

**Minutes of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday, 22nd January 2014
at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall**

PRESENT:

Cllr. G. Wilson (Chairman)
Cllrs Adams, Hale, Price, Connolly & (A) Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllrs Anstey, Lewendon, Perkins
Ms R Croker, Footpath Officer.
4 Members of the Public
Miss D Vine, Assistant Town Clerk

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Cllr Buchanan

2. To receive any declarations of interest

None received

3. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on the 20th November 2013 and report on any matters arising

It was proposed by Cllr Price and seconded by Cllr Adams and **RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 20th November 2013 be signed as a true record.

Matters arising.

Replacement white goods for the kitchen

Cllr (G) Wilson confirmed that the dishwasher had been purchased and installed.

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

The Assistant Clerk advised that Peter Elbro from Moving Images had requested that his talk on provision of new speakers for the Main Hall be postponed to a future date.

5. To report on Matters concerning St Mary's Closed Churchyard and Stuckton Road Cemetery

Cllr (G) Wilson advised that a meeting had taken place on the 9th January between Steve Jones and Colin Mansbridge from NFDC, Cllr (G) Wilson, the Clerk and Assistant Clerk to discuss cemetery responsibility.

St Mary's - Currently NFDC pay Fordingbridge TC to maintain the grass and hedge cutting in St Mary's Churchyard, an arrangement which is likely to continue. The question mark over responsibility for tree maintenance in the Churchyard has now been removed as Steve Jones has advised that these will come under NFDC's maintenance and inspection programme. The PCC have been advised.

Stuckton Road – Steve Jones advised that he believed that Stuckton Road cemetery was owned and the responsibility of NFDC according to a plan he had, although he had no documentation to confirm this or any known agreements for maintenance. Following further searches of archive material held in the Fordingbridge Town Council office, a Land Certificate dated 1983 was found which confirmed that NFDC does own the land.

A response is awaited from NFDC as to what they propose in respect of future maintenance costs and grave allocation which to date have been the responsibility of Fordingbridge Town Council. Cllr Connolly commented that he hoped agreement could be reached with regard to a repayment charge being made by NFDC to Fordingbridge Town Council to continue

maintenance. Cllr (A) Wilson asked who would pay if further land was required for burials and it was confirmed that it would be the responsibility of NFDC to purchase more land.

Cllr Perkins entered the Meeting

6. To report on any matters relating to the Town Hall

Town Hall Roof Repairs – Cllr (G) Wilson reported that following the torrential rain and strong winds water staining had been noticed on the ceiling of the Council Chamber. An initial short report had been carried out by Dave Coatham (MRICS) and circulated to Members identifying areas which could be a contributory factor to the damage and overall repair could potentially be expensive. Enquiries will be made of the insurance company as to whether any claim can be submitted for storm damage. In the meantime quotations are being obtained to give an idea of what cost may be involved should an insurance claim not be successful.

The Clock Tower had also suffered from the extreme weather from water ingress through the clock face. It was also noted at the meeting that water staining had recently appeared on the rear right hand side of the wall in the main hall. Cllr (G) Wilson advised members that it would be necessary to make a recommendation at the next Finance & Policy Meeting for money to be made available for repairs. Members expressed concern at the level of repair work needed and the possible impact on the precept request for the next financial year. Cllr (G) Wilson advised that until quotes had been received it would be difficult to know whether there would be an impact on the precept.

Disabled Toilet Upgrade - At the Finance & Policy meeting on the 27th November 2013 It was agreed that this matter be referred back to this meeting of the General Purposes Committee to determine a programme of refurbishment and costings. It had been suggested that this should be part of a long term plan to fit with the current budget decisions and the Finance Officer has suggested that a sum of £3,000 per year should be put aside over the next 3 years. It was AGREED that this recommendation is made at the Finance & Policy meeting on the 29th January 2013.

