

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held at 8.50pm on Wednesday 16th November 2016 in the Town Hall (Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Committee)

Present:

Cllr Earth – Chairman
Cllrs Bailey, Hale, Adams, Connolly, Wilson & Anstey

In Attendance:

Mrs H Richards, Town Clerk
Mrs M Coatham, Finance Officer

1. To receive any apologies for absence

No apologies received.

2. To receive any declarations of interest

No declarations made

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 21st September 2016 and Extraordinary meeting held on the 2nd November and report on any matters arising

Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Anstey and therefore **RESOLVED:**
that the minutes of the meeting held on the 21st September 2016 be signed as a true
record subject to the following amendment:

*Minute No 8 – The Avon Valley Path (AVP) Bridge repairs at Harbridge
Fordingbridge on the border with Harbridge.*

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Adams and therefore **RESOLVED:**
that the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on the 2nd November 2016 be
signed as a true record.

All in favour

Matters Arising

21/09/16 - Minute No. 6 Upgrade to audio & visual facilities at Town Hall – Cllr
Adams advised that the proposed works would be carried out in the near future.

4. To receive any matters raised by members of the public.

No matters raised.

5. To report on matters relating to the St Marys Closed Churchyard and Stuckton Road Cemetery

The clerk reported that the grounds man had recently reported that the trailer used
for waste soil was in a bad state of repair – consideration had been given to the
provision of an additional skip at the cemetery, however further investigation was
needed to find the best solution.

6. To report on any matters concerning the Town Hall

Advice has been received regarding Business Rates payable for the Information Centre (VIC) and Town Hall. The VIC previously received 100% relief as formerly run by the Tourism Group and the Town Hall received 100% relief as the sole premises of the Council. The rateable values for the 2 premises total in the region of £8,500 although confirmation is awaited of the exact amount that will be due.

7. To report on any matters concerning the Information Office

As minute no 6 above and the Clerk reported that as the Casual Cover Post Holder had recently left, cover over Christmas and during the busy "clock selling period" would be provided by the 2 Information Officers with additional assistance from Town Hall Staff if needed. Clerk to check if New Forest providing additional collections.

8. To report on any matters concerning footpaths

- Avon Valley Footpath Noticeboard – the Clerk reported that the Assistant Clerk was liaising with the Countryside Access Team regarding replacement of the noticeboard located at St Marys Church and the availability of grant funding.

9. To report on any matters concerning Highways

The Clerk reported that a Road Closure notification had been received regarding the temporary closure of Roundhills to allow for utilities connection to new properties at 6 High Street – this closure would allow vehicles to access properties on the western side from the High Street (the wrong way). The Clerk advised that New Forest DC had been requested to ensure that the contractor was aware of the Christmas event on the 2nd December and that signage was in place advising pedestrians of approaching vehicles.

10. To report on matters concerning Allotments

The Clerk advised that all of the rents due for the 2016/17 period had been paid.

11. To discuss budget proposals for 2017/18 financial year and make a recommendation to the Finance & Policy Committee meeting on 30th November 2016

The Finance Officer summarised the budget proposal prepared and drew members attention to the following items:

- Burials Income down in current year
- Trees at St Marys Closed Churchyard included in Annual Survey
- Allotment rents to be raised next April
- Play scheme Breaks Even (last 2 years)
- Further discussion required regarding Information Office and expenditure
- Staff costs – consideration should be given to succession planning for the Grounds staff
- Town Hall Roof Repairs – costs currently unknown but would be met from reserves
- Utilities – new contracts recently entered into to reduce costs
- Information Office Lease & Extra training undertaken in current financial year for casual cover
- Cemetery maintenance – review current service and obtain quotes

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Adams and therefore **RESOLVED**: to recommend to the Finance & Policy Committee at its meeting on the 30th November 2016 to accept the budget proposal prepared by the Finance Officer and attached as Appendix A.

All in favour.

12. To note any items of correspondence

The Clerk reported that a copy of correspondence from Sam Jones, Hampshire County Council to Colin Burt had been received providing an update on the closed footpath no. 78b Puddleslosh Lane.

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

The Clerk had nothing further to report.

14. To note the date of the next meeting as 18th January 2017

The meeting closed at 9.30pm