

FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting Held Wednesday 11 May 2016

At 7:20p.m. in the Parish Rooms

PRESENT:

Parish Councillors: S Tomkinson (Chair), D Toon (Vice Chair) J Perks,
P Hammond, S Spencer,

Clerk: Carol Little

1. **Apologies for Absence:**
Cllrs. E de Quincey, D Carver (RFO).
Cllr. M Winnington (SCC), Borough Councillors M Smith, K Williamson did not attend.
2. **Declaration of Councillors personal interests relating to items on the Agenda:**
There were no personal interests declared.
3. **Minutes of Meeting held on 16 March 2016:**
Minutes were approved as a true record by Councillors and signed by the Chairman.
4. **Matters Arising:**
With reference to item 6 – Planning Application 16/23741/REM:
Councillor Toon recommended that any future references to a Cess Pit were clearly defined and not open to interpretation.
5. **Finance Report:**
The RFO had sent his apology being unable to be present at the meeting but had undertaken to arrange the internal audit prior to going on holiday and would arrange submission of the annual return to the auditors upon his return.

5.1 2015/2016 Year-End

The financial statement for the year ended 31 March 2016 had been distributed. It balanced to the bank statements covering the year-end with a closing balance of £637.80. This financial statement provided the information for the annual return which had also been distributed to councillors. The 2015/16 Year-End statement was accepted as a true record and the chairman signed a copy.

5.2 2016/2017 Quarter One

The financial statement dated 02 May 2016 had been distributed. It balanced to the latest bank statements received with a closing balance of £1,274.80, the first tranche of £637.00 consisting of Precept, Council Tax Grant and Concurrent monies having been received from Stafford Borough Council on 07 April. The Quarter 1 statement was accepted as a true record and the chairman signed a copy.

5.3 Insured Risks

The Council needed to undertake a risk assessment and the RFO had suggested that a review of its insurance cover at this time should meet this responsibility. The Council viewed the scope of cover offered by three companies proposing insurance cover this year and after careful consideration agreed that the cover provided by the Ecclesiastical renewal quotation would meet the risks the Council may face in the forthcoming year. (Insurance cover runs from 01 June to 31 May).

The Council had been insured for the last 3 years with Aviva Insurance Limited via brokers 'Came & Company'. Last year's premium was £278.95. This year the choice of insurer was between:

- Aviva @ £320.87
- Hiscox @ £305.59
- Ecclesiastical @ £291.04
(all prices include insurance premium tax).

Came & Company recommended that we accept the Ecclesiastical quotation which was also endorsed by the RFO. There was a further offer of a 5% discount for a three years undertaking which the RFO also suggested the council might accept.

- **The Council agreed to take out insurance with Ecclesiastical from 01 June 2016 to 31 May 2019 at the initial premium of £276.49 (net of loyalty discount).**

5.4 Payments For Approval

Precept Payments	Budget £ p	Agreed to Pay
Clerk's Salary – 1 st quarter	£102.02 (gross)	£102.02
Clerk's expenses	TBA	nil
Ecclesiastical Insurance premium	£284.51	£276.49

- **The Council approved the above payments.**

5.5 Annual Audit 2014/2015

The RFO had advised that audit papers need to be submitted by 10 June this year. The necessary notices for the exercise of electors' right to inspect accounts and records would need to be posted on the website and noticeboards with the period allowing examination being from 03 June 2016 to 14 July 2016.

The internal audit had been successfully completed on 05 May 2016. The Council was therefore asked to address the Annual Governance Statement 2015/16 (page 2 of the Annual Return) and sign off the Accounting Statements 2015/16 (page 3 of the Annual Return). Copies of these two pages were appended to the finance report.

- **The Annual Governance Statement question Nos 1 – 8 (page 2 of the Annual Return) were answered by the Council and signed by the Chairman & Clerk.**
- **The Accounting Statements (page 3 of the Annual Return), already signed by the RFO on 04 May 2016, were approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman.**

6. **Planning Applications:** No new applications received for consideration.

7. Matters requiring attention in the Parish:

The clerk advised that:

- She was waiting for a response from the Highways Department regarding the footpath from Newport to Forton, about improving visibility when crossing the A41 to visit the canal.
- BT had been unable to locate the broken cover opposite Meretown Grange
- The removal / replacement of the Perished grit bin in Forton had been raised.
- Cllr Perks raised concerns about the stretch of road in front of the National Foaling Bank, stating that a combination of surface water and continuous refilling of potholes had left the lane in a very poor state of repair and that it needed resurfacing.
- It was also reported that there was a significant pothole on the A519 to Wharton Grange by the first gate and the drainage gullies were blocked with mud.

ACTION: CLERK

It was discussed that at the last meeting Councillors had agreed to resume the campaign to relocate the footpath on the A519 to make it safer for pedestrians. It was noted that the last action point recorded was in May 2013 when Cllr Winnington was going to look at the budget. As Cllr Winnington was not at the meeting it was agreed that this be deferred until the next meeting.

8. **Any Other business:** The clerk requested details of any jobs for the July visit by the Highways Department.
9. **Correspondence:** The Council had received confirmation that the plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 had been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination on 27 April 2016.
10. **Date of next Meeting:**
 - Wednesday 10 August 2016

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at **20:30 p.m.**