

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the General Council meeting held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 3rd June 2015 in the Town Hall

(Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Committee)

Present:

Cllr Connolly – Chairman

Cllrs Adams, Price Lewendon, Paton, Anstey, Fulford, Perkins, (G) Wilson, (A) Wilson, Earth & Hale

In Attendance:

Mrs H Richards – Town Clerk

Cllr Bellows – New Forest DC

Cllr E Heron – Hampshire CC

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Sevier, New Forest DC.

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

Cllr Adams declared an interest in Agenda Item 8, Payment of Accounts on the Finance & Policy Minutes but remained in the room to speak and vote

3. To confirm the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on Wednesday 13th May 2015 and to report on any matters arising.

Cllr (A) Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Price and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th May 2015 be signed as a true record.

Cllr Perkins entered the meeting.

Matters Arising

Minute No. 9 - Representatives on outside bodies. Cllr Anstey requested that it be noted that Cllrs Perkins and Anstey are representatives on the Emergency Planning Group.

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

No members of the public present.

5. To receive a report from the Town Mayor

The Mayor reported on the following 2 events attended during May:

6th May - Allenbrook Nursing Home Bake Off

23rd May - Table Top Sale in the Town Hall in aid of the Allotments

6. To receive a report from the County Councillor

Cllr Heron did not have any relevant issues to report. However he spoke on the changing local government landscape; not just in relation to budgets but also changes to the way in which local government will decide what to do and how to do it – emphasis on prioritising. The fastest change to be encountered is regarding the economy with investment in economic growth. This will have further reaching effects on infrastructure (road improvements etc.) and large scale housing growth. Challenging times are ahead with change coming to all communities; change that should be embraced with involvement in areas such as Neighbourhood Planning.

Cllrs Connolly and Fulford advised the meeting that the first steps had been taken towards starting this project, with an approach made to New Forest DC and Communities, seeking clarification and guidance.

7. To receive a report from the District Councillors

Cllr Bellows had nothing to report.

8. To receive the following Committee meeting minutes and any recommendations to General Council contained therein.

- General Purposes Committee – 20th May 2015 (Cllr G Wilson)
- Amenities Committee – 20th May 2015 (Cllr Anstey)
- Finance & Policy Committee – 27th May 2015 (Cllr Connolly)

All minutes received – no recommendations to General Council.

9. To report on any Health & Safety issues

Cllr Anstey reported that lifebuoys had again gone missing – Clerk confirm that steps being taken to source supply of new.

10. To receive reports from representatives on Outside Bodies and meetings attended

Cllr (G) Wilson

Twinning Association – Cllr Wilson advised the meeting that the Twinning Association would be holding their annual boules evening at Sandy Balls Park on the evening of 11th June 2015.

Cllr Earth

Avonway - Cllr Earth reported on attendance at the recent Avonway meeting and advised that the refurbishment works were almost completed.

Cllr Hale

Fordingbridge Conservation Volunteers – Cllr Hale reported that following correspondence with the Town Clerk and subsequent confirmation from New Forest DC regarding ownership/responsibility of land at Whitsbury Road, the FCVG would no longer be able to maintain this area. The Group will concentrate on work at Bishops Pond. The Group requested that NFDC be asked to maintain the area near the bunker as a wildlife area.

Cllr Anstey

6-a-side football Tournament – 24th May – Successful event and good use of land on Brownseys Field for Car Parking.

Planning Meeting Puddleslosh Lane 29th May – Cllr Anstey reported on attendance at a meeting called by Cllr Sevier, New Forest DC, at the Town Hall regarding Planning Issues on land at Puddleslosh Lane. Cllr Anstey raised concern that a member of the group attending the meeting had claimed that the Council were spending £200K on improvements at the Recreation Ground.

The meeting concerned the “Fordingbridge Open Space Protection Society” a newly formed group – the existence of this group was unknown to the Council but was thought to be borne from the objectors to the recent development in Puddleslosh & Marl Lane. The

Neighbourhood Plan must be high priority and issues such as Marl Lane demonstrate the need for this.

Cllr Connolly

Burgate School - Cllr Connolly reported on a meeting attended with the Finance Officer at Burgate School. The School would like to be more integrated with the local community and the Chairman confirmed that the school would be invited to be involved in the Neighbourhood Plan. The development proposals for the school which were presented to the Council on 1st April 2015 are at a very early stage, with no approaches yet being made for funding or progression.

The Chairman informed members that the school had invited the Town Council, Members and Office Staff to lunch and a visit to the school on the 7th July 2015, from 12 noon. The Deputy Head, Mrs Fiona Bradfield will be retiring from the school shortly.

11. To report on the Lengthsman Scheme

The Clerk reported on the recent tendering process which had been undertaken and that a new lengthsman had been selected. Meeting to discuss contracts to be held later in the week. The Clerk wished it to be noted that the change in lengthsman did not reflect on the quality of the work by the existing post holder. The project has been a learning curve for all involved but hopefully will move forward now in a more organised manner. Cllr Heron informed Members that the scheme is likely to become more stringent in its approach in following years particularly with underspends on budgets.

12. To consider the Consultation on the Future Affiliation to NALC

The Chairman reported on the benefits of remaining with NALC, particularly in terms of information and advice/support available on legal issues. This is also gained directly from the local branch Hampshire ALC. It was AGREED that no response should be made at this point and the Council would await further developments.

13. To note any items of Correspondence

The Clerk reported on communication received from The Fordingbridge Surgery regarding the Prime Ministers intentions regarding GP services. The communication encouraged patients to join the Patient Participation Group – it was not considered that it was appropriate for the Town Council to respond. Cllr Heron added that changes would only occur with existing resources but services may be provided in a different way.

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

Cllr (G) Wilson reported that further problems were being experienced with the Clock Tower and Town Hall roof leaking and also issues have arisen at the Kiosk Toilets. Town Clerk investigating.

Fordingbridge Club – An outline Planning Application has been registered regarding the re-development of the former club into Retail store, Offices and 5 flats – Town Council awaiting consultation.

The Town Clerk reported that following discussion with the Finance Officer regarding various issues with buildings at the present time, it was requested that Members consider the formation of a Buildings/Property Management Committee. Office staff do not have the resource to undertake sole responsibility for the upkeep of the buildings in the Council's ownership. All works need to be considered carefully and an approach made which considers all aspects involved in the buildings not merely each issue as it arises. The Clerk raised concern over the occupation of the Groundsman's Bungalow and that the responsibilities of each party should be considered and formalised as soon as possible.

General Council 03.06.15

The Chairman confirmed that the Committee Structure and associated responsibilities should be reviewed.

15. To note the date of the next General Council meeting as Wednesday 1st July 2015

The meeting closed at 8.42pm