

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 25th July 2012 at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall Council Chamber, Fordingbridge

Present:

Cllr Adams – Chairman
Cllrs Anstey, Connolly, Lewendon, Hale & Paton

In attendance:

Ms K Mason, Town Clerk
Deborah Gordon, Finance Officer

1. To accept apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Fulford, Perkins, Price, Shering, (A) Wilson & (G) Wilson

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

There were declarations of interest received from:
Cllrs Adams

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 27th June 2012 and report on any matters arising

It was proposed by Cllr Adams and seconded by Cllr Connolly that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th June 2012 be signed as a true record. All in favour, Carried.

4. To receive any matters raised by Members of the Public

No members of the public present.

5. To receive details of Monies Collected and Payment of Accounts

It was proposed by Cllr Adams and seconded by Cllr Connolly that the monies collected and accounts be approved and paid. All in favour, Carried.

It was AGREED to charge Ringwood Angling Club £446.25 for fishing rights at the Recreation Ground.

It was AGREED to charge the Rugby Club £100 for hire of the Recreation Ground for the Fun Day held on 23rd June 2012.

6. To receive any Finance & Policy Matters referred from sub-committees

General Purposes Committee

Change to Terms of Reference - A recommendation was made to include the care and control of the Memorial Bungalow on the Committee Terms of Reference. It was proposed by Cllr Adams and seconded by Cllr Lewendon that this be accepted. All in favour, Carried.

Memorial Bungalow maintenance budget - Two quotes for the roof and chimney repairs have been received and are in the region of £1400. The current maintenance budget is £500. The General Purposes Committee request that the budget provision be increased to allow the necessary repairs to be carried out.

It was proposed by Cllr Adams and seconded by Cllr Connolly that the budget be increased by money from the Reserves to enable the work to be carried out. All in favour, Carried.

7. To consider the following grant applications

Fordingbridge & District Day Care Centre for the Frail & Housebound – It was AGREED to award a grant of £400.

Forest Live – It was AGREED to award a grant of £350.

8. To consider the terms of office for Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Cllr Adams asked members to consider adopting a policy of limiting the timescale a member could be Mayor or Deputy Mayor to 2 years or possibly 3 years if there were no members willing to take on the role. He advised members that many years ago an informal arrangement had existed at Fordingbridge Town Council and he believed this to be correct. As a principal that it was better to rotate the position of Mayor and Deputy Mayor. He had been advised that Ringwood Town Council have adopted a policy that the Mayor only remains in office for 2 years. A similar policy could be adopted by this Council with a 'let out clause' if no member was willing to take on the role at the end of the tenure.

Cllr Adams also suggested that the duties of the Mayor be concentrated on supporting organisations and events in Fordingbridge but attending out of town functions and events should be left to the discretion of the Councillor holding office at the time.

Cllr Lewendon felt it was important to encourage members to take their turn in holding office.

Cllr Paton suggested that 2 years might not be enough time to fit into the role and follow through projects; 3 years might be a more sensible timescale.

Cllr Connolly pointed out that Ringwood Town Council was a political council with members being either independent or members of a political party. This gave a very different approach to how the council operated. He acknowledged that he was a very active Mayor and did his best to promote the Council, it's work and Fordingbridge generally which entailed many events and visits during the year. This was a personal approach to being Mayor and another Mayor might well approach the role differently.

Cllr Connolly considered that if such a policy were adopted it should also apply to the length of tenure of Committee Chairman. He advised that following his office as Mayor he would like to stand as the Chair of Finance & Policy Committee.

Cllr Adams suggested that as six members were absent from the meeting it should be discussed again at a future meeting when more members were present.

9. To consider the Terms of Reference for the Transport & Disability Access Committee

Members considered the Terms and Reference of the proposed Transport and Disability Access Committee.

It was AGREED to constitute the Committee as 5 Council members and 5 non council members was voting members of the Committee. All other members of the public who attended the meeting would not be able to vote. Only a maximum of two members of any one organisation or society would be able to be a Committee member at the same time.

With the above changes it was AGREED to accept the Terms of Reference.

The first meeting of the Committee will be on Wednesday 15th August at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall.

10. note any items of Correspondence

Draft Audit Bill- this sets out the proposals made in the Government's response to the Future of Local Audit consultation which was published in January 2012, together with proposals for the audit of smaller local public bodies with an annual turnover of less than £6.5 million.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/draftlocalauditbill>

The government consultation ends on 31st August 2012.

11. To receive a report from the Clerk or any other relevant business

Office computers – the Clerk reported that the office needed to update the computer software to MS Office 2010 which will cost approx. £180.

12. To note the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 29th August 2012

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.