

DRAFT MINUTES

At a future meeting the council will consider the accuracy of these minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes to that meeting to confirm whether or not they have been amended.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FOWEY TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5th JUNE 2013 AT FOWEY TOWN HALL

13/09 Present

The Mayor, Cllr John Berryman
The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Mrs A Boosey
Councillors T Delves, Mrs S Gudmunsen, Mrs R Finlay,
D Willmore

In Attendance

The Town Clerk, Sally Vincent
Cornwall Cllr D Hughes
1 member of the public

13/10 Apologies

Cllr K Alexander (delayed flight from New York)

13/11 Declaration of Interests

- a. Pecuniary - None
- b. Non Registerable - None
- c. Dispensations – None

13/12 Public Questions/Police Report

Police Report – No report
Public Questions - None

13/13 Minutes of Meetings of 17th April 2013 and 15th May 2013.

17th April. It was proposed by Cllr Willmore seconded Cllr Boosey and RESOLVED that the minutes be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

15th May 2013. It was proposed by Cllr Boosey, seconded Cllr Gudmunsen and RESOLVED that the minutes be confirmed and signed by the Chairman

13/14 Matters Arising not on the Agenda (for report only)

None.

13/15 To receive and note the minutes, if any, of FTC Committees

Finance – no report.

Planning - minutes noted.

FAC – no report.

Town Hall – no report.

Environment – no report.

13/16 To receive the Mayors Report

The Mayor reported

- He wished to thank everybody for their valuable contribution in making for a very enjoyable Mayor Making Ceremony
- He had attended the Lostwithiel Mayor Making Ceremony on 31st May
- He wished to thank his wife and Cllr Finlay for representing him at the reception aboard the Greenpeace ship, Artic Sunrise
- He wished to thank Cllr Delves for preparing the press release advising the public of the financial implications involved in the acquisition of Squires Field and the toilets

13/17 To receive the Report from the Cornwall Councillor

Cllr Hughes gave the following report.

I am very grateful to those who supported me in my re-election and am very conscious that the results, both here, across the County and nationally show a clear disillusion with party politics. I want to make it very clear that I consider my principle role as representing the people of this Division and of Cornwall rather than any party or faction.

One thing which I would like to express publically is my disgust at the low turnout (39%). The right to vote was obtained by a hard fight and failure to exercise that right is an insult to those who engaged in that fight and a step towards anarchy. If people are not satisfied with the choice of candidate then they should seriously consider standing themselves. At worst they should vote, spoiling their ballot paper, perhaps by writing on it “none of the above”.

I have views of my own on many subjects and cannot promise to agree with everyone on everything. However, even when I don’t agree, I will try to make sure that all views get a fair representation. I can only do this if people tell me so I would ask them to get in touch, face to face, by e-mail, phone or good old letter. My contact details are on the Council web-site.

In the circumstances, I believe that the composition of the new Council is probably a fair reflection of the “political” make-up of our electorate and is capable of working together to steer us through the hard times ahead. Unfortunately the Conservatives chose to go into opposition and the other groups declined to join the Cabinet but will have a fair share of the “posts of special responsibility” and have shown a clear interest in working together for the common good – I hope it lasts!

In my opinion, the Cabinet is probably as strong as could have been selected, irrespective of politics, and will work together as a team. In John Pollard as leader we have a genuine independent who is a proud Cornishman, highly intelligent, a good listener, diplomatic and a natural team leader. He is supported by a Cabinet with a wide range of skills and experience and who are team players, not prima donnas.

For my sins I have been asked to sit on Strategic Planning, Central Area Planning, Standards and Miscellaneous Licensing (taxis, street traders, sex-shops etc).

