

## FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.30 PM ON 28 March 2024

At the Memorial Hall, The Village, Finchampstead, RG40 4JU

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**PRESENT:** Councillor S. Weeks; Chair  
Councillors E. Allen; S. Bowers; S. Bromley; G. Evans; P. Grainger; A. Grimshaw; S. Gurney; G. Jukes OBE; S. McDonald; R. Marshallsay; G. Veitch & R. Woof

#### **406/2024 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllrs B. Eytel; D. Cornish; R. Cundy; C. Mortimer

#### **407/2024 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No non-pecuniary declarations of interest were received.

#### **408/2024 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 28 February 2024 were agreed as a true and correct record with one amendment.

#### **409/2024 CHAIRS REPORT**

Cllr Weeks reported on current matters.

- There will be elections in Finchampstead.
- The new Clerk and RFO, Amanda Everett will start on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April.
- The next Cemex meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday.
- Cllrs Weeks, McDonald and Woof attended the opening ceremony of the new play equipment funded by the Council at Gorse Ride School. They were invited to the School assembly and listened to the children sing the Gorse Ride song.
- The memorial tree for the late Clerk, Katy Dagnall is in place at the allotments. Cllrs Weeks, Woof and Veitch attended a dedication ceremony with Katy's husband and sister on Monday the 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Polling cards for the election went out today.

#### **410/2024 PROJECT AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATES**

##### **Gorse Ride regeneration**

Cllr Bowers reported on the current position.

- The project remains on track.
- An update meeting took place on 28<sup>th</sup> of March with Neil Jones and Joanna Flaxman of WBC.
- Numbers 1-16 will be handed over in June.
- The third floor on some of the apartment blocks will be added next week.

##### **Arborfield Strategic Development Location (Arborfield Green and Finchwood Park)**

Cllr Evans recently met with Cala homes and reported on the current position.

- The planning application for the sports pavilion has not yet been submitted.
- A school site was allocated on the original plans, WBC said that there is no need for it currently, but this will be kept under review by WBC Educational Services.
- Phase 2 is progressing well.

The Arborfield Green Community Centre working group met on site on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March. Crest Nicolson showed attendees around the site and shared the most recent plans. Cllr Steven Conway and representatives from WBC were in attendance as well as the Deputy Clerk.

### **California Crossroads**

Cllr Bromley reported on the current position.

- We will be in phase 1 until 30/04/2024. Access to Red Oak Store and chip shop just changed to access from NMR and not Finchampstead Road.
- There are regular newsletters and leaflet drops describing each phase in more detail.
- There are regular onsite/teams updates with WBC which several FPC councillors attend.
- Cllr Grainger raised concerns about the confusing signage.

### **411/2024 FINANCE & GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE RECOMENDATIONS**

The following items were agreed by the Council:

#### **Grants**

Sebastians Action Trust £500

Life Education Wessex and Thames Valley (LEW & TV) £620

### **412/2024 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **FINANCE & GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

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

The committee met on the 13/03. The minutes of the meeting have not yet been circulated.

#### **Financial position**

- Unity Trust Bank £587,327.81
- CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund Account £1,849,304.74
- CCLA Property Fund £25,000
- The above figures include £2,195,569 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts from 2023/24.

The schedule of payments totalling £18,943 was circulated to all Councillors and payments were unanimously approved. Cllrs Weeks and Jukes agreed to authorise the electronic payments.

The next committee meeting is on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May.

### **AMENITIES COMMITTEE**

Cllr McDonald reported on current matters.

- The committee last met on 7<sup>th</sup> Feb. Minutes were circulated and reported to Main Council on 28<sup>th</sup> Feb.

#### **DDay 80 6<sup>th</sup> June**

No further update

#### **Jones Trophy**

Following confirmation that the Finchampstead Society had formally closed it was decided to invite nominations for the award through our Newsletter and Website. The closing date is the 26<sup>th</sup> April and the award will be presented in May 2024.

#### **Allotments**

The WBC/FPC joint maintenance project is running 2 weeks behind schedule due to bad weather.

As reported earlier, the memorial tree for the late Clerk, Katy Dagnall is in place and a dedication ceremony took place earlier this week.

#### **Litter Pick 2024**

Two events were held on Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup> of March. Both were successful and well-attended.

