

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 15th September 2021 at 7:30pm (Minutes draft until approved at the following meeting of the Committee)

Present: Cllr Wilson – Chair
Cllrs Adams, Earth, Goldsmith, Hale & Lewendon

In Attendance: Mr P Goddard, Town Clerk
Mrs R Edwards, Asst Town Clerk
Cllrs Anstey, Jackson, Paton and White (Public Gallery)
Cllr Bellows (NFDC)
Ruth Croker, Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society (“RFFS”)
A representative from the Salisbury Journal

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Perkins.

2. To receive any declarations of interest

Cllr Adams declared an interest in agenda item 6. To consider Town Hall hire charges for 2022-2023, as he hires the Town Hall on behalf of The Fordingbridge Entertainment Society. He would remain in the room but not speak or vote.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 21st July 2021 and report on any matters arising.

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Adams and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on the 21st July 2021 be signed as a true record. All in favour.

Matters arising

Agenda item 10 – Councillors considered Turn Up For Fun (“TUFF”) to be a success. Full report in the appendix.

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

No matters raised.

5. To report on any matters concerning St Marys Closed Churchyard and Stuckton Road Cemetery

The Clerk has reported FTC’s concerns to the Head of Planning at NFDC regarding transferring the ownership of the land at Stuckton Road Cemetery. He is awaiting her thoughts on this matter.

6. Matters relating to the Town Hall

The Clerk reported that he has met with the case officer for the Town Hall planning applications 21/10980 and 21/10981. After considering the comments of the conservation officer, the case officer thinks it would be possible to retain more of the original fabric of the building. Jerry Davies Planning Consultancy has been consulted.

SITE: TOWN HALL, 63 HIGH STREET, FORDINGBRIDGE SP6 1AS

DESCRIPTION: Reinstatement rear door; new glazed doors and panels; removal of kitchen & refiguration of w/c space; installation of lift; internal staircase to rear; addition of 2 offices and w/c; new guarding balustrade (Application for Listed Building Consent)

APPLICANT: Fordingbridge Town Council

- To consider Town Hall hire charges for 2022-2023
Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Earth and therefore **RESOLVED**: to leave the Town Hall hire charges unchanged. All in favour.
- To review charges for craft and food fairs
There is currently no charge for the craft and food fairs to hire the Town Hall. These fairs have been organised with the aim of increasing footfall in the town and raising money for charity. Stallholders pay for their tables and are possibly unaware that the hall hire is free. The Clerk reported that the cost to hire the hall for the day is £70.

The RFO recommended allowing the hall to be hired free of charge for a further two craft fairs and two food fairs to encourage the event to restart post-Covid. After that to reconsider the decision not to charge.

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Wilson and therefore **RESOLVED**: to accept the recommendation of the RFO to allow the hall to be hired free of charge for a further two craft fairs and two food fairs, on the condition that the organiser confirms that money from the event is going to charity. All in favour.

7. To report on any matters relating to the Information Office

The Clerk reported that the police were called following an incident at the Information Office at the beginning of September, and the office closed to the public with immediate effect. The Information Office remained closed for the following three days to allow NFDC the time to put in the necessary support for the person concerned. The risk assessment has since been revised to make the Information Office a safer working environment. There will always be two members of staff in the building during 10am-4pm when the office is open to the public.

The Clerk reported that under the SLA (Service Level Agreement) with NFDC, FTC is only required to open the Information Office on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Staff have personal alarms only.

Action: Clerk to investigate an alarm to go on the building

8. To report any matters concerning footpaths

- Jobs for Lengthsman – 8th October 2021

It was reported that the footpaths outside the new estate on Whitsbury Road are in a bad state. Also, that the hedge at Tinkers Cross has not been cut and there are brambles protruding from it. The Clerk reported that the contractor has been asked to cut the hedge.

Action: Clerk to find out who owns the field on the Eastern side of Whitsbury Road at the top

Ruth Croker (RFFS) reported that there would be no improvement to footpath 84 (footpath north of Pennys Lane, past the Junior School) until after building work has commenced on site 18. There are no plans for the developers to upgrade this path.

Cllr Lewendon reported that the open culvert on footpath 62 (on the Avon Valley Path from Burgate Manor Farm crossing the river) has been reported and still needs repairing.

9. To report on any matters concerning Allotments

Cllr Wilson reported that there will be 18 new allotments at the Whitsbury Road site. Two cattle troughs would be purchased for the water supply. £1400 will be given to Fordingbridge Town Council in lieu of electricity. The new car park will have a membrane to stop weeds growing.

Cllr Wilson reported that a company called Milestone Infrastructure has offered support in the form of labour and materials for the Fry's Field allotments community plot on Fordingbridge Town Council's land. Fordingbridge Greener Living will be involved in the setting up of the community plot and members will run this project between them.

