

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD AT 7 PM ON WEDNESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2021 BY MICROSOFT TEAMS VIDEO CONFERENCING

PRESENT: Cllr S. McDonald, Chair. Cllr S. Bowers, Vice Chair.
Cllrs C. Driver, B. Eytle, S. Gurney & A. Pearce.

K. Dagnall, Clerk.
C. Warke, Deputy Clerk

387/2021 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr McDonald welcomed those present and advised that Cllrs E. Biskup and S. Gurney wished to join the Committee. This was unanimously approved.

Apologies were received from Cllrs E. Biskup and G. Veitch.

388/2021 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were received.

389/2021 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2021 were approved as a true record and will be signed when circumstances allow.

390/2021 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

Public Participation Session

No members of the public were present.

391/2021 INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2021/22

A report showing the current position was circulated.

The only expenditure to date is on floral displays at the California Crossroads and allotment site maintenance, but several commitments will be coming forward before the end of the financial year.

The Committee agreed to allocate up to £250 from the Community Activities budget for the purchase of a replacement Union Flag for the California Ratepayers Hall.

392/2021 ALLOTMENTS

Finchampstead Allotments

An update on the current position with the Finchampstead Allotment site was circulated. The site is running smoothly with no issues. There is still a large waiting list for plots.

The drainage ditch on the southern part of the site has been collapsing due to mole activity. The Allotment Association had been planning to undertake remedial works but it has been agreed that this is too much for the volunteers to undertake and contractors are being invited to quote for the works.

The Allotment Association has committed funds to the project but is unlikely to be able to cover the full cost. The Council has an Ear Marked Reserve of £2000 allocated for

unplanned allotment maintenance, but it was agreed that ideally Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds should be used for any contribution from the Council. The Clerk will discuss this with Cllr Woof.

Arborfield Green / Finchwood Park allotments

A report was circulated outlining the current position with the four sites to be created at Arborfield Green, within Swallowfield and Barkham Parishes, and the one site to be created at Finchwood Park within Finchampstead Parish.

The Clerk has recently met the Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) Officer dealing with the new sites. The Finchwood Park site will be transferred by the Developer but will not be set out by the Developer – this will be up to whoever takes on the site. The land may be available in 2023/24. A bid would need to be put to WBC for funds to set out the site, no specific allocation has been made for this purpose.

Concerns were expressed about the staff resource required to set up and manage the new site, and the ongoing running costs.

The Clerk has indicated to WBC that the Parish Council may consider taking on the site, subject to funds being provided to draw up plans for the site and to set it out. This would also be subject to any constraints imposed by WBC over the layout of the site and / or the allocation of plots to tenants.

It was agreed that the Council should focus on bringing forward the Finchwood Park allotment site for the benefit of Parish residents, whether or not the Council agrees to take over the site.

It was agreed that the Clerk should work with the Barkham Parish Clerk and the Arborfield Green Community Worker to collate existing waiting lists and to ensure the lists for each site or area are managed by the appropriate body.

393/2021 PLATINUM JUBILEE 2022

A report was circulated on proposals and options to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 2022.

It was agreed at the previous meeting that the trees to be planted at Burnmoor Meadow in the 2021/22 season would be used to mark the Jubilee. These will be registered under the national Queens Green Canopy scheme – ‘Plant a tree for the Jubilee’

www.queensgreencanopy.org

It was agreed that subject to approval by the Council, and to securing the required budget, the following activities would take place. It was noted that much of the organisation would be undertaken by the St. James’ Church Social Committee and other local groups. The main role of the Parish Council would be to provide financial support if possible, and to promote the events.

- A picnic at the Memorial Park on the evening of 2 June, with a band.
- In line with National Celebrations on 2 June, a piper will play ‘Dui Regnare’ at 9.09pm at St. James’ Church, prior to the beacon being lit at the Church at 9.15pm.

The Church Choir will sing the song to be specially written for the event.
Refreshments including a cake will be provided at the event.

- Additional tree planting opportunities at Warren Wood Country Park and near St. James' Church will be looked into. Any planting is likely to be in November /December 2022.

It was agreed that the Council would not organise any community tree planting events.

- The potential for naming a road, walk or block of apartments on the Gorse Ride development will continue to be investigated.
- There will be a new Platinum Award to be presented at the Annual Gathering to celebrate the activities of members of the community and/ or local organisations. This will be considered in more detail including potential categories, nomination process and the form of the award.
- The Barkham Hookers crochet group will be asked to create appropriate bunting and post box covers. The Clerk and Cllr Gurney will discuss a potential grant application from the group.
- A gift will be provided for each of Finchampstead CE Primary School, the Gorse Ride Schools and Nine Mile Ride Primary School, and possibly Waverley School. This is likely to be a fixed item for the school grounds.

A report on the above including estimated budgetary requirements will be presented to the Council at its meeting on 20 October.

