

FINCHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT THE FBC CENTRE, GORSE RIDE NORTH, FINCHAMPSTEAD RG40 4ES

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs Driver; Chair; Cllr Bowers, Vice Chair.
Cllrs Mrs Eytle, Mrs Jennings - Frisby, May, Veitch, Mrs Yorke.

Mrs Dagnall, Clerk.

334/2017 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Pearce.

335/2017 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were received.

336/2017 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2017 were signed as a true record.

337/2017 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

187/2017 CEMEX LTD RESTORATION – FLEET HILL AND MANOR FARMS

Work on the sites is progressing and is expected to be completed on Fleet Hill Farm by the end of 2017, with Manor Farm being fully restored by the end of 2018. It has not been confirmed when the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds will take over the sites.

190/2017 ASSETS – WAR MEMORIAL

A new contractor took over the maintenance of the Memorial surrounds in June 2017. The grass area has suffered from the lack of maintenance earlier in the year.

192/2017 PROJECTS – CALIFORNIA COUNTRY PARK

Work is due to start on the access and car park improvements in September or October 2017 and will be completed by Easter 2018. Work to the café area and signage improvements will also be carried out.

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) has confirmed it will be in contact when plans for the café area progress.

WBC met the 1st Finchampstead Scout Group on 26 June 2017 and put a proposal to the Group about its future use of the Hut. WBC propose taking over the Hut, improving it and adapting it to allow use by various groups or for various activities, while allowing the Scout Group to continue using it on agreed terms. The Scout Group has responded to WBC with various points and concerns about the proposal.

It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the Scout Group to ask if the Parish Council can offer any further support.

The Clerk has recently contacted all four Wokingham Borough Councillors for Finchampstead to ensure that they are aware of the issues, and has had a reply from Cllr Stanton. It was agreed that the Clerk should now contact the new Leader of the Council, the Executive Member for the Environment and the interim Chief Executive.

WBC is seeking quotes for the repair and / or replacement of the board walk within the Park.

194/2017 CORRESPONDENCE – CENTENARY OF THE END OF WORLD WAR I
St James' Church has agreed to light its beacon at 7pm on 11 November 2018 as one of the chain of 1000 beacons which will be lit across the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories in commemoration and remembrance of the end of World War 1 and the many killed or wounded.

The Clerk will check that the Beacon has been registered.

Cllr Mrs Driver confirmed that a Church Service will be held at 6pm prior to lighting of the Beacon, and that the Church Social Committee will discuss additional activities.

Cllr Mrs Eytle agreed to check if the Arborfield Military Singers are available for the event.

Public Participation Session

No members of the public were present.

338/2017 I&E REPORT

A report showing the current position was circulated. No issues were raised.

339/2017 LITTER AND WASTE ISSUES

A report was circulated summarising the work of the Litter Warden to date.

	HOURS	MILES	SACKS COLLECTED	SIGNS CLEANED
2015/16 TOTALS	525	2297	803	579
2016/17 TOTALS	600	2527	1030	576
2017/18				
APRIL	51	198	74	81
MAY	52	225	84	30
JUNE	50	228	82	60
JULY	55	224	50	52
AUGUST	54	204	107	94
TOTAL	262	1079	397	317

The disposal of household waste at the local recycling centres was discussed. There are now charges for the disposal of what is classed to be non-household waste including soil and rubble, plasterboard, asbestos and gas bottles. Detailed information is available on the WBC web site, the Clerk will circulate the link and policy document.

It was noted that a WBC Officer will be attending the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Action Group meeting in November to discuss fly tipping.

The Clerk advised that a further volunteer has joined 'Adopt a Street', there are now around 20 volunteers involved.

Cllr Mrs Driver advised that the St Mary & St John's Community Committee is arranging a litter pick on the Gorse Ride Estate on 23 September 2017.

340/2017 CALIFORNIA CROSSROADS

It was agreed that a further tidy up session will be held on 5 November 2017. The Clerk will work with Cllr Pearce over plans for the event.

The condition of the crossroads area has deteriorated with litter and overgrown areas. The potential for arranging regular litter picks by the Litter Warden, and appointing a contractor to deal with other work on a regular basis was discussed. The Clerk has asked a contractor to provide quotes for a one off tidy up followed by visits every two to three months.

The permission of the businesses will be required as much of the work would be on private land. The Clerk has contacted all of the businesses for their comments and support and has not received any responses. Cllr Mrs Driver has visited several of the businesses and so far no interest has been expressed.

It was agreed that the Christmas decorations proposal should be shelved in view of the poor condition of the crossroads area.

