

Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held at The St John Ambulance Westbury Centre, Fairfield Road, Framlingham on Thursday 5th March 2020 at 7.30pm.

The Chairman advised that the meeting was being recorded.

1. Apologies:

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Jones and Cllr Kitching.

Present:

Cllrs, Mr D Beal, Mr D Carter, Mr P Collins (Chair), Mr C Eastwood, Mr S Garrett, Ms M Hine, Mr J Simpson, and Mrs P Wraight.

Cllr Fisher was not present.

In Attendance: Mrs Eileen A Coe (Town Clerk/RFO) Mr James Overbury (Deputy Town Clerk), CCllr Burroughes, DCllr Cook, and eight members of the public.

2. Minutes of Previous meeting

215320 Cllr Collins proposed that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as an accurate record, which was seconded by Cllr Eastwood and with one abstention due to absence, all were in favour.

The Chair then signed the minutes.

3. To consider any Dispensation requests

None received.

4. To receive declarations of interest

None.

5. Adjournment

515320 The Chairman proposed an adjournment for the following items which was approved.

5.1 Police Matters – PC Simon Green drug related issues in the town.

PC Simon Green introduced himself as a Community Engagement Officer based in Halesworth. He was at the meeting to talk about drugs in Framlingham. Firstly, he said that in comparison with other towns in the district, Framlingham did not have a significant drugs problem. There were people in the town that used and sold drugs but the numbers were relatively low. He said that that the Police were dealing with the situation by educating the children at assemblies at the High School with the aim of allowing the children to make informed choices. The most common drug was cannabis and there were locations in the town – such as the Pageant Field – where it was known that it was being sold and smoked. The police are aware of this because people report the issue to them – using the 101 phone line or via the internet. In the past 12 months there had been 6 reports of drug use using these routes. He urged people to always report suspected use – recording where possible locations, addresses, descriptions, vehicle registration plates etc – via the 101 number or via the internet. The police rely on intelligence to take action and it is vital that people take the opportunity of reporting suspected drug use whenever they have concerns. The police require sufficient evidence, in terms of reports, if they are to succeed in obtaining a search warrant. If someone witnesses drug taking or dealing taking place then a call to 999 may result in a Police Officer attending if they are in the area. There were no questions for PC Green, at the time but the Chair asked if he could stay to respond to the public comments which were later on the agenda, PC Green said he could stay until 8:00pm.

5.2 Report by County Councillor

CCllr Burroughes reported that he had recently had a good service using the 101 phone line to the police and the matter was quickly resolved. He told the meeting that he had sent out his monthly report prior to the meeting (which had been circulated to Town Councillors). He commented on the state of the Counties roads and the recent flooding which had caused significant problems. The County Council was addressing these as they could and prioritising the worst cases. Cllr Eastwood reported that the Town Council was working with a group of residents who were cataloguing the road and pavements faults in the town and this would be shared with SCC when it was completed.

5.3 Report by District Councillors

DCllr Cook reported that his journey to work that morning had been delayed by the SCC Highways team repairing a hole in the road. He too had circulated his monthly report which had also been circulated to Town Councillors prior to the meeting. Turning to the Corona Virus he announced that he would be limiting his travel and attendance at meetings and large gatherings. He said that he was always available to talk via skype or by email.

At this point the Chair suggested that the public have the opportunity to speak about the issue of drugs and then the meeting would return to the normal agenda which was agreed.

The representative from FAYAP said he was pleased to meet PC Green again but stated he was working with a number of younger people who were using harder drugs than cannabis. He had used the 101 telephone line and the website reporting tool but with no apparent success. He regretted that the town did not have a regular Police Officer with whom people could work. A person reported that they had been to a talk about drugs and was horrified about the level of drug use. He was worried that the Police felt there was not a significant a problem in Framlingham and from his discussions with younger people he felt the level of drug use among 16-17-year olds was as high as 90%. He did not know what to do but wanted something to be done. A further person reported that they had used the 101 number after a youth had ridden a motorcycle across the Pageant Field and had told the police the registration number. She was sad that they had not reacted by visiting the person and taking action. Another person said that they knew a person living in Pageant Place who wanted to move away as they felt intimidated by the youths on the field. PC Green reiterated that the Police need to have reports – via the 101 number or the website as 6 reports over a year did not reflect the concerns expressed at the meeting. A final person said that he felt it was often older people setting a bad example which had led to some young people thinking that drug taking was acceptable.

5.4 Report by Fairtrade Representative

Cllr Hine reported that the only news this month was a competition regarding Fairtrade which had been promoted on the back page of FramFare.

