

Framlingham Town Council
Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Thursday 3rd December at 7.30pm
Via Zoom.

The Chair advised that the meeting was being recorded.

Present:

Cllrs: D Carter (Finance Chair), P Collins (Chair), C Eastwood, S Garrett, (Vice Chair), M Hine, J Jones, G Kitching and P Wraight.

In Attendance. Mrs Eileen A Coe (Town Clerk/RFO), and four members of the public.

1. Apologies:

Apologies were received and accepted from James Overbury (Deputy Clerk) and CCllr Stephen Burroughes

2. Minutes of Previous meeting:

2131220 Cllr Collins proposed the minutes of the November Full council meeting be accepted as an accurate record, with one amendment (the addition of Cllr M Hine who was present at the last meeting) which was seconded by Cllr Eastwood with all in favour.

The Chair signed the file copy of the minutes.

3. To consider any Dispensation requests received (Please note: requests must be sent to the Town Clerk in writing prior to the meeting)

No new requests received.

4. To receive declarations of interest (please note declarations must be made verbally at the appropriate time and will be entered in the Interest Book.)

Cllr Hine declared an Interest in the Payments and the Interest Book would be signed on her behalf.

5. Adjournment – the Chair adjourned the meeting the following:

5.1 Police Matters:

The Town Clerk read the report from PC Simon Green:

“SNT, Response Officers & PCSOs from Halesworth Police Station have been in Framlingham during the past two weeks on foot. We have been conducting speed enforcement on Station Rd. and both daytime & evening foot patrols throughout the town.

It has been good to engage with those we saw out & about, but also good to note the town has been responding positively to and abiding by the Covid lock-down restrictions to go out only for essential shopping & exercise. Those we spoke with appeared to be doing one or the other.

We've received reports from members of the public about a number of independent retail businesses in the town apparently trading during the lock-down. We have followed up each complaint, but found that the premises were not open as normal, but only for pre ordered deliveries. The enforcement agency for retail Covid breaches is the District Council. Should Officers be aware of a clear retail breach, a report is made to East or Mid-Suffolk Councils."

The Town Clerk reported that Dan Peck the new Police Sergeant with responsibility for Framlingham following the retirement of Sgt Mark Beresford, had been in touch apologising for the delay in introducing himself. He is now in a position where he can re-focus on our communities and dedicate time to the longer term problem solving issues he has within his area. He is aware the Pageant Field has become a repeated target for vandals and youth related anti-social behaviour.

Sgt Peck advised that PC Shane Mingay has been undertaking a lot of work over recent months, working with partner organisations to bring some positive engagement to youths in Framlingham.

Sgt Peck urged that any new incidents of crime or ASB be reported via 101 or (more conveniently) using the online reporting area of the website. The web address is <http://www.suffolk.police.uk/contact-us/report-something> of course, any crime in progress should be reported via 999. He reiterated that all reports should be made via the correct channels, this generates an auditable document and assists Suffolk Constabulary on a force level in managing demand. If there is no demand, further resources will not be made available to a local area. Using the online template will also direct you to provide suitable details that allows for efficient and effective investigation and ultimately can bring offenders to justice and find resolutions quicker.

Sgt Peck also noted that Framlingham is a great small market town and he was certain that the police and other partner organisations will have a really positive impact on the community moving forward and he looks forward to working with the Town Council.

5.2 Report by County Councillor:

CCllr Burroughes report had been circulated.

5.3 Report by District Councillor:

DCllr Cooks interim report had been circulated.

DCllr Cook reported that he felt that Tier 2 was unjustified and hoped that when this was reviewed on 16th December we would move down to Tier 1. Through the second lockdown grants had been made available to businesses which had been forced to closed. There was a pot of £11m and they were currently dealing with 2,000 applications. The grants system had changed again to a fortnightly cycle to coincide with the Government announcements of the review of tiers, details were on the website.

The Budget process had started for the next financial year 2021/22 and he was pleased to report that although there might be an expectation of a rise in tax the aspiration is to set a 0% increase in the district council proportion, which at this stage is subject to further evaluation and he was also waiting for more information on the Local Government Spending Review expected on 14th December.

