

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 30th January 2013 at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall Council, Fordingbridge

Present:

Cllr Adams – Chairman

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

In attendance:

Ms K Mason, Town Clerk

Martine Coatham, Finance Officer.

1. To accept apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

Cllr Adams declared an interest in agenda item 5, Payments of accounts.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2012 and report on any matters arising

It was proposed by Cllr Adams and seconded by Cllr Fulford that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2012 be signed as a true record. All in favour, Carried.

There were no matters arising.

4. To receive details of Monies Collected and Payment of Accounts

It was proposed by Cllr Adams and seconded by Cllr Connolly that the monies collected and accounts be approved and paid. All in favour, Carried.

5. To receive any matters raised by Members of the Public

No members of the public were present.

6. To receive any Finance & Policy Matters referred from sub-committees

General Purposes Committee 23.01.13

Two Edgar Downe oil paintings:

Recommended that: £4000 be taken from reserves in the current financial year to restore the oil paintings.

It was proposed by Cllr Adams and seconded by Cllr Lewendon that the £4000 be taken from reserves in the current financial year to restore the oil paintings. All in favour, Carried.

Amenities Committee 09.01.13

Planning Permission for Concession building

Recommended that: that based on the amended plan submitted to the Town Council in December 2012, Michael Weakley Associates be asked to proceed to prepare drawings and request planning permission.

It was proposed by Cllr Lewendon and seconded by Cllr Paton that based on the amended plan submitted to the Town Council in December 2012, Michael Weakley Associates be asked to proceed to prepare drawings and request planning permission. All in favour, Carried.

Release of Developer Contributions

Recommended that: Developer Contributions be released from NFDC for the concession/toilets and new sports Pavilion building.

It was proposed by Cllr Lewendon and seconded by Cllr Paton that a request is made to NFDC to release Developer Contributions for the Concession/toilets and new Sports Pavilion. All in favour, Carried.

7. To consider the following grant applications

Fordingbridge CAB - it was AGREED to defer a decision concerning this grant application until the April meeting of Finance & Policy Committee.

8. To agree recommendations for Charging Policy:

The following hire rates were AGREED for the 2013/14 financial year:

RECREATION GROUND HIRE

(All include vat.)

Per session:

Football & Rugby Clubs	£46.00
Juniors	£23.00
Training	£24.00
Whippet Track	£33.00 (day) £17 (evening)
Cricket	£45.00

Tournaments £100 daily rate, £50 half day.

Camping & Caravans – Up to 20 pitches, £100 per day/night. 20 or more £100 per day/night + £5 per pitch. (Price inclusive of use of the pavilion & showers).

Commercial use of the Recreation Ground - £200 per day.

Other events hire costs to be determined by the Finance & Policy Committee.

Fishing Fees (Daily Rate)

Adult	£5.00
OAP/Under 16 yrs	£2.50

BURIAL GROUND CHARGES

Interment of ashes	£220
Interment of body	£220
Children under 16	no charge
Non-Residents	£440 (double fee)

Memorial fee	£140
Additional inscription	£30
Non-Residents	double fees

TOWN HALL

For multiple bookings of 8 or more, a 10% discount applies.
Bookings include all heating and kitchen facilities.

Chairman

MAIN HALL

Maximum number allowed 150.

Hire of projector £10 per session.

8.00 - 1.00 p.m.	Morning	£35
1.00 - 6.00 p.m.	Afternoon	£35
	Full day	£60
6.00 - 11.00 p.m.	Evening	£40
Commercial rate	Daily	£120
Badminton Clubs		£30 a night
Art Clubs		£40 a day or £60 if setting up required.

COUNCIL CHAMBER

Maximum number allowed 35

Full day	£36
Half day	£21
Evening	£21
Commercial Rate	£75

ALLOTMENT FEES

Full Plot	£20.00
Half Plot	£10.00

Cllr Anstey asked about the terms of the lease with the Sports Club for the Club house situated on the Recreation Ground. It was AGREED that will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

9. To consider the budget proposals for the Finance & Policy Committee for 2013/2014

The following budget was discussed and AGREED:

	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>
<u>Finance & Policy</u>	2012/2013	2013/2014
<u>Income</u>		
Precept	£182,200.00	£182,200.00
Interest Received	£0.00	£0.00
Sundry Income	£0.00	£0.00
Museum Rent	£500.00	£500.00
Total Income	£182,700.00	£182,700.00
<u>Expenditure</u>		
	<u>BUDGET</u>	
Office Staff Costs	£35,500.00	£34,650.00
Stationery & Postage	£1,300.00	£1,300.00
Photocopier/copying	£2,500.00	£2,500.00