5.5 Report by the PCC on the St Michael's Rooms project

The Chair read a report from Canon Rev Sanders on the progress of the St Michael's Rooms Project. Work was progressing with relevant professionals on finalising the plans ready for a planning permission submission. A copy was attached to the file copy of these minutes.

5.6 Public Comment

The representative from the Fram Resident's Association read a statement prepared for the meeting. The Resident's Association understood that the 'referral' process during the planning process was being withdrawn and this was an important part in trying to ensure that essential and material facts known by the locality are conveyed to the planning decision making process. He acknowledged the work done by Cllr Garrett on ensuring that local expertise was listened to by ESC and urged that Framlingham, as a larger town with more resources, would take the lead and help other smaller satellite councils. He noted that the Woodyard development which went through a lengthy planning process during which the Town Council's views that smaller single storey dwellings were required over larger properties had apparently been taken on board. The planning permission given was for smaller properties with no more than three bedrooms. These were now being marketed as four-bedroom properties as the 'study' was being illustrated as a fourth bedroom. Cllr Garrett replied stating that the Town Council was aware of this issue and the matter was on the Planning Committee agenda. The Deputy Clerk said that after discussions with the ESC Planning Department he was being pro-active with all planning applications the Town Council objected to and was telephoning the Case Officer to discuss each case. He urged that local Parish Councils do the same. DCllr Cook said that he was not aware of the referral process being changed and was grateful to the Deputy Clerk for his actions as they were the right thing to do. Cllr Beal said that in one particular case ESC made a decision to grant planning permission on a development (to which the Town Council had objected) without notifying the Town Council that it had gone to the ESC Planning Committee. At that Committee the developer and his agent had the opportunity to speak and the Town

Council should have been informed that the case was going to Committee so that it too could make representations. It was agreed that the Deputy Clerk would send DCllr Cook the details of this case. A person asked about the Town Survey being undertaken at present, and asked how confidential it was and what were the assurances that there would not be multiple responses from a single source. The person also felt that there were ambiguous questions within the survey. Cllr Hine responded that the survey had gone through a long process of proof reading and revisions but accepted it was not perfect. She assured the meeting that there were measures to ensure that multiple responses from one source would be identified. The representative from the Mills Charity reported that work had begun on the new Alms Houses on the Old Police house site. The six homes have a target date for completion of December 18 2020. The representative from the Hour Community reported that the balance had been raised for the electric car and they would be taking delivery of it within the next two weeks. The Hour Community had also raised funds to employ a part time mental health worker and that the Forget me not club would be offering two meetings a month in future. A person also commented about the survey and asked why St Michael's Church was not included but St Clare's was. They also asked why questions were asked about issues the Town Council had no power to change but that things that it could – such as the allotments were not surveyed. Cllr Hine said that the Town Council did not want to duplicate issues – it was already known that there was a demand for allotment space, but admitted that St Michael's should have been included. The results of the survey would also help inform the revision of the Neighbourhood Plan and this was the reason for some of the questions. She added that now the Town Council had a Survey Monkey account there was always the opportunity for more surveys to take place on specific issues. Cllr Garrett reported that it was known that the revised Neighbourhood Plan would hold much more weight if some of the policies were backed up by evidence gathered by the survey. Cllr Simpson said that he recognised that the survey was not perfect but would achieve a great deal and thanked Cllr Hine for her efforts on the survey. The Chair summed up the discussion by saying that some of the issues and information would result in rapid changes and others would take more time.

6. Reconvene

615320 The Chair proposed to reconvene the meeting which was agreed.

7. Correspondence:

Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouse Charity

Letter requesting that the Town Council nominated Trustee continues for a further term of office of four years. Cllr Beal said that he did not understand the process or the implications for the Town Council. He said that he was being asked to endorse someone he did not know for a position in the name of the Town Council on an external body and felt unable to make an informed decision. The Town Clerk explained the purpose of a Town Council nominated Trustee. It was agreed that the Town Clerk would request further information about the person and the role and report back to the next Full Council Meeting.

The Town Clerk reported that the FAYAP AGM was to take place on Thursday 2nd April – this unfortunately clashed with the next Town Council Meeting.

8. Training/ Conferences/Events:

None.

9. To debate and agree a policy regarding the issue of drug use and availability in Framlingham

It was agreed to defer this item to the Public Relations and Markets Committee in order to discuss the issue.

Committee Recommendations and Business:

None.

10. Planning Committee:

➤ Planning decisions received prior to the meeting:

Cllr Garrett reported that DC/20/0189/FUL Single storey front extension Lamorna 22 Mount Pleasant IP13 9HG had been withdrawn.

➤ **Planning Applications and any others received prior to the meeting:**

DC/20/0630/FUL 6 Station Road – remove existing one and a half storey rear extension and erect two storey extension

1013520 Cllr Garrett proposed that the Town Council Supports the application which was seconded by Cllr Beal with all in favour.

➤ To consider any Referral of Planning Applications received prior to the meeting:
None.

➤ Planning matters of report/items of information only:

Cllr Garrett reported that a further Liaison meeting had been arranged with Persimmon homes and was very disappointed by the fact that ESC felt they could not attend. This was in the light of a number of planning enforcement or noncompliance issues that remained outstanding. He recounted the issue of the flooding downstream and the fact that taken in comparison with the other developments efforts in creating Play Areas the absence of anything at all on the Persimmon site was particularly disappointing. Turning to the developments at FRAM 25 (Off Victoria Mill road), thanks to the efforts of a local resident submitting a Freedom of Information Act disclosure, the name of the developer was now known but they had not made any attempts to contact the Town Council, which was disappointing.

11. Public Relations and Markets Committee:

Cllr Simpson introduced the motion below and called for any comments or questions. The Action Plan and draft Income and Expenditure Report had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Beal asked how the balance of the funds was to be raised and if the Framlingham Business Association (FBA) were expecting a refund from the failed Christmas Tree, and if so whether this would go into the pot.

The Town Clerk said that she had requested funding from the FBA for the event, but although the FBA had asked for a refund for the cost of the tree it was not expected to materialise.

The Chair proposed to write to the FBA and request that should a refund materialise for the 2019 tree that these funds go into the pot. Cllr Wraight said that the FBA are not running the event this year, or indeed any events, as they intend to concentrate on the businesses. Therefore in order for the Christmas events/ Tree/ Lights etc to take place the proposal was for the Town Council to lead with the help and support of FBA members and other Retailers. Cllr Beal observed that if fund raising was not successful then the Town Council would be liable for the full cost estimated cost of £3,000. Cllr Simpson confirmed that was the case.

1115320 Cllr Simpson proposed to approve the committee's recommendation for approval to support the Christmas Working Group and to transfer the £600 profit from the Soap Box Race event currently in Ear Marked Reserves and £500 from the Entertainments Reserve Account to a designated Christmas EMR account, which was seconded by Cllr Wraight with all in favour.

Cllr Simpson introduced the motion below and asked for comments. Both documents had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Beal observed that the wording in the strategy's aims was a little ambiguous and proposed a minor change to them by inserting the word 'and' to replace 'in' within the aims so it would read as follows:

Our Aim:

- *Our aim is to improve the way we communicate with all of our stakeholders in the town to deliver timely, informative, engaging and transparent communications **and** increase participation and obtain feedback to input into our decision making processes in order to deliver an effective and efficient service to Framlingham. This was agreed.*

1125320 Cllr Simpson proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to accept the External Communications Strategy, with the above amendment, which was seconded by Cllr Hine with all in favour.

1135320 Cllr Simpson proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to accept the Internal Communications Strategy, which was seconded by Cllr Garrett with all in favour.

Cllr Garrett suggested that the order in which the documents appear on the Councillors Page of the website be reversed (latest one first) which was agreed.

- Matters of report/items of information only

None.

12. Rights of Way, Highways & Lighting Committee:

1215320 Cllr Eastwood proposed to approve the committee's recommendation for the purchase of the Speed-Watch equipment owned by Easton Parish Council, total £1,000, using funds from EMR 340, which was seconded by Cllr Wraight with all in favour.

- Matters of report/items of information only

Cllr Eastwood confirmed that Civil Parking Enforcement was due to commence on 6th April and outlined the new proposals.

Cllr Eastwood explained that Suffolk County Council wished to alter two footpaths on the Persimmon Estate and that details were on the Town Council website for people to comment upon.

Cllr Eastwood reported that a litter pick was being organised on 26th April.

13. Lands Committee:

1315320 Cllr Collins proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to accept the quotation from East Suffolk Norse for Pavilion toilet cleaning 3 days a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) from the opening date (TBC) from Budget 1510 - £3,823 per annum equivalent to £73.52 a week, which was seconded by Cllr Eastwood with all in favour.

1325320 Cllr Collins proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to appoint James Rogers Agricultural Services Ltd for the grass cutting on the Fens for the 2020 season, within Budget 1620, this would amount to £100 for a full cut and £60 for a partial cut depending on the results of the Lands committee's recommendations on the new cutting regime, which was seconded by Cllr Simpson with all in favour.

1335320 Cllr Collins proposed to approve the committee's recommendation for hire charges for the Pavilion Meeting Room at £15 per 4 hour session, with a reduction to £10 per 4 hour session for non-profit making organisations (sessions would run from 9-1, 1-5 and 5-9, which was seconded by Cllr Eastwood with all in favour.

- Matters of report/items of information only

Cllr Collins reported that due to the wet conditions the Pavilion was still not open, and the wet weather was also delaying the installation of the Castle themed play equipment.

Cllr Collins reported that work was well under way with the new Tree Planting and Tree Management Plan, which was being compiled by the Town Clerk.

14. Finance and Strategic Planning Committee:

1415320 To approve the committee's recommendation to award a grant of £250 to Framlingham Art Society towards the cost of coach travel for a members outing to the Fitzwilliam Museum and Art Gallery in Cambridge.

The Art Society had withdrawn the application due to the risks associated with the Corona Virus. Therefore, this item was withdrawn.

1425320 Cllr Carter proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to accept the review and amendment of Standing Orders, which was seconded by Cllr Eastwood with all in favour.

1435320 Cllr Carter proposed to retrospectively approve the committee's recommendation to accept the quotation from Birketts Solicitors of £2,250 with funding from Budget 1129 (Legal), including transfers from Budget 2320 (Floodlighting Skatepark) £1,000, 1201(Grants) £950 and 1622 (Riverside) £300 to support the cost for legal work relating to the lease of office space in the Old Con Club, which was seconded by Cllr Garrett with all in favour.

It was proposed to amend the following motion by inserting the words 'and resolution of outstanding matters' to the end of the original motion proposed which was agreed.

1445320 Cllr Carter proposed to approve the committee's recommendation that the Finance Committee be given delegated powers to approve the final lease, subject to satisfactory legal advice, and resolution of outstanding matters, which was seconded by Cllr Eastwood with all in favour.

1455320 Cllr Carter proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to spend up to £1200 on furniture and sundry items from Budget 1126 (Office Furniture/Computers) (Tables x 6 = £142.00, Chairs x 20 = £490.00, Lockable Cupboard = £239.00. Plus various sundry items to the value of up to £250.00), which was seconded by Cllr Garrett with all in favour.

At this point Cllr Beal asked why two items of large expenditure were being retrospectively proposed. There followed some debate on the process by which the motion was proposed, the services purchased, whether alternatives were considered and if the Finance Committee had the authority to commit to this spend.

1465320 Cllr Carter proposed to retrospectively approve the committee's recommendation to accept the quotation from Anglia Telephones for a new enhanced three telephone system with the ability to take two incoming calls, 6 hour fix on connectivity issues, broadband/wifi and 10,000 minutes to UK local, national and mobiles, with a 36 month contract, (Total set up costs £609.49 net and Total monthly rental £119.37) from EMR 325 (Contingency), which was seconded by Cllr Collins, with one against, one abstention and six in favour the proposal was approved by a majority.

1475320 Cllr Carter confirmed the BACS payments approved at the February meeting had been paid as agreed and the bank print out verified and signed by two Councillors.

1485320 The Town Clerk/RFO provided a printout of the balances of all bank accounts which was presented to the meeting by Cllr Carter, and the details noted.

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 relevant Committee Chairs and were made available in the Payment's Folder prior to the meeting.

1495320 Cllr Carter proposed to approve the payment of current invoices which was seconded by Cllr Simpson with all in favour.

1495320 To report on enquiries relating to land acquisition for community use:

Cllr Collins reported that there had been multiple attempts to contact Savills regarding the former John Grose site without success and requested that the Deputy Clerk continue his efforts to do so.

- Matters of report/items of information only

None.

15. Matters of report or items for next agenda only:

Cllr Collins reported that he had been invited to a Civic Dinner on the 2nd April and had declined.

Cllr Hine reported that the survey was generating a lot of responses and called for volunteers to help transfer the data from paper to electronic format.

Cllr Wraight reported that she had attended the Worry Tree Café, the Forget Me Not Club and FAYAP and recorded her thanks to all three facilities, which had impressed her greatly, and she thanked them for their efforts for the people of Framlingham.

16: Date of next Council meeting:

The next Town Council meeting will be held on **Thursday 2nd April 2020 at 7.30pm** in The St John Westbury Centre, Fairfield Road, Framlingham.

The Meeting closed at 9:40pm