

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 30th October 2013 at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall, Fordingbridge

Present:

Cllr Connolly – Chairman

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

In attendance:

Mrs M Coatham, Finance Officer

Ms. K Mason, Town Clerk

In the absence of Cllr Connolly at the beginning of the meeting, Cllr Adams took the chair.

1. To accept apologies for absence

There were apologies from Cllrs Fulford, Perkins & Price

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

Cllrs 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 29th September and report any matters arising.

Cllr Anstey proposed and Cllr Adams seconded and it was **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2013 be signed as a true record subject to the following changes:

The meeting was held on the 25th September *not* the 29th as indicated at the top of the minutes.

Matters arising

10. 106 agreement bids for projects – the Clerk advised that following a meeting of officers and members of the District Council to discuss the various S106 allocations required for next year, there had been a request for further clarification of the projects by NFDC. A meeting was being arranged.

12. Middle Bronze Age Burial Urn – Cllr Buchanan advised members that he had arranged for the urn to be CT scanned at John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford by Consultant Mr S Chakraborty. This will show the urn contents without disturbing them.

The Clerk advised that Prof Tim Darvill and Dr Martin Smith from Bournemouth University had examined the urn and visited Stuckton Road Cemetery. They proposed that an undergraduate student do a geophysical survey of the ploughed out barrows and examine the urn as part of a BSc thesis.

Cllr Buchanan suggested that the urn then be displayed in Fordingbridge and could perhaps be the focus for a Tourism programme to attract visitors.

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.

Fordingbridge Art Club – the Finance Officer advised that Fordingbridge Art Club were disputing the cost of hiring the Hall for their 2 week art exhibition as scaffolding was erected around the Town Hall at the time and they considered that this had limited the number of visitors to the exhibition. Scaffolding was erected to facilitate the painting of the outside of the Hall. No date for the work had been agreed, the contractor determining when the weather conditions were suitable.

The total hire charge payable is £320. A cheque had been sent by the Art Club for £180 but had not been cashed. The Finance Officer had written to the Art Club advising that the matter would be discussed by members while the cheque was being held.

Following discussion, Members AGREED to offer a 10% reduction of the total hall hire fee.

Fishing Permits – the income received for fishing permits will be down as the Post Office no longer sell them. It was AGREED to continue to sell permits from the Information Office and Town Hall Office and to put posters up to advertising the change of venue for tickets.

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

There were no matters received from Committees.

7. Changes to Financial Regulations

The following changes to Financial Regulations were discussed.

- 5.2 A schedule of the payments (cheques and online payments) required, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting, shall be prepared by the RFO and together with the relevant invoices, initialled by the Chair of Finance & Policy Committee, be presented to the Finance & Policy Committee. If the schedule is in order it shall be authorised by a resolution and shall be initialled by the Chairman of the Meeting. Appropriate detail may be shown in the Minutes of the Meeting.
- 5.3 Cheques drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule referred to in paragraph 5.2 or in accordance with paragraph 6.4, shall be signed by two members of Council or one member and the Clerk or RFO.
- 5.4 To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 5.5 Faster payments (online bank transfers) shall be authorised by the RFO and the Chair of Finance & Policy Committee online as a dual authorisation.
- 5.6 Petty cash to a maximum amount of £200 shall be held by the Town Council Office. This shall be audited by the RFO every quarter and signed off by the Chairman of Finance & Policy Committee.
- 5.7 Petty cash to a maximum amount of £100 shall be held by the Information Office. This shall be audited by the RFO every quarter and signed off by the Chairman of Finance & Policy Committee.
- 5.8 A credit card with a maximum credit limit of £750 shall be held by the Town Council Office for online purchases. Any purchases made shall be recorded on an appropriate form provided by the RFO and signed off by a member of the Finance and Policy Committee. The RFO each month shall reconcile the payments with the credit card statement which shall be approved and signed off by the Chair of Finance & Policy Committee.

7 PAYMENT OF SALARIES & PENSIONS

7.1 The payment of all salaries and pensions shall be made in accordance with staff contracts of employment, payroll records, the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and the Local Government Pensions Scheme. The salaries and pensions shall be as agreed by Council.

7.2 Payment of pensions and salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, may be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates, provided that each payment is reported to and ratified by the next available Council Meeting.

8 LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

8.1 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with Council policy.

8.2 The Council's Investment Policy shall be in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 and Fordingbridge Town Council Financial Regulations and shall be reviewed on an annual basis.

It was proposed by Cllr Adams and seconded by Cllr Lewendon and **RESOLVED:** that the changes be made to Financial Regulations.

Cllr Connolly entered the meeting.

8. To consider the following grant applications:

Fordingbridge Turks Football Team – Members discussed the application.

It was proposed by Cllr Hale and seconded by Cllr (G) Wilson and **RESOLVED:** that a grant of £300 be given to Fordingbridge Turks Football Team. Cllr Connolly abstained.

9. To discuss proposed costs of hanging baskets and planters in the Town for 2014.

Members discussed the provision of hanging baskets and 4 planters throughout the town. It was agreed that it was a worthwhile amenity and made the town attractive for both visitors and parishioners.

Baskets had cost £45 each and each planter cost £375. The Town Council purchased 18 baskets and paid for two planters to be planted. Other baskets were purchased by local businesses. The overall cost of the scheme was £6k. Members acknowledged that the scheme needed to be underwritten by the Town Council in order to continue.

It was AGREED to underwrite the scheme for 2014 and to encourage and support fundraising throughout the town.

10. To discuss the provision of a Playscheme in 2014.

The Playscheme this year was deemed a success and had kept to the budget. Sue Little has applied for a grant from HCC for the Playscheme 2014 for £7k. This will be determined at the end of January 2014.

The Clerk advised that the Council would need to underwrite the scheme as although grants would be applied for, much of the income was dependent on the number of children attending and this was unknown. Members acknowledged the need for better publicity of the scheme.

It was AGREED to underwrite the scheme for 2014.

11. To note any items of Correspondence

New Forest Information Service & Forest Forge Theatre Company – letters of thanks had been received for the grants paid.

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

Nothing to report

13. To note the date of the next Finance & Policy meeting as Wednesday 27th November 2013.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm.