

**FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
FINANCE & GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
4 PM ON 29 SEPTEMBER 2021
By Microsoft Teams video conference**

PRESENT: Cllr R. Woof, Chair. Cllr G. Jukes OBE, Vice Chair.
Cllrs S. Bromley, D. Cornish (part); R. Cundy (part), S. Gurney, J. May & G. Veitch.

K. Dagnall, Clerk.

376/2021 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs S. McDonald and S. Weeks.

377/2021 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Non pecuniary declarations of interest were received as follows:

Cllr Bromley: California Ratepayers Association; Finchampstead Park Management Committee.

Cllr Cundy: California Ratepayers Association; Finchampstead Park Management Committee;
Finchampstead CE School.

378/2021 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2021 were agreed as a true record. These will be signed retrospectively as soon as circumstances allow.

379/2021 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES / OTHER MATTERS

298/2021 Assets

Images are still to be added to the Asset Management software.

The 2021 asset inspections are almost complete, the Clerk will be collating the outcomes and details of any minor works required. No major issues have been identified.

The Dozzells stone marking the site of the Dozzells Well was discussed at the previous meeting and the Clerk circulated information on the feature. Cllr Weeks had agreed to contact the Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) Conservation Officer regarding maintenance of the feature. The Clerk will follow this up.

301/2021 Project List

The List has been updated and circulated to all Councillors.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No members of the public were present.

380/2021 FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE COUNCIL

A report showing the current position with income and expenditure was circulated. No issues were raised.

Unity Trust Bank current account

The current balance is £97,590.53 as the final instalment of the 2021/22 precept has recently been received. It was agreed that £40,000 should be transferred to the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund account.

CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund

£739,322.79 is currently held in the Fund. The yield on 8 August 2021 was 0.0219%.

CCLA Property Fund

£25,000 was invested in the Fund in August 2017. The investment continues to be reviewed regularly.

It was noted that work will start on the draft 2022/23 budget shortly. Committees will be asked to consider their proposals for the next financial year.

The potential budget requirements of the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP) will be considered when drafting the budget.

381/2021 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) FUNDS

The current balance is £678,160. A further £33,000 is due in October 2021.

Current commitments total £187,300.

It was noted that expenditure in 2021/22 will utilise the small amount of CIL remaining from the 2018/19 receipts, with other receipts dating from April and October 2019, well within the 5-year period for expenditure of the funds.

382/2021 INTERNAL AUDITOR APPOINTMENT

Claire Connell has fulfilled the role of internal auditor for the Parish Council for several years. The cost of the 2020/21 audit was £350.

It was agreed that Claire Connell should be reappointed for 2021/22.

It was noted that the accountant who assists with the completion of the accounts and the papers for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return will be retiring after 2021/22 and alternative assistance will need to be found.

383/2021 GRANT APPLICATIONS AND DONATIONS TO LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

The Council previously agreed that as in 2020/21, normal procedures would be amended to allow grant applications to be considered on an adhoc basis throughout 2021/22.

A grant of £1000 to MS Therapy was agreed by the Committee in July 2021 and was ratified by the Council. Further applications have now been received and details were circulated.

It was agreed that the following grants and donations would be awarded, subject to approval by Main Council at its meeting on 20 October 2021.

Organisation	Sum requested	Grant awarded
Citizens Advice Wokingham	£3300	£3300
Involve – Cancer Support Network	£250	£250
Friends of Finchampstead Ridges	£2620	£2620 (to be CIL funded) *
Me2 Club	£750	£750
Sue Ryder	£1050	£1050
Wokingham Job Support Centre	£1000	£1000

Category	Organisation	Donation agreed
Halls	California Ratepayers Hall	£1100
	Memorial Hall	£440
Churchyards	St James' Churchyard	£800
Schools		
Donations based on £8.50/pupil**	Nine Mile Ride Primary (roll 358)	3043

	Gorse Ride Infants (roll 151)	£1283.50
	Gorse Ride Junior (roll 219)	£1861.50
	Finchampstead Primary (roll 112)	£952

* Friends of Finchampstead Ridges grant – the grant was provisionally approved subject to clarification of aspects of the project. The Clerk will follow this up.

