

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 25th May 2022 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall (Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Committee)

Present: Cllr Adams – Chair;
Cllrs Anstey, Earth, Goldsmith, Hale, Jackson, Paton & White

In attendance: Mr P Goddard, Town Clerk
Mrs M Coatham, Finance Officer
A representative of the Salisbury Journal

1. To elect a Chair

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr White and therefore **RESOLVED:** to elect Cllr Adams as Chair. All in favour.

2. To elect a Vice Chair

Cllr Earth proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Hale and therefore **RESOLVED:** to elect Cllr Jackson as Vice Chair. All in favour.

3. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Lewendon, Perkins and Wilson

4. To receive any Declarations of Interest

Cllr Adams declared an interest in the payment of accounts.

5. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 27th April 2022 and report any matters arising

Cllr White proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Jackson and therefore **RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 27th April 2022 be signed as a true record. All in favour.

Matters Arising: All items on the agenda this evening

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

None present.

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

Cllr Adams referred to the RFO's report to members.

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Paton and therefore **RESOLVED:** to approve the schedule of payments of account and that the amounts collected are correct. All in favour.

8. To consider grant applications under Section 137/CIL

- **Home-Start Hampshire:** Members discussed the application and it was noted that the request was a large amount primarily towards employment costs and that this did not meet the Council Grant Policy criteria. It was agreed to write to the organisation to inform them of our decision and to suggest an alternative application for a smaller amount which did not include staff costs could be considered at a future meeting.
- **Victim Support:** The RFO advised that Victim Support had received £100 in 2021/2022 and £100 in 2020/2021. Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr White and therefore **RESOLVED** to provide a grant to Victim Support for £100. All in favour, bar one Councillor.
- **The Branch:** Members discussed the application and it was noted that the request was a large amount primarily towards employment costs and that this did not meet the Council Grant Policy criteria. It was agreed to write to the organisation to inform them of our decision and to suggest an alternative application for a smaller amount which did not include staff costs could be considered at a future meeting.

Members discussed the number and content of applications received by the Council and it was agreed to review the Grant Policy and to highlight the availability of grants to local organisations.

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

10. To receive an update on building matters

- **Town Hall update** – Fields of Architecture has produced drawings for the reduced scheme to be considered and these have been circulated. Members to submit comments to the Clerk to feedback to the architect.
- **Toilet Block update** – the Clerk had asked the Buildings Manager to confirm that the demolition quote was still valid and to provide a specification to obtain alternative quotes for comparison – to ensure that the end result did not require further works to make the site safe. This information had not been received – the Clerk to follow up.

11. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22

Members noted that internal audit booked was booked for 21st June and the AGAR would be prepared for the next meeting. The public rights period would commence on 30th June.

12. To review the copier lease

The Council had been approached by the existing supplier to renew the copier lease mid-term at a reduced rate and to replace the existing copier with a new one. Alternative quotes had been received from two alternative suppliers. Discussion took place about renewing mid-term and the costs associated with “buying out” the remaining term on the finance agreement. It was also noted that when the offices move back to the town hall a different arrangement for printing may be required. It was agreed that as the existing copier was not causing any issues that no change would be made at the current time.

13. To review the following policies and registers

- Press & Media
- Lone Worker
- Retirement & Pension
- Whistleblowing

The above policies had been circulated prior to the meeting having been updated in line with current guidance. Cllr Paton proposed and it was seconded by Cllr White and there **RESOLVED**: to approve the policies listed. All in favour, bar one Councillor.

14. To note any items of correspondence

A letter from Pennyfarthing addressed to New Forest District Council had been received and circulated to members regarding ownership and maintenance of the open spaces in the new developments. A brief discussion took place regarding the NFDC's current approach to open spaces. Concerns were expressed that the Town Council was not being properly consulted regarding open spaces. It was noted that a report was expected from the NFDC following a meeting with them regarding open spaces but that this report had yet to be received. Further information was needed before the Town Council could agree its position regarding open spaces on new developments.

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

- The Clerk reminded members that the Annual Town Assembly would take place on 1st June and the Police and Crime Commissioner would be attending.
- The Clerk reported that the approved period had passed following the resignation of Cllr Moulard and no request for an election had been received, the Town Council were now able to co-opt a new member.

16. To note the date of the next meeting as 29th June 2022

The meeting ended at 8:07pm.