

## **FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 8:36pm**

Held remotely using appropriate technology in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crimes Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (“the 2020 Regulations”) which came into force on 4th April 2020.

**(Minutes draft until approved at the following meeting of the Committee)**

**Present:** Cllr Wilson – Chair  
Cllrs Adams, Earth, Goldsmith, Hale, Jackson & Lewendon

**In Attendance:** Mr P Goddard, Town Clerk  
Mrs R Edwards, Asst Town Clerk  
A representative from the Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society  
A representative from the Salisbury Journal

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

Apologies were received from Cllr Bellows (NFDC).

**2. To receive any declarations of interest**

No declarations were made.

**3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and report on any matters arising.**

Cllr Earth proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Goldsmith and therefore **RESOLVED**: to sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021 as a true record. All in favour.

No matters arising.

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

No matters raised.

**5. To report on any matters concerning St Marys Closed Churchyard and Stuckton Road Cemetery**

**• To review Burial Charges from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021**

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Earth and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the burial charges remain unchanged for the coming year. All in favour.

**• To consider a new cremation area**

The Asst Clerk proposed a new cremation area specifically for those whose families wouldn't physically be able to access the other cremation areas in the cemetery, due to problems manoeuvring over grass or gravel or between headstones. This area would be located near to the gate, to the left of the path. The local undertakers have been consulted and think it would be an excellent use of the space and can see no problems with accessing the burial area to dig graves or work on headstones.

Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore **RESOLVED**: to start a new cremation area near the gate and specifically for those whose families aren't physically able to access the other cremation areas in the cemetery, due to mobility problems. All in favour.

- **To agree the purchase of cemetery mapping software**

The Clerk reported that a sum of £1000 has been allowed in the budget for cemetery mapping software (General Purposes Committee meeting 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020, agenda item 11).

The Clerk reported that the cost would be £500 for the mapping and £482 for the software setup and training. There would be an annual charge of £327.50 (3 year contract) or £304.50 (5 year contract).

The Asst Clerk reported that other Councils have been pleased with the product, the only issue being data entry errors by outside agencies which have taken time to correct. The proposal is that all data inputting is done by Town Council staff. Although other companies offer similar products, these are made for much larger cemeteries at a far higher cost.

Cllr Goldsmith proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Hale and to purchase cemetery mapping software with a 5 year contract.

Cllr Adams proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore **RESOLVED**: to purchase cemetery mapping software with a 3 year contract. All in favour.

## **6. Matters relating to the Town Hall**

- **To review Hire Charges for the Town Hall from 1st April 2021**

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Earth and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the hire charges for the Town Hall remain unchanged for the coming year. All in favour.

There is no update on the Town Hall since the report given at the last General Council meeting.

## **7. To report on any matters relating to the Information Office**

Nothing to report.

## **8. To report any matters concerning footpaths**

- Jobs for Lengthsman – 9<sup>th</sup> April 2021

No jobs were identified.

Cllr Wilson proposed removing agenda items 8 and 9 from the General Purposes agenda and adding them to the General Council agenda instead. She said that while it is appropriate for Public Rights of Way (PROW) footpaths to be discussed by the General Purposes Committee, highways and pavements is now such a big and important subject it should be considered by General Council instead. The Clerk proposed amalgamating the Amenities and General Purposes Committees.

**Action: Clerk to add General Council agenda item – “To consider footways in Fordingbridge”**

**Action: Clerk to add General Council agenda item – “To review the existing sub-committee structure and consider amalgamating the Amenities and General Purposes Committees”**

The Representative from the Ringwood and Fordingbridge Footpath Society reported that the NFDC footpath at Sweatford Water Meadows was impassable for five weeks due to flooding and a boardwalk is needed there instead. A site visit with NFDC and others has been organised for April to discuss open spaces in Fordingbridge. She reported that no further work has been done on the Avon Valley footpath south of Fordingbridge towards Bickton, badger activity is rife in that area and there is a low overhanging branch over footpath 97 which needs to be cut back.

Cllr Jackson reported that the Trailway is receiving widespread support and will be a useful link for people to use. He will attend the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans briefing meeting online on Friday.

#### **9. Matters concerning Highways**

Cllr Jackson reported that he still hasn't received the new plan from Claire Upton-Brown, NFDC Head of Planning, regarding planning and highways in Fordingbridge.

Cllr Lewendon reported that Cllr Heron (HCC) had suggested to a local resident that Fordingbridge Town Council could pay for a Speed Indicator Device and speed limit signs for Normandy Way. However, Cllr Lewendon stated that this is a highways issue and as such the Highways Authority should pay for it.

#### **10. Matters concerning Allotments**

- **To consider allowing bee hives at the allotments**

Cllr Wilson reported that a lot of work has been done at the allotments to improve the situation with wild pollinators. By introducing beehive bees to the allotments, there was a possibility of disease transfer to wild bees and the stealing of pollen. The Clerk reported that there may be an insurance issue regarding the risk of anaphylactic shock from bee stings.

Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Earth and therefore RESOLVED: not to allow bee hives in the allotments. All in favour.

- **To review the Allotment fees from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021**

Members agreed to defer this decision until the November General Purposes meeting. Allotment fees are due in February each year.

- **To consider new allotment rules**

Cllr Wilson reported that the allotment rules will be redrafted and brought to a future meeting for consideration by the General Purposes Committee. She reported that one of the new rules will be that 75% of a plot must be available for growing and tenants will be given one year's notice to get their plots in order. Some plots currently have tires, carpets, large sheds, verandas, even a concrete patio. The allotment committee has been renamed the allotment team and will no longer be holding meetings with minutes.

#### **11. To consider the running of the Playscheme**

Cllr Wilson reported that it is not yet known whether the playscheme can use the school buildings as normal, but she thought it unlikely due to Covid. Councillors discussed the possibility of purchasing of a gazebo or marquee and the need for it to be of a suitable quality and safety standard.

Cllr Adams proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Hale and therefore RESOLVED: to consider running the playscheme. All in favour.

#### **12. To note any items of correspondence**

There were no items of correspondence.

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

Nothing further to report.

#### **14. To note the date of the next meeting as 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

The meeting finished at 9.15pm.