

## FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD AT 7 PM ON WEDNESDAY 9 JUNE 2021 BY MICROSOFT TEAMS VIDEO CONFERENCING

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**PRESENT:** Cllr S. McDonald, Chair. Cllr S. Bowers, Vice Chair.  
Cllrs E. Biskup, C. Driver, S. Gurney, A. Pearce and G. Veitch.

K. Dagnall, Clerk.

#### **233/2021 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr B. Eytle.

#### **234/2021 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were received.

#### **235/2021 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2021 were approved as a true record and will be signed when circumstances allow.

#### **236/2021 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising.

#### **Public Participation Session**

No members of the public were present.

#### **237/2021 INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2021/22**

Expenditure to date is £485.25 for floral displays at the California Crossroads. The defibrillators for schools were funded by Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds as approved by the Council.

#### **238/2021 LITTER, WASTE AND RECYCLING MATTERS**

Information on the work of the two part time Litter Wardens carried out from April 2021 to date is summarised below.

	HOURS	MILES	SACKS COLLECTED
2019/20 TOTAL	326	572	323
2020/21 TOTAL	483	773	485
2021/22			
APRIL	42.5	70	42
MAY	45	74	45
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87.5</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>87</b>

There are now approximately 35 Adopt a Street volunteers litter picking in their local area. Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) is promoting Adopt a Street and it is likely that some Finchampstead residents have signed up through the WBC scheme. The Clerk will look into this and will also consider ways to raise the profile of and expand the Parish Council scheme.

California Crossroads tidy up events have been deferred due to the pandemic with the last one taking place in 2019. The improvement scheme for the area due to start in July 2021 is now likely to be deferred for a year to summer 2022.

It was agreed that the focus should be on Adopt a Street and any community litter pick events, and that WBC should continue to be encouraged to undertake routine maintenance at the crossroads.

### **239/2021 DEFIBRILLATOR PROVISION**

The Parish Council has provided five community accessible defibrillators across the Parish. It was noted that the unit at the FBC Centre has been unavailable during the pandemic but as the Centre is now open Monday to Saturday the unit has been reinstated on the Ambulance Service register.

The Ambulance Service (SCAS) has recently been in contact asking for the defibrillators to be registered on a new national defibrillator network, The Circuit. This has been completed by Cllr Pearce.

As agreed at the previous meeting and approved by the Council, defibrillators have been provided for the Finchampstead Village School and the Gorse Ride School. Nine Mile Ride Primary School already has a unit.

The responsibility for the regular checking of the devices was discussed and it was agreed that the schools need to take responsibility for their own units. Cllr Pearce offered to contact the schools informally to check how they are getting on and to recommend that their units are registered with SCAS and / or The Circuit.

It was agreed that a first aid / defibrillator training session should be arranged for autumn 2021.

Additional locations where community accessible defibrillators may be appropriate in future include the Gorse Ride Community, and Finchwood Park where there will be a 'neighbourhood centre' and a new primary school. Cllr Bowers is following up the suggested provision at Gorse Ride.

### **240/2021 ALLOTMENT SITE**

The site is running smoothly.

- There is a waiting list of over 40 including several non-residents. Some on the waiting list are hoping for plots on the new sites to be created at Finchwood Park and Arborfield Green.
- The passing bay was completed as agreed at previous meeting and reported at Main Council.
- Following a consultation, the Tenants have agreed that there can be up to two beehives on the site, and it is hoped to have this in place in 2022.
- One of the original water troughs has failed, a replacement has been ordered.
- The Clerk attended the Allotment Association Committee meeting held on 1 June.
- Cllrs Veitch, McDonald and the Clerk will be undertaking the annual inspection of the site on 22 June.

It was agreed that future allotment provision through the new sites at Arborfield Green and Finchwood Park would be an agenda item for discussion at the next meeting of the Committee.

### **241/2021 TREE PLANTING AND RELATED INITIATIVES**

- There is still no further news on the WBC plans to plant 250,000 trees, including a Garden Forest scheme aiming to get all households to plant a tree in their garden. WBC is apparently working with schools on tree planting schemes, and will be developing a borough wide tree strategy.
- The Parish Council has planted trees at Burnmoor Meadow each year since 2012 and there is scope for a further three trees at the site, then other sites will need to be found.
- It was agreed that the three trees to be planted at Burnmoor Meadow in the 2021/22 season should be used to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, under the national Queens Green Canopy scheme – 'Plant a tree for the Jubilee' [www.queensgreencanopy.org](http://www.queensgreencanopy.org)
- It was agreed that ideally the Parish would have a Tree Strategy, including policies for street trees and trees in other areas, linking to the WBC strategy. The Clerk will continue to follow this up with WBC.
- Issues are:
  - Gaps on grass verges where street trees have been removed and could be replaced.
  - Lack of maintenance of newly planted trees on new developments and roadsides

- Removal of trees for convenience for example to allow more light, rather than out of necessity.
- Lack of known sites for further tree planting
- Potential opportunities include:
  - Adopt a Tree scheme, encouraging residents to care for trees near their property, and possibly involving residents in the choice of tree species.
  - Ask the community to help identify gaps where street trees have been lost.
  - Ask the community to suggest other areas where trees might be planted, either whips or larger trees.
  - Tiny Forest scheme [www.earthwatch.org.uk/get-involved/tiny-forest](http://www.earthwatch.org.uk/get-involved/tiny-forest)
  - Warren Wood Country Park.

