

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 29th January 2014 at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall, Fordingbridge

Present:

Cllr Connolly – Chairman

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

In attendance:

Mrs M Coatham, Finance Officer

Ms. K Mason, Town Clerk

1. To accept apologies for absence

There were apologies from Cllrs Lewendon and Paton

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

Cllr Adams declared an interest in agenda item 5, Payment of Accounts, but remained in the room to speak.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 27th November 2013 and report any matters arising.

Cllr Adams proposed and Cllr (G) Wilson seconded and it was **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2013 be signed as a true record subject to the following change:

Agenda item 7

It was proposed by Cllr Buchanan that fees should be quadrupled for non-residents *in line with other parishes in the area to discourage non-residents, due to space*. This was not seconded.

Matters arising

Christmas Lights – the Chairman advised that the catenary wires will be put in place in the next few weeks.

Cllr Perkins entered the meeting.

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

No members of the public were present.

5. To receive details of Monies Collected and Payment of Accounts and any other financial matters

Cllrs Adams declared an interest and remained in the room.

Monies collected and payment of accounts were noted by members and signed by the Chairman.

Christmas Lights - The Finance Officer expressed concern that there was no written instruction stating that Fordingbridge Rotary were going to pay £2.5k annually towards the lights for the duration of the contract with STM Contractors. The Clerk to write.

6. To consider the following grant application:

New Forest Citizens Advice Bureau – the Finance Officer advise that a grant had been given in May 2013. It was AGREED to place this on the May agenda.

Youth football fees – a further request has been made for reduced pitch fees for the Fordingbridge Town youth football teams. The Finance Office and Cllr Anstey will discuss and report back to the next meeting.

7. To receive any Finance & Policy matters referred from Committees

Staff & Remuneration Committee held on 17.12.13

1. To adopt the following policies:
 - Leave policy
 - Retirement & Pension policy

It was proposed by Cllr Fulford and seconded by Cllr Adams and **RESOLVED** that the Leave Policy and Retirement & Pension policies be adopted.

2. That following staff appraisals, incremental payments, where appropriate, will be paid on 1st April 2014.

It was proposed by Cllr Fulford and seconded by Cllr Price and **RESOLVED** that incremental payments, where appropriate, will be paid to staff on 1st April 2014.

General Purposes Committee held on 22.01.14

1. That, following receipt of a report made on the Town Hall roof following leakage, money is made available in the 2014/15 precept for repairs

Leaking has occurred in the Council Chamber, Main Hall and office during January. A comprehensive report advises repair to the guttering, flashing and re-pointing of brickwork which are defective and likely to be the cause of the leaks.

As the precept was being discussed for the forthcoming financial year the Clerk asked for quotes for the work to enable members to make a decision regarding repair. It has been suggested that the amount could be £10 - £15k. as extensive scaffolding will be needed in order for all parts of the roof to be made accessible.

Members agreed that they had a duty of care to keep the Town Hall in good order and that the money was not available from reserves. A few grants for listed buildings were available but very difficult to get. The Clerk to investigate. As this is a maintenance issue a claim cannot be made on the insurance policy.

It was **AGREED** that routine maintenance (bi-monthly) was needed on the gutters, the Clerk to instigate immediately.

It was proposed by Cllr Hale and seconded by Cllr Fulford and **RESOLVED**: that after investigation, any repairs needed to the roof be carried out, the cost of which will be absorbed from the existing budgets [2013/14 or 2014/15].

2. That money is made available in the 2014/15 precept towards the refurbishment of the disabled toilet, and this to continue for the next 3 financial years prior to the project taking place in year 4 (2018/19).

Cllr (G) Wilson reminded members that the Disabled toilet needed updating as currently it wasn't large enough to fulfil the Building Control criteria for mobility impaired persons. There would need to be extensive work done which will be costly and initial quotes suggest in the region of £12k.

It was proposed by Cllr Buchanan and seconded by Cllr (A) Wilson and **RESOLVED**: that a sum of £3k is taken from the General Purposes budget in 2014/15 towards the refurbishment of the disabled toilet, and this to continue for the next 3 financial years prior to the project taking place in year 4 (2018/19).

8. To receive and discuss a recommendation from the Amenities Committee for budget proposals for 2014/2015

It was proposed by Cllr Anstey and seconded by Cllr Perkins and **RESOLVED:** that the budget proposals for the Amenities Committee for 2014/15 be accepted.

The budget proposals is attached to these minutes, Appendix A.

9. To receive and discuss a recommendation from the General Purposes Committee for budget proposals for 2014/2015

It was proposed by Cllr (G) Wilson and seconded by Cllr (A) Wilson and **RESOLVED:** that the budget proposals for the General Purposes Committee for 2014/15 be accepted.

The budget proposals is attached to these minutes, Appendix B.

10. To consider the budget proposals for the Finance & Policy Committee for 2014/2015

It was proposed by Cllr Connolly and seconded by Cllr Hale and **RESOLVED:** that the budget proposals for the Finance & Policy Committee for 2014/15 be accepted.

