

FERNDOWN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Ferndown Town Council Full Council held on Monday 25 January 2021 at 7.00pm via Zoom.

Present: Councillors: J Robinson (Chairman), J L Baxter, T J Cordery, P Hanson Graham, C A Lugg, A J Miller, M Parkes, K Stamp, N Wellstead and M Willis.
Officers: L Harrison (Town Clerk), T Dudley (Committee Administrator) and S Denton (Minute Taker).

320	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Adkins, Flay, Fleetham, Stickley and Wilson (Cllr Worth's apologies for a six month period had been accepted previously due to medical reasons).</p> <p>Cllr Lugg proposed that the apologies for absence be accepted, seconded by Cllr Wellstead and agreed by all.</p> <p>Resolved - apologies for absence from Cllrs Adkin, Flay, Fleetham, Stickley, Wilson and Worth were accepted.</p> <p>Cllr Flay requested via the Chairman that Council to consider his apologies for the next six-month period due to family/business/health reasons.</p> <p>Cllr Cordery proposed that Cllr Flay's apologies for the next six month period be accepted, seconded by Cllr Hanson Graham and agreed by all.</p> <p>Resolved – apologies for absence from Cllr Flay for the next six month period were accepted.</p>
321	<p>Declarations of interest and dispensations</p> <p>None.</p> <p>County councillors' roles and dispensations were discussed. The Town Clerk advised councillors that they did not need to request a special dispensation to discuss and vote on item 9 on the agenda (budget and precept). It was also agreed that for all future meetings a general dispensation would be recorded to reflect those councillors on the Town Council that were also councillors at Dorset Council.</p>

322	<p>Public participation</p> <p>None.</p>
323	<p>Updates, Reports and Announcements</p> <p>(i) Town Mayor updates: none.</p> <p>(ii) Dorset County Councillor updates: none.</p> <p>(iii) Local organisations, representatives, and partners: Cllr Cordery advised that the previously reported merger between Citizens Advice East Dorset and Purbeck was to take place on 1 April 2021 and confirmed Council's grant was to be ringfenced for work within the East Dorset area.</p>
324	<p>Full Council Minutes of 14 December 2020</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Wellstead that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2020 be agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and be duly signed by the Chairman when appropriate, seconded by Cllr Willis and agreed by all.</p> <p>Resolved - the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2020 were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings and were to be duly signed by the Chairman when appropriate.</p>
325	<p>Matters to report from the Town Clerk in relation to agenda item 4.</p> <p>None.</p>
326	<p>Committee and Working Party minutes/notes.</p> <p>The minutes of the following minutes and notes were received and noted on block: Planning Consultative Committee 15 December 2020 and 12 January 2001. Personnel Committee 18 January 2021. Finance and General Purposes Committee 11 January 2021.</p>

	<p>Barrington Centre Management Committee 20 January 2021. Allotments Working Party 14 January 2021. Traffic Management and Road Users Working Party 18 January 2021. Natural Environment Committee 14 January 2021.</p> <p>Recommendations from Committees and Working Parties:</p> <p>(i) Finance and General Purposes Committee Members noted that the amended standing orders and financial risk assessment had been approved and adopted by the F&GP Committee on 11 January 2021.</p> <p>(ii) Barrington Centre Management Committee Members noted that at a meeting of the Management Committee on 20 January 2021 and the provisional hand-over date for the Barrington Centre had been set for the week commencing 8 February 2021.</p> <p>(iii) Personnel Committee It was noted that the Personnel Committee on 18 January 2021 had agreed that the 'SharePoint' electronic folder system was to be used by all staff and Councillors to access point for council documents.</p>
<p>327</p>	<p>Budget and Precept 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.</p> <p>The draft budget and options regarding the precept were discussed.</p> <p>Cllr Parkes thanked staff and committee members for the work involved in preparing the various options, acknowledged the current economic climate in terms of the impact of the continuing pandemic and suggested any precept increase of between 10.8% and 57.1% was neither realistic nor palatable to residents.</p> <p>Cllr Parkes proposed that the budget was accepted with the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff costs reduced by £50,000 to £250,000 and proposed staff restructuring to be phased over two years; • the publication and distribution of the community newsletter Ferndown Matters to be suspended saving £12,880. • professional fees of £10,000 for the Barrington Centre removed and instead taken from the money precepted this year, and • KGV grant should remain as last year, noting the Council agreed funding should be reduced following the refurbishment and any new staff posts self-funding

