

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 24th September 2014 at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall, Fordingbridge

Present:

Cllr Connolly – Chairman

Cllrs Adams, Anstey, Fulford, Hale, Paton, Price, Earth, (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 Lewendon & Perkins

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

Cllr Adams declared an interest in Agenda Item 5, Monies Collected and Payment of Accounts

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 27th August 2014 and report any matters arising.

Cllr (G) Wilson proposed and Cllr Paton seconded and it was **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th August 2014 be signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

Minute No.9 – Protocol for Recording & Use of Social Media at Council Meetings – See Agenda Item 8

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 advised members of the following Budget items:

Amenities – Income from the Recreation Ground has been low – Meeting planned for Friday 3rd October with Cllrs Connolly & Anstey, The Town Clerk & The Finance Officer.

Items of expenditure include replacement swings for the recreation ground (in accordance with the ROSPA report), purchase of sound equipment for the Town Hall (although this will be paid by Fordingbridge Entertainment Society) currently experiencing problems with supply and order may be cancelled. One or both of the Council's vehicles will need replacing in the near future, members raised the need for 2 vehicles– Finance Officer and Town Clerk to discuss provision.

General Purposes – Expenses for the allotments are higher, Town Hall maintenance, spend will be during winter months, Seats & Bus Shelters – need to agree replacements

Finance & Policy – Subscriptions are higher this year. Business Forum will be overspent due to Christmas Lighting not provided last year.

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

No referrals received

7. To consider the following grant applications:

- New Forest Disability Information Service – Members considered the request for grant aid and agreed that this was a valuable service which should be supported. Cllr (G) Wilson

proposed and Cllr Adams seconded and it was therefore **RESOLVED**: that a grant of **£100.00** be given to New Forest Disability Information Service.

- Avon Valley Concerts – Members considered the request for a Grant of £500.00. Cllr Fulford proposed and Cllr Anstey seconded and it was therefore **RESOLVED**: that a grant of **£150.00** be given to Avon Valley Concerts.

8. To agree a protocol for Recording and the use of Social Media at Council Meetings.

Members considered the National Association of Local Council's Guidance regarding this item and AGREED to Suspend the Council's Standing Order 1 (l) "*Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is not permitted without the Council's prior (written) consent.*"

until such time as it has been replaced.

This item will be referred to the Finance and Policy Committee at the meeting on 29th October 2014.

9. To approve Employer Discretions & Policies regarding Pensions

Members considered the draft Retirement & Pension Policy compiled by the Finance Officer. Cllr Connolly proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Paton and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the Policy be adopted as written.

10. To discuss and agreed the procedure for receiving reports from representatives on outside Bodies at General Council

Cllr Fulford raised this item as the current procedure of providing written reports does not give as much feedback to Members as an oral presentation can – reports can lack description, vigour and a flavour of the subject(s) discussed. Oral presentations should be subject to a time limit (2-3 minutes each Member) in order to avoid lengthy meetings and the Chairman would have discretion to end a presentation. Members AGREED to adopt a flexible approach to reporting for a trial period of 3 months – this would ensure that Members could opt to provide a Written Report or present their report orally – Members to advise Clerk which option prior to meeting.

11. To note any items of Correspondence

The Clerk reported that two items of correspondence had been received giving thanks for Grants awarded – These were received from:

- New Forest Citizens Advice Bureau
- Fordingbridge and District Day Centre for the Frail and Housebound

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

Nothing to report from the Clerk.

The Finance Officer reported that the Grant Application in connection with the new Sports Facility submitted to Sports England yesterday, had been accepted and would now progress to the second stage.

The Chairman reported that the Agent for the new owner of Fordingbridge Club had indicated that other premises may be purchased within the Town by the Company who would then let the premises to new traders – this would bring new businesses into the Town. This could also link with the intention to form a Business Improvement District (BID) in Fordingbridge and consideration was being given to this.

The Chairman also reported that a letter had been received from Cllr E Heron regarding the old toilet block at the Recreation Ground and the request by It's Your choice Youth Group to use this building once decommissioned. Cllr Heron had indicated that Grant Funding may be available for works to be carried out. Members agreed that Youth Groups need help to

provide their services and Cllr Connolly agreed to respond to Cllr Heron requesting funding to be sought.

13. To note the date of the next Finance & Policy meeting as 29th October 2014

The meeting ended at 8.35pm.