#### **California Park Lakeside Improvement Project**

The WBC lead Project Manager has returned to work after a lengthy absence.

A project team meeting attended by Cllrs McDonald, Veitch, Bowers and the Deputy Clerk took place on 13<sup>th</sup> March.

Background work on an ecology report regarding the relocation of a rare species called Penny Royal and a Risk assessment by ROSPA on access for disabled and visually impaired and a community engagement survey will be ongoing. Work will start on site in the autumn 2024.

### **Hanging Baskets at California Crossroads**

Summer displays have been cancelled due to the redevelopment. Winter ones will be ordered in September. There will be 16 lamp columns and we are investigating the idea of having Christmas lights as the new Columns can support lighting.

### **FBC Play Area/ Lottery Bid**

Everything on hold until FBC share their plans for the redevelopment of the car park with WBC and FPC.

### **Community Fun Day**

The FBC are holding a fun day on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June. The committee to decide if the Council will have a stand at the event.

**Date of Next Meeting 12<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

## **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Cllr Marshallsay reported on current matters.

- The Planning Committee met on 20 March. Minutes will be circulated in due course.
- 15 applications were considered, of which 2 were objected to. Notable applications included:
  - Revised plans for Land to the rear of 240 Nine Mile Ride for up to 32 dwellings. The Committee re-submitted their original objections relating to inadequate parking, access and safety issues for pedestrians, together with some additional concerns about potential noise pollution from the air source heat pumps, and inappropriate fencing of the site. The Committee also asked that the tree protection area is being addressed appropriately and monitored.
  - Application for change of use from Officers Mess to a 49-bed hotel at West Court – The Committee had no objections.
- 6 WBC decisions were noted and all but 1 were in line with our comments. Decisions included approval for Sainsburys at Arborfield Green, and the refurbishments at Finchampstead's Sport Club in the Village. Additionally, 33 Barkham Ride was approved by WBC's Planning Committee, for the erection of 56 residential dwellings, despite much opposition and the efforts of Roger Marshallsay who spoke on behalf of FPC to re-iterate our concerns. We await official decision notice from WBC.
- Appeals:
  - We received notification of an appeal for the 60-bed care home at Oak Dale, Lower Wokingham Road. This was refused by WBC in July 2023 and FPC objected to it.
  - The appeal at 60 Kiln Ride for a single storey front extension and conversion of an existing garage, was dismissed. It was refused by WBC in May 2023 and FPC objected to it.

## **RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE**

Cllr Jukes reported on current matters.

- The committee met on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March.
- Minutes will be circulated once they have been written.
- The project list was discussed and updated.
- Footpath 33 and Rights of way at the Cemex site were discussed in detail.

- The committee voted against supporting the resurfacing of Range Road at this time. This will be discussed and voted on at the next Main Council meeting.
- A request for CIL funding from a resident has been received to resolve issues at the Vermont woods bridleway/public path. 3 issues were reported:
  1. Tree roots causing a potential trip hazard. The committee agreed that the responsibility for the maintenance of this falls with WBC and the resident to resolve.
  2. The path needs improvement, particularly outside 67 and 69 Vermont Woods which is muddy and slippery with the grass verge being churned up due to a lack of maintenance of the original path. This path is used to access California Country Park and is regularly used by walkers, joggers/runners, dog owners, cyclists and horse riders. Although this is not an official right of way, the Committee have agreed to partner with WBC to make some general maintenance improvements to the footpath itself. Cllr Weeks to follow this up with WBC.
  3. There is also significant overhang of several metres of tree outside 22 and 24 Vermont Woods which blocks sunlight, and the wooden fencing boundary which forms the border between Vermont Woods pathway and the Council woodland for California Country Park is rotting and broken in some sections and requires maintenance. The committee confirmed that it is the responsibility of Countryside Services to maintain these areas.

## **ROADS & ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Cllr Bromley reported on current matters.

- There has been no Roads meeting since the last main council.
- The only expenditure from the Committee budget is about £200 for the streetlight energy supply during the last quarter.

### **Community Speed Watch**

- Session 15/3 in Finchampstead Road nr Pine Drive - 21 of 332 vehicles reported fastest doing 45mph.
- Session 25/3 in NMR East nr 312 - 12 of 131 vehicles reported fastest doing 50mph.
- There have been 2 new CSW volunteers, 1 is now qualified.

