

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ROADS & ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 12 JANUARY 2023 AT 7PM on Microsoft Teams

PRESENT: Cllr S. Bromley, Chair; Cllr R. Cundy, Vice Chair.
Cllrs S. Bowers; R. Marshallsay; C. Mortimer; S. Weeks.

K. Dagnall, Clerk.

332/2023 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All Committee members were present.

333/2023 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were received.

334/2023 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2022 were agreed as a true record and will be signed in due course.

335/2023 MATTERS ARISING

199/2022 Street Lights / potential transfer to Wokingham Borough Council

As reported to Main Council in November 2022, Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) has confirmed that it will not take over any lamp columns currently owned by the Town and Parish Councils. It has taken 5 years to get to this point, and as Finchampstead Parish Council has only 6 columns it is not considered worth taking this any further.

199/2022 Bus shelters

The new bus shelters installed on Nine Mile Ride in August 2018 are still not illuminated. The electrical supply is apparently now in place but has not been connected.

The bus shelter due to be installed on the Finchampstead Road opposite the California Ratepayers Hall in August 2020 will be installed (subject to space) when the California Crossroads improvement scheme is implemented. The Parish Council owned bus shelter outside the Ratepayers Hall is due to be replaced as part of this scheme. The Clerk has asked WBC to consider a shelter with a green roof for this location.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No members of the public were present.

336/2023 INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2022/23

The only expenditure from the Committee budget is £252 for the street light energy supply.

A new energy contract has been negotiated for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2023 at a total cost of around £950. This is approximately three times the cost of the previous contract

337/2023 COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH

Traffic volume and speed monitoring units

- Two Black Cat speed data recorders were purchased in February 2022. Cllr Bromley has had difficulty with making the units operational and the manufacturer/supplier is unable to assist.

It was agreed that if the units are not operational by 31 January 2023 they should be returned to the supplier for a refund.

- The Parish Council used similar units for approximately 10 years until December 2020. It was agreed that the data collected was useful both to inform community speed watch activities, and in connection with development control matters, and that it would be desirable to continue this monitoring although this could be on a less frequent basis.
- If the units are returned as noted above, alternatives will be looked into, including the possibility of working in partnership with another local Town or Parish Council which undertakes monitoring.

Post mounted Speed Indicator Devices (PSID's)

- The units continue to be used in rotation on the roads with the worst speeding problem and are left in each location for 3 weeks.
- One unit has recently developed a fault and has been returned to the manufacturer for repair.

In June 2022 WBC was promoting the use of its 6 Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) which are installed for up to 3-month periods on roads where there is an intermittent speeding problem. The promotion stated that locations are generally chosen following feedback from Town and Parish Councils, the public or community groups, although the Parish Council has not yet been approached in relation to this.

The Clerk has asked WBC to consider installing it's VAS on the Lower Wokingham Road.

Speed indicator device (SID) sessions

- Roadside SID sessions have been taking place regularly since May 2022, following an enforced break during the pandemic.
- It would be helpful to have more volunteers.
- It was agreed that it would be helpful to document how sessions are planned, run on the day and the follow up. Cllr Bromley and the Clerk will discuss how to progress this.
- Cllrs Bromley, Cundy and the Clerk will review the current risk assessment and update as necessary.

Equipment for volunteers:

Volunteers currently wear branded hi vis vests during sessions. At the previous meeting it was suggested that as sessions are no longer run from within a vehicle, but with volunteers standing by the roadside, warm / weatherproof clothing should be provided.

The Clerk will look into what is currently available and will circulate details, and will check with Thames Valley Police over the use of the 'Police Community Volunteer' logo. It was agreed that the Parish Council logo should be included on any clothing.

It was agreed that any jackets provided should initially be for regular Parish Council or other volunteers only.

338/2023 ROAD SAFETY ISSUES

Lower Wokingham Road – there has been no progress with the potential crossing. In 2020 WBC agreed to investigate the proposal.

Finchampstead Road near Church Lane junction – the sight line issue for pedestrians crossing the road has been raised with WBC several times in recent years. Cllr Cornish raised this again with WBC in Autumn 2022; it was noted that the hedge alongside the Finchampstead Road on the Church Farm boundary has been cut back but it is unclear who did the work.