Those who know me will be aware that Planning is very dear to my heart. I believe that it is one area where local democracy can still have some influence (in spite of the Wainhomes experience). However this can only happen if people are well organised, well briefed and make sure that they base their arguments on “planning” grounds. I am more than willing to offer advice and support to those wishing to express their views, whether for or against any application. However, since I will almost certainly be involved in deciding on applications, in most cases it would be improper for me actively to support one “side”. There may be occasions where local opinion is so strongly one-sided that I might consider it appropriate to campaign actively for that position but there is always the risk that this might preclude me from voting on the matter.

Over the past few weeks I have heard many comments about the proposed supermarket in Fowey, almost exclusively negative. I believe that it would be appropriate to arrange a public meeting in order that all arguments, for and against can be aired and the developer made aware of public feelings, both about the principle and detail of design. We should do this sooner rather than later, before positions become too entrenched for dialogue.

With other commitments, the subject of neighbourhood plans has gone onto the back-boiler. We must bring this back to the front as soon as possible. Once we have such a plan in place, the community will have a far greater say in what is developed whether housing, supermarkets or any other projects, where and, to some extent at least, in what form. I would urge all Councillors to promote the Neighbourhood Plan as widely as possible in the community.

Times are tough and getting tougher. Many services and facilities which we have taken for granted will come under threat, like public toilets or the festival. If we want to save these things it will be up to us as community leaders to develop new and imaginative ways of funding and managing them.

Finally, a plug for Cornwall Council training sessions coming up on Standards and Planning: these are free, well run and informative. I would urge councillors to attend them as soon as possible, both for your own protection and to enable you to exercise your office more effectively.

13/18 To receive and consider reports from representatives of the Town Council on other bodies

Fowey Estuary Partnership – no report.

Forum – Cllr Boosey reported that, at the Forum AGM, Melissa Hartwell had been elected Chairman and Neil Hartwell Treasurer. There had also been an interesting talk by Debbie Burdon..

Community Network Panel – no report.

Cornwall Towns Association – no report.

Chamber of Commerce – The Mayor reported that the Chamber AGM had been held the previous Monday but he had been unable to attend.

13/19 To receive the Town Clerks Report

The Clerk reported that

- The 2013/2014 Agency Agreement contract had been issued but it had not included Hillhay as promised so she had contacted Paul Allen to arrange for this to be rectified. A revised agreement had then been issued, which did include Hillhay, but had removed the payment for weed spraying in the town centre and part of Hanson Drive. When she had questioned this she had been advised that Cornwall Council had awarded the responsibility for these areas to Cory, although it had been agreed that CC would pay FTC for carrying out one treatment as this had already been done before the revised agreement had been issued.

13/20 Accounts for Approval

Cllr Boosey proposed, Cllr Gudmunsen seconded and it was RESOLVED that accounts to the value of £12,319.53 be approved.

It was noted that the £10,000 earmarked for the TH/TQ sinking fund was not showing on the Current Assets Report. The Town Clerk undertook to rectify this.

13/21 Correspondence

The correspondence file was left 'on the table' for Cllrs attention.

13/22 Resolutions from Councillors

None.

13/23 Public Conveniences in Fowey Parish

The Mayor and Town Clerk had met with a representative of Cornwall Council to agree the refurbishment of the five toilet blocks and the details had been circulated to all members, together with the transfer documentation issued by Cornwall Council. Cllr Delves stated that, so far, he could not see a business case for taking on the toilets as he was not convinced that FTC could make a significant saving on CC's running costs. In addition, the Overage Schedule contained in the transfer documents was suggesting that FTC would be liable to CC for the immediate payment of 50% of any enhanced value on the properties and not 50% of any sale value. Cllr Boosey responded that she was also very worried about taking on the facilities but that she felt that FTC was left with little choice in the matter; the public conveniences were essential to the town. The Town Clerk confirmed that she was in the process of setting up a meeting with Cornwall Council to discuss how the transfer could progress as, clearly, the Overage Schedule was unacceptable. Cllr Delves asked to be included in the meeting if at all possible.