### **War Memorial junction**

- The results of the Road Safety Audit (RSA) Stage 1 based on the concept design has highlighted some necessary changes. After investigating the utility plans and Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) further, WBC have requested to have another trial pit to locate the exact position and depth of an electrical cable, which is buried underneath the existing traffic island.
- This has resulted in the design process being delayed for a few weeks, until WBC receive the information required to progress. The design should be completed by the 26th of April.
- Other projects – There has been little progress due to staff shortages at FPC.
  - Bus stops on NMR with no power or seats
  - Extend double yellow lines on Arnett Avenue to allow turning space at the end of the road.
  - Concealed drive ahead notice for Court Cottage in Jubilee Road.
  - Dangerous turning right from the old Park Lane onto Park Lane opposite Hogwood Industrial Estate.
  - VAS at bottom of Park Lane should say stop and not give way.

### **413/2024 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES BALC**

An update to be circulated by email following this meeting.

**Finchampstead Park Management Committee**

The meeting was postponed as they have no secretary.

**Councillor Forum**

Cllr McDonald asked for an update on the yellow lines and lights outside the Memorial Hall.

Cllr Weeks said that this will be raised at the next Finchampstead Park Management Committee meeting.

**414/2024 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 24 April 2024.

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

### March Payments List

<b>UNITY TRUST BANK ACCOUNT 10/03/24</b>			£587,327.81
<b>CCLA DEPOSIT ACCOUNT 29/02/24</b>			£1,849,304.74
<b>CCLA PROPERTY FUND 31/08/23</b>			£25,000.00
INCLUDING CIL RECEIPTS TOTAL £2,177,093.51			
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>			<b>£ 2,461,632.55</b>
<b>Outstanding payments not yet cleared</b>			
<b>Total payments outstanding</b>			<b>0.00</b>
<b>Payments already approved and paid</b>			
PEAC SOLUTIONS - PRINTER	100.74	20.15	120.89
WELLINGTON SIGNS - WAVERLEY WAY	85	17	102
GRAHAM JUKES - FOI REQUEST	85.74	0	85.74
GORDON VEITCH	286.33	57.27	343.6
JACK PEACHEY	67.5	0	67.5
KATE LANG	38.1	0	38.1
<b>STAFF COSTS</b>			
C.L.CORDELL	1501.56	0	1501.56
K.E. LANG	1997.62	0	1997.62
J.D. ALEXANDER - FOOTPATH WARDEN	244.5	0	244.5
J.D.P. AGUIRRE - LITTER WARDEN	252.75	0	252.75
M.BIBBY - LITTER WARDEN	0	0	0
HMRC	1327.59	0	1327.59
BERKSHIRE PENSION FUND	1484.68	0	1484.68
<b>Total staff costs</b>	<b>6808.7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6808.7</b>
<b>OTHER COSTS</b>			
ASAP COMPUTER SERVICES	278.9	55.78	334.68
WEB MARKETING MATTERS	194	38.8	232.8
MICROSHADE	119.37	23.87	143.24
GORDON VEITCH	12.5	2.5	15
BT	73.6	14.72	88.32
FBC - YOUTH WORK	3000	0	3000
FBC - TOP UP SERVICE CHARGE	104.08	0	104.08
FBC - CAFÉ CHARGES	12.26	2.44	14.7
SSE - STREET LAMPS	100.84	5.04	105.88
FINCHAMPSTEAD MAGAZINE	10	0	10
<b>ALLOTMENT COSTS</b>			
CASTLE WATER	156.9	0	156.9

<b>Grants and contributions - subject to final approval by Council where required</b>			
SEBASTIANS ACTION TRUST	500	0	500
LIFE EDUCATION WESSEX & THAMES VALLEY	620	0	620
<b>TOTAL MARCH PAYMENTS</b>			<b>£ 18,943.00</b>
<b>TOTAL REMAINING</b>			<b>£ 2,442,689.55</b>
<b>MARCH PETTY CASH / CARD PAYMENTS</b>			
CARD PAYMENT DEPUTY CLERK			
CARD PAYMENT ROGER WOOF			
CARD PAYMENTS (FOOTPATH WARDEN)	13.34	2.67	16.01
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13.34</b>	<b>2.67</b>	<b>16.01</b>