Biggs Lane pedestrian crossing

Barkham Parish Council is now leading on the project to install a crossing by Hazebrouck Meadows. There is no progress to report.

White Horse Lane

At the previous meeting it was noted that concerns had been raised by residents about the increased use of White Horse Lane as a short cut when The Ridges re-opens. The road re-opened in November 2022. WBC had advised that it was looking at measures to discourage use of the Lane but there is no further update on this.

Junction of the B3348 and B3016 – former ‘War Memorial junction’

The Ridges re-opened in November 2022 and some concerns have been expressed by residents about the safety of the junction, particularly at night, now that the War Memorial has been relocated. The WBC Highways department were consulted in relation to the planning consent for the relocation of the Memorial and had no objections to the relocation, nor concerns over the safety of the junction following the relocation. However, a WBC Councillor has asked the Highways Department to undertake a safety review and to assess if any markings or other measures would be helpful pending the future redesign of the junction.

Quiet Lanes

It is understood that WBC may be looking into the designation of certain roads as Quiet Lanes. Quiet Lanes are an initiative introduced by the Countryside Agency with support from the Department of Transport, and aim to maintain the character of minor rural roads with generally low traffic speeds and volume. Only minor rural roads suitable for use by walkers, cyclists, equestrians and motorists are suitable for designation as Quiet Lanes.

Roads in Finchampstead which may be suitable could include Park Lane, Lower Sandhurst Road, Dell Road, and Evendons Lane to the north of the Parish.

339/2023 ROAD CONDITION ISSUES

The poor condition of roadsides and footways is an ongoing concern. Issues with dirty or broken or obscured road signs, encroaching vegetation, potholes or footway condition should continue to be reported to WBC using its online reporting system.

In September 2022 the Clerk submitted a blanket report for the stretch of Finchampstead Road, southbound, from the gateway signs to the Barkham Ride junction, as numerous signs on this stretch were obscured by vegetation. WBC has now done some work to clear the signs. The same approach could be taken with other stretches of road with multiple issues.

Commonfield Lane

The condition of the Lane is a concern, particularly the informal passing points. WBC has said that it will be undertaking improvements to the Lane and passing bays, but the timescale is unknown.

Lower Sandhurst Road and Dell Road

The roads were heavily used while The Ridges was closed. WBC committed to undertaking repair and reinstatement when The Ridges re-opened. Lower Sandhurst Road is in the WBC works programme for 1 January 2023 to 30 June 2024 but it is unclear if any works are planned for Dell Road.

Road surface condition at the Barkham Ride roundabout and the California Crossroads

The extremely poor condition of the road surface was reported to WBC in November 2022 and WBC subsequently advised that no work was needed. The Clerk is following this up.

The Barkham Ride / Windsor Ride junction is however in the WBC planned works programme for 1 January 2023 to 30 June 2024. The Nine Mile Ride between White Horse Lane and the Finchampstead Road is also included in the programme and this may include the problem area at the California Crossroads adjacent to Creswell's Garage.

Finchampstead Road between the Doctor's Surgery and Spring Gardens

This stretch of Road has numerous potholes, and floods caused by blocked gullies, and has also suffered water leaks. There are also sections where the road surface is in poor condition. All issues have been reported to WBC and some have been resolved.

Other planned works included in the WBC programme for 1 January 2023 to 30 June 2024

Jubilee Road (B3016) between Wick Hill and The Ridges – minor repairs were implemented in early January but the road is in the programme for resurfacing.

Improvements to the Reading Road (A327) between the Nine Mile Ride Extension and Park Lane.

Barkham Ride footways

Cllr Bowers commented on the condition of the footways. The Clerk has reported the build up of debris and leaf litter on many sections of the footways and kerbsides between Rooks Nest Woods and the junction with Finchampstead Road.

Funding for road repair / improvement works

Community Infrastructure Levy funds are intended primarily for the provision or improvement of infrastructure but in some cases can be used for maintenance works. The Clerk will look into the possibility of directing funds to road repairs or maintenance.

340/2023 LARGE PROJECT UPDATES

Nine Mile Ride Extension

The new road opened in October 2022. The Clerk has asked WBC if a Parish gateway and a community speed watch area sign could be installed close to the Reading Road roundabout.

