

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a General Council Meeting held on 6th November 2012 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

NFDC Cllr Bellows

Mr P Elbro and 6 members of the Fordingbridge Entertainment Society

Prior to the meeting, Peter Elbro and members of the Entertainments Society presented a cheque to the Town Council for the balance of the cost of the projector. Peter Elbro explained that since the projector and screen had been fitted two years ago the average audience had risen from 75 to 105 persons. In the last 2 years £7k of tickets were sold with a large percentage of the money going back into the town paying for other services supporting the events. Live broadcasts of the proms, Royal Wedding and Olympics had also been popular and matinees were taking place prior to each evening film screening.

The Mayor thanked the Entertainment Group for their hard work and congratulated them on providing such popular entertainment for the residents of Fordingbridge and surrounding parishes.

Mr Elbro and Entertainment Society members left the meeting.

1. Apologies

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Shering, NFDC Cllr Sevier and HCC Cllr Heron.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2012 and report on any matters arising

It was proposed by Cllr (G) Wilson and seconded by Cllr Lewendon that the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2012 be signed as a true record. All in favour, Carried.

Matters arising

Green Lane road closure – Cllr Lewendon advised that the quality of the work carried out on the pavements was poor leaving them sloping which would prove dangerous when icy. At one point a drop curb had been made using a straight curb stone set at an angle instead of the proper piece. The Clerk to report the problems to Cllr Edward Heron.

Pharmacy on Bridge St – the Chairman confirmed that there were rumours about the town that Bridge Street would be narrowed or a zebra crossing would be put in place to aid those crossing the road by the Pharmacy. Both these suggestions were illegal because of the vicinity of the mini roundabout and that no road alterations would be taking place.

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 Lewendon reported that youngsters on scramble bikes were using Marl Lane and other lanes, particularly on a Sunday, which was causing problems. The Mayor advised that the police were aware.

Fireworks - The Clerk reported that a concerned resident had reported an impromptu firework display on Council land next to Sweatfords Water, by Beacon Court, on the Parsonage Park estate. The police were aware.

6. To receive a report from the Town Mayor.

4th October – I attended a New Forest Association of Town & Parish Councils meeting

5th October – I attended the Western Downland School in Rockbourne for the opening of their Ludus Garden (place of learning)

8th October – I spoke with Age Concern who are working towards opening a multi-agency unit on the High Street

18th October – I went to the Fordingbridge Infants School to discuss the duties of being mayor with the children!

27th October – I attended Bryanston School in Dorset to listen to Hyde Band and Shaftesbury Drama group

7. To receive a report from the County Councillor.

Cllr Heron was absent.

8. To receive a report from the District Councillors

Cllr Bellows had nothing to report.

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

Planning Committee held on the 9th October 2012 - Cllr Fulford presented the minutes which were noted and received.

Finance & Policy Committee held on the 30th October 2012 – Cllr Adams presented the minutes.

Life Education Wessex – request for a grant. Cllr Connolly reported that he had spoken to the head teacher of the Infant School, Mr M Beale, who verified the work of Life Education Wessex, as they worked with the school last year. The Clerk confirmed the grant application had been placed on the forthcoming Finance & Policy Committee agenda.

The minutes were noted and received.

10. To report on any Health & Safety Issues.

No issues were reported.

Cllr Anstey reminded members that the responsibility for Health & Safety within the Council was down to the members and staff and not individuals.

11. To discuss proposed Concession building plans and proposals

This item will be first discussed by the Amenities Committee at their meeting on 20th November 2012.

12. To receive a report on the Late Night Shopping event, 7th December 2012

Cllr (G) Wilson reported that she had collected donations of £1320 from local traders and organisations towards the costs of the event. More money was due to be pledged and costs were covered.

The arrangements were all in hand and many local organisations were taking part. A children's carousel had been booked, together with reindeer and Santa's grotto. There will also be a 'Where's Rudolph?' competition using shop frontages and window displays.

The Chairman thanked Cllr (G) Wilson for her hard work in organising the event.

