

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 20th November 2019 in the Town Hall.

(Minutes draft until approved at the following meeting of the Committee)

Present: Cllr Wilson – Chairman
Cllrs Adams, Anstey, Earth, Goldsmith, Hale and Jackson

In Attendance: Mr P Goddard, Town Clerk
Mrs M Coatham, Finance Officer (RFO)
Cllrs Lewendon, Mouland & Paton (Public Gallery)

1. To receive any apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

2. To receive any declarations of interest

No declarations were made.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th September 2019 and report on any matters arising.

Cllr Earth proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Jackson and therefore **RESOLVED**: to sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th September 2019 as a true record. All in favour.

Matters Arising

Minute 3 – The broken glass pane in the door of the Information Office has been replaced.

Minute 3 – The ash tree on the bank of the allotments has been inspected by the Lengthsman who has identified that some work needs to be done. The work has not yet been undertaken as the Lengthsman no longer does that nature of work.

Minute 6 – The Clerk advised that K&B builders had said that Smith of Derby would look at the chiming mechanism of the clock for no charge. The cost of an inhibitor if required would be circa £2,000. However, there had been no complaints from residents when the clock had been chiming throughout the night so at present there is no need to incur this cost.

Minute 10 – The Town Council was unsuccessful in its grant application to Hampshire County Council regarding a community plot at the allotments. Cllr Wilson is looking at alternative potential sources of funding.

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

Ian Newman had emailed the Council asking the NFDC to undertake certain tree work at the St Mary's closed churchyard. The NFDC has acknowledged that it is responsible for the trees at St Mary's closed churchyard and the NFDC's corporate tree officer will attend the churchyard to establish the extent of the work required.

6. Matters relating to the Town Hall

• **To consider the licence for the Town Hall**

Cllr Adams thought the Town Council should renew the licence for another year and the Town Hall and its benefits should be better promoted. Cllrs discussed potentially revising the layout of the Town Hall, what work could be done and the role of the architects, Sheerin Bettle.

Cllr Adams proposed, and it was seconded by Cllr Earth, and therefore **RESOLVED** to renew the licence for another year. All in favour.

Action: Clerk to review historic correspondence regarding internal work to the Town Hall and then convene meeting

The Clerk advised that the final bill for the lightning conductor work for £2,684 plus VAT would shortly be received and this was likely to be the final bill for the Town Hall works until the end of the retention period of 12 months.

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

Nothing to report

8. To report any matters concerning footpaths

The RFO advised that the Town Council had some time ago received £357 towards replacing the Avon Valley Path map board near St Mary's Church. Hampshire County Council has now provided a map of suitable quality for a new board and the RFO is in the process of obtaining costings.

The RFO referred to emails regarding historic footpaths from the New Forest National Park Authority ("NPA"). Cllr Lewendon has been receiving these emails and said the emails were not really relevant to the town itself but made reference to the Stuckton Ironworks and the historic riots at that site. The RFO asked Cllr Lewendon to contact the NPA as the NPA has funding to try and promote historic routes, one of which is partly in Fordingbridge.

9. Matters concerning Highways

Cllr Wilson commented on the condition of the pavements and the low level of lighting in Whitsbury Road and Alexandra Road and suggested raising the lights on the poles so that they are not obscured by hedges. Cllr Wilson said this had been raised with Cllr Heron (Hampshire County Council) in the past. Cllr Lewendon reported that drains were being cleared by contractors and the waste was being left on to the pavements and that outside Augustus Park the road floods on to the pavement. Cllr Goldsmith referred to a drain in the High Street that was blocked. Cllr Hale raised the issue of parking in Salisbury Street. Cllr Lewendon informed the meeting that Cllr Heron had advised that parking enforcement was likely to be transferred to Hampshire County Council.

Action: Clerk to ask Cllr Heron about raising the lights

10. Matters concerning Allotments

Cllr Wilson referred to the new allotments at Augustus Park. The Town Council has been liaising with the NFDC and Pennyfarthing Homes and is looking for twenty half plot allotments. Some local residents are keen to set up a man-shed and Cllr Wilson had just attended one of their meetings. The mens-shed association is a national body which aims to set up man-sheds to promote the health and well-being of men. It may be possible to put a man-shed on the proposed allotment site. The residents could supply their own portacabin if a suitable site could be found or, if it was available, they could use the old toilet block at the Recreation Ground, which they would renovate. Cllr Adams said he wouldn't want to see the block demolished and Cllr Paton agreed that the block should only be demolished if there was no use for it. Cllr Earth suggested a suitable site for a portacabin in Frog Lane which Cllr Wilson and Cllr Earth will contact the residents about.

11. To discuss budget proposals for 2020/2021 financial year and make a recommendation to the Finance & Policy Committee Meeting on 27th November 2019

The RFO had produced a draft budget for 2020/2021 having reviewed the forward plan. The RFO talked through the assumptions made in producing the budget. Cllrs discussed the funds allocated to Fred's patch and the allotments. Cllr Jackson highlighted the £150,000 allocated to the Town Hall and raised the issue of drawing down of the current PWLB loan. The RFO advised that the current approved PWLB loan would need to be drawn down this financial year and would fund the Town Hall remedial works undertaken this year. A further loan could be applied for if deemed necessary for additional works on the Town Hall. The RFO advised that the proposed costs set out in the budget did not need to be met from the precept but could be

funded from other sources such as CIL funds, a PWLB loan or from reserves. Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Earth and therefore RESOLVED to recommend the proposed budget requiring £40,647 from the precept without the £153,000 forward planning costs to the Finance & Policy Committee Meeting on 27th November 2019. All in favour.

12. To note any items of correspondence

No items of correspondence received.

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

No matters to report.

14. To note the date of the next meeting as 22nd January 2020

The meeting finished at 8.13pm