

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.15 PM ON 21 APRIL 2022

At the Finchampstead Memorial Hall, The Village, Finchampstead

PRESENT: Councillor S. Weeks; Chair. Councillor S. Bromley; Vice Chair.
Councillors E. Biskup; S. Bowers; R. Cundy; C. Driver; D. Cornish; S. Gurney;
G. Jukes OBE; R. Margetts; R. Marshallsay; S. McDonald; G. Veitch & R. Woof.

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

13/2022 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors B. Eytley and A. Pearce.

14/2022 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

15/2022 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 23 March 2022 were agreed as a true and correct record and were signed by Cllr Weeks.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No members of the public attended the meeting.

16/2022 CHAIRS REPORT

- Cllr Driver has confirmed that she will be standing down from the Council at the end of May 2022 after 35 years on the Council which included a period as Chair of the Council. Cllr Weeks thanked Cllr Driver for her commitment and for her work on behalf of the Parish Council and the Finchampstead Community during her term of office.
- Cllr Weeks advised that the Parish Councils Annual Gathering, the Annual Meeting for Parishioners, will take place on 31 May at 7pm at the FBC Centre.
- The low pupil allocation at local primary schools for September 2022 was noted, linked at least in part to the increased intake at the new Farley Hill School at Arborfield Green which is fully subscribed. The Parish had responded to the initial consultation about the School at Arborfield Green, and to the latest consultation regarding the increase to two form entry, expressing concerns about the impact on pupil numbers at local schools.
- Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) will be holding elections on 5 May. There will be changes to representation in local wards as Cllr Weeks will be standing down from Finchampstead South, Cllr Sargeant from Finchampstead North, and Cllr Ross from Wokingham Without.

17/2022 PROJECT AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan (FNDP)

The draft Plan and associated documents can be viewed on the Council's website at

<https://www.finchampstead-pc.gov.uk/community-projects/neighbourhood-development-plan/documents>

Cllr Cornish advised that WBC has now completed its informal review of the draft Plan and related documents and has made a number of comments, mostly in respect of the Local Green Spaces and the Strategic Gaps and Green Wedges Topic Papers.

Feedback from WBC has also identified a requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on two of the potential housing sites included in the Plan. Cllrs Cornish and Marshallsay have met representatives from Locality who would undertake the EIAs, and the need for the EIA's has been questioned. This is being followed up with WBC.

Further work on the documents is now needed before the final draft Plan and related documents can be submitted to WBC for the Regulation 15 official review. This will be followed by a Regulation 16 public consultation, independent examination and a referendum. Subject to this, the Plan may be officially confirmed in Spring 2023. However, even at this stage the draft Plan does have some influence in the planning context as an emerging policy document.

Cllr Jukes advised that initially the NDP Group and the Parish Council put forward 21 sites to WBC for Local Green Space designation. The sites were subsequently reduced to 13, but WBC has now only accepted 8 of these sites for inclusion in the Local Plan Update. However, the NDP can designate additional sites and all 13 sites will be included in the Plan, with appropriate justification.

Gorse Ride regeneration

Cllr Bowers advised that demolition of properties in Phase 2A is on hold pending the relocation of the residents of two properties. Construction on Phase 2A is due to start in late summer 2022.

Arborfield Strategic Development Location (Arborfield Green and Finchwood Park)

- Crest Nicholson gave a presentation to Councillors on 28 March on plans for the new Arborfield Green Community Centre. It is now proposed that rather than a new build, the existing Library building will be used. Tours of the Library building were available on 12 April.
- The use of the refurbished Stables is still to be confirmed.
- A drop in consultation event on plans for the Arborfield Green District Centre and Community Centre will take place on 29 and 30 April at the Arborfield Community Centre.
- The Community Liaison Group met on 4 April. Cllr Pearce attended, and notes have been circulated with the minutes of the meeting to follow.
- The Steering Group has not met for some time but is due to reconvene in the near future.

18/2022 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) EXPENDITURE

Cllr Woof advised that the Finance & General Management Committee considered potential projects at its meeting on 30 March and agreed the following subject to Council approval.

- Bridlepath 26 drainage improvements: A Parish Council project being proposed with the agreement of WBC. £5000.
- Cycle route to Wokingham: A feasibility study on the potential use of Wokingham Foot Path 3 to link Nashgrove Lane with Evendons Lane, to form a section of a cycle route to Wokingham. £750

The use of CIL funds for both projects was approved by the Council.

Cllr Woof advised that a further project has come forward following a recent meeting between the War Memorial Working Group and WBC regarding the future improvement of the War Memorial junction.

- WBC had previously advised that survey and design work for the junction would cost up to £95,000. The Parish Council agreed it was unable to commit funds to this due to uncertainty over the WBC commitment to funding and implementing the works.