The Town Clerk reported that the disabled toilets on the Town Quay had been closed by Cornwall Council, possibly because they were found to be not fit for purpose when she and the Mayor had undertaken the refurbishment inspection.

The Polkerris toilets were still open and costing FTC a significant amount of money each month, a situation that members recognized could not continue indefinitely. Cllr Willmore proposed, Cllr Boosey seconded and it was RESOLVED that the Town Clerk should advise CC and the Rashleigh Estate/Polkerris businesses that the funding would be withdrawn at the end of June.

13/24 Squires Field and Car Park

The transfer documentation for Squires Field and car park had been issued and contained a similar Overage Schedule to the toilet documents, which, again, was unacceptable and would need to be discussed at the forthcoming meeting with CC. In the meantime Cllr Delves agreed to erect the public notices around both the sites advising of the proposed transfer of ownership. It was again emphasized that FTC would have to raise some revenue on the site if the people of Fowey wanted the property returned to them.

13/25 Allotments

The documentation for the transfer of the allotments was still awaited.

13/26 Town Hall/Town Quay Complex

- The railings and lampposts on the inner quay had been repainted and were looking very smart.
- Cllr Boosey and Cllr Alexander had arranged for the positioning of two flower tubs by the KOP steps. These were also looking very smart and it was agreed that the Environment Committee should investigate purchasing some more to put on other parts of the quay.
- Some of the parking permit holders were experiencing difficulty with people parking in their spaces. The Town Clerk had contacted the parking enforcement company and they had advised that, if this happened, the permit holder should take a photograph and a penalty notice would be issued.

- The Town Clerk had contacted the FTC solicitor to query the progress of the SW Water and KOP leases. A response was awaited.

13/27 St Catherines Castle Lights

The Mayor reported that the benefactor of the new lighting system had been in Fowey recently and had been disappointed that the Castle was still unlit. This situation could clearly not be allowed to continue and the Mayor proposed, Cllr Boosey seconded and it was RESOLVED that Chris Biggs should be asked to submit a quote to get the system up and running and that if the quote was reasonable he should be instructed to undertake the work immediately..

13/28 Co-option of Councillors

Deferred.

13/29 Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Hughes reported that Cllr Alexander was formulising the arrangements for ongoing finance and was applying for some of the new tranche of government funding. If successful, this funding would be held by FTC, as lead council, on behalf of the group. He envisaged that within the next 4/6 weeks some form of public function would be needed in each parish to engage with the public and recruit people with the different skills needed to move the project forward. Cllr Hughes emphasized how important a Neighbourhood Plan would be if communities wanted to shape the future of their parishes; an adopted Neighbourhood Plan would form part of the Cornwall Local Plan and be a material planning consideration..

13/30 Questions under Standing Order 21

The Mayor and Cllr Boosey explained that the Fowey Committee responsible for the running of the Fowey St John bus was experiencing difficulty with the St John organization. It appeared that St John now run very few community buses and want to discontinue this type of service, in spite of the fact that the Fowey bus was purchased with funds raised in Fowey and then donated to St John. A further difficulty was that an age stipulation for drivers was being introduced – 65 years – and that drivers now had to pass a test before being allowed to drive the vehicle. Arthur Baker and Rhona Foster were due to meet with the SW Area team the following day (Thursday) to try to find a solution. One suggestion that would be on the table was that St John release the bus into the ownership of FTC until other arrangements can be made, possibly by asking Age UK or a Community Trust to take over responsibility. It was agreed that FTC should await the outcome of the meeting before discussing the matter further. Cllr Boosey had penned a letter should to the Royal Mail urging the company to retain an Operational Delivery Office in Fowey; it was agreed that this should be sent on behalf of FTC.

It was proposed by Cllr Boosey, seconded Cllr Gudmunsen and RESOLVED that the Press & Public should be excluded under Section 1(2) of the Press & Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 because of the confidential nature of the business to be conducted under the agenda item Co-option of Councillors

