

FORDWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 28th April 2021.

Present: Councillors Philip Lewis (chair), Adrian McCarthy, Roger Green, Sue Thompson, Geoff Connolly. In attendance: Guy Foster (clerk).

This meeting was held remotely over the internet.

55/21 Apologies

Louise Harvey-Quirke (CCC) and Alan Marsh (KCC) had sent apologies.

56/21 Minutes of the previous meeting

It was unanimously resolved to accept the minutes of the March meeting as tabled.

57/21 Matters arising

The possibility of buying waste bins to be placed opposite the George and Dragon was discussed.

More replies are still needed to the residents' parking survey.

58/21 Declarations of interests

Members declared interests as follows:

- 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.

59/21 To receive reports from CCC and KCC representatives

No CCC or KCC representatives were present.

60/21 Planning

The approval of CA/21/00389 (town hall) was noted.

There was considerable discussion of actions at the Romany Green Acres and Moate Farm sites. The chairman was keen to establish a list of questions that we should be asking of various authorities. The issues raised in this context were:

- Should one seek a judicial review of the CCC planning decision in respect of Romany Green Acres? The consensus was that this was probably not of value.

- Is CCC happy that the correct decision was made at Romany Green Acres given the number of traveller sites now available in the area?
- Are there the appropriate permits in place for the dumping of waste by DJ Tippers?
- Should HMRC be alerted to possible tax law breaches?
- Is the bund dangerous? Is the overhanging tree dangerous?
- Should KCC be made aware of lorries going the wrong way along Well Lane?
- Given the apparent lack of an appeal, what enforcement action is CCC taking at Moate Farm, following the refusal of their planning application?
- Should we consider taking CCC to the Local Government Ombudsman?
- Should we contact the relevant parish/local council who dealt with the Dale Farm issue?

There was discussion concerning the building works at Primrose Villa. The chairman reported that he had spoken to the people there.

61/21 To receive a report from the Fordwich Neighbourhood Plan steering group

There have been two recent meetings. Three working groups have been formed: early engagement; evidence base; funding. Cllr Thompson has been liaising with the clerk on the matter of a grant application. Advice is being sought from CCC and other experienced parties.

62/21 To receive the Chairman's and Councillors' Reports

Cllr Green reported that he is going to deal with the long-standing matter of the tree overhanging the footpath. Ownership of the tree cannot be established.

He can provide a quote for a covid related clean at the Old School Room which could be met from the grant received by FTC from KCC. All were happy with this.

He has incurred some cost in respect of planning documents. The meeting was happy to reimburse this.

Cllr McCarthy is awaiting a price for a notice board. He suggested a bin and padlock for opposite the George and Dragon. Cllr Lewis has a spare bin. It was agreed to use this.

Cllr Thompson has attended a joint remote meeting with Sturry and Westbere PCs. A further meeting is planned. She wondered if we could improve the appearance of the existing town notice boards?

Cllr Lewis reported as follows:

- Denton Homes are going to be inviting the public to a display in the church on May 26th to promote their development proposal.

- The Ford advertising crew will be working in the Brett's site on May 21st to 23rd. Public invited to take test drives.
- For a long time we have been in possession of a bench which was destined for the river bank but placing it in the town hall garden would be easier if all are happy? All were happy.
- Kent Wildlife are involved with the land owner in dealing with the riverbank issues opposite the George and Dragon.
- Fordwich River Tours are currently tidying up their boat. The new agreement with them will now start on June 1st.
- Annual town meeting: it is really not practical to hold it soon, so he proposes to have it later in the year, albeit this is not in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Civic service: this is pencilled in for September 19th. We could perhaps use the church yard or the Old School Room for the post-service reception.
- The Rev. Peter Cornish is due to retire soon.
- Following damage caused by their delivery vehicles, Amazon have now agreed to designate Spring Lane as a road requiring small vehicles.
- A town tidy-up is planned for May 8th.

63/21 Finance

The clerk reported that the cash book balance at 31st March was £10,004.72. This has been reconciled to the bank statement figure of £11,100.56.

The following payments were unanimously approved:

1. Guy Foster – April salary and expenses, net	£391.40
2. Plan Xpress (newsletter)	£50.00
3. Valerie Clark (newsletter postage)	£70.74
4. Nigel Ogilvie Ltd (internal audit)	£140.00

Following discussion it was unanimously resolved to accept the Came & Co quote for insurance and to renew our membership of KALC. Accordingly, payments were approved as follows:

Came & Co.	£378.51
KALC	£231.65

The invoice received from emagine create Ltd some time ago remained unapproved pending advice as to its validity.

Annual return for 2020/21: the clerk had circulated this. It was unanimously resolved to approve the annual governance statement and the income and expenditure statement. This showed a surplus for the year of £2,978 but this resulted mainly from grants yet to be spent.

It was unanimously resolved to declare as an exempt authority within the definition contained in the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015.

64/21 To receive the clerk's report and correspondence

All issues in the clerk's report had been dealt with elsewhere during the meeting.

65/21 Highways and footpaths

The George and Dragon pavement issue is still unresolved. The public footpath by Primrose Villa is in need of attention.

66/21 Date of next meeting

This was confirmed as Wednesday May 26th at c. 7.35 pm. The annual town council meeting will immediately precede it at 7.30 pm. **These meetings will be in the town hall.**

Guy Foster

Clerk to Fordwich Town Council

May 3rd 2021.

Signed as a true record _____ Date: _____

Position _____