

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Faversham Town Council

Monday 6th April 2020, 7.30pm

Present:

The Mayor, Cllr A Reynolds	Cllr A Hook	Cllr K Barker	Cllr J Irwin
Cllr J Saunders	Cllr C Jackson	Cllr H Perkin	Cllr D Knights
Cllr B J Martin	Cllr T Martin	Cllr E Thomas	Cllr C Williams

In attendance:

Louise Bareham – Town Clerk

Adrienne Begent – Deputy Town Clerk

191. Apologies for Absence

None

192. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

193. Coronavirus Emergency Grant Applications

It was proposed by Cllr Perkin, seconded by Cllr B J Martin and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to grant SATEDA £150 for a desk and shredder to enable home working.**

It was proposed by Cllr B J Martin, seconded by Cllr Knights and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to reject the Market Co-operative application and refer them to the EDU at Swale Borough Council to see what support is available, then return to FTC if they were unable to assist.**

It was proposed by Cllr Thomas, seconded by Cllr Perkin and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to grant West Faversham Community Centre, working in partnership with FTC, £500 for 3 months to provide food parcels to those in need who do not meet the criteria of Government assistance provided through Swale Borough Council.**

194. Coronavirus Update

Cllr B J Martin reported that Swale meetings would commence from the following Wednesday. Brown bin collections would recommence, although any missed would have to wait until the next collection date. All rough sleepers were being housed, however one had not accepted the accommodation. Cllr Saunders reported that the community hub had been launched with a press release and a telephone number to call 01795 417525.

Cllr Hook reported that all updates were being provided on kent.gov.uk. All face to face services were now being delivered online or via the telephone. The registration of births was on hold, but parents are able to register for benefits.

Cllr Perkin thanked the volunteers of Mutual Aid and other groups in Faversham.

The Town Clerk reported the office had taken 38 coronavirus related calls the previous week.

195. Town Council Communication with Residents

Cllr Hook confirmed that the Town Council was not complacent to the crisis and had responded as well as it could and believed the community helpline was a good idea, however the Town Council does not control services so it was not straightforward. He proposed writing a letter to every household in Faversham with a key message, targeting those not on the internet. The printing cost would be £1,400 for 8,000 letters, which would be personally addressed in envelopes with an additional charge of 40p postage for each letter – totally £4,600. Cllr Hook suggested if the Council agreed to the idea in principle it should be deferred to Policy & Finance Committee.

Cllr T Martin should it was a good idea, as some money would usually be spent on the newsletter. He thought the message needed to be put out there.

Cllr Saunders supported the spirit of the idea, but questioned whether it was value for money, asking what were the Council's priorities and whether the money would be better spent on food parcels. He agreed that there was an argument for targeted resources and thought through the Mutual Aid group many communities were well connected.

Cllr Barker considered it to be a lot of money and questioned whether resources would be needed elsewhere if the lockdown were to continue for six to nine months.

It was proposed by Cllr Perkin, seconded by Cllr Barker and on being put to the meeting it was RESOLVED to defer the item to the Policy and Finance Committee

196. Any Other Business

It was agreed that weekly meetings should continue. The date of the next Town Council meeting would be Tuesday 14th April, followed by Policy and Finance Committee on Wednesday 15th April.

Public Questions

Mrs Jenny Reeves

To ask the Town Council what provision if any they have set out to support the unpaid carers in Faversham and the surrounding area? Currently there is no provision for these from the Government yet there is evidence from Carers UK and the We Care Campaign both of which I'm an active part of that Unpaid and Family member Carers are suffering both financially and emotionally during this crisis. There is no support or provision for PPE with the only advice to remain 2 metres away, something that is impossible when providing personal care. I have already organised the supermarket chains allowing carers in at the priority times but more needs to be done.

Response

Thank you for your question Mrs Reeves and the work that you have done to bring the challenges that unpaid carers face during the COVID 19 crisis to the attention of supermarkets and the council.

The Town Council has not set up specific provision to support unpaid carers. It has however put in place a number of measures to support the local community during the current crisis. These are:

- building up detailed information on the full range of services and support available in the town during the crisis
- setting up and publicising a telephone helpline to provide information and referral to agencies that can provide direct help to people facing problems
- re-directing council funding towards an emergency COVID 19 fund which can make grants to community and voluntary sector groups that are providing emergency support
- liaising closely with the local hub for the national programme delivered through local authorities, which is providing support for those who are shielded or in crisis.

We want to be as effective as possible in helping local residents during this crisis, so if there are specific steps you feel we should consider to support unpaid carers please inform us.