Chairman

Office - Telephone/IT	£1,200.00	£2,000.00
Staff Gratuities	£500.00	£500.00
Insurance	£11,000.00	£11,500.00
Subscriptions	£1,100.00	£1,500.00
Staff Training and Expenses	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Sundries	£0.00	£0.00
Election Expenses	£0.00	£0.00
Professional Fees	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Bank Charges	£0.00	£0.00
Twining/Diamond Jubilee	£2,000.00	£500.00
Promotion & Advertising	£500.00	£500.00
Mayors' Allowance/Meetings	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
S137 Grants	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Avonway Grants	£0.00	£0.00
Business Forum Partnership	£4,500.00	£5,000.00
Community Support	£0.00	£0.00
Total Expenditure	£68,100.00	£67,950.00
Overall Total		£67,450.00
	F & P	£67,450.00
	GENERAL PURPOSES	£23,300.00
	AMENITIES	£91,450.00
	PRECEPT	£182,200.00

10. To consider the Amenities and General Purposes Budget proposals for 2013/2014

The following budgets were discussed and AGREED:

Amenities Committee

	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>
<u>Amenities</u>	2012/2013	2013/2014
<u>Income</u>		
Recreation Ground - Sundry Lets	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00
Brownsea Land	£ -	£ -
Cricket Clubs	£ 100.00	£ 150.00
Rugby Clubs	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00
Football Clubs	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,325.00
Whippet Club	£ 750.00	£ 750.00
Refreshment Concession	£ 600.00	£ 800.00
Fishing/Anglers	£ 300.00	£ 700.00
Youth Shelter & Skate Park	£ -	£ -

Chairman

Playscheme	£ 4,000.00	£ 6,500.00
Total Income	£11,250.00	£14,725.00
<u>Expenditure</u>		
	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>
	<u>2012/2013</u>	<u>2013/2014</u>
Recreation Ground - Staff Costs	£ 34,200.00	£ 34,575.00
Casual Labour	£ 3,000.00	£ 2,000.00
Playscheme Staff	£ 5,000.00	£ 7,000.00
Playscheme Equipment etc.	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,500.00
Recreation Ground - Utilities	£ 3,500.00	£ 5,000.00
Petrol/Road Tax	£ 2,500.00	£ 3,100.00
Pavilion	£ 6,500.00	£ 6,000.00
Recreation Ground Seats	£ 500.00	£ 1,000.00
Safety Equipment	£ -	£ 500.00
Machinery Repairs/Replacement	£ 5,000.00	£ 8,000.00
General & Ground Maintenance	£ 12,000.00	£ 15,000.00
VIC Lease	£ 4,500.00	£ 5,000.00
VIC	£ 8,500.00	£ 8,500.00
Brownsea Land	£ -	£ -
Youth Projects		£ -
Floodlights	£ -	£ 500.00
Children's Play Area	£ 11,000.00	£ 6,000.00
Youth Shelter	£ 3,500.00	£ 500.00
Skate Park	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00
Total Expenditure	£102,700.00	£ 106,175.00
OVERALL TOTALS	£91,450.00	<u>£91,450.00</u>

General Purposes Committee

General Purposes		PROPOSED
	BUDGET	BUDGET
	2012/13	2013/14
INCOME		
Hall Lettings - Sundry	£ 3,500.00	£ 5,500.00
Badminton	£ 700.00	£ 700.00
Art Clubs	£ 500.00	£ 750.00
Burial Fees	£10,000.00	£ 8,500.00
Allotment Rents	£ 500.00	£ 650.00
Total Income	£15,200.00	£ 16,100.00

Chairman

EXPENDITURE		PROPOSED
	BUDGET	BUDGET
	2012/13	2013/14
Town Hall - Staff Costs	£ 8,500.00	£ 9,000.00
Town Hall - Maintenance	£15,000.00	£ 15,000.00
Town Hall - Utilities	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,300.00
Town Hall - Rates	£ -	£ -
Town Hall - Clock Maintenance	£ 350.00	£ 350.00
Burial Grounds	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,500.00
Allotments	£ 1,000.00	£ 750.00
Memorial Bungalow	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
Footpaths/Public Seats	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
Bus Shelters	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
Total Expenditure	£38,350.00	£ 39,400.00
OVERALL TOTALS	£23,150.00	£ 23,300.00

11. To formulate a resolution to go before General Council in February 2013 for the precept request.

The Clerk explained how the Council tax Reduction Scheme would work.

NFDC as a billing authority bills, collects and recovers council tax on behalf of the precepting authorities and currently administers council tax benefit. The Government has determined that Council tax benefit is to be replaced by localised council tax reductions from April 2013.

NFDC will be responsible for determining a local council tax support scheme by 31 January 2013. The reform is accompanied by a projected 10% (£1M+) reduction in expenditure from April 2013. Government proposals will affect all preceptors from next year. Pensioners are to be protected and the Government will specify rules on how the scheme can be administrated. Local schemes will be for working age claimants. The Government is giving billing authorities some additional limited discretions for council tax discounts e.g. empty properties & second homes

NFDC calculates Band D tax for each area by dividing the precepts by the relevant taxbase (the Taxbase is the total estimated number of properties in the area adjusted for bandings, exemptions, discounts, bad debt provision etc. and Band D tax is the full council tax payable on a band D property).

The Governments proposed changes are National Council Tax Benefits being replaced by Local Council Tax Support and a Payment scheme replaced by discount to taxbase scheme

Government has offered a voluntary transitional grant for one year only if Billing Authorities (NFDC) introduce local Council Reduction Schemes, whereby claimants required to pay no more than 8.5% council tax. This has been done by NFDC.