394/2021 TELEPHONE BOX

It was agreed at the previous meeting that the best use of the telephone box at the California Crossroads, formerly used as a book swop, would be as an information feature displaying images and text about the Parish.

Examples were viewed and it was agreed that good presentation of the information was vital. Cllr Driver has collected some appropriate information and images and the project will be progressed when staff resources allow.

395/2021 REMEMBRANCE 2021

Cllr Driver and the Deputy Clerk are working on arrangements for Remembrance with representatives from the Parochial Church Council and the Uniformed Youth Groups. The Remembrance Parade and Service will take place at the Finchampstead Memorial Park at 3pm on 14 November 2021, with arrangements similar to those in 2019. Further information will be circulated in due course and the event will be widely promoted.

It was agreed that the £90 fee for the Bugler to play at the event would be covered from the Community Activities budget.

It was also agreed that £50 should be allocated from the Community Activities budget to allow the Barkham Hookers crochet group to create poppies to display at the California Crossroads.

396/2021 UPDATES ON OTHER MATTERS

Litter, waste and recycling

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

	HOURS	MILES	SACKS COLLECTED
2019/20 TOTAL	326	572	323
2020/21 TOTAL	483	773	485
2021/22 TO DATE	244.5	373	232

There are now approximately 35 Adopt a Street volunteers litter picking in their local area. The Clerk will be contacting the volunteers shortly to thank them for their efforts and to check on any equipment requirements.

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.

There is no news from WBC or Keep Britain Tidy on the next community litter pick, but it is expected that this will be in March 2022.

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. There is no further progress to report.

Improvements to the Park

As previously reported, 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 Spring 2021.

Tree planting and related initiatives

- Three trees have been ordered for Burnmoor Meadow, as noted under agenda item 393/2021 above.
- Some suggestions have come forward for new or replacement street tree planting and the Clerk will be following this up with WBC.
- There is 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.
- Wellingtonia Avenue surveys: The remaining surveys were completed in April and the consultant has produced an interim draft of the report. The final report is expected shortly.
- 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 8000th tree being recorded took place at the West Court SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace) on 24 June. It was agreed that a plaque should be produced for

the tree, and this is in hand. Cala Homes Ltd. has agreed to cover the cost of the plaque.

Hanging baskets

- The winter basket order was cancelled due to the California Crossroads improvement scheme which was due to be implemented this year, but as this has been deferred the baskets have been re-ordered.
- The potential installation of baskets around the Barkham Ride roundabout will be followed up. The poor condition of the roundabout was noted and has been raised with WBC.

Noticeboards

- The information in the noticeboards will be updated shortly. Cleaning of the boards is on hold pending finding a new handyman.
- The replacement board for near St. James' Church is in hand and it is intended that this will be installed by the end of January at the latest.

Defibrillators and first aid training

- The units continue to be checked regularly by Cllr Pearce with reports now being uploaded to The Circuit – the central database of community accessible defibrillators.
- Units were donated to two local schools in May 2021 – Cllr Pearce has followed this up and the units are now set up and ready for use.
- First aid / defibrillator training – it is likely that this will be arranged for Spring 2022.
- Future locations for defibrillators were noted, including the Gorse Ride area post regeneration and the future Finchwood Park School and new Community Centre.

397/2021 BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2022/21

The Clerk will propose figures for most account lines.

It was agreed that an additional budget for the Platinum Jubilee should be proposed, to include provision for gifts of a value of £500 to each local primary school as noted under agenda item 393/2021 above.

398/2021 FORUM

No matters were raised.

399/2021 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next Committee meeting will be held on 26 January 2022 (to be confirmed).

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

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS 6 OCTOBER 2021

MINUTE REFERENCE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
391/2021	Union Flag for Ratepayers Hall	Deputy Clerk
392/2021	Allotments – drainage ditch works Secure quotes Discuss funding with Cllr Woof	Clerk
392/2021	Finchwood Park / Arborfield Green future allotments Collate waiting lists Maintain contact with WBC over F / Park site	Clerk
393/2021	Platinum jubilee proposals – continue to progress items as minuted / produce report for October Main Council	Deputy Clerk / Clerk/ CD/ SG
394/2021	Telephone box – progress plans when resources allow	Clerk
395/2021	Remembrance 2021 Promotion Advise Barkham Hookers re funds for poppies	Deputy Clerk/CD
396/2021	Adopt a Street – contact all volunteers. Look into aligning with WBC scheme and ways to further promote the Finchampstead scheme	Clerk
396/2021	California Country Park – potential land purchase	Clerk/GV
396/2021	California Country Park improvements	Clerk/ SM
396/2021	California Country Park mounds	Clerk
396/2021	Follow up tree strategy and tree planting opportunities with WBC	Clerk
396/2021	Floral displays for around Barkham Ride roundabout	Clerk
396/2021	New noticeboard for near St James Church	Clerk
396/2021	First aid / defibrillator training session Spring 2021	Clerk
396/2021	Future provision of defibrillator at Gorse Ride	SFB