Cllr Eastwood noted that he had read the Interim Report and looked forward to the suggested mutual discussions on the parking issues.

5.4 Report by Fairtrade Representative – Cllr M Hine

No report.

5.5 Report from PCC on the St Michael's Rooms project:

The Town Clerk read the report provided by the PCC, members of which were unable to attend due to a Church Study meeting:

“ We are expecting to submit a planning application shortly and are just awaiting some clarification from East Suffolk Council on the application and finalising matters pertaining to drainage to the nearby public sewer. Preparatory work on fundraising is also underway”.

5.6 Public Comment:

One person noted they could understand the Town Councils frustration on the lack of communication regarding the parking issue on the Market Hill and hoped the situation would be made clear soon. They also noted that they had heard on Radio Suffolk something that seemed to imply that there would be a period of free parking on ESC managed car parks up to Christmas, but thought there was to be 30 minutes free anyway.

DCllr Cook responded advising that the off-street Parking Places orders were not due to come into effect until the end of November when the 30 minute parking across all ESC car parks could be announced. ESC were precluded from issuing any statements until the end of the statutory period. He noted that mistakes had been made with signage and fees etc but the machines had now been covered up until these matters can be addressed.

Council tax was also mentioned and the increase in the number of houses in the town. However, it was noted that due to Covid-19 there would be a huge increase in claims for Council Tax reduction.

One person commented on a meeting with ESC and the Almshouse Association regarding the £60,000 S106 funds available from the New Road development, which had been highlighted as being available by Cllr Jones. The Mills Charity had applied for these funds for the new dwellings on the old Police House site, and had received a letter back in August advising that they did not qualify as ESC were unable to accommodate people for these houses and also because there was no security of tenure to the licensees. The Almshouse Association had been fighting long and hard to demonstrate that this was in fact a more secure way of housing people and more likely to accommodate people from the community who otherwise may have to move out of the community. However, they have now been informed that these funds have already been allocated to someone else about 18 months ago and they would like to know where the funds have gone. He would be speaking to Nick Khan and DCllr Cook at ESC about this matter and felt the Town Council should also be making enquiries.

One person noted a quick reminder that the application for Sizewell C had been submitted with some last minute changes.

6. Reconvene:

3. Framlingham Town Council – Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 3rd December 2020

The Chair reconvened the meeting

7. Attendance at events/conferences/meetings etc:

No business.

8. Correspondence:

Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk Award – circulated to all Councillors. It was noted that HOUR Community had also received an Award.

Cllr Collins thanked everyone concerned for all the hard work put in.

9. COVID-19 Response Team Update:

Cllr Kitching reported that the weekly report had been circulated and he noted that there were very few infection cases locally which was good news, and combined with the news about the vaccine this is very positive, but it is not a time to let down our guard, and hygiene and social distancing is still very important over the period until the vaccine is rolled out.

10. Casual Vacancy:

The following applications for the casual vacancy arising from the resignation of David Beal were considered and the applications had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.

The results of the vote were as follows:

Samantha Tassera 1

Tim Higham 7

Roland Elworthy 0

10131220 Tim Higham was duly co-opted by a majority as a Framlingham Town Councillor. The Town Clerk/RFO would provide the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and other information and respond to those unsuccessful candidates noting that there would be a By-Election held in May 2021 for the remaining two vacancies .

11. Planning Committee:

11.1 The following planning decisions were noted:

DC/20/3993/FUL - New home office & workshop to replace existing garage - Lincolns Meadow Brook Lane

FTC Supported Planning Permission Granted

DC/20/3090/LBC – Apply lime render to part front elevation – details of render mix and colour and the proposed alterations to the window sills – 29 Fore Street

DC/20/4111/DRC Discharge of Condition 3 of above application – Application Permitted

11.2 Planning Applications received prior to the meeting:

None.

11.3 Matters of report/items of information only:

Cllr Garrett reported that the Sizewell C matter was a standing agenda item for the Planning Committee.

12. Public Relations and Markets Committee:

12.1 To consider a request from the Retailers Group for a contribution of £500 for Christmas tree lights to add to those bought last year to be erected around the Market Hill area.

The Town Clerk advised that the Retailers Group led by Bill Bulstrode had purchased extra lights for the Christmas tree and extra baubles, as well as new lights for around the Market Hill stretching down to Well Close Square. These lights were of professional quality and should last for a good few years. An article would be published in the next Framfare asking residents to contribute towards the cost and the Retailers Group had requested a contribution of £500 from the Town Council. The Town Clerk/RFO advised of funds available in the Budget.

Cllr Collins noted that the lights and baubles would be looked after by the Town Council and stored in the Pavilion.

12131220 Cllr Hine proposed to approve a contribution of £500 towards the Christmas lights , using £180 from Budget 2277 and £320 from Budget 2114, which was seconded by Cllr Kitching with all in favour.

12.2 Matters of report/items of information only:

Cllr Kitching reported that he had produced a Matrix which had been circulated to Councillors for information and comment. Four companies had been shortlisted for the CCTV tender and meetings with them would be held over the next two weeks.

13. Rights of Way, Highways and Lighting Committee:

13.1 To consider change of committee meeting dates (Both Planning and RofW,H&L on 3rd Monday of the month)

It was unanimously agreed to hold the Planning Committee meetings on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7pm and the Rights of Way, Highways and Lighting Committee meetings on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7pm, starting from January. Once face-to-face meetings resumed the situation would be reviewed.

13.2 Matters of report/items of information only

Cllr Eastwood reported that the parking meter on the Market Hill had been temporarily covered up and hopefully the issues will be resolved with ESC and the parking meter would become live at the same time as the one on The Elms.

Cllr Eastwood reported that the launch date for the bus to Campsea Ashe is 15th January. It is an electric bus that would meet every train from the Wickham Market Station to Framlingham, but can

only be booked 24 hours in advance by telephone. Cllr Eastwood noted his disappointment that due to Covid-19 no one from Framlingham had been invited to the launch.

14. Lands Committee:

14.1 14131220 Cllr Collins proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to accept the quotation of £800 + vat from Eastwood Tree Service to carry out works to 2 x Beech trees in the Cemetery as recommended following the results of the picus and resistograph tests, which was seconded by Cllr Kitching with all in favour.

14.2 14231220 Cllr Collins proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to accept the quotation of £1,365 + vat from Kindewood for the work specified in three areas on the Fens, including a transfer of funds of £550 from Budget 1622 and £100 from Budget 1617 to Budget 1613 in order to meet this cost, which was seconded by Cllr Hine, with all in favour.

The Town Clerk would update the recent Tree Article to include the above work and the **Lands Committee would** consider the publicity for the tree work as an agenda item at the next meeting.

14.3 14331220 Cllr Collins proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to accept the Cleaner/ Caretaker Contract document for the Pavilion on the Pageant Field (circulated to all in advance of the meeting), which was seconded by Cllr Garrett and with two abstentions the motion was carried by a majority.

14.4 14431220 Cllr Collins proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to appoint a Cleaner/Caretaker starting on 1st January 2021, at £85 per month retainer with extra hours, being paid at £13 per hour subject to contract terms, which was seconded by Cllr Kitching and with one abstention the motion was carried by a majority.

14.5 14531220 Cllr Collins proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to accept the quotation from Westrock CCTV at £695 + vat for a new CCTV camera to overlook the Pavilion and new Table Tennis area, with an amendment to the funding source (Budget 1512 -CCTV Maintenance including a transfer of £100 from Budget 1506 -Skatepark Maintenance) using funds from Budget 2316 Local CIL instead, which was seconded by Cllr Jones with all in favour.

14.6 Matters of report/items of information only:

Cllr Collins reported that through the diligence of the Town Clerk looking through the CCTV footage and liaising with the local Police the people responsible for the recent vandalism at the Pavilion had been identified and action was being taken.

Cllr Collins reported that new trees would be delivered and planted on the Fens the next day.

Cllr Hine asked what damage had been done to the Pavilion.

