

FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting Held Tuesday 4th August 2015

PRESENT: Councillors: S Tomkinson (Chair), David Carver (RFO), P Hammond.

IN ATTENDANCE: Carol Little (Clerk).

1. Apologies for Absence:

M Winnington (SCC), M Smith (SBC), J Perks, D Toon (Vice Chair)

2. Declarations of Councillors' Personal Interests:

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Shrewsbury and Newport Canals Trust:

The Chairman welcomed Bernie Jones, Chairman of the Shrewsbury & Newport Canals Trust and Trust Engineer John Heather. Mr Jones thanked Councillors for their invitation to the meeting. He gave an update of recent ground clearance work on the site of the canal in the Parish and explained that the trust been fortunate enough to secure the services of the Waterworks Recovery Group, a group of around 20 volunteers who would be working to re-profile the canal from the Aqueduct to the Skew Bridge from the 22nd - 29th August 2015. Mr Heather explained that the stretch would have a bund at one end and that water to fill the stretch would be drawn from the Mere over the winter months. The canal will also have a pump installed to circulate water to avoid stagnation and fish will be introduced. Mr Jones added that whilst Thomas Telford died before completion of the canal, the grave (in Forton Churchyard) of the colleague who concluded the project (Alexander Eaton) would be restored with a new stone and iron railing as part of the project. Cllr Hammond asked who would be responsible for maintenance of the new stretch of water on completion. Mr Jones and Mr Heather confirmed that various agencies e.g. Environment Agency and Highways would be required to do regular checks. In addition to this the trust would continue to visit the site on a regular basis. Cllr Carver wished the trust well with this exciting development, the Chairman thanked Mr Jones and Mr Heather for their presentation and they left the meeting.

4. Minutes of Meetings:

Minutes of: -

- Parish Council Meeting held on 12th May 2015
- Planning Meeting held on 12th May 2015
- Planning Meeting held on 23rd June 2015

were each approved as true records by Councillors and signed by the Chairman.

There were no matters arising from any of these meetings.

5. Finance Report:

5.1 2015/2016 Quarter Two

The quarter 2 financial statement dated 25 July 2015 was presented. It balanced to the bank statements shown below with a closing balance of **£779.07**

| Balances | £ p |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Current Account @ 03 July 2014 | 100.00 |
| Reserve Account @ 22 July 2014 | 779.88 |
| Less cheques not presented | (100.81) |
| TOTAL | 779.07 |

| Precept Payments | Budget £ p | Agreed to Pay £ p |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Clerk's Salary (gross) – 2 nd quarter* | 102.02 | *103.23 |
| Clerk's Expenses – 2 nd quarter | 16.02 | nil |

5.2 Payments Approved

* The Clerk's quarter 1 salary was incorrectly put through at the old rate by our PAYE service, an underpayment of £1.21 (gross). This amount has therefore been added to this quarter's payment to correct the error.

5.3 Annual Audit 2013/2014

The External Audit report was received on 29 July and it was a clean report. There was a note 'not affecting our opinion' pointing out that the governance statement (No. 6) should not be answered in the affirmative until after the Council has undertaken its internal audit. It will therefore be necessary to arrange the internal audit to predate the May meeting in 2016.

Copies of the Annual Return have been displayed on the notice boards, together with the notice for Local Government Electors stating their rights in respect of inspecting the return from 04 August and should remain on display for at least 14 days.

Under the Government's current audit arrangements there will be no charge for this year's audit.

5.4 Workplace Pension Scheme

SPCA bulletins of 25 September 2014 and 09 April 2015 spoke of the need to establish a workplace pension scheme for any Council employee(s). More detailed conversations between the RFO and SPCA disclosed that Forton Parish Council has only one employee, the Clerk, who earns less than £5824 per annum. This means that she is defined by the Pensions Regulator as an 'Entitled Employee', such employees are entitled to benefit from a non-contributory pension scheme if they wish it.

The Clerk was informed of this position and after due consideration decided that she did not wish to have such a pension scheme established. At the meeting she signed a formal statement to this effect which is valid for 12 months. The clerk has the right to reconsider the matter annually hereafter.

Two nominated contacts, the RFO as primary and the Chairman as secondary contacts have been lodged with the Pensions Regulator to comply with the PR requirements. It is not certain at this time whether these contacts are necessary in view of the fact that the Council will not be establishing a pension scheme. The RFO is endeavouring to establish whether these contact details might be discontinued.

6. **Parish Councillor Vacancy:**

Cllr Hammond suggested that due to the difficulties we are having securing a new Councillor agreeing to change the day of meetings may attract a new Councillor. Cllrs agreed that a move to Wednesday would not be a problem if it enabled us to secure another Councillor.

7. **Matters requiring attention in the Parish - updates:**

Potholes on A519 by 40mph sign: **Ref: 4013628** now complete.

Potholes Fernhill Lane to Shay Lane at the bottom of unmade road. **Ref: 4005844**
Inspector monitoring - Clerk has contacted Highways to reopen this case (4/08/15).

HGV's signage not clear to vehicles approaching Fernhill road from the Eccleshall direction and it needed another sign on the pole. Also lack of signage off Shay Lane is resulting in the road being subjected to inappropriate traffic. **Ref: 4011613**
Acknowledged but need to prioritise limited resources - Clerk has contacted Highways to reopen this case (4/08/15).

Road edge markings from 30mph sign into Sutton village almost eradicated.
Ref: 4011612 *job raised but no date as yet - Clerk has contacted Highways to reopen this case (4/08/15).*

Gullies and blocked drain requiring larger jetter by Sutton Bank Garage
Ref: 4010923 *Job raised and scheduled for week commencing 10/08/15.*

The Clerk was able to report that the work on the Sutton Embankment and on the soft verges at the bottom of Meretown Lane has now been completed.

Cllr Carver had contacted the Clerk in connection with overgrown hedges down Meretown Lane. The Clerk has raised this issue with Simon Mitchell and agreed to progress the situation.

9. Any other business:

Cllr Carver said he had become aware that Parish Councils are being encouraged to have websites. The Council's insurance broker had introduced him to a free Parish Councils website provider and he has agreed to look into this on behalf of the Parish Council.

11. Correspondence:

There was no correspondence that had not already been circulated to councillors.

12. Dates of Future Meetings:

- Wednesday 18th November 2015
- Tuesday 15th March 2016

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