

**FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 7:30pm  
(Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Committee)**

**Present:** Cllrs Anstey, Earth, Goldsmith, Hale, Hinton, Lewendon, Millar (Chair), Paton, White and Wilson

**In attendance:** Paul Goddard, Town Clerk, Mrs M Coatham, RFO

**1. To receive any apologies for absence**

Apologies received from Cllrs Jackson and Perkins

**2. To receive any Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest.

**3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 and report any matters arising**

Cllr Paton proposed and it was seconded by Cllr White and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 be signed as a true record. All in favour.

Matters arising: Agenda Point 5: Cllr Wilson advised that NFDC would not allow a bench to be placed in the Community Orchard. An alternative site for the bench has been identified in Sweatfords Water Meadows. Agenda Point 16: The RFO advised that there was an accident involving the ClubCar that had been taken on a trial basis that is likely to give rise to an insurance claim.

**4. To receive any matters raised by Members of the Public – none raised**

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

The RFO noted the cost of tree works, repair to play equipment matting, the cost of levelling the car park and the current unknown cost of the repair to the ClubCar. The RFO also confirmed that the cost of a memorial bench was funded and that the bench would go on the risk register. The bank reconciliation was noted on her report to Cllrs.

Cllr Lewendon 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.

**6. To consider grant applications under Section 137/CIL**

- Fordingbridge Greener Living  
Cllr Millar had spoken to a representative of Greener Living. The £500 grant was to fund the cost of room hire for a series of talks throughout the year. It was envisaged there would be ten three hour talks over the year. The room hire cost was £56 per session. Cllrs discussed the merit of the application and whether it met the Town Council's grant policy. Cllrs agreed to fund the talks as they occurred for the first year. Cllr White proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Anstey and therefore **RESOLVED**: to fund the room hire costs up to £500 during the year to be drawn down for each meeting. All in favour.
- Busy Bees Playgroup  
Cllrs discussed the grant application and agreed that, as submitted, it did not meet the grant policy. Had the application been framed differently it may have been successful. Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Earth and therefore **RESOLVED**: to reject the application but Cllrs asked that the RFO contact Busy Bee Playgroup to explain why the grant application was rejected and how a future application could be framed.

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

- None received

**8. To receive an update on building matters**

- The Clerk reported that the Buildings Manager was discussing with one of the preferred contractors, Bemacross, a quote for them to undertake the whole of the work (asbestos removal and demolition) and was awaiting a total price.

- The RFO reported that the flooring in the two cubicles in the current toilet block had been installed and the contractor is awaiting replacement sanitaryware (with improved flushing mechanisms to increase the water flow/prevent blockages). The RFO advised the work would be funded from the budget for the current financial year.
- The RFO reported that Normans had serviced the domestic boiler at the Pavilion and had identified a number of issues: they have recommended that the boiler should be replaced. They also had a look at the commercial water heater (normally serviced by Asbury) and said there could be issues with it. Asbury's are due to service the commercial water heater in May and currently both boilers are functioning. The RFO recommended that both units are reviewed when the season is over (May). She is flagging it now as it might be both boilers will need replacing so there might be quite a big expense pending.

#### **9. To identify priority projects for CIL funding to present to the Annual Town Assembly**

Regarding the Annual Town Assembly, the Clerk advised that the NFDC have said that they could present on the current and possible future development in the town, provided it was after the pre-election sensitive period. He suggested that the ATA could be deferred to May to allow this and thoughts on CIL spending could be presented to those attending at the time. Cllr Wilson had provided some comments on existing possible CIL projects. She commented regarding railings outside the memorial gates could be funded in the short term from CIL, subject to checking the width of the pavement and cutting back the grass on the verge. Cllr Millar referred to the report from the Recreation ground working party, which had identified the play area as a starting point. Cllr Earth suggested there were a number of projects, such as a footpath over the river, that should be removed. The RFO confirmed that the Council was holding approximately £110,000 of CIL funds. Cllr Hinton said that this was not a large sum of money in terms of CIL projects and he felt that, rather than dividing the sum across multiple projects, the current CIL funds should be allocated to the play area and this would be reported to the ATA. The spending would need to enhance the area if CIL funds were used. Cllr Hinton suggested that this would deal with an immediate need and then it would be for a new council to decide on future CIL spending priorities. Cllr Wilson felt that any spending should be for a whole enhancement package to include signs, fencing, outside gates as well as play equipment.

#### **10. To review the following policies and registers – none this month**

#### **11. To approve the continuation of the SLA with NFDC for the dog waste bins**

Cllr White said, since a change of operative at the NFDC, he felt that the bins were not being emptied as frequently as they should. The Clerk said concerns could be raised with the NFDC to the Town Council under the SLA and also the NFDC's own obligations with regard to rubbish collection. Cllrs discussed the number of dog waste bins the Council owned and whether they could be reduced, with general waste bins being used instead. The RFO advised that the cost of the SLA had gone up by inflation (9%) to £2372. It was agreed that the RFO discuss the reduction in number of bins with NFDC prior to approving the annual SLA. Members also discussed alternative vehicle provision for the grounds staff in the future. Cllr Hinton proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Goldsmith and therefore RESOLVED: to defer the decision on the SLA to next meeting, to review how the Council could rationalise the service with a view to possibly saving money and, in the meantime to raise service concerns with the NFDC. All in favour.

#### **12. To note any items of Correspondence**

None received.

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

The Clerk will put rescheduling the Annual Town Assembly on the next General Council agenda.

#### **14. To note the date of the next meeting as 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

The meeting closed at 8.21pm