

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 27th February 2019 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall (Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Committee)

Present: Cllr Adams - Chairman

Cllrs Anstey, Earth, Fulford, Hale, Lewendon, Moulard, Paton, White, & Wilson

In attendance: Mr P Goddard, Town Clerk

Mrs M Coatham, Finance Officer (RFO)

Two members of the public representing the Fordingbridge Events Group

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Perkins

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made:

Cllrs Adams declared a pecuniary interest in item no. 5 Monies Collected and Payment of Accounts as a supplier to the Council and would remain in the room but not speak or vote.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 30th January 201 and report any matters arising

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on the 30th January 2019 be signed as a true record. All in favour.

Matters Arising

- Minute no. 7 – The re-use of the Flower Tower plants at the Recreation Ground.

Action outstanding: The RFO to review with Scentsational Plants

Cllr White joined the meeting

- Minute no. 7 – The RFO provided details to members of an exchange of emails with STN Solutions regarding Christmas light options and costs
- Minute no. 10 – The Sports Club Lease

Action: The Town Clerk is to arrange a meeting with members to agree the Town Council's position regarding the Sports Club lease.

- Minute no. 13 – The RFO advised that Hampshire County Council would not be providing funding for the Playscheme this year and provided initial costings setting out the implications of this.

Action: The RFO is to discuss options and the viability of the scheme with the Playscheme manager. Cllr Fulford is to consider alternative sources of funding with the Playscheme manager.

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

No matters raised.

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

See Appendix A for the Finance Officer's summary of the February 2019 accounts.

The RFO advised that by year end the Council will have spent in the region of £20,000 in excess of budgeted costs as a result of staff recruitment costs and the Town Hall works.

Income highlights: the December quarter VAT reclaim had been received. There was no income attributable to Amenities. The Rugby Club had been issued with its second block booking invoice.

The Football Club was using the Recreation Ground less frequently and consequently income was down.

Expenditure highlights: expenses related to the Town Hall works, insurance, machinery and building maintenance and legal fees.

It was **RESOLVED:** to approve the accounts for February 2019. All in favour.

6. To consider grant applications under Section 137

None received.

7. To receive a report and presentation about Events in Fordingbridge (2019) and to discuss funding implications

Two members of the public presented to members in relation to the Events Group (“the Group”). They explained the background to the Group and how it came about and outlined their ambition to work with the Town Council for the good of the community. They suggested that this could be achieved through Cllr White who is a member of the Group.

They also set out their proposed schedule of events for the year: An arts and literature week from 29th May 2019 to 5th June 2019, which the Group would co-ordinate and market, and would involve local schools, groups and businesses; a Summer Festival on 20th July 2019, similar to last years festival but on a larger scale, and a Christmas event involving Christmas lights and activities, liaising with the Town Council and other stakeholders, with a similar framework to last year’s event. The Group has working party for each event and the Group would like to get the Town Council involved with those working parties.

The members of the public advised that the Group had started a year ago with no sponsorship or funds. The Group was successful in securing sponsorship but some of it was one-off and the weather on the day of the Summer Festival contributed to its success. These cannot be relied upon and the Group needs to be prudent and retain adequate reserves to fund this year’s events.

On behalf of the Group the members of the public proposed that the Group would make an initial contribution to the Town Council now of £500 and a further contribution after the Summer Festival in August or September that contribution being dependent on the outcome of the Summer Festival. The members of the public asked for assurance that the Recreation Ground could be used by the Group at no cost.

Cllr Adams asked whether the Group held adequate reserves now and was advised that the Group had adequate but not luxurious contingency.

Cllr Fulford asked whether the Group had considered what had not gone well at last years Festival. The members of the public advised that the Group had done so.

Cllr Anstey thanked the Group for the Summer festival recognising the amount of effort that was required and the benefit to the town. He suggested that the Town Council should treat the Group the same as it had treated the Rotary club when it arranged Summer Festivals: That the Town Council allowed use of the Recreation Ground for free and contribution was made to the Town Council towards the cost of Christmas lights.

Cllr White expressed the view that not having a Summer Festival would be to the detriment of the town. Cllr Paton agreed with this. She thought the Summer Festival was an excellent thing and that the Town Council could not expect more of a commitment from the Group, albeit there may be implications regarding the Town Council arranging Christmas lights.

Cllr Fulford commented that the Art and Literature Festival with events through the town was an excellent proposal.

Cllr Adams commented that it would be unrealistic to expect more of a commitment from the Group when the outcome of the Summer Festival was uncertain.

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr White and it was **RESOLVED** that the Group could use the Recreation Ground for the Summer Festival free of charge.

The members of the public left the meeting.