The budget proposals is attached to these minutes, Appendix C.

11. To formulate a resolution to go before General Council on 5th February 2014 for the precept request.

The Finance Officer expressed concern at the proposed spending for 2014/15.

The attached appendices of budget proposals were reviewed by each committee in November 2013. Based on these proposals, the summary on the Finance & Policy spreadsheet shows that the precept request should be set at £183197.00 (which is the figure noted by NFDC) with the additional grant being £12060 – to be set aside for capital projects (the disabled toilet, etc.).

Since these proposals were discussed the following issues have arisen:

- a potential maintenance issue to the town hall roof may need substantial work, which could cost up to £15,000 (based on surveyors report).
- Confirmation is needed of how much grant Fordingbridge Rotary is to pay annually towards the Christmas Lights contract.
- Considerable amounts have been spent on the plans for the Sports facility and Concession building. These will be recouped when the building works commence (to be put back into the Council reserves).
- Grounds maintenance carried out by Contractors (as in Brownsey's Field in 2013/14) at the recreation ground needs to be agreed.
- Remedial works to the play areas may also become an issue but this will be unknown until the water subsides, although there may be potential to make an insurance claim.

The Information Office may be a potential area where savings can be made by moving it from a separate office to the Town Hall.

The Finance Officer recommended that the precept is increased by at least £15000 to ensure that the reserves are not used to fund any of the issues above in 2014/15 as the auditor has already noted the reserves are not adequate for a council of this size.

Members discussed the recommendations made by the Finance Officer and AGREED that money could not be taken from reserves but that the precept should also not be increased. Money needed for the issues listed would to be found from existing budgets.

The Chairman advised members that a 3 monthly budget review will take place during the forthcoming financial year between himself, the Committee Chairman and Finance Officer prior to discussions with members at the next Finance & Policy Committee following those discussions. Any cuts needed to the budget will also be discussed.

NFDC are will continue to pay a main grant to add to the precept but this will stop in 2 years (2016/17). There is no transitional grant paid this year.

For the financial year 2014/2015:

Finance & Policy budget	71,300.00
General Purposes	35,097.00
Amenities	76,800.00
NFDC Main grant	12,060.00
Total required:	195,257.00

Precept amount	183,197.00
Grant amount	12,060.00
Total amount to be requested	195,257.00

It was proposed by Cllr Adams and seconded by Cllr Fulford and **RESOLVED:** that the following amount be requested as the precept for 2014/15: £195,257.00 (to include the grant of £12,060.00).

The Chairman thanked the Finance Officer her hard work in providing concise and clear budget information.

12. To note any items of Correspondence

Section 137 limit – the Government has advised that the appropriate sum for the purpose of Section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act) for parish and town councils in England for 2014/15 is £7.20.

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

Nothing to report.

14. To note the date of the next Finance & Policy meeting as Wednesday 26th February 2014.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm.

Appendix A
Amenities Committee Budget proposals 2014 -15

Amenities				
INCOME	BUDGET	Yr End Forecast	PROPOSED BUDGET	Comment
	2014-2015		2014-2015	
Recreation Ground - Sundry Lets	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,300.00	£ 1,500.00	
Brownsea Land	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Cricket Clubs	£ 150.00	-£ 88.00	£ -	
Rugby Clubs	£ 3,000.00	£ 7,000.00	£ 3,000.00	
Football Clubs	£ 1,325.00	£ 1,325.00	£ 2,000.00	
Whippet Club	£ 750.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	
Refreshment Concession	£ 800.00	£ 583.33	£ 4,500.00	
Fishing/Anglers	£ 700.00	£ 624.38	£ 500.00	
Youth Shelter & Skate Park	£ -	£ 6,250.00	£ -	
Total Income	£ 8,225.00	£ 18,194.71	£ 12,700.00	
EXPENDITURE	BUDGET	Yr End Forecast	PROPOSED BUDGET	
	2014-2015		2014-2015	
Recreation Ground - Staff Costs	£ 34,575.00	£ 40,000.00	£ 42,000.00	
Casual Labour	£ 2,000.00	£ -	£ -	
Recreation Ground - Utilities	£ 5,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,000.00	
Petrol/Road Tax	£ 3,100.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,500.00	
Pavilion	£ 6,000.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	
Recreation Ground Seats	£ 1,000.00	£ 650.00	£ 1,000.00	
Safety Equipment	£ 500.00	£ 100.00	£ 500.00	
Machinery Repairs/Replacement	£ 8,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 6,000.00	
General & Ground Maintenance	£ 15,000.00	£ 19,000.00	£ 18,000.00	
Land and buildings	£ -	£ 6,018.50	£ 500.00	
Brownsea Land	£ -	£ 400.00	£ -	
Youth Projects	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ -	
Floodlights	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	
Children's Play Area	£ 6,000.00	£ 4,500.00	£ 4,500.00	
Youth Shelter	£ -	£ 200.00	£ 500.00	
Skate Park	£ 2,000.00	£ 500.00	£ 2,000.00	
Total Expenditure	£ 84,175.00	£ 88,868.50	£ 89,500.00	
Amount required from Precept	£ 75,950.00		£ 76,800.00	
Presented to F&P 27th November 2013				