13. Code of Local Government Data Transparency consultation

The Clerk advised that there was to be a consultation by the Government, which closes on the 20th December, concerning the transparency of local government data. This will make the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency enforceable by regulations. The Clerk explained that this could have a resource implication on councils that were the size of Fordingbridge Town Council. The item will be on the agenda for discussion at the next General Council meeting on 4th December. The Chairman confirmed that it was also being discussed by the New Forest Association of Local Town & Parish Councils.

14. receive reports from representatives on outside bodies

Cllr Hale reported that he had attended two Trustee meetings of the Victoria Rooms. The Hallway is being re-decorated and a £500 grant has been received from Cllr Heron. The Friends of the Victoria Rooms raised £373 at two events. The Forest Forge are putting on a play on 11th January 2013. Money has been allocated to replace the noticeboard at the front of the building.

Conservation Group – Cllr Hale advised that there will be two working parties taking place on 10th and 19th November at Bishops Pond between 2 and 4pm.

Cllr Fulford – attended a meeting of the Fordingbridge Children's Centres where the committee met with a representative of Action for Children who are now managing the centres across Hampshire. Fordingbridge and Ringwood Centres are now classed as one and will have one Ofsted inspection. Rosie Wilcox is managing three centres, Ringwood, New Milton and Fordingbridge but can only spend one day a week at Fordingbridge. There are currently staff shortages. Some of the services previously provided will now have to be paid for by parents.

The Community Management Committee meeting at Burgate was cancelled.

Cllr Anstey – met with Michael Weakley, architect for the new Sports Club facility on a very busy Saturday which showed the large number of team members, supporters and families of various sports which use the Sports Club following matches.

Christmas Lights – Cllr Anstey voiced concern, having spoken to Martyn Calver of Rotary, for future of the Christmas lights in Fordingbridge. The overall cost and number of inspections were increasing and there didn't seem to be anyone willing to take over the job of organising the lights for future years. Members needed to consider a budget for the next 2 years.

Cllr Connolly agreed and suggested that the Council investigate the costs of hiring the lights. Cllr (G) Wilson said she was in contact with a member of Verwood Town Council who was going to let her have costings of contractors who provide their lights which she would bring to the Finance & Policy Committee.

Cllr Lewendon – attended a meeting at Fordingbridge Hospital. The agreement with the Surgery to rent rooms in the Arch Clinic has been delayed as the Surgery solicitors have asked for more money.

Air Cadets- are holding a Craft Fair on Saturday 24th November in the Town Hall.

Cllr Shering – advised by email, she had attended a meeting of the Friends of Fordingbridge Hospital on 5th November.

Various sums of money have been donated to other organisations: £500 to Fordingbridge Stroke Club, £3000 to First Responders and £5000 towards the new Minibus for Avonway Community Centre.

There is to be an Open Day on Ford Ward on Sat. 10th Nov 2-4 pm.

Concern was raised about the advancing age of the members, with health concerns meaning that almost all of them were unable to do as much as before. With lack of new younger members it is difficult to see how the organisation might continue. Already it has been decided that the annual fete is too much for them to organise next year.

Student Councillors - Cllr Fulford asked if the project to encourage students at Burgate School to become young councillors was progressing. Cllr Connolly advised that he was waiting for the school to respond. The Clerk to chase.

Cyclists - Cllr Connolly voiced the concerns of local parishes in the Forest regarding the anti-social behaviour of some cyclists who take part in the large races and 'lone' cyclists who ride cross country away from tracks. It was highlighted again at the NPA Quadrant meeting which took place at the Town Hall on Monday 5th November.

11. To note any items of correspondence

Precept decisions – NALC have highlighted the need for the current Localism Bill 2011 legislation to allow members with an interest to take part in meetings related to the setting of the Council's precept. As most Councillors are likely to be Council tax payers for their area most will have a Declarable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in setting a precept. The previous legislation which allowed for this was removed with the introduction of the Localism Bill. The Clerk will advise at the Finance & Policy meeting on 30th November.

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

Nothing to report.

13. To note the date of the next General Council meeting as Tuesday 4th December 2012

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.