

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a General Council Meeting held on 6th February 2013 at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall

Present:

Cllr Connolly – Chairman

Cllrs Adams, Anstey, Fulford, Hale, Lewendon, Paton, Perkins, Price, (A) Wilson & (G) Wilson

In attendance:

Ms K Mason, Town Clerk

HCC Cllr E Heron

NFDC Cllr R Bellows

1. Apologies

There were apologies for absence from NFDC Cllr Sevier

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd January 2013 and report on any matters arising

Because of an omission it was decided to ratify the minutes at the next General Council meeting on 6th March.

Cllr Paton entered the meeting.

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

No public were present

5. To receive a report on any matters under Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act

No police were present.

Cllr Connolly reported that a new Sergeant had started at Fordingbridge and Ringwood, Sgt. Paul Towler. There are also a number of new Police Community Support Officers who have been recruited and are currently stationed at Ringwood.

Cllr Lewendon asked if the police could be informed of the dangerous parking practices which were taking place on the road outside Avonway Community Centre despite the public car park being only meters away. The Clerk to inform.

6. To receive a report from the Town Mayor.

During January the Mayor attended:

- New Forest Town & Parish Councils meeting
- Met with Sgt Towler and Insp Tribe
- the new Transport Committee meeting.
- New Forest National Park Quadrant meeting.

7. To receive a report from the County Councillor.

Cllr Heron asked if members could report any potholes or other road surface problems so that the Highways teams can attend to them.

Cllr (G) Wilson reported a sunken drain in the High Street. Cllr Perkins advised that residents had told him they were impressed that pavements were gritted prior to the recent snow fall.

8. To receive a report from the District Councillors

Nothing to report.

9. To receive the following Committee meeting minutes and any recommendations contained therein:

Amenities Committee – Resolved: that the minutes of the Amenities Committee held on 9th January 2013 be received.

Planning Committee – Resolved: that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 16th January 2013 be received.

General Purposes Committee – Resolved: that the minutes of the General Purposes Committee held on 23rd January 2013 be received.

Transport Committee – 29th January 2013 These minutes will be presented to the next General Council meeting.

Finance & Policy Committee – Resolved: that the minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on 30th January 2013 be received.

A recommendation that the precept be set at £182,200 was not accepted.

10. To determine the precept request for the 2013-14 financial year

The Finance Officer had sent an email to members expressing her concern and advising members that cuts will have to be made if the government reduce the amount of grant. Cllr Fulford considered that if the precept were not raised by the amount of grant then the Council would not be able to fulfil any new responsibilities as well as its statutory responsibilities. Cllr Connolly agreed that the Council will need to become more financially astute. There was no guarantee that the Government would offer some or any of the grants next year and further constraints may be brought in such as capping. Cllr Lewendon suggested a further option of raising the precept by half the amount of grant to lessen the amount of additional Council tax to be paid by residents.

If the Council tax is raised by the amount of grant then a Band D property will have a Council tax rise of £8.17 (10.75%) when compared to last year's Band D amount.

If the Council tax is raised by half the amount of grant then a Band D Property will have a Council tax rise of £4.42 (5.82%) when compared to last year's Band D amount.

It was proposed by Cllr Fulford and seconded by Cllr Connolly that the precept request be £198,426 [last year's precept amount plus the full amount of grants].

A counter proposal was made:

It was proposed by Cllr Lewendon and seconded by Cllr Hale that the precept request to NFDC be £190,313 [last year's precept amount plus half the amount of grants] In favour: Cllrs Lewendon, Adams, Price, Hale & Paton. Against: Cllrs Connolly, Anstey, Fulford, (A) Wilson, (G) Wilson & Perkins. Not carried.

The first proposal was then voted on:

It was proposed by Cllr Fulford and seconded by Cllr Connolly that the precept request to NFDC be £198,426 [last year's precept amount plus the full amount of grants] In favour: Cllrs Connolly, Anstey, Fulford, (A) Wilson, (G) Wilson & Perkins. Against: Cllrs Lewendon, Adams, Price, Hale & Paton. Carried.

Cllr Heron and Cllr Bellows left the meeting.

11. To report on any Health & Safety issues

Nothing to report.

12. To receive reports from representatives on outside bodies

Cllr Fulford reported:

Burgate Community Partnership Meeting – she attended the last meeting held in November (the recent meeting in January was cancelled). The School wish to apply for funding for a new Sports Hall which would expand the current facilities for the pupils and also be open for community use as an amenity for the people in the Fordingbridge area. This can only be achieved by working in partnership with the County, District & Town Councils and Fordingbridge Sports Club. A Community Strategy is needed to include all community groups working in partnership. A marketing strategy was also discussed.

Burgate Sixth Form Awards Ceremony – Cllr Fulford attended with Cllr (G) Wilson. The standard from the pupils was very high and the Town Council gave an award to two students for Service to the Community who had raised £1500 towards the Honeyptot charity.

New Forest Association of Town & Parish Councils – Attended a meeting with Cllr Connolly. Comments were requested to be given to Jo Stannard at Ringwood on the new planning public access webpage as some members found it difficult to navigate. The New National Park Authority website in contrast is very clear and easy to use.

NFDC Planning application weekly lists are no longer being sent to Councils who are being emailed individually if a planning application is submitted for their area. Certificate of lawfulness applications and environmental impact assessments are not being notified.

GIS System – the map based information service is capable of pinpointing queries within a parish. It is £250 to join including training and back-up. Fordingbridge Town Council have already expressed an interest.

Lyndhurst PC have given each member a tablet to use in Committee instead of printing and posting agendas, minutes and committee papers etc. as it is overall cheaper. It was agreed to discuss this at a Finance & Policy Committee.

SLCC – attended a meeting at Ringwood with the Town Clerk and heard the Local Government Pension Scheme discussed. This will be reported at the next Finance & Policy meeting.

Cllr (G) Wilson – concurred with Cllr Fulford's comments regarding the Awards Ceremony at Burgate where the standards from students was excellent.

Cllr (A) Wilson – attended the Avonway Management Committee. There are still problems regarding the Friday Night Youth Club. Bids are being requested from outside organisations to run the club, renting the room from Avonway.

Cllr E Hale - The Victoria Rooms fundraiser on 11th January with the Forest Forge was a success and raised £280.

The HCC/Rockbourne Partnership are offering help and advice to local archaeological groups at the Roman Villa. Funding is available for projects that link the Roman Villa to the Community.

Cllr Connolly reported that he had met with Ian Newman and the Rotary Club regarding the Christmas lights for this year. A suggestion has been made to string catenary wires across the streets with LED lights in frames hanging off them. This would reduce the time in putting up the

lights although there would still be the expense of erecting, brackets, lights, cherry picker etc. The Town Council has budgeted £5k for lights and hanging baskets but further monies need to be found as the overall costs are likely to exceed this figure.

13. To note any items of correspondence

There was no correspondence.

14. To receive a report form the Clerk or any other relevant business

Nothing to report.

15. To note the date of the next General Council meeting as Wednesday 6th March 2013

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.