

Minutes of the Meeting of Faversham Town Council
9th December 2024, 7pm
The Guildhall, Faversham

Cllr Rowlands (Chair)	Present	Cllr Golding	Apology
Cllr C Martin	Present	Cllr Jones	Present
Cllr Coniam	Present	Cllr B Martin	Present
Cllr Cook	Absent	Cllr T Martin	Present
Cllr Crayford	Present	Cllr Newman	Present
Cllr Eyre	Present	Cllr Perkin	Apology
Cllr Gibson	Present	Cllr Saunders	Present

In Attendance:

Louise Bareham (Town Clerk)

Adrienne Begent (Deputy Town Clerk)

322. Apologies for Absence

Apologies with reasons were received from Cllrs Golding and Perkin.

323. Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None.

324. Town Council Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr B Martin, seconded by Cllr Gibson, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of the Town Council meeting dated 11th November 2024.***

Cllr Saunders advised he had raised a query regarding the Mayoral Robes which had not been recorded in the minutes. A verbal report will be provided at the next Policy and Resources Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr Gibson, seconded by Cllr Eyre, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of the Extraordinary Town Council meeting dated 18th November 2024.***

10 FOR/1 ABST.

325. Mayor's Announcements

Cllr Rowlands provided a report of various events and functions he had attended including:

- Gunpowder WI event
- Opening of the Transport Hub at Hazebrouck

- Faversham Christmas Lights Switch On
- Swale Friends of the Earth Green Market
- Friends of the Cottage Hospital Raffle

326. Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Rowlands noted the successful Neighbourhood Plan Referendum result.

It was proposed by Cllr Rowlands, seconded by Cllr B Martin, and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to thank Councillors, previous Councillors, and staff, particularly Adrienne Begent, for their work in delivering the Neighbourhood Plan.**

327. Environment Committee

It was proposed by Cllr Gibson, seconded by Cllr Eyre, and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of the Environment Committee dated 12th November 2024.**

Cllr Crayford provided an update on police operations to take action on off-road bike riders causing anti-social behaviour in the Bysing Wood area.

328. Community Committee

It was proposed by Cllr Coniam, seconded by Cllr Rowlands, and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of the Community Committee dated 18th November 2024.**

329. Heritage, Buildings and Creek Committee

It was proposed by Cllr T Martin, seconded by Cllr C Martin, and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to select Company B to undertake the works on the Guildhall Clock as per options 3, 4, and 6 and that the clock should be silenced between 7pm and 8am. The clock mechanism should be photographed. A record to be kept of any parts that are removed, which should be photographed before removal. The removed parts should be kept and displayed.**

10 FOR/1 ABST.

330. Policy and Resources Committee

It was proposed by Cllr Eyre, seconded by Cllr Crayford, and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee dated 2nd December 2024.**

331. Swale Borough Council Draft Budget

It was proposed by Cllr Crayford, seconded by Cllr Gibson, and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED that comments on the Swale Borough**

Council Draft Budget be sent to the Town Clerk by 20th December for consideration at the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting.

9 FOR/2 ABST.

332. National Insurance Contributions

It was proposed by Cllr Gibson, seconded by Cllr BJ Martin, and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED that this Council is deeply concerned that Town and Parish Councils will not be compensated for the changes in Employers' National Insurance Contributions which will be introduced in April 2025.**

From April next year Employers' National Insurance Contributions will increase by 1.2% and the threshold at which employers must contribute to National Insurance will be reduced to all employees earning £5000 or more. Principal Councils will be compensated for revenue lost due to the National Insurance rises. But Town and Parish Councils will not – as the criteria used to determine whether compensation can be received is whether the organization receives direct funding from the Government.

The National Insurance increases are predicted to cost Town and Parish Councils an extra £10 million each year – roughly £615 extra for every employee earning over £9000. The Council welcomes pay increases and additional national insurance support for local government employees.

However, by passing the bill onto local Town and Parish Councils, the Government is forcing us to choose between possibly increasing Council Tax precepts or making staff cuts.

The Council resolves that the Mayor writes to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities, and Local Government to ask that the compensation formula is changed so Town and Parish Councils receive the same compensation as principal Councils for financial losses due to the forthcoming National Insurance changes.

Cllr Saunders	AGAINST	Cllr T Martin	FOR
Cllr Crayford	AGAINST	Cllr Eyre	FOR
Cllr Jones	FOR	Cllr Gibson	FOR
Cllr Coniam	ABSTAINED	Cllr C Martin	FOR
Cllr BJ Martin	FOR	Cllr Rowlands	ABSTAINED
Cllr Newman	FOR		

7 FOR/2 AGAINST/2 ABST.

333. Government Consultation

It was proposed by Cllr Crayford, seconded by Cllr Gibson, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to respond to the Consultation that the Town Council is in favour of Remote attendance but is not in favour of proxy voting.***

334. Receipts and Payments

It was proposed by Cllr T Martin, seconded by Cllr Gibson, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to accept the Receipts and Payments for December 2024.***

It was agreed that Cllr Rowlands would discuss with the Town Clerk the issue of payments agreed by the Planning Committee and the reporting process for the Town Council meeting.

335. Private Session

It was proposed by Cllr Rowlands seconded by Cllr T Martin, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted.***

336. Staffing Committee

It was proposed by Cllr Rowlands, seconded by Cllr T Martin, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of the Staffing Committee dated 2nd December 2024.***

1 ABST

The meeting concluded at 8.04pm