

D R A F T

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 30th April 2014 at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall, Fordingbridge

Present:

Cllr Connolly – Chairman

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

In attendance:

Mrs M Coatham, Finance Officer

Mrs H Richards, Town Clerk

1. To accept apologies for absence

There were apologies from Cllrs Perkins & Lewendon

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 25th March 2014 and report any matters arising.

Cllr Anstey proposed and Cllr Fulford seconded and it was **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on 25th March 2014 be signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

Building Valuation - Martine Coatham reported that the Valuation for the Pavilion was awaited from Woolley & Wallis.

Playscheme 2014 - The Town Clerk & Finance Officer had met with the scheme organiser, Sue Little who is applying to NFDC for a 2nd Grant. The School costs are also awaited. It was AGREED that this item should be discussed at the May meeting of the General Purposes Committee.

Insurance – a quote for a premium of £6,877.28 per annum for a 3 year term had been accepted from Zurich.

Army Cadets – Cllr Connolly gave thanks to the Councillors who had attended the Army Cadets event on 2nd April 2014.

WCDDT Quote £10,500 – It was AGREED that the membership of AMT and Fundraising guidance/support (£350.00 per day) should be taken to the next Sports meeting. (AMT could also be approached for help with Neighbourhood Planning and requirements over the next year.

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

No matters were raised.

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

The Finance Officer reported to members that a large expenditure was expected as the Front Deck had been delivered. Ongoing requests had been made to secure refunds from Direct Tech/SMS for overpayments on Direct Debits. A bank statement had been received for Sandy Balls Charity which had not been active for many years and the Finance Officer proposed to close the account and transfer the remaining balance to be used for grant payments.

A subscription renewal request had been received from Hampshire Playing Fields Association and it was AGREED not to renew the Council's membership.

Audit Report – The Auditor had visited today and a draft report had been received with the following recommendations:

- The Council notes the limit on recovery on VAT on “business exempt” activities and the particular impact this may have in respect of capital projects.

The RFO advised members of the VAT implications on the new Concession Building and the management of it, particularly if the building is to be leased. It was AGREED that the management of the building should be discussed by the Amenities Committee at its meeting on 21st May 2014 with a recommendation to Finance & Policy Committee on 28th May 2014.

- The Council reviews its arrangements for the management of risk. In particular it should consider whether it would be advantageous to establish a central risk register.

It was AGREED that the RFO and Town Clerk will establish a Risk Register.

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

No referrals from sub-committees

7. To conduct an annual review of the Section 137 grant application policy

Members considered the Grant Award Policy and requested clarification of the criteria that *Grants will only be considered for Capital Cost of new or improved facilities or equipment*. It was AGREED that the Town Clerk would seek clarification on any restrictions.

8. To consider the following grant applications:

Citizens Advice Bureau: - Members discussed the application and it was AGREED that the Town Clerk should write to request further clarification of opening times of Fordingbridge CAB and other money received by the organisation.

9. To review the Standing Orders & Financial Regulations

Members reviewed the Financial Regulations and considered the following points:

- whether the two signature rule should be retained
- whether dual authorisation should be required for online payments

It was AGREED that the two signature rule should be retained, that dual authorisation would not be adopted as this could hamper Faster Payments during periods of absence and that all other Financial Regulations remain the same.

Members reviewed the Standing Orders and Councillor Fulford requested that Members note Orders 1 c, d, e & f relating to Public participation in meetings and restrictions in this respect.

It was AGREED that the Standing Orders will remain unchanged.

10. To conduct the annual review of the following policies:

- Complaints procedure – no changes made
- Freedom of Information Publication Scheme – no changes made
- Data Protection Policy – no changes made
- Press & Media Policy – no changes made

11. To conduct the annual review of the Terms of Reference of the following Committees:

- Amenities - to be reviewed by Amenities Committee
- Disability Access – Cllr Fulford proposed & Cllr Connolly seconded and it was RESOLVED that: this sub-committee be incorporated into General Purposes Committee
- Finance & Policy - No change
- General Purposes – To be reviewed regarding inclusion of the Information Office & Terms of Reference relating to the Disability Access Committee – report back to Finance & Policy Committee

- Planning – No Change
- Staff & Remuneration – No change
- Transport – no change

12. To review the Code of Conduct for Councillors

No change - Code of Conduct in line with NFDC Code.

13. To discuss Allowances (Expenses) for Town Councillors

Councillor G Wilson proposed and Councillor Paton seconded and it was RESOLVED that: For a 3 month trial period with immediate effect and with the exception of Councillor Price, Agendas and Minutes would only be distributed electronically, with a hardcopy being made available for Members at meetings. All Members present voted in favour except Cllr Price who voted against.

14. To discuss the Information Office Risk Assessment

Members considered the report prepared by Helen Woodvine, former Strategic Health & Safety Officer, NFDC following a visit to the Information Office in January 2014. Members felt that an excellent and valuable service had been provided since the opening of the office and partnership in February 2013. The risks highlighted in the report cannot be ignored and all recommendations should be explored. Councillor Heron (NFDC) had previously agreed to share any costs involved in enhancement works. The report also provided an alternative solution – to relocate the Information Office within the Town Hall. It was AGREED that the Town Clerk would inform the Information Office Staff of the findings of the report and would arrange for the Mayor and herself to meet with representatives from NFDC.

15. To note any items of Correspondence

Scout Group – Confirmation received that the Scouts will be unable to hold a Car Boot Sale during the summer as previously approved by the Town Council.

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

Nothing to report

17. To note the date of the next Finance & Policy meeting as Wednesday 28th May 2014.

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.