

## **FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7:30 pm.**

**(Minutes draft until approved at the following meeting of the Committee)**

**Present:** Cllr Hinton – Chair  
Cllrs Lewendon, Millar, White and Wilson

**In Attendance:** Paul Goddard, Town Clerk  
Cllrs Bailey, Jackson, Paton and Shering (Public gallery)

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

Apologies were received from Cllrs Hale and Cameron.

#### **2. To receive any declarations of interest**

No declarations of interest.

#### **3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and report on any matters arising.**

Cllr White proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Wilson and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023 be signed as a true record. All in favour.

##### Matters arising.

Agenda item 4 – Cllr Wilson was not sure the Council should run TUFF again. A report on the sessions is awaited from Mandy Robbins.

#### **4. To receive any matters raised by members of the public**

Cllr Bailey queried the meeting set up for the General Purposes and Amenities committees and how Cllrs could contribute to those meetings. Cllrs discussed how historically the meetings had been structured and whether the committees should merge. It was noted that the terms of reference of both committees had been changed to allow Cllrs to sit on both committees should they so wish. Cllr Hinton told the meeting that as both committees meet on the same evening, non-members of each committee sit as visiting members and can speak. If non-members sat in the same area it could become confusing. So long as non-members are aware that they can speak it should be fine.

#### **5. To report on any matters concerning St Marys Closed Churchyard and Stuckton Road Cemetery**

The notice board has been repaired and the hedge has been cut. Cllr Millar reported that the laurel hedge had grown over some graves and a member of the public was having to cut it back themselves. Cllr Millar felt the laurel hedge could be made smaller and cut back.

#### **6. Matters relating to the use of the Town Hall**

The Last Night of the Proms was a great success and a nice tribute to Cllr Adams. The Clerk is to look into microphone systems to allow those attending meetings to hear what was being discussed. Cllr Jackson suggested in the interim the seating could be arranged closer together.

#### **7. To report on any matters relating to the Information Office**

Due to staff absence, the Information Office has changed to its winter opening hours (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) which had been due to take place from 1<sup>st</sup> October.

Members discussed what leaflets the Information Office could give to tourists to promote Fordingbridge. Cllr Wilson advised that the museum is claiming copyright of the Fordingbridge Town Trail map. A resident had also produced a good map of the town but again that could not be used. Cllr Shering felt that a leaflet did not require a lot of historic information but should detail what is currently in town. He was happy to progress something. Cllr Hinton said a leaflet should be put on the agenda. Cllrs discussed how the Council could promote the town and Cllr Hinton said that an agenda point regarding a leaflet could be expanded to promotional matters. He noted, however, that when asked about Town Council priorities, promoting the town was not identified as a priority. He was keen that the Council agreed a direction and focussed its resources accordingly, otherwise there was a risk the Council would just touch upon the fringe of matters.

#### **8. To report any matters concerning footpaths**

- Jobs for Lengthsman – 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023

Cllr White reported that it had been reported that there was an issue with the hedge encroaching upon the pavement on station Road. He would look into this further.

- To consider the Proposed Diversion of Part of Fordingbridge Footpath 7

The Clerk had circulated details of the proposed diversion. Cllr Hinton noted that the proposed diversion had been discussed at a previous meeting and the Council had been notified of the diversion by the landowner's consultant. The Council had seen two objections to the proposed diversion, one from the Footpath Society and one from the secretary of the society in his own right. Cllr Hinton provided details of these. Cllrs discussed the reasons for the proposed diversion including potentially a Cemex application for landfill. Cllr Wilson felt that the Town Council should strongly object and reported that she was planning on attending the Bleak Hill meeting the following Friday. Cllrs noted that the application to divert was made in the interest of the landowner and did not agree with the comments regarding the steepness of the current path. Cllr Hinton proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Wilson and therefore RESOLVED: to respond to the consultation saying that the Council felt no substantial case had been made to divert the path and that the Council supported the views submitted by the footpath society. All in favour.

#### **9. To report on any matters concerning Allotments**

Cllr Hinton reported a second instance of vandalism at the allotments, which had been reported to the police. Cllr Wilson suggested investigating boreholes for the new allotments prior to allocating the plots to tenants. The new allotments have not been handed over yet. Cllr Wilson is obtaining indicative water costs from the Sandheath allotments. The cost of boreholes should then be taken to the Finance & Policy Committee. The cost is likely to be around £5k for two boreholes.

#### **10. To agree allotment and cemetery priorities in the short term**

The Clerk asked Cllrs to give some thought to what the Council's priorities are in the interim while a new grounds maintenance operative is recruited. Cllr Hinton felt it would be a good idea for Cllrs to know the full breadth of the work undertaken. Cllr Millar said if an agenda item is to agree something there need to be some backing for Cllrs to consider.

#### **11. To note any items of correspondence**

No items of correspondence.

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

Cllr Bailey advised Cllrs that he was still looking to establish ownership of the green box that needs to be moved to allow the bus stop to be re-positioned. He thought it was likely to be the gas networks, but he would continue his investigations.

#### **13. To note the date of the next meeting as 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

The meeting finished at 8.07pm.