

FORDWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd February 2023.

Present: Councillors Adrian McCarthy (chair), Geoff Connolly, Roger Green, Sue Thompson, Philip Lewis. In attendance: Guy Foster (clerk), Alan Marsh (KCC) and two members of the public.

25/23. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Louise Harvey-Quirke and Georgina Glover of CCC.

26/23 Minutes of the last meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on February 8th were unanimously approved as tabled and signed by the chairman.

27/23 Matters arising

None.

28/23. Declarations of interests

- Cllr Green declared his role with Friends of Fordwich and District and also declared his position as a trustee of Fordwich United Charities.
- Cllr Lewis declared his position as a custodian of Fordwich church

29/23 To receive reports from representatives of KCC and CCC

For KCC, Alan Marsh reported on the KCC budget process. There would be a 4.99% council tax increase but a £38m shortfall remained. About half of KCC's spend is on adult social care and this far exceeds what is available to spend on things like highways. Members' grants in 2023/24 are to be reduced to £3,600 which is well down on previous levels. But money should be available for coronation celebrations.

For CCC, Georgina Glover had submitted a written report: fines will be issued to those leaving car engines running while stationary; garden waste collections recommence on February 27th; the £2 limit on bus fares will remain until 30th June.

The meeting was adjourned for comments and questions from members of the public. No matters were raised:

30/23 Planning

No specific items were on the agenda. The meeting expressed general disappointment at recent planning decisions which it was felt did not pay sufficient attention to FTC concerns.

Canterbury Local Plan: the Kentish Gazette were coming to the town on Saturday. It was agreed that the FTC objections document should go on the web-site and to local MPs. Cllr McCarthy said he would try and merge the various documents and reduce the overall size.

It was agreed to write a letter of thanks to Greg Jones KC for all his work on this.

31/23 To receive a report on Neighbourhood Plan progress

Cllr Thompson had circulated a draft and invited comments. It is very much a work in progress. She hopes for public engagement with this by the end of April.

32/23 To consider the Fordwich Trail

This is being worked on and will be trialled with residents. After discussion, it was unanimously resolved to grant up to £200 of FTC funds for this project.

33/23 To consider the celebration of the King's Coronation

It was agreed that we should have a town party on Sunday May 7th. A group of people was needed to organise it and various names were put forward.

34/23 To consider the purchase of a shed

This would require permission from the church authorities and almost certainly planning permission too, so further consideration was deferred.

35/23 To receive the Chairman's and Councillors' Reports

Cllr Green reported that the digging activity has already found some interesting items,

Cllr Connolly has been away. He has been helping with the Neighbourhood Plan and noted motorcycle damage to the golf course.

Cllr Lewis reported:

- Lifebelts by the river: our assistant harbour master had no clear guidance on this.

- The Drove: we need to nag the CDAA and write to Mr Chris Wachter.
- There will be a town tidy-up on March 25th. We should ask people to restore the various plant troughs.

36/23 Finance

As reported at the previous meeting, the clerk reported that the cash book balance at 1st February was £14,055.74. This had been reconciled to the bank figure of £14,070.74.

The clerk has successfully submitted a VAT reclaim which has boosted funds by £951.97.

The following payment was unanimously approved:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Guy Foster – February pay and expenses | £408.69 |
| 2. Mr P.G. Knowles – archaeological work | £700.00 |

37/23 To receive the clerk’s report and correspondence

The clerk has written to CDAA about the state of the Drove but still no significant reply has yet been received.

The clerk has written to Rev Craig about civic service but has had no reply.

Lifebelts: the clerk’s researches have not revealed any obligations in this respect although the general issue of riparian liability is one for the land-owner which of course is not FTC.

Defibrillators: there is a new government grant scheme for these but it has yet to be launched. Various other funding sources are always available although they are unlikely to offer 100% funding so there could be a significant cost to FTC. If we are to put one in the phone box then clearly the first thing is to proceed with leasing this from BT.

38/23 Highways and footpaths

We need to see if traffic survey data is available.

39/22 Date of next meeting

This was confirmed as Wednesday March 29th in the town hall at 7.30 pm.

Guy Foster

Clerk to Fordwich Town Council

February 27th 2023.

Signed as a true record _____ Date: _____

Position _____