10. To note any items of correspondence

A report was received from the Turn Up For Fun ("TUFF") project. Full report in the appendix.

Action: Clerk to write letter of thanks to TUFF project leader

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

Nothing to report.

12. To note the date of the next meeting as 17th November 2021

The meeting finished at 7.56pm.

APPENDIX

TUFF in Fordingbridge Summer 2021.

TUFF ran 15 free, open access sessions at Fordingbridge Junior School during the school summer holidays this year. Sessions ran on Wednesday mornings, and Thursdays in the morning and afternoon. All sessions were completely free of charge, and open to unaccompanied children over 8, and children under that age with an adult.

Sessions were advertised through our facebook page, facebook local listings pages, a flier which went home in bookbags, word of mouth and through the Town Council.

Because there was a paid for sports club running at the school in the first 2 weeks of the holiday, we were careful to keep our activities separate, and used the front playground area. After that, we used the further playground, and ended up using the grass field in front of the Annex for the rest of the sessions. We used the school hall for a couple of sessions, when the weather was not so good, but were mostly outside.

We were still aware of ensuring Covid safety despite restrictions being lifted, including having hand sanitiser and anti-bac spray for equipment when necessary, encouraging a bit of space when playing, and an awareness of numbers, especially if we were inside. A Covid risk assessment was available, in addition to our usual risk assessment. Everyone who attended signed in, with contact details and confirming that they did not have any possible symptoms.

In total, we had 106 recorded visits over the 15 sessions, although this generally doesn't include parents/carers who stayed, of which there were many. We had one session where no one came (the weather was extremely changeable on this day), and the maximum was 18. Although we don't record ages, the youngest child attending was under 1, and the oldest was approx 12. Children mostly came from the Fordingbridge schools, but a small group of home educated children joined us as well.

A range of adults stayed, not just parents, but also grandparents and other relatives as well as a childminder. Many joined in, or supported their children playing, but also took the opportunity to meet friends and socialise themselves, some joined in for themselves, particularly with some of the craft activities!

Some children came who were moving from the Infants to the Junior school, and it was an opportunity for them to explore the new site in a gentle and fun way, and also for those already at the Junior school to tell them all about it. This is one of the many benefits of having activities which are open to all ages etc.

We had a number of children with additional needs who came along, and one mum in particular said how much she valued being able to come to the sessions and enjoyed how much freedom and how unpressurised it was.

We offered a wide range of activities, much in response to the children... these included, circus skills, skipping, basketball, football and cricket skills, paperboats and origami, beads, facepainting, dream catchers and weaving, ceramic painting, clay, printing, big bubbles, kite making and flying, masks, badges and keyrings, parachute and playground games, drawing and painting, ropes and play on the playground equipment at the school.

We had the opportunity to talk with adults about a range of different things, including places to go locally on a budget, the local scrap store and sources of cheap or free materials for play at home.

Adults all seemed really grateful for the sessions, noting that they were free, for all ages, local, that the children could play as they wanted to with plenty of space, but also meet up with friends old and new, it offered adults a change to socialise (and arrange other meet ups), it gave adults a rest for a few hours and that there still isn't much available for children to do during the school holidays. They were all keen to know if we were doing any other sessions later in the year!

Storytelling.

Jason Buck told a range of stories by the woodland area at Fordingbridge Junior School on Sunday 8 August, from 7.30pm. We advertised the session through fliers, the TUFF facebook page and local facebook listing pages and word of mouth. People were asked to book, so we could monitor numbers, but there was no charge for the event.

We had 36 people booked into the session, although a handful didn't turn up, this was probably because the weather was a bit 'iffy'. We took a chance and carried on with the session outside, and it was a real success! Fortunately most people came prepared for a cooler evening, so snuggled up with blankets and flasks.

There were 4 families who came with children, as well as adults, but everyone seemed to really enjoy the evening – the children stayed rapt as well as the adults!!

Jason offered a range of short folk tales, some more 'traditional', while others were very funny, with a full range of voices and actions, with a short break in the middle.

People really liked being outside, which gave the session a completely different atmosphere, alongside the fairylights and the occasional overhead bat!

There seemed to be much enthusiasm for another session like this too.

We are really grateful to Fordingbridge Town Council for funding and supporting us in providing much needed play, fun and social time to families in the town during the summer of 2021. We also appreciate the space given to us by Fordingbridge Junior School, and the flexibility and good humour of the staff who made sure everything went ahead as easily as possible. Also to those parents, carers, adults and children who came to the sessions and made them such fun for us as well!

Mandy Robbins
September 2021