In November 2012 the government decided to include town & parish councils in the funding of local Council Tax Reductions. NFDC then notified Local Councils immediately that local tax bases would be affected by changes. This in turn has affected the amount calculated for a Band D property.

Chairman

In calculating the precept this year Town & Parish councils will need to calculate the precept they wish to spend, deduct the total grant that NFDC propose to give and the sum is the actual precept for 2013/14.

Fordingbridge Town Council have an amended tax base of 2165.4 (from 2398.4 in 2012/13). The Transition grant is £457 (available for one year only) and the attributable grant is £15,769, making a total of **£16226** in grants. As these make up the total precept received the Clerk explained that there was no guarantee that grants would be available for the next financial year. If that is the case then the Town Council will be starting with a precept amount *minus* the grants before setting a new precept. The Government could also introduce capping to Town & Parish Councils or requirement for a referendum which will further restrict spending.

Calculating the Precept under old arrangements

	2012-13
NORMAL NET SPENDING REQUIREMENT	182,200
Divide by tax base	2398.4
Band D Council Tax	75.97
Precept to be received from NFDC	182,200

Calculating the precept under the revised arrangements

Example 1

Proposal by NFDC under new arrangements

	2013-14
Precept request	182,200
Attributable Grant	-15,769
Transitional Grant (one year only)	-457
Precept under new arrangements (minus grants)	165,974
Divide by tax base	2165.4
Band D Council Tax	76.64
PRECEPT TO BE RECEIVED FROM NFDC (inc grants)	182,200

The precept payment of £182,200 is paid because of the Attributable grant and transitional grant paid. Please note the transitional grant is for 2013/14 financial year only and will not be available next year. There is NO guarantee that all/any of the Attributable grant will be paid in 2014/15.

Example 2

To keep Band D the same as last year

Proposal by NFDC under new arrangements if the Band D Council tax is to be kept the same as it is in 2012/13.

Chairman

	2013-14
Precept request	182,200
Adjustment to precept request	-1469
	180,731
Attributable Grant	-15,769
Transitional Grant (one year only)	-457
Precept under new arrangements	164,505
Divide by tax base	2165.4
Band D Council Tax	75.97
PRECEPT TO BE RECEIVED FROM NFDC	180,731

Example 3

If we add the total amount of grant given in 2013-14 to our precept (in anticipation we may not receive it next year, or be capped)

	2013-14
Precept request	198,426 (182,200 + 16,226)
Attributable Grant	-15,769
Transitional Grant (one year only)	-457
Precept under new arrangements	182,200
Divide by tax base	2165.4
Band D Council Tax	84.14
PRECEPT TO BE RECEIVED FROM NFDC	198,426

In summary, Band D properties will pay annually:

	2012/13	2013/14 Example 1	2013/14 Example 2	2013/14 Example 3
Band D	75.97	76.64	75.97	84.14
% rise	-	0.88%	0%	10.75%
£ rise		0.67	0.00	8.17

Precept History

2009/10	163,170	
2010/11	162,420	- 0.46%
2011/12	182,160	12.15%
2012/13	182,200	0.022%

Chairman

The Chairman suggested that members might like to consider the above information.

The meeting was adjourned at 9.10pm.

The meeting re-convened at 9.18pm.

Following discussion it was proposed by Cllr Fulford and seconded by Cllr Adams that the Finance & Policy Committee be mindful to recommend to General Council on the 6th February a precept request of £182,200 (example 1). Cllr Connolly against, all other members in favour. Carried.

12. To discuss and agree the aims of the Finance & Policy Committee for inclusion in the Forward Plan.

The following aims of the Finance & Policy Committee were AGREED to be included in the Forward Plan:

1. Work to deliver all services within budget and on time
2. Draft an annual budget for the Town Council in line with the key objectives of the adopted Forward Plan to submit to General Council.
3. Ensure all financial requirements and reserves are managed in line with the Council's financial regulations
4. Annually review all Council policies and regulations (with the exception of staff policies) and make any necessary amendments
5. Ensure accurate, prudent financial regulation and control of Council finances, striving to ensure the best value for money.
6. Place orders and works for services in line with the Councils adopted financial regulations
7. Oversee all legal matters and processes to ensure transparency and probity
8. Make available open and transparent policy and financial information at all times

These all link to Objective 1 & 4

13. To consider adoption of the Lone Worker Policy.

The Lone Worker Policy was adopted.

Standing Orders were suspended at 9.30pm.

14. To discuss the position of Mayor or Chairman of the Council

Members discussed having a limited tenure for the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Committee Chairmen. It was acknowledged that this can be a problem if there aren't willing members available to take office.

It was suggested that Councillors approach the Clerk if they wished to stand for office prior to the May meeting, avoiding potential confusion at the meeting.

15. To note any items of Correspondence

Public consultation - planning for safe and well maintained highways in Hampshire

Members noted the consultation.

Chairman

16. To receive a report from the Clerk or any other relevant business

Nothing to report.

17. To note the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 27th February 2013.

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm.