

**FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
FINANCE & GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
7.30PM ON 09 JANUARY 2024
At the FBC Centre, Gorse Ride North, Finchampstead**

PRESENT: Councillor R. Woof, Chair. Councillor G. Jukes OBE, Vice Chair.
Councillors E. Allen; S. Bromley; D. Cornish; R. Cundy; A. Grimshaw; S. McDonald; & S. Weeks.

K. Lang, Deputy Clerk.

292/2024 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors G. Evans; G. Veitch.

293/2024 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.

Cllr Weeks: Finchampstead Park Management Committee; MS Therapy Centre.

295/2024 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2023 were agreed as a true record and were signed by Cllr Woof.

296/2024 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

205/2023 Transfer of funds

This has been delayed.

257/2023 Grant Applications

Me2Club have submitted a further application.

258/2023 St James' Church

The application is on tonight's agenda.

California Gardeners Club

The application is on tonight's agenda.

Range Road

No further information has been received from WBC.

CIL Report

Not yet complete.

Climate Change Wokingham

Have been informed about the Solar panel installation at the Ratepayers Hall.

259/2023 Cyber essentials security audit

Terms of reference have been written for the working group and will be shared.

Email Addresses

The website has been updated to change the way email addresses are displayed.

Arborfield Green Sports & Wellbeing pavilion

Martin Prodger & Chris Shelton presented their ideas to the Main Council at the meeting in November.

260/2023 Allotment Repairs/Maintenance

The application is on tonight's agenda.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No members of the public were present.

297/2024 FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE COUNCIL

Unity Trust Bank current account

The balance on 10 December 2023 was £630,343.

A transfer of c. £500,000 to the CCLA deposit fund to be arranged.

CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund

The balance on 30 September 2023 was £1,832,866.65

CCLA Property Fund

£25,000 was invested in the Fund in August 2017. The investment remains stable.

Income and Expenditure to date

Report circulated showing the current position.

298/2024 Budget for 2024/25

The draft budget for 2024/25 was circulated showing a total expenditure of £222,236.

The committee agreed to increase the precept by 3%.

It was noted that the Council has an appropriate level of reserves and will continue to use Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds for expenditure on capital and infrastructure projects.

The draft budget will be presented at the next Main Council meeting on the 25th of January 2024.

Precept demand to be submitted to WBC by 9th February 2024.

299/2024 GRANT AWARDS FOR 2023/24

Grant applications were considered, and the following awards agreed, subject to approval from the Council at its meeting on 30 November 2023.

Organisation	Project	Grant requested	Committee recommendation
Me2Club	Me2 Club's objective is to address the isolation and exclusion of children and young people (aged 5 to 19 years) with wide ranging additional needs and disabilities by enabling them to benefit from a weekly mainstream leisure activity of their choosing.	£750	The committee recommended awarding the full amount.
The Wokingham Volunteer Centre	To support the community transport scheme, Green 'n' tidy gardening and the volunteer brokerage service	£1,500	The committee recommended an award of the full amount.
Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre	To help with core running costs	£1,000	The committee recommended an award of the full amount.

300/2024 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) FUNDS

The current balance is £1,731,106

Expenditure to date

- War Memorial relocation project (final payment) £7645

- Waverley Way play area £14,000
- Gorse Ride School £42,500
- Finchampstead Primary £10,000
- War memorial Junction improvements £35,000
- Allotment water troughs £1,150
- Ratepayers Hall Solar Panels £17,337

Current approved commitments include:

- California Country park improvements (provisional allocation)
- California Crossroads improvements
- War Memorial junction improvements (provisional allocation)

The following applications were considered for CIL funding:

St James Church £12,000

Refurbishment of kitchen and disabled toilet. The total project cost is £30,428.94. The committee recommended awarding the full amount requested.

California Gardeners Club £798

The purchase of a laptop and projector for the annual shows and club administration. The committee recommended approval of up to £600 for the purchase of a projector to keep at the Ratepayers Hall. The committee did not recommend the purchase of a laptop as it was felt that a member of the club must have a laptop that could be used.

Allotment Enhancements £21,000

The committee recommended approving the full amount and thanked Cllr Veitch for organising the joint application with WBC.

301/2024 COUNCIL MANAGEMENT MATTERS AND WORKING GROUP ACTIVITIES

To consider increasing the website support by 1 hour a month

The committee recommended this and asked the Deputy Clerk to confirm the cost. The committee would like a report every 3 months showing website and Facebook statistics.

To consider the purchase of Canva Software

The committee recommend in principle but requested additional information on licensing.

302/2024 FORUM

Cllr Woof is documenting how payments will be approved when there is no Main Council meeting. Once approved, this will be added to the financial regulations.

Cllr McDonald asked if a security light has been installed at Memorial Hall where there was an accident.

Cllr Weeks confirmed that lights and road markings are now in place.

Cllr Weeks confirmed that the job specification for the Clerk role has been approved and advertising will begin this week.

Cllr Bromley mentioned the loss of emails and website over the weekend which was caused by issues with the domain renewal.

Cllr Allen is keen to move forward with a CIL strategy. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

303/2024 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 13 March 2024.

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

FINANCE & GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 22 NOVEMBER 2023**SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

MINUTE REFERENCE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)
297/2024	Financial Position – A transfer from the Unity Trust account to the CCLA deposit fund of around £500,000 to be arranged.	RW/Deputy Clerk
298/2024	Draft budget to be circulated for approval at Main Council	Deputy Clerk
301/2024	Deputy Clerk to confirm the additional cost for an extra hour of website support per month.	Deputy Clerk
301/2024	Deputy Clerk to send a report showing website and Facebook statistics every 3 months.	Deputy Clerk
301/2024	Deputy Clerk to investigate the licence options for Canva.	Deputy Clerk
302/2024	Cllr Woof to document how payments will be approved when there is no Main Council meeting.	RW
302/2024	Further discussions to be had on a CIL strategy.	RW