

## FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting Held Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in Forton Parish Rooms

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: E De Quincey (Chair); D Toon (Vice Chair); D Carver (RFO); P Hammond;  
S Tomkinson & S Spencer.

Borough Cllrs: M Smith & P Farrington.

Clerk: C Little.

Observer and prospective councillor Leanne Bayton.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** County Cllr. M Winnington sent apologies which were accepted.
2. **Declaration of Councillor's Personal Interests:** None declared.
3. **Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019 and matters arising not on this Agenda:**

Minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

Cllr. Carver advised that the installation of Meretown's broadband cabinet was now complete but went on to say that BT is not as yet, making it generally available. He is continuing to pursue BT to obtain an improvement to his own service after which he hopes pass on the benefit of his own experience. He said that he would continue to keep the parish council updated.

It was noted that in addition to the road patching works in Meretown, Radmore Lane has also been patched ahead of the resurfacing scheduled for next year. Cllr. Spencer raised concerns that in the process of patching at the crossroads in Forton the stop line adjacent to the stop sign and the no parking signs in the filter lane had been obscured. Whilst it was appreciated that these would no doubt be restored following the resurfacing exercise, councillors were very concerned of the immediate danger the missing markings present. The clerk was asked to report both, Cllr. Smith recommended that Cllr. Winnington be copied in.

**Action Clerk**

#### 4. Financial report and authority for payments

##### 4.1 2019/2020 Quarter Three

The financial statement dated 16 November 2019 balanced to the latest bank statements received: -

Current Account @ 05 November 2019	£88.40
Reserve Account @ 05 November 2019	£1,076.95
TOTAL	£1,165.35

The statement was examined by councillors who then approved it, after which it was signed by the Chairman.

##### 4.2 Payments Approved

Precept Payments	Budget £ p	Agree to Pay
Clerk's Salary – 3rd quarter *(gross)	108.15	86.35
PAYE	nil	21.80
Clerk's Expenses – 3rd quarter	15.00	nil
RFO expense, website domain renewal**	23.98	23.98

\*Net salary is £86.35, PAYE of £21.80 having been determined by the payroll service.

\*\*Not budgeted

The council approved the above payments and asked the RFO to action them. **Action RFO**

**4.3 Budget 2020 / 2021:** A draft budget dated 16/11/2019 for next year was discussed. It was based on the forecast to the year's end which indicated a precept balance brought forward of £655.57. This draft budget required a precept of 1072.27 (2 x £517.81 + Council Tax Support Grant, £36.65).

Year	Annual Precept £
2020-2021	1072.27
2019-2020	976.00
2018-2019	989.99
2017-2018	893.99

Salaries and Insurance had been increased in line with the Government's Consumer Prices Index (CPI – All items) which in October 2019 stood at +1.5%. The general contingency was preserved at 15% (£185.00) and the reserve at £300.00.

Stafford Borough Council had announced that its concurrent grant would remain the same as the past several years, £270 (2 x £135). The council asked the RFO to ask SBC for the maximum concurrent grant. **Action RFO**

The council debated the draft budget, and then approved it without amendment. The Chairman then signed the draft to indicate this approval.

**4.4 Concurrent Grants:** The RFO reminded councillors that any Concurrent Grants for the current year must be made by 31 March 2020 or be forfeit back to Stafford Borough Council. The council agreed to encourage applications that will need to be considered no later than the meeting next March.

**5 Parish Councillor:** Leanne Bayton of Forton Nursery attended the meeting to express an interest in the current vacancy. As the deadline had passed allowing the parish council to co-opt a councillor Cllr. De Quincey asked the clerk to clarify the procedure ahead of the next meeting. Nevertheless; councillors welcomed Ms Bayton's interest and hoped to be able to welcome her in due course. **Action Clerk**

**6 Appointment of trustee for Forton charities:** Cllr. Hammond advised that this longstanding charity has a vacancy for a trustee. As the new trustee does not need to be in place until November 2020 councillors were asked to consider possible candidates by the next meeting in March. The clerk was asked to carry this item forward. **Action Clerk**

**7 Update on A519:** Cllr. Toon confirmed that following the last meeting he had written to Cllr. Winnington, as agreed at the last meeting, to identify the areas of the A519 deemed a priority for attention. He had received a reply from Cllr. Winnington saying that whilst the council agree that the current condition is poor, and the work has been included in the long term structural maintenance programme for carriageway and footway reconstruction, they are unable to confirm any time frame for when this work is likely to take place. They anticipate that the cost of this particular scheme be in the region of £1.25m. Cllr. Hammond stated that it was not clear that the plans included making the footpath safe and that we should clarify this. Cllr. Smith advised that there had been significant expenditure on road safety in Great Bridgeford and it was not clear why that would have taken priority over the particularly dangerous stretch of road in our parish. He recommended that the parish council write to Mark Deaville. The Chairman and clerk agreed to send a letter.

**Action Chair/Clerk**

**8 Matters requiring attention in the Parish:** Cllr. Toon advised that the Red Lion in Sutton has been taken over recently by Admiral Taverns and is attracting more business. Unfortunately the external lighting is not working despite the landlord having taken up the issue with the company. This means that pedestrians are not visible to oncoming traffic and the pub is not attracting the interest it would if it looked more welcoming at night. Cllr. Toon asked if the parish council would send a letter to Admiral Taverns in support of the new landlord's initiative, this was unanimously agreed. Cllr. Toon agreed to draft the letter for the clerk. **Action Cllr. Toon/Clerk**

**9 Any other business:** None raised

**10 Correspondence:** The parish council had received an email via the website from the Newport Carnival committee asking if it were possible to receive a donation towards their fundraising efforts. It was acknowledged that this is a worthy cause and undoubtedly local parishioners attend the carnival. Cllr. Carver advised that the annual amount available for distribution amounts to £270, however the qualifying criteria for recipient organisations is that they be within the parish therefore the parish council is unable to contribute. The clerk was asked to communicate this to the carnival committee. **Action Clerk**

**11 Date of Next Meeting: 7:00pm on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at **7:52 p.m.**