- At the recent meeting it was agreed that a sensible way forward would be for WBC to develop concept designs for the junction which can be used as a basis for more detailed discussion with WBC over actual implementation of and funding for the works.
- WBC has submitted a fee proposal for £900 is requested for this work, which can be completed in June 2022. This expenditure was agreed by the Council.

The Committee also considered bids from the Finchampstead Sports Club and from the Gorse Ride Schools for funding towards large scale projects. The projects were supported in principle, but further information has been requested so that the appropriate level of funding can be considered.

19/2022 COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE & GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr Woof reported on the financial position of the Council and current matters.

Financial position

- Unity Trust Bank £31,217.59
- CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund account £700,022.43
- CCLA Property Fund £25,000
- The above figures include £679,367 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts.

The schedule of payments totalling £13,588.88 was circulated to all Councillors. The schedule included a provisional grant of £300 to Berkshire Vision. This was recommended by the Finance & General Management Committee and was unanimously approved by the Council.

All remaining payments were approved by the Council. Cllrs Bromley and Woof agreed to authorise the electronic payments.

Committee meeting held on 30 March and other matters

- Prior to the meeting the Committee had a presentation from the WBC Head of Enforcement and Safety about the delivery of the Public Protection Partnership (PPP) functions after 1 April 2022.
- The current position with the Council's support for Youth Work activities provided by the Finchampstead Baptist Church (FBC) was discussed. It was agreed that while the service was highly valued, the Parish Council should be better informed about the activities and how these meet local needs. Cllrs McDonald and Woof and the Clerk have now discussed this in more detail and plan to meet with FBC representatives to gather further information. Relevant organisations and stakeholders will also be consulted.
- Two grant applications were considered including an award to Berkshire Vision as noted above, and an application from the local Scout Group for funds towards bike racks. A decision on this application was deferred pending further information coming forward from the Group.

Review of working groups / sub committees / representation on groups and organisations

Cllr Weeks, the Committee Chairs and the Clerk met on 13 April and reviewed the various working groups, sub committees and representation on organisations. It was agreed that some working groups could be disbanded and that representation on certain organisations was no longer required. Details will be circulated shortly in order that Councillors can consider if they wish to make any changes to their roles on the Council, for confirmation at the Annual Meeting in May.

War Memorial relocation

Cllr Jukes provided an update on the project.

- Tenders for the main contract are due to be returned on 29 April.
- Applications have been submitted to WBC for the discharge of conditions of the planning consents.

- WBC is proposing to grant a licence to place a structure in the highway to formalise the use of the highway verge.
- The Working Group met on 29 March to review progress. A low-key event to mark the dismantling of the Memorial and a larger rededication event were discussed and the form of signage at the current and new locations was agreed. Future improvements to the road junction were considered and the Group agreed to meet WBC to discuss this as noted under minute 18/2022 above.

AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Cllr McDonald reported on current matters.

- Platinum Jubilee Awards: The Panel will be meeting on 25 April to assess the nominations. Awards will be presented at the Annual Gathering on 31 May.
- Cllr Driver confirmed that arrangements are in place for 2 June including a picnic in the Memorial Park with live music, and the lighting of the beacon at St. James' Church.
- Community litter pick: The event on Sunday 3 April ran smoothly and was well attended with around 130 sacks of litter collected. All those who participated were thanked for their efforts.
- Wellingtonia Avenue project: The overall report and individual reports on 92 trees are finally complete. Information has been circulated to Councillors. The reports will now be forwarded to the property owners, and consideration will be given to arranging a seminar type event for the property owners and interested parties.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Cllr Cundy reported on the recent meeting and other matters.

- The Committee met on 13 April - minutes of the meeting have been circulated.
- The Committee considered 31 applications and submitted objections to seven of these. Applications considered included one proposing amendments to the restoration plans for the Cemex site at Fleet Hill Farm – comments on the proposals were drafted by the Cemex Working Group and were approved by the Committee.
A Reserved Matters application for 140 dwellings at the former Reading Football Club training ground on Park Lane has been submitted. The Committee stated that, as previously agreed, a pedestrian / cycle path alongside Park Lane should be provided in connection with the development.
- 11 decision notices received from WBC were noted. All but 4 decisions were in line with the Parish Council's views.
- Cllr Veitch attended the Appeal hearing on 29 March relating to Bloor Homes proposal for up to 150 homes in Sandhurst on land west of Wokingham Road and East of Lower Church Road. Cllr Veitch presented the Parish Council's objections to the proposals.
- The Finchampstead Sports Club application for 2 new cricket nets has been approved.

RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE

Cllr Cornish reported on current matters.

