

## FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

### Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2015 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall, Fordingbridge

**Present:** Cllr (G) Wilson, Chairman  
Cllrs (A) Wilson, Earth, Adams and Hale

In Attendance: Helen Richards, Town Clerk

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Connolly.

#### **2. To receive any Declarations of Interest**

Cllr (A) Wilson declared an interest in Agenda Item 5 Budget Proposals.

#### **3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2014 and report on any matters arising**

Cllr (A) Wilson proposed and Cllr Earth seconded and it was therefore **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2014 be signed as an accurate record subject to the following amendment:

#### **Minute No. 6 – to Report any matters relating to the Town Hall**

The word *stairway* in the second sentence be replaced with *stair-lift*.

#### Matters Arising

Minute No.8 – Highways – The NFDC Dog Warden had visited the Town on several early morning visits to patrol and investigate complaints of dog fouling. New notices had been erected and repeated patrols would be made.

Minute No.9 – Allotments – The Chairman reported that the Annual Competition winners were announced at the Allotment Committee AGM on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014. Discussion had taken place regarding the provision of a more permanent toilet on the Allotment Field and it is hoped that new allotment tenants would play an active role in the running of the allotments and possibly by forming an Allotment Association.

Minute No. 12 – Late Night Shopping – The chairman highlighted progress made with the organisation of the event. Cllr Hale requested that The Fordingbridge Conservation Group could be allowed to run a stall within the Town Hall (a similar request has been received from the Fordingbridge society). It will not be possible to accommodate this request due to Health & Safety Regulations, however the option of using the Salvation Army Hall or the Information Office would be investigated. Cllr Wilson also undertook to arrange for the WI to be located within the Library.

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

No Members of the Public present.

#### **5. To discuss budget proposals for 2015/16 and make recommendations to be taken to Finance & Policy Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2014.**

The Finance Officer reported on items for consideration for budget proposals including:

- Income for the Town Hall Hire is reduced this year – consideration of different rates depending on group size – not feasible. New regular hirers need to be encouraged.

Consider whether discount offered to Badminton Club permanent – Members AGREED that as the Club only use the hall for approx. 2 hours, this reduction was fair and should continue.

Cllr Earth proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Adams and it was therefore **RESOLVED**: that hire rates should increase by £1 each session.

The Art Club hire rate would remain but would also be subject to the £1 increase.

Cllr Adams proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Earth and therefore **RESOLVED**: that an hourly rate of £10.00 per hour be introduced for Hall Hire to be permitted at the discretion of the Town Council.

- St Mary's Churchyard Maintenance – New Forest DC currently pay £453.00 per annum – Town Clerk to investigate if there is a formal agreement for this and whether the maintenance of other closed churchyards in the District are funded by New Forest DC.
- Allotment Rents – Allotment Rents raised this year to £12.50 and £25.00. Vacant plots need to be advertised as no waiting list.
- Playscheme – Expenditure down this year. Should Town Council continue to subsidise, potential problems if Grant Funding is reduced or not awarded. Special Needs children accommodated on the Scheme, this raises the income received through grant funds. Need to advertise scheme next year and boost uptake.

Cllr Hale Proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Adams and therefore **RESOLVED** to continue the Playscheme next year.

- Information Office – Slight increase in income received from NFDC for Agency (1%). Investigate other revenue streams – Sale of Tourist Bus Tickets, Local Shows etc. The Public computer located at the Information Officer requires replacement – investigate re-conditioned equipment.
- Staff – Salaries increased slightly. Consider pay rise for Caretaker/Cleaner.
- Town Hall maintenance – Leaking Clock Tower – Cost Implications  
General re-decorate works and replacement of tiles in toilets  
Members agreed that the Tables should be checked in the Hall and replaced as necessary.

Members discussed the potential amalgamation of Town Clerk's and Information Office staff in one building. Town Clerk to ascertain term length of the Information Office Lease and the Service Level Agreement with New Forest DC for the Agency at a meeting the following day plus if additional costs to provide cover over the parking Clock sales period would be met by the District Council.

- Grass Cutting & Hedge Cutting – Town Clerk to clarify areas of responsibility and costs incurred and income received.
- Allotments – Pumps and washers costs high – more control required
- Memorial Bungalow – Inspection should be made to ensure no defects present requiring action – Town Clerk to arrange with Groundsman

- Seats and Bus Shelters – No spending this year to date
- Costs for provision of stair-lift to the Town Hall – Town Clerk and Finance Officer to seek new quotes

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr (A) Wilson and it was therefore RESOLVED that the recommendations for budgets set out in the Finance Officers report be accepted subject to the results of investigations into any works and spending required to the Clock Tower or for the provision of accommodation for the Information Office.

**6. To note any items of correspondence**

No correspondence received.

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

Nothing to report and no other business

**8. To note the date of the next meeting as 19<sup>th</sup> November 2014.**

The meeting closed at 9.10pm