

FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting Held Wednesday 18 November 2015

PRESENT: Forton Parish Councillors: S Tomkinson (Chair), D Toon (Vice Chair) David Carver (RFO), P Hammond, J Perks.

Prospective Parish Councillors: Stephen Spencer, Dr Ed de Quincey
Stafford Borough Councillors: M Smith, K Williamson

IN ATTENDANCE: Carol Little (Clerk)

1. **Apologies for Absence:** M Winnington (SCC) did not attend
2. **Declaration of Interests relating to items on the Agenda:** Following his election to the post, Councillor Spencer declared that he lets a field adjacent to his home to the owner of Chetwynd Hall Farm whose application 15/23215/OUT is listed on the agenda.
3. **Minutes of Meeting held on 04/08/15 and matters arising:** Minutes were approved as a true record by Councillors and signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising and no outstanding jobs reported.
4. **Parish Councillor Vacancy:** Mr Stephen Spencer and Dr Ed de Quincey were each proposed as co-opted Councillors by Councillor Hammond and seconded by Councillor Toon. Councillors voted unanimously in each case in favour and both were duly elected.
5. **Planning Application:** No. 15/23215/OUT regarding land at Chetwynd Hall Farm was discussed and no objections to the application were raised. The clerk agreed to confirm this to the planning officer.

6. Finance

6.1 2015/2016 Quarter Three: The financial statement dated 07 November 2014 was presented to the meeting, it balanced to the latest bank statements received: -

Current Account @ 03 November 2015	110.00
Reserve Account @ 22 October 2015	1,216.80
TOTAL	£1,326.80

The financial statement was approved by the council and the chairman then signed it.

6.2 Payments for Approval

Precept Payments	Budget £ p	Agreed to Pay
Clerk's Salary – 3 rd quarter *(gross)	102.02	£102.02
Clerk's Expenses – 3 rd quarter	16.02	nil
Parish Hall Rent 2015 (invoice expected)	121.44	max £121.44

*The gross amount paid is £102.02. The split between salary and PAYE is determined by the payroll service @ Salary - £81.62; PAYE - £20.40.

The council approved the above payments including the Parish Hall Rent where the invoice has yet to be received thus allowing it to be paid when the invoice is received if before the next meeting.

ACTION: RFO

6.3 Budget 2016/2017: A draft budget for next year was tabled and discussed. It was based on the forecast to the year's end which showed a precept balance brought forward of £699.28 (last year £569.51). The proposed budget requires a precept of £1,004 (2 X £502), (last year £1,036). It should be noted that precept will include central government Council Tax Support Grant of £26.00.

Year	Annual Precept £
2013-2014	1,032
2014-2015	1,036
2015-2016	1,036
2016-2017	1,004

Other general costs remain unchanged as the Government's Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) in September 2014 stood at -0.1%. The general contingency is preserved at 15%.

Stafford Borough Council had not yet announced its concurrent grant level but the budget assumes the Parish Council will request the maximum and that it remains the same as last year (£270). **The RFO was authorised to ask SBC for the maximum concurrent grant.**

ACTION: RFO

The council having debated the draft budget approved it without amendment and the chairman then signed it.

6.4 Concurrent Grants: The Parish Council noted that Concurrent Grants have to be made before the end of the year or be forfeit to Stafford Borough Council. It was therefore agreed to encourage applications by way of notices for the boards and the website. Applications will be considered and considered at the next meeting in March 2016.

ACTION: Clerk & Cllr Carver

7. Shrewsbury and Newport Canals Trust update: Work has commenced and is ongoing. There is nothing else to report following the circulation of the Trust's last newsletter.

8. Forton Parish Council Website: Councillor Carver had circulated the link to the draft website ahead of the meeting. There was some discussion regarding the extent of material which should be allowed into the public domain but following advice from the Borough Councillors it was accepted that there was very little that should be kept confidential and minutes and financial information in particular would generally be expected to be made available. Cllr Carver then went on to propose taking the website live and his maintaining it for the time being. Councillor Hammond seconded the proposal. The motion was unanimously carried.

ACTION: Cllr Carver

9. Matters requiring attention in the Parish

9.1 Following recent high winds Councillor Perks reported that some substantial branches on the east side of Meretown Lane and belonging to the Aqualate Estate required attention to make them safe. The clerk agreed to write to the owner Mr Juhre in the first instance.

9.2 Councillor Hammond reported a pothole around a drain cover on the A519 that needs attention, the clerk agreed to photograph the pothole and log an incident with the Highways Department.

9.3 Councillor Perks raised concerns that the incidents of illicit meetings and disposal of rubbish, drinks cans and evidence of drug use was still ongoing in Meretown. Whilst it was agreed that Streetscene responds to requests to clear the rubbish Councillors felt that engaging Community Police Officers may be one way of discouraging the culprits. The clerk agreed to look into this. Councillor Williamson asked to be copied into any communication with Tracey Redpath.

9.4 Councillors also reported that the historic problem of sewage seeping from drains adjacent to the National Foaling Bank was reoccurring. The clerk agreed to investigate the problem further and if appropriate to contact Severn Trent and the Environmental Agency.

ACTION: Clerk

10. Any other business:

10.1 Councillor Hammond raised concerns about dog fouling in the Parish. In particular he was concerned about the danger to the toddler group using the village Hall. It was agreed that more still needed to be done to stop this anti-social behaviour. The clerk agreed to investigate initiatives that had led to an improvement in other areas with a view to adopting a more rigorous process to eliminate the problem.

ACTION: Clerk

10.2 Councillor Tomkinson was pleased to share the news that the Forton Cricket Club First XI would be competing in the Premier Division of the Shropshire League in 2016 following its promotion.

11. Correspondence:

11.1 The clerk had received an email from Rebecca Martin regarding the withdrawal, following a review, of recycling bins from the Red Lion in Sutton. It was agreed that the cost of this provision, £2,200.00 per annum could not be covered by the Parish council and it was accepted that the majority of recycling in Staffordshire can now be done via domestic bins. The clerk agreed to inform the council that it would not be able to contribute to the cost.

ACTION: Clerk

11.2 The clerk had received an email from Julie Lynn regarding the Forton and Meretown Conservation Area appraisal and boundary review, and advising that the draft appraisal would be launched for a six week public consultation. Councillors asked the clerk to find out more details of the proposals and how and when they could be viewed. The clerk agreed to investigate further and inform Councillors of her findings.

12. Dates of Future Meetings: Wednesday 16 March 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 20:05 p.m.