

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 26th October 2022 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall (Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Committee)

Present: Cllr Jackson – Chair;
Cllrs Earth, Goldsmith, Hale, Lewendon, Millar, White & Wilson

In attendance: Mr P Goddard, Town Clerk
Mrs M Coatham, RFO

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllr Adams, Cllr Anstey, Cllr Paton & Cllr Perkins

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Jackson and White declared an interest in agenda item 10 “To re-consider funding Ashford marker signs” as they were both residents of Ashford.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2022 and report any matters arising

Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr White and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on the 28th September 2022 be signed as a true record. All in favour.

Matters arising: Item 10 (building matters) the Clerk confirmed that a planning application had been submitted to demolish the old toilet block and he was still waiting to receive details of contractors to obtain 2 further quotes for removal of the asbestos. Item 12 Film New Forest – Cllr White to commence taking photographs to upload to the website.

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

No matters raised.

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

Cllr Jackson referred to the RFO’s report to members. Cllr Jackson queried the works required following the Aish service visit – RFO to clarify the urgency of the work and confirmed that there was no budget for these works but it would need to be met from the Amenities overall budget if possible. The Clerk advised that the twinning bench cost was to be reimbursed by the twinning association. Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore **RESOLVED**: to approve the schedule of payments of account and that the amounts collected are correct. All in favour.

6. To consider grant applications under Section 137/CIL

- NFDIS: discussion took place about the element of staff costs within the annual accounts supplied. It was agreed that there was sufficient evidence that this grant met FTC requirements and offered a good service to a large number of residents in the town. Cllr Jackson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr White and therefore **RESOLVED**: to grant £250 to NFDIS. All in favour.

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

8. To receive an update on building matters

Town Hall: the Clerk had reported the provision of a stair lift had been reviewed and may be possible if the boxing that housed the clock weights was removed. Cllr Wilson had contacted Smiths of Derby to supply a quote for an electronic winding system which would allow the weights to be removed – for conservation purposes these would need to be retained. The Clerk felt this was a positive move as it meant that staff would not need to climb into the tower to wind the mechanism each week, unsupervised. The application would need to be reviewed by Building Control (fire approval) and the Conservation Officer. ***The Clerk to follow-up the quote request.***

9. To note the external audit report from PKF for 2021/22

The External Audit report stated that there was nil to report for 2021/22 – noted by members.

10. To re-consider funding Ashford marker signs

This item had returned for review as the quote was ambiguous and the cost was per sign rather than for both – so the total costs would be £760 rather than the approved sum of £380. Discussion took place about the additional cost. It was agreed to fund one sign in the current financial year, at a cost of £380. Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Earth and therefore RESOLVED: to proceed with the installation of the first sign on the Fordingbridge side with the other to follow in the next financial year. All in favour.

11. To consider funding for Warm Space provision

Minutes and a report had been circulated regarding the provision of Warm Space by local groups and discussion took place whether the Town Hall should offer a facility. There was some concern about competing with other services and so it was agreed that the Council should work closely with the groups to monitor the demand and either to provide a warm space at the town hall if required or to provide funding to support existing facilities as demand was established. It was suggested that information regarding the provision of warm spaces and other services should be shared with the local GP Surgery. All in favour.

12. To review the CIL Spending and initial budget proposals for 2023/24

The RFO had circulated the draft proposals for members to consider prior to the budget meetings in November. Additional CIL funds had been received, approximately £25k – giving a total unspent of around £109k. There was discussion regarding the existing staff structure and the possible additional costs if the Town Council receives further amenity land.

13. To receive a report from the Hampshire Pension Fund regarding future rates

The report had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The Town Council had agreed not to opt out of the group and the ERs rate would not change for the next 3 years.

14. To review the following policies and registers – none this month

15. To note any items of correspondence

None

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

Nothing to report

17. To note the date of the next meeting as 23rd November 2022

The meeting ended at 8.29pm.