

FORDWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2015.

Present: Councillors Patrick Heren (chair), Philip Lewis, Val Clark, Roger Green, June Hardcastle. In attendance: Guy Foster (clerk), PCSO Jo White, Peter Waring and Jana Small of the Environment Agency and ten members of the public.

1/15 Flood defences

Mr Waring (EA) gave a brief presentation on this topic. Cllr Lewis had drafted a Fordwich Flood Defence plan. Various points pertaining to both these were discussed. Mr Ted Edwards of CCC (Fordwich Flood Warden), said he had a flood plan from another village which contained much useful information which could be incorporated into the FTC plan.

Other points of discussion included:

- Stour dredging: a good deal had been done and more was planned
- Backing-up of sewers: a few years ago, Southern Water built a new holding tank so this problem is greatly improved. It is unlikely that any more will be done in the near future.
- Flood defence products: see the EA web-site for a comprehensive list.
- River level gauge: it was felt it would be better to have this sited near the Town Hall rather than in the G&D car park.
- Assembly points: for residents south of the river, a good point would be up the High St outside Christmas House; for residents north of the river, the far side of the railway line in Sturry would be a suitable area, perhaps at the Cost Cutter shop.
- Stonar Cut: this river "bypass" near Sandwich can be opened to increase the flow of water into the sea, but only under specific circumstances, governed by an 18th century Act of Parliament. Its main purpose is to protect Sandwich and its effect on river levels at Fordwich is relatively minor.

2/15 Apologies

Alan Marsh of KCC had sent apologies due to ill health.

3/15 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of November 26th were unanimously approved without amendment.

4/15 Matters arising

None.

5/15 Declarations of interest

Cllr Heren declared his position as a trustee of Fordwich United Charities
Cllr Clark declared her position as a custodian of the town hall.
Cllr Hardcastle declared her position as a trustee of Fordwich United Charities and the Friends of Fordwich and District and as a member of (and a member of the working group of) the Littlebourne and Stodmarsh Road Community Association and a perceived pecuniary interest in respect of Moate Farm.
Cllr Lewis declared his position as a custodian of Fordwich church.
Cllr Green declared his role with Friends of Fordwich and District and also declared his position as a trustee of Fordwich United Charities

6/15 To receive reports from KCC and CCC representatives.

No CCC or KCC representatives were present.

7/15 To consider reports from police representatives

PCSO Jo White reported that burglaries from sheds were a particular feature of local crime recently.

Ms White noted that her attendance at FTC and other parish meetings was dependent on her shift pattern and the need to maintain a work-life balance.

Cllr Hardcastle raised issues of sightings of dubious activity in her locale. The advice was to report such things as they occur by 'phoning 101, or 999 if appropriate.

Ms White confirmed that she does regularly drive through Fordwich.

The idea of a "police surgery" in Fordwich was mentioned and Ms White said she would pursue it with her superiors. In the meantime, PC Laidlow of the rural crime team would be giving a presentation in the Town Hall on 4th March at 7.30 p.m.

11/15 Planning

Application CA//14/02650/FUL (The Old Rectory). After discussion it was unanimously resolved to object to this change of use as being inappropriate, given the history and nature of the meadow in question. Cllr Heren agreed to draft and circulate a form of words to be submitted to CCC.

The approval of application CA//14/02309/FUL (Kingtree House) was noted.

Cllr Hardcastle passed on comments from residents concerned that extra caravans at Moate Farm were in breach of planning permission and might actually constitute a new site, as they might be outside the boundary of the currently permitted site.

8/15 Chairman and councillors' reports

Cllr Clark reported that some drains still needed unblocking. Cllr Lewis said he had been told the drains would be cleared by now and he had chased KCC.

Cllr Green reported that good progress was being made on the final works in the Old School House.

Cllr Hardcastle reported her attendance at the “blessing of the seas” ceremony in Margate. She noted the continuing pot-holes situation. She also noted that footpath CB1145 was in a dangerous condition and that one of the road humps warning signs in Moat Lane had been twisted out of position.

9/15 Finance

The Clerk reported the cash book balances as:

Current account: £12,059.53
Bonus saver account: £3,958.36

The current account and bonus saver bank statements were checked and signed by the Chairman. The current account bank balance was showing as £85 higher than the cash book balance due to an unrepresented cheque.

The following items were unanimously approved for payment, except the flowers item which was not approved by Cllr Hardcastle:

- Clerk’s salary (net of tax) and expenses for January
£383.22
- Fiona Cadwallader – civic service flowers £90.00
- HMRC – PAYE for October/November/December
£189.00

10/15 Clerk’s report and correspondence

The only material item to be reported was the notification from the Boundaries Commission that a review of KCC ward boundaries was underway and all views were welcome.

12/15 To consider the matter of disabled access to the town hall.

There was no more news to report on the subject of a lift.

13/15 Highways and footpaths

No further discussion at this juncture.

14/15 Date of next meeting

This was confirmed as 25th February 2015 at 7.30 pm.

Guy Foster

Clerk to Fordwich Town Council

February 2nd 2015.

Signed as a true record _____ Date:

Position _____