** It was agreed that donations to schools should be based on £8.50 per pupil, increased from £8 per pupil in 2020/21.

- The current budget includes provision for awards to the Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership and to Keep Mobile. Keep Mobile has just submitted its application, and this will be considered at the November meeting of the Committee. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the Blackwater Valley Partnership s to establish whether an application would be submitted.
- It was also agreed that the Clerk should contact the Wokingham Volunteer Centre to establish whether an application will be submitted.

384/2021 COUNCIL MANAGEMENT MATTERS AND WORKING GROUP ACTIVITIES

Council policies and procedures

- A full update will be provided at the next Committee meeting.
- Data protection policies require review, and new HR related policies are outstanding.
- The Business Continuity Policy is outstanding although some measures to ensure continuity are now in place.
- The Council generally adopts the same Code of Conduct as that used by Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) and was consulted on proposals for a new Code in late 2020. It now appears that WBC has adopted a new Code but has not informed the Town and Parish Councils. The Code adopted by WBC is the Local Government Association (LGA) Model Code, with amendments agreed by the WBC Standards Committee at a meeting on 8 March 2021.

The Clerk has followed this up and the WBC Monitoring Officer will be attending the October Wokingham Clerks Forum to give an update on the current position and on the potential adoption of the new Code by the Town and Parish Councils.

Cllr Gurney sits on the WBC Standards Committee and will raise the matter at the next meeting of the Committee on 11 October 2021. It was suggested that the Code should refer to / cover expected conduct at virtual meetings – Cllr Gurney will raise this with the Committee.

Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP)

Cllr Cornish reported on the current position at the Council meeting on 16 September 2021.

The Group has applied for a grant from the Government through the Locality organisation. Funds are required for a public consultation planned for October – November 2021.

It is uncertain whether any grants will be available in 2022/23. Funds will be required for the Referendum on the Plan which is likely to take place in 2022, and potential budget requirements will be considered when drafting the Parish Council budget for 2022/23.

War Memorial relocation

The Council agreed to proceed with the project at its meeting on 16 September 2021. The project is progressing well and is on target for completion by the end of May 2022.

Human Resources Sub Committee

- The Sub Committee met on 22 September and reviewed staffing matters.

- All 3 staff are now working part from home and part in the Office. Improvements to the Office are now in place.
- It was agreed that staff appraisals would take place in February 2022.
- Cllr Woof and the Clerk will undertake the pay review for the Wardens, with proposals to be considered by the Sub Committee at its next meeting in November (date to be confirmed).

Other matters

- Virtual and in person meetings were discussed a meeting of the Council Chair and Committee Chairs on 22 September. Two Extraordinary Meetings have now been arranged for 7 and 21 October to ensure compliance with the 6-month attendance rule.
- The current constraints around meeting room availability were noted.

385/2021 FORUM

No matters were raised.

386/2021 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 24 November 2021.

These minutes are subject to final approval at the next meeting of the Committee.

FINANCE & GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 29 SEPTEMBER 2021

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

MINUTE REFERENCE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
397/2021	Add images to asset management software	Clerk
397/2021	Collate asset inspection outcomes and arrange works	Clerk
397/2021	Contact WBC re maintenance of Dozzells Stone	Clerk
380/2021	Transfer £40k to CCLA Deposit Fund	Clerk
382/2021	Confirm internal auditor appointment for 2021/22	Clerk
383/2021	Grants and donations to October Council for approval	Clerk
383/2021	Contact BVCP and WCVC re potential applications	Clerk
	Policies – full update for November meeting	Clerk
384/2021	Policies - GDPR compliance esp subject access requests - New HR policies	Clerk
384/2021	Policies – Business Continuity	
384/2021	New Code of Conduct – follow up with WBC New Code of Conduct – raise at WBC Standards Committee	Clerk SG