341/2017 BARKHAM RIDE ROUNDABOUT

WBC cleared the spent seasonal bedding from the beds in the roundabout and has repaired the brickwork. The roundabout is now covered in weeds again.

A quotation to replant the beds with suitable plants, together with regular maintenance, has been obtained. Further to discussions between Cllr Mrs Driver and the Clerk a quotation has been requested to weed kill the site, and to fill the beds with ornamental stone. It was agreed that subject to cost and approval from WBC this was the preferred option.

It was agreed that subject to permission from WBC, hanging baskets should be installed on three of the four lamp columns around the roundabout. The Clerk will progress this with a view to installing baskets as soon as the lamp columns have been replaced.

342/2017 ASSETS

- **Seats**

The metal seats at Simon's Wood and on FP9 have been refurbished.

The overhanging branches at the Jubilee seat near St James' Church have been pruned back to protect the seat.

- **Noticeboards**

The boards at Kiln Ride Barbers, Kiln Ride / Finchampstead Road and the Tally Ho have been removed and are being reused on the Allotment site.

The boards at St James' Church, the Memorial Hall and Barkham Ride have been refurbished.

- **Defibrillators**

The unit at California Crossroads has been replaced and has been operational since 26 August 2017. The insurance claim for the damaged unit and cabinet was successful.

A grant application has been submitted for two further defibrillators and cabinets. It was agreed that if the application is successful the units should be located at the California Ratepayers Hall and at the St James' Church Centre.

It was agreed that a further awareness/ training session should be arranged, potentially in November 2017.

343/2017 TELEPHONE BOX

The telephone box is very shabby and in need of work before it can be used for an alternative purpose such as a book swap.

The cost of professional refurbishment is around £6000, including taking the box off site. However, the Handyman has successfully refurbished a box in Arborfield which is now used as a book swap and also has a small noticeboard.

It was agreed that the Clerk should ask the Handyman for a quotation to refurbish the box. It was noted that eventually the aim is to move the box to a more suitable and prominent location, as and when the improvements to the crossroads take place.

An item was included in a previous newsletter asking for suggestions for a use for the box and this was mentioned at the Annual Gathering. The Clerk will ask again using social media.

345/2017 ALLOTMENT SITE

Cllr Veitch and the Clerk reported on the current situation.

- Several plots have been let recently including a number to Yateley residents. Several of the newly created plots in the south east corner of the site have been let.
- The annual rent invoices have been sent out.
- Plot markers have been provided for all the new plots, and new locks for the site.
- There has been a foul water leak between a manhole just inside the allotment gates and the pumping station outside the gate, caused by a blockage. Thames Water dealt with the leak promptly but cannot guarantee it will not recur.
- The Allotment Association is fund raising for additional car parking which is needed to cater for the additional plots. It was agreed that subject to cost and approval from the Council, a contribution should be offered to the project, possibly match funding the sum raised by the Association.

It was also agreed that the car park extension should include an extension of the water supply, and that the Council should manage the project to ensure the work is of a similar standard to the existing infrastructure. The Clerk and Cllr Veitch will discuss how to progress this.

- There has been no further progress with the new 30 year lease for the WBC land. The Clerk will continue to follow this up.
- The Land Agent for Cemex Ltd. has been in contact and advised that an extension of the existing lease and also the lease of additional land will be considered. The Clerk has followed this up and is waiting to hear the next stage.

The purchase of the land is not an option as the Land Agent has advised the land would have to be put on the open market.

- Cllr Veitch and the Clerk met WBC and representatives from neighbouring Parishes regarding plans for the management of future allotment sites on the Arborfield Development. Comments have been submitted to WBC on its specification for new sites, and WBC has been advised that the Council will consider taking over any new sites created in Finchampstead Parish.

346/2017 WARREN WOOD COUNTRY PARK & BELL BARROW

Cllrs Mrs Driver and May have been in contact with Reading University which has been researching barrows, and with the Berkshire Archaeology Officer.

Reading University has advised that further archaeological research could be undertaken but it would not expect this to provide any better evidence about the date of the barrow, and it would be very costly. There is also concern that the investigations carried out in the 1960's may result in any new investigations having modern contamination.

The Clerk will circulate information on the Barrow which was designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument in 1977 by English Heritage due to it appearing to be of national significance. It is believed to be the largest example of a bell barrow in Berkshire, dating back to 2000 to 1300 BC.

The Clerk will also try to secure the report on excavations carried out by Bulmershe College in the 1960's.

It was agreed that the presence of the barrow and the history of the barrow and the surrounding area should be promoted locally, potentially through the Council's website, a newsletter and social media.

347/2017 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items to report

348/2017 FORUM

No matters were raised.

349/2017 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next Committee meeting will be confirmed in due course.

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