

Minutes of the Framlingham Town Council Meeting – Thursday 3rd February at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Cllrs D Carter, J Culemann, P Dean, C Eastwood (Chair), S Garrett, T Higham, M Hine, J Jones, S Pepperdine, N Williamson.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. E Coe (Town Clerk/RFO), James Overbury (Deputy Clerk), DCllr Cook, 7 members of the public in the room and 7 members of the public on Zoom.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from CCllr Burroughes.

2. Minutes of Previous meeting

Cllr Higham proposed to remove the word 'near' from the minute in item 3 which was agreed.

FCM-22-02-03 1 Cllr Eastwood proposed, with the above amendment, that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as an accurate record, which was seconded by Cllr Dean with all in favour.

3. Dispensation requests received

FCM-22-02-03 2 Cllr Eastwood proposed to grant Cllr Jochen Culemann a dispensation regarding the St Michael's Rooms project for reason (c) granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area – until May 2023 (next Election), which was seconded by Cllr Jones, and with one abstention due to interest, all were in favour.

4. Declarations of interest

Cllrs Higham and Pepperdine declared non pecuniary interests in 10.3, and signed the Interest Book.

5. Adjournment

The Chair proposed to adjourn the meeting which was agreed.

5.1 Police Matters

The Town Clerk reported that the current Police Report had been circulated and passed to Cllr Hine for the website.

5.1.1 Report on attendance at recent Police Meetings – Town Clerk

The Town Clerk reported that she had attended the Tier 1 Framlingham, Leiston and Saxmundham ASB Meeting hosted by ESC where she had outlined the closure of the

Pavilion Toilets until April and learnt that the anti-social behavior issues at the Pageant Field were still part of ongoing investigative work.

5.2 Report by County Councillor

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting

5.3 Report by District Councillors

DCllr Cook reported on the Chancellor's announcement of relief measures following the Covid-19 pandemic and measures ESC were taking through financial aid. He noted the demolition of St Michael's rooms, the recent Ofsted report on Thomas Mills High School and the ESC planning decision on DC/20/3326/OUT – Leaperland off Victoria Mill Road.

5.4 Report from PCC on the St Michael's Rooms (Castle Community Rooms) project

Cllr Hine referred to the report provided by the PCC, which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

5.5 Report from Castle Community Rooms Fundraising Committee Representative – Cllr M Hine

Cllr Hine reported that a website and Facebook page had been launched, and that it was hoped that an on-line auction of relics from the building would take place to help raise funds for the project.

5.6 Report by Fairtrade Representative – Cllr M Hine

Cllr Hine reported that Fairtrade fortnight was to take place between 21st February and 6th March. A raffle and pop-up stall were being planned.

5.7 Public Comment

One person felt that the questions they had asked concerning a change of policy regarding dogs on the Pageant Field, had not been answered. Cllr Eastwood replied that he would check and provide an answer.

Ten people spoke of their disappointment that ESC had granted planning permission to Leaperland for the development off Victoria Mill Road – DC/20/3326/OUT, and the effect it had on the Neighbourhood Plan. One of those felt that the Town Council should not spend any further money on the issue, and hoped that the Town Council would always give straightforward replies to questions put to them. They added their sadness at the resignation of Cllr Collins. A person added their concerns about the funding of the St Michael's Rooms redevelopment.

6. Reconvene: The Chair reconvened the meeting.

7. Correspondence

The email from Phil Collins tendering his resignation as a Town Councillor was noted with regret, and his efforts over the years were recorded with appreciation. The Town Clerk would be writing to him formally thanking him for his period of service.

8. Attendance at events, conferences and training:

None.

9. Covid Response Team:

Cllr Eastwood reported that a meeting was to be held the next day to consider if any further action needed taking.

10. Planning and Environment Committee:

10.1 To note any planning decisions received prior to the meeting:

None.

10.2 To consider the following and any other Planning Applications received prior to the meeting:

10.2.1 DC/22/0059/FUL - The Bungalow, Coles Green, IP13 9LF - Alterations, extensions and attached double garage

FCM-22-02-03 3 Cllr Garrett proposed that the Town Council support this application which was seconded by Cllr Pepperdine with all in Favour.

10.3 Report on the decision on DC/20/3326/OUT (Land South of Victoria Mill Road)

Cllr Garrett began the report by thanking DCllr Cook for his efforts to support the Town Council in its objection to this planning application. He then outlined the history of the process, and the perceived threat to the validity of the Neighbourhood Plan and any review of it.

Cllr Pepperdine supported the view that the decision by ESC could set a precedent for district authorities to overrule made Neighbourhood Plans.

Cllr Higham focussed on the highway and pedestrian safety issues caused by construction traffic and more vehicles using the road. He noted that Thurston and Eye Parish Councils also had issues and may be challenging ESC in their own right, he felt their views and issues should be explored.

Cllr Jones felt that questions asked of a Planning Officer by a member of the ESC Planning Committee were not answered with the truth as he understood it. These were in relation to the size of the development and the application by the Town Council for CIL funds.

Cllr Garrett felt there were four options open to the Town Council: do nothing, ask ESC to take note of the Neighbourhood Plan, make a complaint to ESC, or seek further legal advice.

The Deputy Clerk advised that the only remedy available to a third party if it wishes to challenge a planning decision was a judicial review and that he did not believe the ESC complaints process could overrule a planning decision. To aid the Town Council he had obtained a quotation for counsel's advice which he shared with the meeting.