Cllr Collins responded that there had been three incidents where the shutter mechanism had been damaged, the outside tap and pipe broken off, CCTV and Covid-19 notices ripped off and toilet rolls strewn around. Also the hand sanitiser had been broken and the liquid used to try to light a fire He noted that this had been taken very seriously and the Police are taking this matter forward as well.

15. Strategic Planning Committee:

15.1 30 year plan / vision - Consideration by council and agreement of strategic planning priorities

Cllr Jones read the following statement which had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting:

Framlingham Town Council's response to a request to consider a 30 year plan for Framlingham.

"Councillors having discussed the request to produce a thirty year plan for the town have concluded that it would be difficult to create a detailed *plan* over such a period. However the council recognise that it is important for the town to have a *vision* for the long term.

In shorter time scales, there are two tasks that the Town Council must do: first, a five year strategic plan is needed to provide focus and direction on key issues and agree priorities for the short and medium term , for example to manage expenditure of CIL funding. This will then feed into the second task: the review of the Neighbourhood Plan, which will involve representation from a number of bodies within the town, and the work on this will commence in the spring of 2021, and the plan will take the town through to 2036.

It is in the Neighbourhood Plan where a longer term vision will be required, not just for the 15 years to 2036 which will bring us in line with the East Suffolk Local Plan, but looking further ahead perhaps to 30 years in outline.

Both documents are dynamic and under constant review. The Neighbourhood Plan in particular 'carries weight' with both District and County councils as it has to have the agreement of the residents of the town before it can be adopted or "made". This means that District and County councils are obliged to take the policies contained in Framlingham's Neighbourhood Plan into account in making decisions.

Throughout the Neighbourhood planning process councillors and all interested residents and organisations will meet to discuss the policy and planning requirements and ways of improving the Town on behalf of its residents as part of the community consultation requirements.

Our vision being: - To make Framlingham the most vibrant, thriving, distinctive, safe and prosperous market town in East Suffolk, retaining its historical character, respecting the environment, reflecting the views of its community and providing an outstanding quality of life for current and future generations."

Cllr Jones suggested that this statement needed full publicity in the minutes and on the website.

It was agreed that as part of the process engagement with other organisations and bodies would be undertaken.

15.2 Matters of report/items of information only:

Cllr Jones reported that the first draft of the Strategic Plan had been circulated to Councillors for comment and the comments would be considered at the December SP Committee meeting with a view to working towards a final draft for a final SP Forum, and then publication on the website in

the New Year. He noted that it had been harder having discussions via Zoom rather than face to face meetings.

16. Finance Committee:

A copy of the list of current invoices was provided to each Councillor. Current invoices put forward at the meeting had been checked and verified by the Town Council Chair and Finance Chair, prior to the meeting.

16.1 16131220 Cllr Carter confirmed that the BACS payments approved at the November meeting have been paid as agreed and the bank print out verified and signed by two Councillors.

16.2 16231220 The Town Clerk/RFO had circulated a copy of the balances of all Bank Accounts to all Councillors, prior to the meeting and the details were noted. A copy of the list of current invoices would be published on the website, once approved.

16.3 16331220 Cllr Carter proposed to approve the payment of current invoices , which was seconded by Cllr Jones and with one abstention due to Interest all were in favour.

16.4 16431220 Cllr Carter proposed a resolution to exclude the press and public by virtue of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 (2) for the next two items because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, which was agreed.

The Zoom Host put members of the public in the Zoom Waiting Room for item 16.5

16.5 16531220 Cllr Carter proposed with a minor amendment to the wording to approve the Committee's recommendation that as part of the Deputy Clerk's progression an increase would be awarded based on 25 hours per week to SCP 16 from 1 April 2021. Subject to satisfactory performance and review from 1 April 2022 it is the intention to progress to SCP 20 and from 1 April 2023 to SCP 24, which was seconded by Cllr Garrett with all in favour.

The Zoom Host admitted members of the public in the Zoom Waiting Room back to the meeting.

16.6 Matters of report/items of information only:
None.

18. Matters of Report or Items for the next Agenda only:

Cllr Collins wished everyone a happy and peaceful Christmas

19. Date of next Full Council Meeting

Thursday 7th January 2020 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 21.23