The Clerk will contact WBC regarding potential planting at Warren Wood Country Park.

- Wellingtonia Avenue surveys: As reported at Main Council the remaining surveys were completed in April. The Consultant is now working on the reports.
- Cemex UK Ltd. woodland off Longwater Road and adjacent to the allotment site: The Clerk is liaising with the Cemex contractor over management works for the woodland. The potential purchase of the site will be progressed through the new Cemex Working Group.
- The Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association (WDVTA) event to celebrate the 8000<sup>th</sup> tree being recorded: This event will take place at the West Court SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace) on 24 June. Cllrs Veitch, Weeks and the Clerk will be attending along with additional representatives from the WDVTA.

#### **242/2021 PLATINUM JUBILEE OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II**

- As agreed above, three trees will be planted at Burnmoor Meadow to mark the Jubilee.
- Information has now been released about the national celebrations.  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-57329680>

Cllr Driver will speak to representatives from St James' Church regarding participation in the national lighting of beacons on 2 June 2022. This event could include refreshments and activities.

- A Big Jubilee Lunch is being promoted to take place on Sunday 5 June. When more details are known the Parish Council will seek to promote this locally.
- Other opportunities to be considered may include:
  - A joint event with the Finchampstead Society, for example a barn dance
  - Commemorative gift / other for local school children
  - Naming of one of the new streets at Gorse Ride

It was agreed that Cllr McDonald and the Clerk would prepare a briefing note for discussion by the Council at its July meeting.

#### **243/2021 CALIFORNIA COUNTRY PARK**

##### **Potential land purchase**

Further to discussions and meetings in 2020, WBC has indicated its support in principle for purchasing land adjacent to the Park, and is most interested in securing the part of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which lies outside the park and in providing a buffer for the entire SSSI, with no additional public access. Cllr Veitch and the Clerk aim to produce a map showing options for further discussion, but professional assistance may be needed with this.

##### **Improvements to the Park**

As reported at Main Council, WBC has committed to draw up an outline scheme for the lakefront / wishing well / ice cream hut area and to arrange a joint meeting of Town and Parish Councils to discuss the

scheme and funding. The intention is that WBC will then approach Town and Parish Councils for CIL funds in October 2021.

The Clerk is in contact with WBC over this and the project will also be raised at a forthcoming meeting with the WBC Assistant Director for Neighbourhoods and Communities.

The Clerk will again contact WBC regarding the soil spillage over paths from the mound near the Chalet Park entrance, and regarding the timescale for the planting and fencing of the mound near the café.

#### **244/2021 TELEPHONE BOX BOOK SWOP**

The book swop was closed in August 2020 due to the level of misuse.

Two local residents have offered to look after the book swop if and when it reopens. It was agreed that it was not appropriate to re-open the book swop at present.

Alternative suggestions have included a heritage / art feature, an information facility, a cash point, coffee shop or a site for one of the Citizens Advice free telephones.

The preferred option is use as a heritage / information feature including the origins of the name 'california', Finchampstead past and present and promoting the Parish Council.

Cllr Mrs Driver agreed to speak to a local historian about the project.

#### **245/2021 UPDATES ON OTHER MATTERS**

##### **Hanging baskets and floral displays**

- The summer hanging baskets have been installed and the two floral tubs removed as agreed due to the improvement scheme which was due to start in July.
- The improvement scheme may now be deferred for 12 months. If this is the case it was agreed that winter baskets should be installed for winter /spring 2021/22.
- There has been an indication that WBC may allow baskets to be installed on the lamp columns around the Barkham Ride roundabout and the Clerk will be following this up.

##### **Noticeboards**

- St. James' Church agreed that a new board could be located on the grassed area near the Jubilee seat. This was on hold pending agreement on potential sites for the War Memorial should it be relocated. The site is no longer being considered so the noticeboard project can now go ahead.

#### **246/2021 CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence to report.

#### **247/2021 FORUM**

No matters were raised.

#### **248/2021 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next Committee meeting will be held on 6 October 2021.

*These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting of the Committee.*

#### **SUMMARY OF ACTIONS 9 JUNE 2021**

MINUTE REFERENCE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
238/2021	Adopt a Street – look into WBC scheme and ways to further promote the Finchampstead scheme	Clerk
238/2021	Continue to encourage WBC to do maintenance works at the crossroads	Clerk
239/2021	Schools to be contacted re defibrillators provided	AP
239/2021	First aid / defibrillator training session	Clerk
239/2021	Future provision of defibrillator at Gorse Ride	SFB

240/2021	Annual allotment inspection	GV/Clerk/SM
240/2021	Future allotment provision – agenda item for next meeting	Clerk
241/2021	Arrange tree planting at Burnmoor Meadow for 2021/22 To be labelled to mark the Platinum Jubilee	Clerk
241/2021	Follow up tree strategy and tree planting opportunities with WBC	Clerk
242/2021	Platinum Jubilee June 2022 – discuss Beacon lighting with St James' Church	CD
242/2021	Platinum Jubilee – briefing note on potential activities for Main Council (July)	SM/Clerk
243/2021	California Country Park – potential land purchase	Clerk/GV
243/2021	California Country Park improvements	Clerk/ SM
243/2021	California Country Park mounds	Clerk
244/2021	Telephone box – speak to historian	CD
245/2021	Order winter baskets for California crossroads	Clerk
245/2021	Floral displays for around Barkham Ride roundabout	Clerk
245/2021	New noticeboard for near St James Church	Clerk