

FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

held in Forton Parish Rooms at 7:00 p.m.

on Wednesday 15 March 2023

1 PRESENT:
Councillors: Steve Spencer (Chair), David Carver RFO, Angus Hawkins, Zena Young, Oliver Thomas

Borough Councillors: Patrick Farrington, Mike Smith

County Councillor: Mark Winnington

Clerk: Carol Little

2 Apologies for Absence:
Cllr Hammond and Cllr Baynton submitted apologies to the clerk which were accepted.

3 Declaration of Councillors' Personal Interests:
None

4 Minutes of Meeting 23 November 2022 & Matters Arising not on this Agenda:
Minutes were accepted and signed by the chairman without amendment.

5 Financial Report; Authority for Payments:

5.1 Financial Statement 2022/2023 Quarter Four

The financial statement dated 04 March 2023 was presented. It balanced to the latest bank statements received.

Account	£	p
Current @ 04 March 2023 (on-line)	110.00	
Reserve @ 04 March 2023 (on-line)	1291.38	
TOTAL	£1401.38	

The council approved and the chairman signed the financial statement.

5.2 Authority for Payments

Precept Payments Approved

Precept Payments	Budget	Approved
Clerk's Salary – quarter 4	(gross) £113.75	£90.95
PAYE as calculated by the payroll provider	nil	£22.80
Clerk's Expenses – quarter 4 - TBA	£15.00	nil
Parish Hall Rent for 2023 calendar year	£135.00	£135.00
*SPCA Subscription 01/04/23 – 31/03/24	106.37	£102.96

Council approved the above payments and authorised the RFO to make them.

*Payment to be delayed until April.

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The council approved the above payments

ACTION: RFO

5.3 Concurrent Grants

The Council was reminded that concurrent grant (£270.00 already received) should be properly disbursed before the end of the financial year (31 March 2023) otherwise it could liable to forfeiture by Stafford Borough Council. However, we were also advised by Borough Councillors at the last meeting that this money may be used by this Council for appropriate works in the parish.

No applications for grant had been received though it was still expected that the Parochial Church Council would be asking for help towards its churchyard costs and the Clerk would check this out. The noticeboard in Sutton is in urgent need of repair and this would be legitimate expenditure of concurrent money. The Clerk would obtain a quotation for its repair and a decision on all disbursements will be made before the end of the month.

ACTION: CLERK

5.4 Accountability and Governance

The council certified itself as being exempt from requiring a limited assurance review (external audit) due to our gross income and expenditure being below £25,000. This now enables the RFO to complete the Annual Governance and Accountability Return part 2 (AGAR) once it is received. The deadline for completion and approval of the AGAR is expected to be early July 2023 although the documentation has yet to be provided. In practice this will mean that the council must be in a position to approve its AGAR at its next meeting in May. The RFO expects to be able to complete the AGAR and arrange an internal audit within the required timescale.

ACTION: RFO

6 Update on A519 safer road campaign:

The Chair reported that the meeting arranged for 17th January 2023 had taken place. See appendices attached for meeting notes and subsequent emails. Whilst councillors felt it was clearly a good opportunity to see and discuss the issues arising Cllr Spencer said that it was disappointing to note that no progress appeared to have been made. Cllr Winnington added that he had also been pursuing the issues to no avail. It was agreed that the clerk would send a chasing email regarding these matters and check why the road speed sign reported before the last meeting has still not been replaced despite the driver's insurer footing the bill.

ACTION: CLERK

7 Matters requiring attention in the Parish

Cllr Young indicated that she was keen to arrange a public meeting to gauge community interest in supporting road safety on the A519. Councillors discussed the options at length but agreed that all of these would be unworkable without

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support of local residents, in terms of their time or supporting a fund-raising event. Cllr Winnington advised that if such an event was scheduled, he could arrange for Michelle Shaker to speak at the meeting to explain our options. Cllr Young also expressed concern about the lack of street lighting in the area and said that the bollards near the Swan were particularly dangerous for pedestrians at night. Cllr Spencer agreed that this was an issue. Cllr Young agreed to establish who was responsible for the bollards before any further action was taken.

ACTION: CLERK/Cllr YOUNG

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Any other business

Cllr Spencer had been asked by Sean O'Donovan to publicise the Open Garden Event he is holding on 20th May at Brook House in Meretown in aid of All Saints Church, Forton.

Meeting Closed at 8:05 p.m.

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 10 May 2023 (starting with the Annual Meeting at 7:00pm)