- Following sight of the recent planning application relating to the Cemex site at Fleet Hill Farm, a meeting will be arranged with WBC to reiterate the Parish Council's concerns, discuss the next stages and try and encourage WBC to push for completion of both the Fleet Hill and Manor Farm sites.
- Bridlepath 26 drainage improvements: As funding is now confirmed is hoped that the work will take place in May.
- Cllrs Cornish and Margetts and the Clerk met the WBC Rights of Way Manager on 25 March. Discussion points were the Bridlepath 26 drainage works and the cycle route as noted under minute 18/2022 above. A potential project to create a path on Fleet Hill to link Footpath 29 and the Tally Ho was also discussed. The Ramblers and the Parish Council are keen to see this link implemented and it is included in the WBC Rights of Way Improvement Plan. WBC has agreed to commission a safety study on the potential path.

ROADS & ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE

Cllr Bromley reported on current matters.

- The new traffic monitoring units are proving difficult to set up and are not yet in use.
- Thames Valley Police has now approved the arrangements for community speed watch sessions, in line with its new requirements. 15 locations have been approved and 7 volunteers including 6 Councillors are now trained. Further training on the new camera and the system to be followed in sessions will be arranged and sessions will then resume.
- The Parish gateway signs and community speed watch signs have now been installed on Reading Road as part of the recent traffic management works undertaken by WBC.
- WBC will be removing one of the bottle banks at the Avery Corner Car Park to free up a parking space.

Cllr Weeks advised that the Nine Mile Ride / Park Lane junction is due to re-open on 27 April. WBC has confirmed that repair / reconstruction work to The Ridges is due to commence in June 2022.

Cllr Driver noted the poor condition of Commonfield Lane. This was discussed by the Roads & Road Safety Committee at its meeting in February 2022 and subsequently at Main Council in February 2022. WBC views the Lane as a minor road with unofficial passing places and is concerned that improvements will encourage more traffic to use the Lane. Cllr Margetts confirmed that WBC has now stated that remedial work may be undertaken when the Nine Mile Ride Extension is opened. The Roads & Road Safety Committee will monitor this and follow up as necessary.

20/2022 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

No reports were presented.

21/2022 FORUM

No matters were raised.

22/2021 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 25 May 2022.

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

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL - PAYMENT LIST 21 APRIL 2022

UNITY TRUST BANK ACCOUNT 10/04/22			£31,217.59
CCLA DEPOSIT ACCOUNT 01/04/22			£700,022.43
CCLA PROPERTY FUND 31/03/22			£25,000.00
INCLUDING CIL RECEIPTS TOTAL £679,367.20			
TOTAL FUNDS			£756,240.02
	NET	VAT	TOTAL
Outstanding payments not yet cleared			
Total payments outstanding			£0.00
Payments already approved and paid			
CHALLICE - WELLINGTONIA PROJECT	12,510.00	2502.00	15,012.00
GOODGER - WAR MEMORIAL PROJECT	2,717.33	520.27	3,237.60

PAYMENTS APRIL 2022			
Staff costs			£8,319.05
Other costs			
ASAP COMPUTER SERVICES-SUPPORT	244.20	48.84	293.04
MICROSHADE REMOTE HOSTING	77.20	15.44	92.64
WEB MARKETING MATTERS	157.55	0.00	157.55
SSE STREET LIGHT ENERGY	25.04	4.55	29.59
BRITISH TELECOM	47.68	9.53	57.21
FBC CAFÉ	40.01	4.99	45.00
FBC LITTER PICK CATERING	110.00	22.00	132.00
WBC DIGITAL SOLUTIONS - PRINTING	27.00	0.00	27.00
UNIPAR - CAMERA (SPEEDWATCH)	3,304.00	660.80	3,964.80
ICO DATA PROTECTION REGISTRATION	35.00	0.00	35.00
CPRE SUBSCRIPTION	36.00	0.00	36.00
BARKHAM HOOKERS - PLATINUM JUBILEE	100.00	0.00	100.00
Allotment costs			
NONE			
Neighbourhood Development Plan costs			
NONE	0.00	0.00	0.00
Grants and contributions - subject to final approval by Council where required			
BERKSHIRE VISION	300.00	0.00	300.00
TOTAL APRIL PAYMENTS		£766.15	£13,588.88
TOTAL REMAINING			£742,651.14
APRIL PETTY CASH / CARD PAYMENTS	Net	VAT	Total
Total petty cash payments	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Card payments (Clerk)	255.52	51.10	306.62
Total Card payments (Footpath Warden)	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	£255.52	£51.10	£306.62

CARD PAYMENTS DETAIL	Net	VAT	Total
HDMI CABLE	15.82	3.16	18.98
WEL MEDICAL DEFIBRILLATOR SUPPLIES	239.70	47.94	287.64
	£255.52	£51.10	£306.62