Cllrs and the RFO then discussed the costs and viability of the Christmas lights, alternative light options and potential sources of funding including sponsorship.

8. To receive an update from the Clerk regarding the Town Hall project

The Town Clerk advised that two tenders had been received from contractors by the tender cut-off date of 1st February 2019. The architects engaged by the Town Council had undertaken to consider the tenders and report their recommendations within four weeks of the tender cut-off date (1st March 2019). The Town Clerk and the Town Council's building manager had met with the architects to consider the progress of the tender process prior to the report being issued. Following submission of their report the architects had undertaken to present their recommendations to Cllrs at the General Council meeting on 6th March 2019.

The RFO advised Cllrs of the existing fee agreement with the architects for the tender process. Cllrs considered the cost of the work, the need for post contract supervision and funding options.

Cllr Adams suggested that Cllrs should wait for the architects report and recommendations and then a decision to approve the works could be considered at General Council on 6th March 2019. Cllrs agreed that the architects should present their recommendations prior to General Council.

9. To receive a report from the CIL working group and s106 update

The RFO reported she and the Town Clerk attended a meeting at NFDC to consider the use of s106 monies. NFDCs have indicated that the use of s106 funds needs to be agreed by the end of March 2019 and the s106 funds need to be utilised by the end of March 2020.

The head of planning at NFDC suggested that the s106 funds may need to be reallocated to different spaces and that an open space review might be appropriate. The RFO is waiting to hear further from the NFDC in that regard.

Cllr Moulard queried why the s106 funds would be taken back and not utilised. The RFO cited Bishops Pond allocated funding as an example where it was unlikely to prove possible to utilise the funds and that they were likely to be taken back by NFDC. Cllr Hale confirmed that this was likely to be the case as an agreement could not be reached as to how the funds should be used. Cllr Fulford suggested it was important to have identified projects to ensure funds are utilised.

Cllr Paton suggested the Town Council should look at the cost of adult gym equipment. The RFO advised that if it was felt that Whitsbury Road, the area allocated the s106 adult gym equipment funds, was the correct site for that equipment then quotes could be obtained. Cllrs Moulard and White suggested that Parsonage Park would be a more suitable site.

The RFO advised a further meeting had been requested with NFDC to seek clarity on what s106 could be used for to include options in relation to the play area of the Recreation Ground and the Pavilion.

Cllr Fulford suggested that consideration should be given to providing something for older people. Cllr Wilson suggested that the s106 funds allocated to the Memorial Gardens should be used and that a fixed wooden gazebo might be a good option.

Action: Members to consider preferred use of s106 funds and notify the Town Clerk within the next 7 days

10. To receive an update on the Skate Park and to approve quotes for preparation works.

The RFO reported that over the past week the electricity supply had been moved to the workshop and a sub-supply has been run on to the old toilet block.

The Town Council's Building Manager met with Maverick today on site. The work to remove the existing skate park will commence next week and the anticipated duration of the total works is three months. Maverick has issued a JCT contract and the Building Manager has agreed to act as contract administrator under that contract. A launch event for the new skate park is built into the plans. Clarification needs to be obtained as to whether the existing side railing will be retained.

11. To approve the budgets following the Committee Restructure for April 2019 onwards

The RFO reported that she had moved building costs out of individual committee budgets and transferred them to the Finance and Policy Budget. Building running costs had been left in the respective committee budgets. This was approved by Members.

12. To review and approve the Risk Register

The RFO advised that amendments to the Risk register had to be approved at General Council this financial year. The RFO had circulated her comments for the Cllrs consideration.

Cllr Anstey advised that he had undertaken a review of the asset register and will provide this to the RFO.

Action: Cllr Anstey to provide updated asset register to the RFO

Cllrs considered the position regarding access to the Pavilion and the control of keyholders. Cllr Anstey suggested that there may be implications regarding insurance as well as security and that it might be appropriate to change the locks on the Pavilion and the Town Hall and keep a register of keyholders. The RFO advised that it would be possible to change the locks at the Pavilion but it might be more problematic to do so at the Town Hall due to its listed status and the thickness of the door.

Action: Further discussion at Amenities and General Purposes

13. To note any items of correspondence

The Town Clerk noted correspondence received from Hope for Tomorrow thanking the Town Council for its £600 grant and correspondence received from a resident regarding the age and condition of play equipment at the Recreation Ground.

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

The Town Clerk had nothing further to report. The RFO advised that agenda point 20 of the previous minutes held in closed section need to be approved by Cllrs. Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Anstey and therefore **RESOLVED**: that agenda point 20 held in closed session of the minutes of the meeting held on the 30th January 2019 be signed as a true record. All in favour.

15. To note the date of the next meeting as 27th March 2019

The meeting closed at 8:55 pm.