

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 30th August 2023 at 7:30pm
(Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Committee)**

Present: Cllrs Cameron, Hale, Hinton, Jackson, Lewendon, Millar (Chair), Paton, Shering, White and Wilson

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

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllr Perkins and Bailey

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 26th July 2023 and report any matters arising

Cllr White proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore **RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 26th July 2023 be signed as a true record. All in favour. No matters arising.

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 updated Cllrs on the proposed NFDC cost increase regarding dog bins for 2024 onwards following a review of costs. The groundsman had now installed the replacement waste bins in place of the dog waste bins and the monthly contract with NFDC has been terminated as previously agreed by members. Cllr Wilson queried whether a replacement general waste bin had been installed between Parsonage Park and Pealsham Gardens – the Clerk will confirm with the groundsman after the meeting. Since the report had been circulated to members, additional invoices requiring authorisation had been received from Biffa and Datum Drainage (for works completed to the pool in June prior to opening). The RFO noted that utility companies keep cancelling and re-raising invoices, creating a VAT issue – hopefully this will be resolved in the next month. The individual committees are currently looking at an overspend primarily due to increased utility costs and the demolition of the toilet block falling into the current financial year. There may be an overspend for the year subject to whether some reserves are used towards the demolition.

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Jackson 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

• **Hope for Tomorrow**

Cllrs discussed previous applications from Hope for Tomorrow and noted that the grant in 2022 had increased to £1000 to meet the refurbishment cost of Kayleigh (the vehicle used locally) and that continuing with this level of funding would represent 20% of the Councils allocated grant budget. Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Hale and therefore **RESOLVED:** to approve a grant of £800. All in favour. Members asked that the decision was explained in full to the applicant.

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

8. To receive an update on building matters

• To consider Christmas lights for the Town Hall

Cllrs discussed the merit of a light on the Town Hall and the range of costs. The Christmas lights budget is £17,700. Cllrs asked the Clerk to obtain clarification from Sparkx regarding whether the

proposed lights would be purchased or leased and if the latter whether the cost would be spread over the three year period of the contract. Cllrs discussed whether any scrap value could be obtained from the old lights and also whether sponsorship for the lights might be available.

- To approve the installation and cost of a winder for the clock

Smith of Derby had provided a quote of £5,694 ex VAT to supply and fit an automatic clock winder. The work is specialist in nature and Smith of Derby service the clock. Cllrs discussed the possibility of re-instating the chimes and noted that the original weights had to be retained. Cllr Hinton proposed and it was seconded by Cllr White and therefore RESOLVED: to agree the quote for the automatic clock winder. All in favour. The meeting then moved to point 11 of the agenda.

9. To consider Parkrun Proposal and Funding

Cllr White reported that he, Cllr Millar and Cllr Woods had met with representatives of Parkrun at the Recreation Ground and they were happy with the site and proposed route. The Council would need to find £4,000 plus VAT as a one-off cost to register, get help to set the run up, a defibrillator and equipment. Cllr White had written to the NFDC regarding community grants. The sports clubs are supportive of the proposals and the potential moving of the pitches. Cllrs discussed whether the Council's grounds operatives could undertake this work. Cllrs discussed the proposal for a circular track that would also improve accessibility. The proposal is for in excess of 600m of additional path that would then allow a four-circuit run. Cllr Shering agreed to re-map the path and look at a specification, which could then be costed. Cllr Shering will look to obtain three quotes from contractors. Cllrs discussed sources of funding for the path, including developers, local businesses and organisations and Veolia. Cllr Millar suggested, once costed it could be taken to full council. Cllrs discussed the merits of installing low level lighting but felt this might be a longer-term project.

10. To review the Information Office footfall data

Cllrs considered the analysis of footfall data. The RFO provided details of a meeting with the NFDC to discuss the SLA for the Information Office. The original agreement included an inflationary rise but this has not been applied. The NFDC are likely to be reluctant to agree any increase in contribution from the NFDC, which is currently £13,500 per annum. Cllr Millar raised continuing with further analysis. He noted that the Information Office was well used and was a valuable resource.

11. To review the Town Hall plans and costings

An indicative quote for a stairlift had been obtained of £7,900 ex VAT. The NFDC building control surveyor advised that it is a material alteration to a building that includes a workplace so a full plans application and consultation with the fire prevention officer was required. The Clerk summarised the history of the schemes that had been drawn up. Cllrs discussed the merits and costs of the schemes. The Clerk was asked to clarify with the NFDC building control surveyor whether a stairlift was required as there were no alterations being proposed to the first floor with the scaled back scheme. Once the position had been established further discussion could take place with the architect. Cllrs also discussed the merit of having access to the rear of the property from the main hall, as set out in the scheme for which planning permission was granted.

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

13. To note any items of correspondence – none this month

14. To receive a report from the Clerk and any other relevant business

The RFO advised that the Last Night of the Proms event in memory of Malcolm Adams was sold out and that plenty of raffle prizes have been donated in support of the event. Cllrs discussed the recruitment of a grounds operative and agreed to ask a candidate for a second interview.

15. To note the date of the next meeting as 27th September 2023

The meeting ended at 20:57