One quote for approximately £20,000 had been received for the complete refurbishment. Cllr Adams was unhappy at the proposals shown on the quotation and asked that plans be drawn up which could then be debated by members and agreed before further quotations were obtained. Members agreed that as this was a long term plan the principle was to establish that funds needed to be put aside and the detail would then be discussed further at a later date.

7. To report on any matters concerning footpaths

Riverside Development, Salisbury St – Neil Williamson from NFDC had visited Riverside Place and taken legal advice regarding the public access provisions made in the Lease and could not see that there was an actionable breach of the S106 Agreement. Ruth Croker, Footpath Officer had received a copy of this and felt that this was not what had been intended or agreed when the development was built and was liaising with Bob Hale, previous Councillor and Rowan Brockhurst, previous Footpaths Officer, who would be in possession of documentation to back up previous proposals which could be presented to NFDC.

St Mary's Church Footpath – The Assistant Clerk advised that following NFDC's acceptance of responsibility for the maintenance of St Mary's Churchyard, Steve Jones had been asked whether an upgrade to the entrance from the lych gate to the Main doors also be included in ongoing maintenance.

8. To report on any matters concerning Highways

Cllr (G) Wilson advised that Bob Brown, Highways Manager was currently on sick leave, having fallen off his bicycle on Boxing Day and broken his femur. His work was being covered by a colleague, Michael Mihhailov.

Provost Street Parking – During the past few months many residents had complained about the obstructions being caused to the bridge by parking in Provost Street. Members had been sent the Minutes of an informal meeting of Fordingbridge Traffic Management Meeting held on the 8th January 2014 in which it was commented upon that the majority of Fordingbridge has daytime restrictions. Moving any night time parking out of Provost Street could result in it being displaced to other routes particularly in the Market Place area.

Allan Ellis, NFDC Transportation outlined proposals for Provost Street and that a localised section of “no waiting at any time” in Provost Street may be appropriate in order to provide the effect of a passing place to ensure long stretches of single carriageway, resulting from parked cars, do not create congestion issues. It was noted that the bridge was just wide enough for 2 cars to pass but the railings could have reflector markings to raise awareness of their position on a narrow road.

The proposals for Provost Street were supported but the length of no waiting at any time restrictions needed to be extended in both directions. Additionally the no waiting at any time restriction on the approach to the bridge (from the south) is extended up to the bridge edge lining markings. Allan Ellis would make amendments and advertise the proposals.

Members queried the comment that the bridge was wide enough for two vehicles.

Cllr (G) Wilson advised that Sembcorp have requested a temporary closure of Roundhills from 20th January for about 3 days between 08.00 hrs & 17.00 hrs for water service connection works.

Cllr (G) Wilson asked Councillors to be vigilant when walking round the town as on a number of occasions large vehicles were parking/stopping over the pavement area to make deliveries causing a problem to pedestrians and potential damage to the kerbside. Cllr (G) Wilson asked for photographs to be taken and number plates noted so that in the event of any damage being caused the evidence could be passed to Highways who would be able to recoup remedial expenditure from the firms involved.

9. To report on any matters concerning Allotments

Cllr (G) Wilson reported that many of the Allotments were currently flooded.

10. To report on matters concerning the Information Office.

The periods prior to Christmas and after the New year were extremely busy with the sale of parking clocks. NFDC normally double up staff at this time of the year in their offices but Fordingbridge TC were not made aware of this and were therefore unable to make contingency plans. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk spent time at the Information office assisting. The Clerk is arranging a meeting with NFDC to discuss concerns arising from this situation anything relevant will be taken forward to the next Staff and Remuneration Committee.

The office is suffering from leaks, specifically around the bay window area, which are not affecting the working of the office but clearly require looking at. Gerald Dowler, the property owner will need to be contacted regarding the repair of these but it is believed he is out of the country at the moment. The Clerk/Assistant Clerk to continue to try and contact him.

11. To note any items of correspondence

Nothing to report.

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

Nothing to report

13. To note the date of the next meeting as 19th March 2014

The meeting ended at 8.00pm.