The Town Clerk/RFO advised the meeting that there were insufficient funds left in the legal budget to cover these costs, but underspend could potentially be transferred from budgets where there was a surplus. However she advised caution and for Councillors to think very carefully before committing public money to what could potentially be a bottomless pit.

Cllr Jones felt that the issue needs wider publicity and to ensure that other parishes are aware of the issues.

Cllr Carter expressed concerns regarding the financial and practical implications of challenging the higher authority through litigation, and called for all transactions to be transparent.

The Town Clerk suggested that SALC and NALC should be informed and their help and guidance sought.

10.4 Consider the implications of the decision and the impact on the Neighbourhood Plan and consider what action (if any) to take.

FCM-22-02-03 4 Cllr Garrett proposed to spend up to an additional £2,000 on legal advice to bring the total to £3,800, to ask counsel to review the papers and give an opinion and advice on the lawfulness of the process, options available and chances of success regarding the processes and procedures of the ESC decision on DC/20/3326/OUT which was seconded by Cllr Williamson, and with seven votes in favour and three against the motion was carried.

FCM-22-02-03 4 Cllr Garrett proposed that the Town Council agrees to seek active publicity to highlight the potentially unlawful processes regarding the approval of DC/20/3326/OUT which undermines the authority of Neighbourhood and local plans which was seconded by Cllr Pepperdine and with nine votes in favour and one abstention, the motion was carried.

10.5 Matters of report and items of information only.

None.

11. Communication, Events and Partnerships Committee:

11.1 FCM 22-02-03 5 Cllr Hine proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to appoint a self- employed part time media / news assistant, to be appointed by the CEP committee, starting from 1st March to set up the new Facebook page ready for the new

website launch, and subsequent management of news posts, using budget 2109 up to a maximum of £1500 PA. (Month by month contract), which was seconded by Cllr Jones with all in favour.

11.2 Cllr Hine withdrew the following motion: To approve the committee's recommendation that arrangements be made to purchase the CCTV cameras and repeaters required from within the agreed CIL budget of £30,000 allocated to the project in order that permission could be sought from SCC to install them.

11.3 Matters of report and items of information only

Cllr Hine reported that:

- The new Town Council Website was on target to be launched on 1st April
- The Annual Newsletter was in preparation and informed the Councillors of the deadline for their reports.
- Framlingham was to host 'Suffolk Day' this year on 21st June and talks had begun with Radio Suffolk and the Castle.
- The Town Clerk was leading on the celebratory events for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee which were underway.

12. Highways, Rights of Way and Parking Committee:

12.1 Matters of report and items of information only:

Cllr Eastwood reported that:

- Extra road salt had been purchased and stored for emergencies
- The Market Hill car park would be pay and display from 14th February.
- ESC parking services help would be sought to help reduce confusion over which parts of the Market Hill were covered by the Pay and Display conditions.

13.Strategy and Development Committee:

13.1 Matters of report and items of information only:

No report.

14. Lands and Markets Committee:

14.1 FCM 22-02-03 6 Cllr Eastwood proposed to consider the quotation of £1245.00 to fell T3 and T6 (Lime) in the Churchyard following permissions from ESC (8/2), PCC and Archdeacon as a priority, which was seconded by Cllr Dean with all in favour.

14.2 Matters of report and items of information only

None.

15. Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan Review Committee:

15.1 FCM 22-02-03 7 Cllr Jones proposed to approve the committee's recommendation to appoint Navigus Planning as the preferred consultant for the Neighbourhood Plan review (subject to NPR funding allocation from Locality) which was seconded by Cllr Williamson with all in favour.

15.2 To consider the committee's recommendation to delay the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan Review until the outcome of the Victoria Mill Road Planning application is known and the subsequent effect this may have on our ability to gather meaningful evidence for the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan Review – explanation document circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Jones explained the rationale behind this motion and felt there were three options available to the Town Council in terms of the length of the delay. After a debate, he proposed to amend the motion by defining the delay as '6 to 12 months' which was agreed.

FCM 22-02-03 8 Cllr Jones proposed to delay the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan Review for six to twelve months, until the outcome of the Victoria Mill Road Planning application is known and the subsequent effect this may have on our ability to gather meaningful evidence for the Framlingham Neighbourhood Plan Review, which was seconded by Cllr Culemann with all in favour.

15.3 Matters of report and items of information only

None.

16. Finance and HR Committee:

16.1 Cllr Carter confirmed BACS payments approved at the January meeting had been paid as agreed and the bank print out verified and signed by two Councillors. A copy of the list of current invoices had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting and would be published on the website when approved.

16.2 FCM 22-02-03 9 Cllr Carter proposed to approve the payment of current invoices, which was seconded by Cllr Higham with all in favour.

16.3 Cllr Carter reported that 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.

16.4 FCM 22-02-03 10 Cllr Carter proposed to approve the purchase of a zoom live track L8 @ £380 and up to 6 microphones @ £65 each plus SD cards for Town Council meetings from Synergy Audio, using EMR 337 (Office Equipment and Computers) which was seconded by Cllr Dean with all in favour.

16.5 Matters of report and items of information only

Cllr Jones reported that the Bank of England interest rate had increased and suggested the Town Council should investigate better returns on its deposits.

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

Cllr Eastwood reported that he had attended the FAYAP AGM.

18. Date and time of the next Full Council Meeting

**Thursday 3rd March 2022 at 7.00pm –The Club House, Framlingham Sports Club,
Badingham Road, Framlingham**

The Meeting concluded at 9:22pm.