

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on Wednesday 31st January 2018 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall (Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Committee)

Present: Cllr Connolly, Chairman

Cllrs Price, Lewendon, Paton, Anstey, Adams, Fulford, Wilson, Earth & Hale

In attendance:

Mrs H Richards, Town Clerk

Mrs M Coatham, Finance Officer (RFO)

Mr M Walker, Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

The chairman opened and requested that Members agree a change of order of the Agenda to allow for item 7 (Grants) to be dealt with earlier to allow Mr Walker to leave the meeting. Members Agreed.

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs White and Perkins.

2. To receive declarations of interest

No declarations received

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd January 2018 and report on any matters arising

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Paton and therefore **RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd January 2018 be signed as a true record. All in favour.

Cllr Adams entered the meeting

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

Nothing raised.

7. To consider the following S137 Grant Application

- Citizens Advice Bureau

The Chairman introduced Mr Walker, who has recently taken over as Chief Executive of the New Forest CAB. Mr Walker gave a brief history of the CAB in Fordingbridge and also of the current varied services offered including healthcare support (Macmillan Nurse) – the branch is eager to continue providing a service on 2 days a week in the Town. One problem faced is the reduction in the accommodation available and Mr Walker asked members to consider any alternatives – a suggestion was made of enquiring at the Salvation Army Hall.

Members agreed that the services offered were invaluable to the town and members of the community in need.

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Anstey and therefore **RESOLVED:** to offer the New Forest Citizens Advice Bureau a grant of **£500.00** – all in favour.

Mr Walker left the meeting

3. Minutes 3rd January 2018 continued Matters Arising

Minute no. 6 – the Clerk informed the meeting that an independent Event Committee had now been formed (with its own constitution) and gave details of Officers. A Working Group had also been set up to organise the Summer Festival.

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

- General Purposes Committee 17.01.18 – Town Hall Fee Proposal

Cllr Hale reported on the recent activity of the Accommodation Working Party, the report prepared by the Finance Officer and the fee proposal received from Sheerin Bettle Associates (SBA) for professional advice on options available to provide accommodation for all officers at the Town Hall.

Cllr Fulford advised members that this would be a good opportunity as Kevin Jones from SBA was already engaged by the Council as Principal Designer on the project to carry out works to the Roof and Clock Tower – building works and listed building applications could possibly be carried out as one project. Cllr Fulford also reminded members that the Accommodation Working Party was commissioned by the Finance & Policy Committee and should report directly to that Committee not General Purposes.

Cllr Connolly proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon to accept the fee proposal for professional advice from Sheerin Bettle Associates in the sum of **£1875.00 + VAT**.

9 in favour & 1 abstention

The Finance Officer suggested that a timeline is agreed with SBA for completion of the preparation of options to avoid further delays.

6. To receive details of Monies Collected and Payments Made

The Finance Officer summarised the accounts for January and members noted the following items:

Kiosk Lease – Rent instalment received – RFO to chase response from Solicitor

Whippets – ½ year payment received

Other Sports clubs – payment reminders needed

STN Invoice & contribution from Businessman to be clarified

Xmas lights insurance claim – meeting with contractor to discuss issues

Ellis Whittam – 1st Annual Payment due

8.10pm Cllr Adams declared an interest as a supplier to the Council on payment of accounts but remained in the meeting.

The RFO summarised the activities on the budgets and highlighted the following items; General Purposes - Burial Income down, Play scheme 2017 grant monies not received from HCC (RFO investigating but could mean that Play scheme cannot run in 2018 unless fees are doubled)

Amenities – Income down (football pitch bookings down)

8. To review the Risk Register

The RFO advised members of the need to review this document fully for sign off at General Council in March. Members agreed to defer this item until Finance & Policy committee meeting on 28th February 2018.

9. To agree appointment of Data Protection Officer

The clerk reported on recent training undertaken regarding the General Data Protection Regulations due to come into force in May 2018. An information sheet and publication from the Information Commissioners Office was distributed to Members and the Clerk summarised the requirements. The Councils internal auditor, Kevin Rose, IAC, had put forward a proposal offering a service as Data Protection Officer (whose job it is to ensure compliance) at a cost of £75.00 per annum for 3 years.

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Paton and therefore **RESOLVED**: to accept the proposal from Kevin Rose, IAC to be engaged as Data Protection Officer for the Council for 3 years at a cost of **£75.00 per annum**.

10. To receive an update on the Lengthsman Scheme

The RFO advised that Hampshire County Council had confirmed that while they would like each parish to spend its full allocation, it is appreciated that this is not possible in some parishes. It is therefore acceptable to spend the funds across other parishes who have more work for the lengthsman. Funding has been confirmed for the scheme to continue in the next financial year 2018-19.

11. To note any items of correspondence

No items of correspondence to report

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

The Clerk gave an update on the repair Project on the Town Hall and advised that it had been necessary to review the design of the support tower and therefore receipt of quotes had been delayed further.

13. To note the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 28th February 2018

The meeting closed at 8.30pm