California Crossroads: The improvement scheme was deferred from 2021 and the implementation date is still to be confirmed. WBC has committed to arrange a meeting for stakeholders at an appropriate stage.

Parking at the California Crossroads

The potential for creating additional parking on land adjacent to the Co-op was being looked in to prior to the pandemic. The property owner has given approval in principle and the next stage is to arrange a site meeting with the Co-op, the lessee. Cllr Bromley will progress this.

The problem of shop and business staff parking in the bays at the front of the shops persists. In 2018 WBC stated that it would put a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in place for

one-hour limit on parking in the bays in front of the shops, but this is not yet in place. In 2022 a further TRO was to be introduced to prevent commercial vehicles from parking in the Avery Corner Car Park but this is not in place although WBC has advised that it is looking at what can be done to restrict all day parking in the Car Park.

The Avery Corner Car Park continues to be heavily used, with staff from Nine Mile Ride Primary School and the Day Nursery / Pre School taking up a number of spaces. Several spaces have been out of use since September due to their use in connection with works at Nine Mile Ride School. This work was due to be completed in October but completion has been delayed, it is hoped that the work will be complete and the bays released for parking at the end of January.

Junction of the B3348 and B3016 – former ‘War Memorial junction’

The War Memorial Working Group is leading on this project, reporting to the Finance & General Management Committee and Main Council.

341/2023 INCIDENT REPORTS

- Jubilee Road / The Ridges – car hit the kerbs on the traffic island in November.
- Park Lane – tanker lorry in a ditch on 3 January.
- Finchampstead Road – car hit a telegraph pole and flattened footway barriers near the roundabout at the junction with Sandhurst Road.

341/2023 FORUM

Cllr Weeks raised the issue of significant flooding on Lower Sandhurst Road at its junction with Cricket Hill and to the east of this. The Clerk will follow this up with WBC.


342/2023 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is 31 May 2023.

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

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS – Roads & Road Safety 12 January 2023

MINUTE REFERENCE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
335/2023	New bus shelters on Nine Mile Ride – continue to follow up lighting issue	Clerk
335/2023	Continue to monitor progress with planned installation of new and replacement bus shelters nr Ratepayers Hall, including provision of a green roof	Clerk
337/2023	Traffic monitoring units - if not operational by 31 January 2023 return to manufacturer for a refund.	SPB/Clerk
337/2023	Subject to above, investigate alternative monitoring units and potential partnership working / sharing of units with another organisation.	SPB/Clerk
337/2023	Continue to ask WBC to put VAS on Lower Wokingham Road (7/10/22, Jan 23)	Clerk
337/2023	Roadside speed watch sessions Document procedures for session planning, implementation and follow up Review Risk assessment	SPB/Clerk SPB/RC/ Clerk
337/2023	Volunteer weatherproof clothing – seek update on options and circulate. Check on use of Thames Valley police logo	Clerk Clerk

		
338/2023	Maintain contact with Barkham PC re Biggs Lane crossing by Hazebrouck	Clerk
338/339/2023	Check the powers local councils have to undertake works on the highway such as narrowing roads, installing crossings or dropped kerbs.	Clerk/RC
339/2023	Dirty/missing/broken/obscured signs – continue to report issues and encourage WBC to address these.	All
339/2023	Look into use of CIL for road repair / maintenance works	Clerk
340/2023	California Crossroads improvements – maintain contact with WBC over proposed implementation date	Clerk
340/2023	Potential parking at the Co-op – consider rights of access. Arrange meeting with Co-op.	SPB
	Follow up with WBC/ monitor progress TRO / Parking Order at California Crossroads Gateway – NMR nr junction with Sandhurst Road / Lower Wokingham Road Gateway / community speed watch signage on NMRE KD/AW 7/10/22 Lower Wokingham Road crossing Finchampstead Road / Church Lane crossing Lower Sandhurst Road / Dell Road reinstatement Lower Sandhurst Road / Cricket Hill flooding Commonfield Lane works White Horse Lane works Road condition at Barkham Ride / Windsor Ride and California Crossroads. Refs 2241908 and W2241909. 5/10/22. Request for double yellow lines at Arnett avenue / Gorse Ride North. 09/2021.	Clerk