

**FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 7:30pm  
(Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Committee)**

**Present:** Cllrs Bailey, Lewendon, Shering, White (Chair) and Wilson

**In attendance:** Rachel Edwards, Asst Town Clerk  
Martine Coatham, RFO  
Cllr Woods (NFDC)  
1 member of the public

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

Apologies received from Cllrs Hinton, Millar, Paton and Perkins.

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

Cllr Shering declared an interest in item 5 (Payment of Accounts) - invoice from his company Crownshade.

**3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and report any matters arising**

Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Shering and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023 be signed as a true record. All those that attended in favour.

**Matters Arising**

Agenda item 6 – the cleaners will have finished in the Town Hall by 9am and therefore the Avon Valley Shed can use the Town Hall on a Wednesday morning free of charge, with paid bookings taking precedence.

Agenda item 10 – The RFO and Cllr White met with the Sports Clubs. The Rugby Club will hold their men's and youth training sessions at the new all-weather pitch at Burgate on Thursday evenings, which will reduce the Town Council's income by approximately £1500 pa. Matches will continue to be played at the Rec. The Fordingbridge Whippet, Lurcher and Dog Racing Club opposed the increase in the camping charges. The RFO will review budgets and tariffs based on the information supplied and report back to members.

**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 advised that the NFDC election expenses came in at under the budgeted figure. Cllr Bailey queried whether Zoom is still used as it costs £12.99 per month. The RFO confirmed that it is still used.

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Wilson and therefore **RESOLVED**: to approve the schedule of payments of account and that the amounts collected are correct. All who had not declared an interest in favour.

**6. To consider grant applications under Section 137/CIL – none**

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

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

The clock winder is due to be fitted on Friday. The chimes will not be reinstalled due to complexity and cost.

**9. To discuss the provision of water at the Augustus Park allotments**

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Members considered whether to install bore holes at the new allotments or to use the metered water supply provided. Quotes to install two boreholes has previously been received but would need to be revised. The RFO confirmed that this work could be funded by CIL.

Cllr White proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Wilson and therefore **RESOLVED**: to look at the provision of water and obtain revised quotes to install boreholes, with a view to making a final decision.

#### **10. To discuss the use of the levelling up funds from NFDC for Town Centre Improvements (UKSPF)**

Cllr Wilson proposed spending the £15k available for town centre improvements on the NFDC land behind the Co-op, with the vision of making the area accessible, improving biodiversity, providing opportunities for different activities, a safe environment, encouraging people to spend time there, maximising the seating and providing shelter and shade.

Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Bailey and therefore **RESOLVED**: to progress the above project and in principal to spend the levelling up funds from NFDC for Town Centre improvements on the NFDC land to the rear of the Co-op. All in favour.

**Action: Cllr Wilson to confirm with NFDC that the above would be a suitable project on which to spend the levelling up funds for Town Centre improvements.**

#### **11. To note the external audit report from BDO for 2022/23**

The External Audit report stated that there was nil to report for 2022/23. Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr White and therefore **RESOLVED**: to note the external audit report from BDO for 2022/23. All in favour.

#### **12. To note the reports from the summer events (TUFF, picnics and breakfasts)**

The reports were noted. Cllr Wilson commented that not many families had attended the TUFF sessions and thought the Council could be more inventive in the use of funds.

#### **13. To approve the town hall project fees from Barclay & Phillips Architects (formerly Fields of Architecture)**

Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr White and therefore **RESOLVED**: to approve the stage 1 - Feasibility Design and stage 2 – Developed Design town hall project fees from Barclay & Phillips Architects, of £500 + VAT and £1500 + VAT respectively. All in favour.

**Action: Clerk to agree a fixed fee with the architect for the stage 3 – Planning Submission town hall project fees.**

#### **14. To agree to instruct Wild Future to act for the Town Council in relation to agreeing an open space commuted sum with Pennyfarthing**

Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore **RESOLVED**: to instruct Wild Future to act for the Town Council in relation to agreeing an open space commuted sum with Pennyfarthing, at an hourly rate of £50 per hour, up to a maximum total of £1050 (3 days). All in favour.

#### **15. To review the CIL Spending and initial budget proposals for 2024/25**

- To agree to allocate CIL funds towards the construction of a circular path at the Recreation Ground and to apply for the balance of funding from the Rural England Prosperity Fund
- To agree to allocate CIL funding to a project to develop and provide enhanced accessibility to the play and river frontage area of the Recreation Ground
- To consider a fee proposal for design work at the Recreation Ground play area

Cllr White proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the following projects are viable and the Council wish to progress:

- the construction of a circular path at the Recreation Ground and to apply for the balance of funding from the Rural England Prosperity Fund – Total project cost £100k
- to develop and provide enhanced accessibility to the play and river frontage area of the Recreation Ground – Total £10k

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- to match fund any application from the Avon Valley Shed for the provision of a shed for the group to use, up to a maximum of £10k – Total £10k
- to fund design work and new play equipment at the Recreation Ground – Total £50k
- to provide boreholes for the new allotments – Total £5k

All in favour.

**16. To review the following policies and registers – CIL Policy**

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Wilson and therefore **RESOLVED**: to approve the updated CIL policy. 4 in favour, 1 abstention (not read).

**17. To note any items of correspondence –**

The Green Gram Management Committee wrote with thanks for the Community Grant of £650 and will shortly purchase the laser printer and allergen label printer for which the grant was made.

The RFO reported that £275 was raised at the Last Night of the Proms in memory of Malcolm Adams and this money would be donated to the British Heart Foundation.

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

Cllr Bailey apologised for not attending the Planning Committee meeting at which the application for the removal of the restriction of 18 uses of the premises per year in the Sports Club licence was considered. He recommended the following changes in the wording of Section A of the licence application notes, removing the highlighted text in yellow and replacing with the blue text instead. Cllr Bailey said that these changes would still give FTC control of when the gate is open/shut and reflect the change of opening hours. If the application is successful, then potentially the clubhouse could be open 7 days a week; by not changing the sentence regarding just Saturdays, it would not be applicable for the extra days. (Previously, the 18 days would have been classed as an event so was covered by the notes.)

a) General - all four licensing objectives (b, c, d, e)

The Recreation Ground is closed and locked by the groundsman from Fordingbridge Town Council between sunset and sunrise from Sunday – Saturday Friday unless there is an evening event at the Club.

~~On Saturdays in the winter the clubhouse closes by 19.00 unless there is an evening event.~~

In the winter, the clubhouse closes by 19.00 unless there is an evening event.

**19. To note the date of the next meeting as 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

The meeting ended at 20.59.