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include option 2 as detailed on the proposed budget which would leave a precept requirement of £838,303 resulting in 5.4% or £5.32 increase to Band D properties, seconded by Cllr Stamp. <p>An amendment was proposed by Cllr Hanson Graham to accept Cllr Parkes' proposal but to include Option 1 not 2, seconded by Cllr Cordery with three councillors in favour and six against (amendment not carried).</p> <p>Voting on Cllr Parkes' original proposal was carried out with six in favour and three abstentions.</p> <p>Resolved: to agree the budget and precept requirements from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 with the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff costs reduced by £50,000 to £250,000 and proposed staff restructuring to be phased over two years; • the publication and distribution of the community newsletter Ferndown Matters to be suspended saving £12,880. • professional fees of £10,000 for the Barrington Centre removed and instead taken from the money precepted this year, and • KGV grant should remain as last year, noting the Council agreed funding should be reduced following the refurbishment and any new staff posts self-funding, • include option 2 as detailed on the proposed budget to leave a precept requirement of £838,303 resulting in 5.4% or £5.32 increase to Band D properties. <p>Cllr Miller joined the meeting at 7.32pm (reported technical difficulties inially joining the meeting).</p>
328	<p>COVID-19 Risk Assessment update</p> <p>Council noted the following update from the Town Clerk on the COVID-19 risk assessment due to increases in transmission rates and hospital numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff working from home all the time to continue (due to age – those over 65 were 18 times more likely to die from COVID) and/or proximity to vulnerable close family/contacts/relatives; • some staff to work from home on days when shown working in the office on bubble rota because of one-off circumstances (juggling childcare responsibilities with partners/relatives, visiting/managing care for dependant relative): • all staff to wear masks when at work and away from desks. and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> staff not to interact with unplanned visitors at the Council's offices unless emergency or statutory requirement/responsibility.
329	<p>Parish Survey</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that she had not yet had the opportunity to speak with Cllr Stickley on this issue and suggested a deferral on this item, which was agreed by all.</p>
330	<p>Youth Centre project</p> <p>Members noted the proposed project to be undertaken by the Youth Worker-in-Charge (young people to video interview locally employed residents or those running businesses and share information on careers advice and posted via social media) and agreed it was a worthwhile project. The Town Clerk confirmed that all participants would receive the same briefing in relation to content (e.g. set time to describe the business and web address).</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Parkes that the Youth Worker in Charge to go ahead with the video project, seconded by Cllr Wellstead and agreed by all.</p> <p>Resolved: video project to be undertaken by the Youth Worker in Charge.</p>
331	<p>NALC Council Quality Award Scheme</p> <p>The report from the Town Clerk was discussed. The Town Clerk confirmed there would be no additional impact on staff as all staff were working to the professional standard as demonstrated in the award scheme.</p> <p>Cllr Parkes proposed that authority be given for Council to undertake the NALC Quality Award Scheme and that the Town Clerk was to put the full proposals, report and timescales before the appropriate Committee for progression, seconded by Cllr Lugg, with six in favour, two against and 2 abstentions.</p> <p>Resolved: authority be given for Council to undertake the NALC Quality Award Scheme and the Town Clerk to put the full proposals, report and timescales before the appropriate committee.</p>

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Correspondence, training, consultations and forthcoming meetings.

The correspondence from an insurance company regarding a claim in respect of damage caused to a vehicle by a falling tree was noted and the Town Clerk confirmed the company had been referred to Dorset Council Highways department.

Correspondence from a charity based in Swanage requesting a donation was discussed and it was proposed by Cllr Stamp that, although this was a very worthwhile project, not to support the donation request as the organisation was outside the parish of Ferndown, seconded by Cllr Parkes and agreed by all.

Resolved: not to provide a donation toward the charity based in Swanage.

The response to the Dorset Council draft Local Plan was discussed and it was confirmed the Planning Consultative Committee had recommended setting up a task and finish group to consider a recommended response to Full Council on the draft Local Plan. It was suggested Cllr Willis to lead the group and she agreed to take on this role. It was agreed that the group would benefit from other relevant experienced and interested individuals outside of Council.

Cllr Parkes proposed to set up a task and finish group, chaired by Cllr Willis, to undertake a structured and objective review of the proposals contained within Dorset Council's draft Local Plan, and recommend a response to Full Council, seconded by Cllr Robinson and agreed by eight with two abstentions.

Resolved: set up a task and finish group, chaired by Cllr Willis, to undertake a structured and objective review of proposals contained within Dorset Council's draft Local Plan and recommend a response to Full Council.

It was noted that an extraordinary meeting of Council would be necessary to consider the recommended response as the closing date of 15 March 2021 was before the next scheduled Council meeting.

Cllr Willis agreed to liaise with the Town Clerk regarding the Terms of Reference for the group.

A request has been received from Dorset Council for individuals to take part in a local working group to consider a Phase 2 Parking Review. Cllr Cordery

	<p>volunteered his time for this review.</p> <p>Cllr Parkes left the meeting.</p> <p>The consultation regarding Dorset Council’s six free parking days was considered. Members noted that one relevant car park in the town and that as local businesses were continuing to economically suffer during the pandemic, everything should be done to encourage visitors into the town centre when it was safe to do so. Cllr Stamp proposed to accept the car parking proposals as outlined with a further comment that the amount of free parking days could be more generous, seconded Cllr Baxter, seven in favour and two abstentions.</p> <p>Resolved: Ferndown Town Council to respond to Dorset Council’s ‘free parking’ consultation and accept the proposals and noting that the amount of free parking days could be more generous.</p> <p>The Town Clerk reminded members about the many training courses on offer through DAPTC.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised members that a valid request has been made in respect of the vacancy for a member to represent Ferndown Central Ward and confirmed that a poll would take place in May 2021 if local elections went ahead.</p> <p>Finally, a recommendation from the Town Clerk’s three-month probationary meeting was discussed and it was agreed that this matter should be placed on the agenda for the next Full Council Meeting of 15 March 2021. It was noted that if agreed there would need to be an amendment of Standing Orders and the Town Clerk was to liaise with the Mayor and Cllr Mrs Lugg, Chairman of Personnel Committee, in respect of this matter.</p>
<p>333</p>	<p>Close of meeting</p> <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for their participation and closed the meeting at 8.20pm.</p>