

FORTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
held in Forton Parish Rooms at 7:00pm
on Wednesday 13th March 2024

PRESENT:

Councillors: S Spencer (Chair), P Hammond (Vice Chair), D Carver (RFO), Z Young, A Hawkins, O Thomas.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Clerk: Carol Little

Borough Councillor: Scott Spencer

1. Apologies for Absence: Cllr Winnington did not attend.

2. Declaration of Councillors' Personal Interests: None

3. Minutes of Meeting Held on 22nd November 2023.

Approval: Minutes were accepted and signed.

Matters Arising not on this Agenda: The clerk advised that she had made a further attempt to access under Skew Bridge, to photograph the abandoned sunbed after the last meeting but the overgrowth had made access impossible. Clerk will speak to the resident who can see the bed from his property to see if access can be made from that side.

Action Clerk

The clerk further advised that there was no outstanding call logged for the flooding in Sutton and she had been to the area to check it was clear.

Borough Cllr Spencer advised that the issue had been dealt with.

4. Parish Councillor Vacancy: The clerk advised that unfortunately there had been no application for the vacant position. Councillors agreed to redouble their efforts to secure another councillor and observed that there were some new residents to the community who may wish to be involved. Cllr Hammond advised that the church would be doing a newsletter for distribution in the coming days, and he offered to include a note of the vacancy. The clerk agreed to create a poster and send it to Cllr Hammond in time for printing.

Action Clerk

5. Finance Report:

5.1. 2023/2024 Quarter Four Financial Statement

The financial statement dated 07 March 2024 had been circulated and it balanced to the latest bank statements received.

Account	£ p
Current @ 07 March 2024 (on-line)	125.00
Reserve @ 07 March 2024 (on-line)	1227.54
TOTAL	£1352.54

The council approved and the chairman signed the financial statement.

5.2 Precept Payments Approved

Precept Payments	Budget	Approved
Clerk's Salary – quarter 4	£122.85	£98.25
PAYE as calculated by the payroll provider	nil	£24.60
Clerk's Expenses – quarter 4 - TBA	£15.00	nil
SPCA Training planning & etc – Zena Young	nil	£36.00
*Parish Hall Rent for 2024 calendar year	£146.00	tba
*SPCA Subscription 01/04/2024 – 31/03/2025	£106.05	tba

The Council approved payments 1 to 4 above and authorised the RFO to make payments 5, Parish Hall Rent and 6. SPCA Subscription, once those invoices were received, provided that they did not exceed budget.

Action: RFO

5.3 Concurrent Grants

The Council had received requests for grant aid from 1) All Saints Church Forton PCC in respect of the churchyard upkeep and some building maintenance and 2) Forton Cricket Club to help with the costs of improving its pavilion. The concurrent grant account stood at £270.00 and the RFO proposed that it be split evenly between the two applications (£135.00 each). This was seconded by Cllr Hawkins and unanimously agreed by the Council. The RFO was authorised to draw the cheques and the Clerk to send them to the applicants.

Action: RFO & Clerk

5.4 Accountability and Governance

The RFO asked the Council to certify itself as being exempt from a limited assurance review (external audit) due to its gross income and expenditure in the year 2023-24 being below £25,000. It was

unanimously agreed that this was the case and that the RFO should complete the Annual Governance and Accountability Return part 2 (AGAR) accordingly, once it is received.

Action: RFO

The RFO notified the Council that the deadline for completion and approval of the AGAR is expected to be early July 2024 although the documentation has yet to be provided. 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 expects to be able to complete the AGAR and arrange an internal audit within the required timescale.

Action: RFO

- 6. Matters Requiring Attention in the Parish:** The clerk advised that she had received notification from a resident about a significant amount of fly tipping by Moss Pit Pool. She had taken a photograph and reported it but had noticed that as soon as it was removed more had been deposited. Councillors felt that this was probably private land but asked the clerk to report it again. Cllr Carver advised that some other fly tipping had been removed from private land in the area.

Action Clerk

7. Correspondence:

a) Flag of Peace for D-Day: Councils had been offered the opportunity to purchase a flag to fly for the anniversary. Cllr Hammond advised that the church flagpole had been mended and that there were already plans to fly the Union Jack flag. Councillors agreed that this was the best course of action as the Flag of Peace could only be used for a week.

b) Proposed diversion of Public Footpath No. 31: Councillors discussed the diversion and reasons for it and felt that it would be a good move. It would help the resident who had suffered flooding due to the inability to block the floodwater because of the public access.

8. Any Other Business:

Consider Purchase of Planter for the Village: Cllr Spencer suggested that we purchase a planter to be placed in a prominent place in the village on the basis that we had been told previously that if a place looks more cared for it encourages the traffic to move slower. The response was mixed and the possibility of gates welcoming careful drivers was mooted. Borough Cllr

Spencer advised that Norbury had done a similar installation recently. Councillors concluded that Cllr Young and the clerk would do an exploratory visit and gather some suggestions and costings ahead of the next meeting.
Action Clerk

- 9. Does the Council wish to explore a .gov.uk domain:** This proposal was discussed and Cllr Carver agreed to attend the fact finding webinar.

10. Date of Next Meeting:

8th May 2024 AGM at 7pm followed by next meeting