

## **FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 7.30pm  
in the Town Hall**

**(Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Committee)**

**Present:** Cllr Adams - Chairman

Cllrs Anstey, Fulford, Hale, Lewendon, Mouland, Paton, Perkins & Wilson

**In attendance:** Mr P Goddard, Town Clerk

Mrs R Edwards, Asst Town Clerk

Mrs M Coatham, Finance Officer (RFO)

2 Members of the Public

### **1. To receive any apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Earth and White

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

The following declarations of interest were made:

Cllrs Adams declared a pecuniary interest in item no. 5 Monies Collected and Payment of Accounts as a supplier to the Council and would remain in the room but not speak or vote.

### **3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and report any matters arising**

Cllr Mouland proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Paton and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019 be signed as a true record. All in favour.

#### **Matters Arising**

- Minute no. 3 – The RFO will review the re-use of the Flower Tower plants at the Recreation Ground with Scentsational Plants: still outstanding
- Minute no. 9 – CIL and s106 update: the Town Clerk and RFO will meet with NFDC next week to discuss the reallocation of funds
- Minute no. 7 – The RFO reported that the £500 promised donation has yet to be received from the Fordingbridge Events Group.
- Minute no. 10 – Skate Park: STN have been unable to reconnect the old toilet block's electrics as they don't meet current regulations – RFO will review what needs to be done once the lease agreement is finalised. The existing side railings have been retained. The Skate Park should be completed, inspected by RoSPA and handed over to FTC part way through the Easter holidays. Cllr Anstey asked about an opening event, the RFO advised that as part of Maverick's contract, they would organise one.

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

No matters raised.

*Cllr Perkins entered the room.*

### **5. To receive details of Monies Collected & Payment of Accounts**

See Appendix A for the Finance Officer's summary of the March 2019 accounts.

**Income:** nothing of note.

**Expenditure:** non-regular items include:

- New Skate Park – first stage payment, buildings management, moving of electrical cable
- Town Hall works – structural reports and ongoing roof repair works costs
- SAGE payroll licence for year end
- Repair of cracked pipe for paddling pool

Council tax for 2019/20:

- Info Centre £2504.10 (£2488 in 2018/19)
- Town Hall £2135.85 (£2088 in 2018/19)

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Anstey and therefore **RESOLVED**: to approve the accounts for March 2019. All in favour.

#### **6. To consider grant applications under Section 137**

None received.

#### **7. To receive an update from the Clerk regarding the Town Hall project**

SheerinBettle (architects) presented their report to Council on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and have since issued a letter of intent for the works to K and B Builders Ltd. The Party Wall agreement has been issued. It is anticipated that the works will begin in April and continue until the end of August, with the hall being unavailable for hire from approximately mid-May until mid-August. These dates have yet to be confirmed with the buildings manager.

#### **8. To receive an update from the Clerk regarding the Christmas Lights**

The Town Clerk and RFO met with the contractor from STN, a representative from the Business Forum and Cllrs Anstey and White to discuss the future of Christmas lights in Fordingbridge. Various options included doing nothing, replacing the pole at a cost to the Council of £5000, leaving these three catenaries empty and only using the others, or looking for community funding for a replacement pole. The Business Forum offered to speak to businesses about sponsorship.

Cllr Perkins asked if the price for the pole was fixed, the RFO advised that it was an estimate based on costs of similar installations and therefore the final figure may be different.

A member of the public suggested concentrating lights in the car park to give more impact. He'd been involved in raising money for LED lights through the Rotary Club and raised £10k, which had been spent on new lights, fixed to old frames. He thought these looked dated now.

*The member of the public left the meeting*

#### **9. To approve the borrowing and consultation for financing the Town Hall repairs**

Members had received a report from the RFO detailing the cost of the town hall project and how it could be financed with a combination of a Public Works Loan, reserves and some of the CIL funds. The RFO and Town Clerk's recommendation is that a Public Works Loan of £110,000 is taken out over 25 years. General reserves currently held are approximately 50% of annual expenditure. Cllr Fulford asked whether sufficient reserves would be held if some were used for the Town Hall project. The RFO advised that the level of reserves is at members' discretion.

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Fulford and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the borrowing and consultation for financing the Town Hall repairs be approved. All in favour.

**Action: The RFO and Town Clerk to investigate what level of public consultation is required for a Public Works Loan.**

#### **10. To review and approve Financial Regulations**

Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore **RESOLVED**: to approve the Financial Regulations. All in favour.

Cllr Fulford asked about Town Council email addresses for all Councillors.

**Action: Asst Town Clerk to set up @fordingbridge.gov.uk email addresses for members.**

#### **11. To review and approve Standing Orders**

Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore **RESOLVED**: to approve the Standing Orders. All in favour.

**12. To review Playscheme funding and approve use of reserves**

Hampshire County Council will not be providing any funding for the playscheme to run this year and there are no other grants available to cover the estimated £5000 shortfall between the fees paid by parents and the cost of the scheme. Fordingbridge Town Council has budgeted £700 towards the scheme, leaving an expected deficit of £4354.

The playscheme manager suggested (before the meeting) that to make the playscheme viable, fees could be increased to £20 per child per day and costs could also be cut.

Cllr Paton proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Moulard and therefore **RESOLVED**: to go ahead with the playscheme and if necessary to fund it from reserves. All in favour.

**13. To approve the testing of lighting columns for hanging baskets**

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Anstey and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the lighting columns be structurally tested for the hanging of flower baskets. All in favour.

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

No items of correspondence.

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

The Town Clerk reported that Cllr Paton had seen some second hand play equipment for sale and that photos of this equipment had been circulated to members. The seller would bear the cost of dismantling, transporting and installing the equipment. The RFO and Town Clerk will meet with NFDC next week to discuss the reallocation of S106 funds and explore the possibility of more being spent on play equipment.

The RFO advised that in order to buy this equipment, standing orders would need to be suspended and it was noted that this play equipment wouldn't replace the need for a toddler playhouse in the Recreation Ground. The Town Clerk thought that this equipment may be more suitable to enhance the play areas at Flaxfields End or Queens Gardens or the open space at Parsonage Park. It comes with rubber matting as a play safety surface. It was agreed that further investigation regarding suitability and funding was required – **Clerk to action**.

**16. To note the date of the next meeting as 24<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

The meeting closed at 8:46 pm.