

FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting Held Wednesday 11th March 2020 at 7:00 in Forton Parish Rooms

PRESENT: Cllr E De Quincey (Chair), D Toon (Vice Chair) Cllrs P Hammond,

S Tomkinson, S Spencer

Borough Cllr M Smith

C Little (Clerk)

Prospective councillor Leanne Bayton.

NOT PRESENT: D Carver (RFO), Borough Cllr P Farrington, County Cllr M Winnington

1. Apologies for Absence: None

2. Declaration of Councillor's Personal Interests:

Cllr Hammond declared an interest as a trustee of two organisations requesting grants.

3. Parish Councillor Vacancy brought forward from last meeting: The clerk advised that she had heard back from the solicitor at the Borough Council who advised that the parish council could co-opt a councillor even though the deadline following the elections had passed. Councillors voted to appoint Leanne Bayton and she was welcomed by the Chairman.

4. Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 20th November 2019 and matters arising not on this Agenda: Minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman. Cllrs Spencer, Hammond, Bayton and the clerk all reported they had raised incidents regarding in the obscured road markings at the crossroads in Forton. They all reported that the council had left a warning sign but had advised that unless there was a serious accident there would be no further action.

5. Financial report and authority for payments:

5.1 2019/2020 Quarter Four: The financial statement dated 22 February 2020 was considered. It balanced to the latest bank statements received.

Account	£ p
Current @ 05 February 2020	110.00
Reserve @ 05 February 2020	923.70
TOTAL	£1033.70

The council approved the statement and the chairman signed it.

5.2 Precept Payments Approved

Precept Payments	Budget	Approved
Clerk's Salary – quarter 4	(gross) £108.15	£86.55
PAYE as calculated by the payroll provider	nil	£21.60
Clerk's Expenses – quarter 4 - TBA	£15.00	nil
SPCA subscription 2020-21	£99.47	£98.00
SBC uncontested election expenses	£167.94	£97.40

The council considered the above payments and authorised the RFO to make them.

5.3 Concurrent Grants: The Council had received £270.00 concurrent grant from Stafford Borough Council and considered two applications from interested parties for its disposal.

On behalf of Forton Church Cllr Hammond had applied for grants in respect of both the church and churchyard. He advised that the Parochial Church Council is at present involved in a number of improvement and repair projects including a proposal to provide an inside toilet and to renovate the main doors which haven't received attention for many years. The churchyard is kept to a good standard at an annual cost in excess of £1000. The church hoped that further grants could be awarded this year. Cllr Spencer suggested in light of the relatively small amount of money available, would it not be more beneficial to award all the money available to the application with the most purposeful bid. This was discussed at length however it was agreed that as there had been only two applications received they should, on this occasion, equally share the funds available and the awards to the church and churchyard were approved with £135.00 going to each.

ACTION: RFO & CLERK

5.4 Accountability and Governance: The RFO informed the Council that in his opinion the council was still able to certify itself as being exempt from requiring a limited assurance review (external audit). The Council considered the matter and agreed that this remained the case and authorised the RFO to complete the Annual Governance and Accountability Return part 2 (AGAR) once it was received.

ACTION: RFO

The RFO informed the Council that the deadline for completion and approval of the AGAR would probably be early July 2020 though the documentation had not yet been received. In practice this will mean that the council must be in a position to approve the AGAR at its next meeting in May. The RFO expected to be able to arrange an internal audit, hopefully with Robert Watson Jones and to complete the AGAR within the required timescale.

ACTION: RFO

6. New Local Plan issues and options: Cllr Smith referred to the recently distributed Stafford Borough local plan. He explained some of the proposals around housing, play areas, and climate change. He also suggested that councillors viewed the document online and take part in the consultation by responding to the questions in Appendix 2 by 31st March. The clerk agreed to send out the link.

ACTION: CLERK

7. Appointment of trustee for Forton charities: Cllr Hammond reiterated that this longstanding charity has a vacancy for a trustee. Cllr Spencer agreed to take on the role.

8. Update on A519: Cllr De Quincey confirmed that he had written to Mark Deaville at Staffordshire County Council as agreed at the last meeting, to identify the areas of the A519 deemed a priority for attention and to clarify what works were proposed in the projected £1.25million spend. Despite chasing a response no reply had been received. Cllr Smith advised that the letter should be sent to Helen Fisher who was now responsible for this and Cllr Winnington be copied in. Councillors also discussed the possibility of installing speed indicator devices on lamp posts in the parish. Cllr Smith advised that these cost in the region of £2000 each. It was agreed that the cost was prohibitive for our small parish.

ACTION: CLERK

9. Matters requiring attention in the Parish: Cllr Toon advised that matter with the Red Lion in Sutton regarding broken external lighting had been dealt with promptly and made it much easier to see and safer to get to. Cllr Smith advised he had reported a significant case of fly tipping in Shay Lane which was also cleared within 24 hours. Cllr Toon advised that following flooding in Sutton Bank the grids and gullies remained blocked with debris stopping water draining away. The clerk agreed to log this call.

ACTION: CLERK

10. Any other business:

10.1 Litter Pick: It was agreed that the annual litter pick would take place on 29th March 2020. The clerk agreed to arrange litter pickers, high visibility jackets and bags.

ACTION: CLERK

10.2 Noticeboard: Cllr Toon advised that the noticeboard in Sutton no longer shuts and needs repairing.

ACTION: CLERK

10.3 The Swan Trees: Cllr DeQuincey reported that his email regarding the removal of trees outside the Swan at Forton had been passed to tree officer Gavin Pearce. He is awaiting a response.

11. Date of Next Meetings:

AGM at 7:00pm on Wednesday 13th May 2020

Parish Council Meeting at 7:30 13th May 2020

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at **7:55 p.m.**