

**FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee held on**  
**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall**  
**(Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Committee)**

**Present:**

Cllr Connolly – Chairman

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

**In Attendance:**

Mrs H Richards – Town Clerk

Mrs M Coatham – Finance Officer

**1. To receive apologies for absence**

No apologies

**2. To receive Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Adams declared an interest in Agenda item no 5, Monies collected and Payment of Accounts as a supplier to the Council. Cllr Hale declared an interest in Agenda item no.,7 grant application as also a committee member of the Fordingbridge & District Day Centre for the Frail & Housebound – both Councillors remained in the meeting but did not speak or vote on the relevant items.

Cllr Perkins entered the meeting and then declared an interest in Agenda item no 5, Monies collected and Payment of Accounts as a supplier to the Council but remained in the meeting but did not speak or vote on the relevant item.

**3. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and report on any matters arising.**

Cllr (G) Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Anstey and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the Minutes of the meeting of the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2015 be signed as a true record. All voted in favour

**Matters Arising**

Minute no.5 – The Finance Officer reported that quotes were still awaited for the remedial works to the Groundsman's Bungalow.

Following receipt of invoices from BT, the Finance Officer reported that the 2 year broadband contract previously in place at the Information Office had been cancelled by persons unknown and the Council had now been charged a cancellation fee and a further charge for a new contract. Finance Officer to investigate.

**4. To receive any matters raised by Members of the Public**

No Members of the Public present.

## 5. To receive details of Monies Collected and Payment of Accounts

The Finance Officer summarised the financial activity for July during which period there had been no unexpected items. Reminders had been prepared for the outstanding invoices for the hanging baskets with a total of £1,500 outstanding. A cheque had been received from the Whippet Club for their festival in June. Regarding expenditure, invoices had been paid for the completion of pitch maintenance works by WWCS and an invoice of £232 relating to the serving of a notice on the Travellers at the Recreation Ground. A query was raised over expenditure at the Kiosk – the Finance Officer confirmed this related to repair works required following the attempted break-in. The Defects Liability Period is due to end in August – Town Clerk and Finance Officer to liaise regarding outstanding defects & release of retention sum.

## Budgets

The Finance Officer summarised the budgets and highlighted that:

General Purposes – Burial Income increased and will be up at year end due to re-introduction of charge for purchase of grave rights. Town Hall budget may be overspent as repairs are urgently required to the roof.

Amenities – Kiosk rental payment due.

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

### General Purposes Committee

- Review of Allotment Fees for 2015/16  
Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Hale and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the rental charge for a half plot be raised from, £12.50 to £15.00 per annum with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015.
- Amended Allotment Rules & Regulations & Tenancy Agreement  
Cllr (G) Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Adams and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the revised Allotment Rules and Regulations and Tenancy Agreement be adopted subject to the following amendment to the Tenancy Agreement:

Insert “*hereinafter called the Tenant*” following the tenants name in the first paragraph.

- St Marys Footpath

The Chairman reported on recent further correspondence with St Mary’s Church regarding the replacement and upgrading of the footpath through the churchyard. A response had been received that while the Diocesan Advisory Committee had agreed in principle, no funding would be forthcoming from the Diocesan and a strict specification would need to be adhered to. The chairman advised members that the Town Council would not be in a position to fund this project. Following discussion Members AGREED to hold this in abeyance until further clarification had been obtained from the church. Cllr Fulford stated that recent activity within

the churchyard appeared to have been carried out without any formal specification; furthermore the church could apply for grant funding regarding improvements to disabled access.

- Footpath 97

The clerk gave an update regarding Footpath No. 97, currently closed due to the presence of badgers. A proposal had been made by the Countryside Access Team, following advice from Natural England, which would provide a boardwalk over the badger sett and would enable the path to be re-opened. A request for funding had been received and the Clerk had looked at various grant funding availability – grants would not be available in order to carry out the works this year (September/October) and it was unclear of the amount being sought – Town Clerk to contact the Countryside Access Team to request clarification.

### **7. To consider the following grant applications:**

- Fordingbridge & District Day Centre for the Frail & Housebound

Members discussed this application including the fact that Alderholt & Sandheath residents also used the Centre. However both Parishes have also contributed grant funding to the Centre.

Cllr (G) Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Adams and therefore **RESOLVED** that the sum of £350.00 be awarded to Fordingbridge & District Day Centre for the Frail & Housebound. 11 in favour – Cllr Hale did not speak or vote due to declared interest.

### **8. To appoint contractor for the Play Area Enhancement Scheme**

The Finance Officer reported on site visits carried out at reference sites for the 2 short-listed providers. Following further clarification and concerns raised regarding the Customer Service received from one of the companies over repairs to existing play equipment, it was recommended that Proludic be chosen as the successful supplier. Cllr Anstey proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore **RESOLVED** that Proludic Ltd be selected as the supplier of the new Play Area Enhancement at the Recreation Ground – quotation £40,000 less £1,000 discount offered for placing of order in July. All voted in favour.

### **9. To receive an update of the Playscheme 2015**

The Finance Officer reported that the following grants had been awarded towards the Playscheme:

- New Forest DC - £1,800 (received)
- Hampshire CC - £2,300 (awaited)

It is estimated that the contribution required from the Town Council will be less than £1,500 (subject to receipt of all expense claims).

### **10. To receive an update on the Audit Report**

The Finance Officer reported on additional queries raised following the Audit Report, this related particularly to the spending of S106 Developer Contribution monies and minuted evidence of agreement to spend funds.

**11. To note any items of Correspondence**

The Clerk reported that a letter of thanks had been received from Fordingbridge Carer Hub in respect of the £300 grant awarded.

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

The Clerk informed the meeting that a significant sum would be required for repair works to the Town Hall roof. The Finance & Policy Committee at their meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2014 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]*" This work has not been carried out - Town Clerk to discuss with Finance Officer once quotes obtained.

The Clerk also reported that following the Fire Risk Assessment, an Electrical System Report is overdue for the Town Hall and should be carried out without delay. Cllr Anstey proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Perkins and therefore **RESOLVED**: that an Electrical System Check is carried out as soon as possible and quotes obtained for any essential remedial works identified by the report.

The Chairman then advised the meeting that following recent discussions with interested parties (Sports Club and relevant associations) funding could not be found for the proposed new build Sports Facility at the Recreation Ground. Both Hampshire County Council and New Forest District Council are unable to offer any grants. It is also unlikely that funds can be secured from Sporting Organisations towards the cost of the project in its current form and there appeared to be no common ground between the Football and Rugby Clubs requirements. The developers contribution re-allocated from the MUGA project could be put back to the original project for a MUGA. Finance Officer/Town Clerk to contact New Forest District Council.

In order to move the project forward consideration was now being given to other options including complete refurbishment of the existing changing room facilities or a smaller re-build of the pavilion. Grants towards these options would be more obtainable. The existing Sports Club building would remain, however the Club are exploring ways of making improvements.

Members also discussed the expenditure on the project so far for architects fees, planning permission etc. which would be wasted. It was considered that this could be a Community Build with contributions from local suppliers, contractors and groups.

**13. To note the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2015**

The meeting closed at 8.53pm