Appendix B
General Purposes Budget proposals 2014-15

General Purposes			
	BUDGET	Yr End	PROPOSED
	2013/14	Forecast	BUDGET
			2014/15
INCOME			
Hall Lettings - Sundry	£ 5,500.00	£ 2,200.00	£ 3,000.00
Badminton	£ 700.00	£ 800.00	£ 725.00
Art Clubs	£ 750.00	£ 700.00	£ 400.00
Parish Lengthsman Scheme	£12,000.00	£12,000.00	£ 12,000.00
Burial Fees	£ 8,500.00	£ 8,500.00	£ 8,500.00
St Marys Churchyard	£ 906.00	£ 453.00	£ 453.00
Allotment Rents	£ 650.00	£ 978.00	£ 1,000.00
Playscheme	£ 6,500.00	£ 9,500.00	£ 13,850.00
VIC Income/Misc Sales	£13,500.00	£13,000.00	£ 13,500.00
Total Income	£49,006.00	£48,131.00	£ 53,428.00
EXPENDITURE			
	BUDGET	Yr End	PROPOSED
	2013/14	Forecast	BUDGET
			2014/15
Town Hall - Staff Costs	£ 9,000.00	£11,000.00	£ 10,500.00
Town Hall - Maintenance	£15,000.00	£13,000.00	£ 12,000.00
Town Hall - Utilities	£ 4,300.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 4,600.00
Town Hall - Rates	£ -	£ -	£ -
Town Hall - Clock Maintenance	£ 350.00	£ 350.00	£ 375.00
Playscheme Staff	£ 7,000.00	£ 9,500.00	£ 12,850.00
Playscheme Equipment	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,530.00	£ 2,000.00
VIC Lease	£ 5,000.00	£ 4,750.00	£ 5,000.00
VIC Costs	£22,000.00	£21,000.00	£ 20,000.00
Burial Grounds	£ 8,500.00	£ 7,500.00	£ 7,000.00
Allotments	£ 750.00	£ 600.00	£ 700.00
Memorial Bungalow	£ 500.00	£ 350.00	£ 500.00
Parish Lengthsman Scheme	£12,000.00	£12,000.00	£ 12,000.00
Footpaths/Public Seats	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
Bus Shelters	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
Total Expenditure	£86,900.00	£85,580.00	£ 88,525.00
Amount Required from Precept Presented to F&P 27/11/13	£37,894.00		£ 35,097.00

Appendix C - Finance & Policy Committee Budget proposals 2014-15

	BUDGET	Year End Forecast	Proposed Budget
Finance & Policy	2013/2014		2014/2015
<u>Income</u>			
Precept	£182,200.00	£ 182,200.00	£183,197.00
Grants	£16,226.00	£ 16,226.00	£12,060.00
Interest Received	£0.00	£ 25.00	£0.00
Sundry Income	£0.00	£ -	£0.00
Museum Rent	£500.00	£ 500.00	£500.00
Total Income	£198,926.00	£ 198,951.00	£195,757.00
<u>Expenditure</u>			
	BUDGET	Year End Forecast	Proposed Budget
Office Staff Costs	£34,650.00	£ 37,000.00	£37,000.00
Stationery & Postage	£1,300.00	£ 1,400.00	£1,400.00
Photocopier/copying	£2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£2,500.00
Office - Telephone/IT	£2,000.00	£ 1,600.00	£2,000.00
Staff Gratuities	£500.00	£ -	£0.00
Insurance	£11,500.00	£ 11,585.44	£12,000.00
Subscriptions	£1,500.00	£ 1,200.00	£1,200.00
Staff Training and Expenses	£1,000.00	£ 1,150.00	£1,200.00
Sundries	£0.00	£ -	£0.00
Election Expenses	£0.00	£ -	£0.00
Professional Fees	£1,000.00	£ 3,500.00	£2,500.00
Bank Charges	£0.00	£ -	£0.00
Twinning/Diamond Jubilee	£500.00	£ 250.00	£500.00
Promotion & Advertising	£500.00	£ 300.00	£500.00
Mayors' Allowance/Meetings	£1,000.00	£ 1,000.00	£1,000.00
S137 Grants	£5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£5,000.00
Avonway Grants	£0.00	£ -	£0.00
Business Forum Partnership	£5,000.00	£ 7,500.00	£5,000.00
Community Support	£0.00		£0.00
Total Expenditure	£67,950.00	£73,985.44	£71,800.00
Overall Total			£71,300.00
	F & P		£71,300.00
	GENERAL PURPOSES		£35,097.00
	AMENITIES		£76,800.00
	Capital Projects		£12,060.00
	Total Required		£195,257.00
	Precept Amount		£183,197.00
	Grant Amount		£12,060.00