

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 27th September 2017 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall (Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Committee)

Present: Cllr Connolly - Chairman
Cllrs Adams, Anstey, Earth, Fulford, Lewendon, Paton, Price & White

In attendance: Mrs R Edwards, Asst Town Clerk
Mrs M Coatham, Finance Officer (RFO)

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Hale, Perkins and Wilson

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

Cllr Adams declared an interest in Agenda item 5, Monies collected & Payment of Accounts as a supplier to the Council – but remained in the meeting but did not speak or vote on this item.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 30th August 2017 and report any matters arising

Cllr Anstey proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore **RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 30th August 2017 be signed as a true record. All in favour.

Matters Arising – Minute No. 5 Customer has been charged for the memorial bench
- Minute No. 8 –The Council is now part way through stage 2 of the tender process for the Skate Park. The RFO will meet with Cllr Bellows on Friday 29th September 2017.

Cllr Paton entered the meeting.

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

No matters raised.

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

The Finance Officer (RFO) summarised the accounts for September and members noted the following items:

Income – Burial fee income is lower than in previous years. The second half of the precept has been received, as has the second payment of the Service Level Agreement from NFDC for the Visitor Information Centre. The Rugby club has been invoiced for 50% of block booking. The Football club has requested that the grass be cut shorter following the injury of two players. However, there are currently no bookings in the diary which makes pitch maintenance difficult to plan. The groundsman has a lot to do.

Expenditure - The hedge cutting bill and the auditor have now been paid. Staff costs are higher as the Information Centre is now open five day a week. Memorial Bungalow costs are low. There has been an overspend on the Pavilion due to the cost of the boiler repairs. The RFO has changed the Council's energy supplier. The VW Caddy needs maintenance. The weed and feed bill will be paid once the pitches have been treated in October. Following the RoSPA report, new parts need to be ordered for the play equipment. There is more wear and tear on the skate park which needs to be repaired. The Town Hall roof repairs will be a large item of expenditure.

Playscheme - The RFO is waiting to hear about a grant for next year.

6. External Audit Update

The report from the external auditor BDO was received. There was a query over the insurance as two payments went out within the same financial year due to the subsequent year's insurance being paid early and the annual return will be qualified due to the previous year's electors' rights period. The new auditor from next year will be PKF Littlejohn who will be taking over from BDO.

7. To receive any Finance & Policy matters referred from sub-committees

- Amenities Committee – 20th September 2017

The cost of the cleaning of the War Memorial stones, to be undertaken in Spring 2018, will come from the maintenance budget. Ian Newman will pay for the repainting of the inscriptions. Cllr Connolly asked if the memorial gate could be rehung.

***Action:** RFO to get quote for rehanging of War Memorial gate.*

- General Purposes Committee – 20th September 2017

The General Purposes Committee gave authority to spend £345+VAT with Mike Rickman Roofing Ltd for remedial works to the Town Hall Clock Tower to make watertight. The Conservation Officer would need to place the Town Hall on the At Risk register if remedial work was not undertaken.

Cllr Adams proposed and Cllr Anstey seconded and it was therefore **RESOLVED**: that Mike Rickman Roofing Ltd be instructed to undertake the work.

8. To consider Christmas Lights tender

The RFO advised that a tender for the Christmas lights had been received from Sparks Electrical for £14500 to include all maintenance costs. A quote has also been received from STN Solutions for £10700 to cover sections 1 & 2 of the tender, but not the reactive maintenance.

In 2016 the Christmas lights cost the Council a total of £10800, in previous years with greater maintenance costs due to high winds, the lights have cost as much as £12000. The quotes are higher this year due to reactive maintenance being included in the tender.

The RFO reminded the Council that they are not obliged to accept the tender and presented three possible options

1. No Christmas lights in Fordingbridge this year
2. Instruct Sparks Electrical and pay for it using the Council's reserves
3. Negotiate with STN Solutions for a better price.

***Action:** RFO to negotiate a lower price for the Christmas lights with STN Solution.*

9. To consider quotation regarding the supply and fitting of neoprene matting to lampposts (flower baskets)

The Finance Officer advised members that as the lampposts don't belong to the Council then flower baskets cannot be hung unless neoprene matting is fitted. It stops the baskets rubbing against the lampposts and lasts for many years. The cost would be £50 per lamppost with a total cost of £1350.

Cllr Earth proposed and Cllr Anstey seconded and it was therefore **RESOLVED**: that this quotation from Avon Valley Property & Heritage Ltd would be accepted.

10. To consider the grant applications under Section 137.

- None received

11. To note any items of correspondence

The Clerk read a letter of thanks from Avon Valley Concerts for the grant of £250.

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

Cllr Connolly said that volunteers are needed to help marshal at the Remembrance Parade on Sunday 12th November.

Action: *The Clerk to ask for volunteers through the Fordingbridge Town Council Facebook page*

Cllr Lewendon has purchased some 20 *is Plenty* signs at £1.30 each and suggested putting them up on posts and signs as encouragement for drivers to slow down. Members decided this wasn't appropriate to do as a Council due to possible legal implications.

13. To note the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 25th October 2017

The meeting closed at 8.20pm