

**FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at  
7.30pm in the Town Hall**

**(Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Council)**

**Present:** Cllr Anstey – Chairman  
Cllrs Adams, Earth, Goldsmith, Hale, Jackson, Lewendon, Mouland, Paton, Perkins & Wilson

**In Attendance:** Mr P Goddard, Town Clerk  
Mrs R Edwards, Asst Town Clerk  
Cllr Heron (HCC)  
Claire Upton-Brown (Chief Planning Officer, NFDC)  
Jim Sanders (Advice Service Manager, Citizens Advice Ringwood)  
Katy Griffin (Salisbury Journal)

**1. To receive any apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr White, Cllr Bellows (NFDC) and Cllr Sevier (NFDC).

**2. To receive any Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest

**3. To confirm the minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>  
August 2019 and to report on any matters arising**

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Mouland and therefore **RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the General Council meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> August 2019 are signed as a true record.

No matters arising.

**4. To receive any matters raised by members of the public**

No matters raised.

Items 7, 10 and 11 were brought forward in the meeting.

**7. To receive a report from the County Councillor**

Cllr Heron reported that Hampshire County Council is considering the responses of the budget consultation in order to save £80M in 2021-2022. He said that the Council is now past the point of making easy decisions but instead having to choose the least-worst options. Ofsted has recorded Hampshire's Adult Social Services as outstanding in every measure. Children's Services and Adult Social Care will be prioritised. Hampshire is no longer keeping up with road maintenance, but rather managing a network in decline.

## **10. To consider planning matters with the Chief Planning Officer of the NFDC**

Claire Upton-Brown answered the following planning questions.

- i) Do NFDC still produce charts showing the outcome of verbal and written appeals and could they be made available?
  - NFDC no longer produce charts setting out the outcome of verbal and written appeals. Appeal decisions go to the planning committee and are then shared with Town and Parish Councils. NFDC are currently reviewing the communication of the outcome of appeals.
  
- ii) There was a recently published article that said the NFDC has been asked to identify 20% more land than originally set out in the local plan for a five year housing supply. Does that mean that NFDC does not have a five year housing supply in its local plan?
  - There have been changes in how housing need is calculated and NFDC has a low score on the new housing delivery test.
  - Cllr Wilson asked if property developers can challenge everything that is done. Cllr Heron confirmed that they can. However, he also said that NFDC had assessed every parcel of land in the district and allocated everything that was sustainable. If land wasn't already in the local plan then there are reasons why it wasn't included. Claire Upton-Brown said that this is reinforced by the lack of applications challenging the five year land supply.
  
- iii) Could the Town Council be made aware of relevant planning applications in adjacent parishes? For example, Hurley Farm, where there are plans for a wedding venue, falls under Sandheath but will impact on Marl Lane and Station Road within the Fordingbridge parish.
  - Yes, but the Town Council would have to be notified of all applications in neighbouring parishes rather than just those which may impact the local parish.
  
- iv) Some residents feel that if someone breaches planning rules they just get asked to apply retrospectively and wonder why the enforcement team are not more active.
  - Enforcement action is only taken if it is expedient to do so. Not applying for planning permission is not necessarily a reason to take enforcement. If permission would normally have been granted then a retrospective application is invited. However, if it is not forthcoming then officers' time is not wasted in pursuing it.
  - Cllr Wilson asked if it is expedient to stop work as it's happening? Claire Upton-Brown confirmed that it is expedient to issue a stop notice in some circumstances. Cllr Heron advised that although building without permission doesn't actually break the law, an application is no more likely to get permission if it's already built. Buildings can be knocked down if they don't receive permission.

Cllr Jackson asked why Fordingbridge has a greater allocation of houses than other towns in the New Forest. Claire Upton-Brown assured him that no stone has been left unturned in looking at potential sites but the greenbelt, and the quality of greenbelt land, had led to small areas being marked for development. Cllr Heron said that balanced communities are wanted; the last big build in Fordingbridge was in the 1980s and since then there has been less

development than most other similar sized settlements. Housing needs to cover what the market demands, on balance Fordingbridge will benefit from more development and vitality.

Cllr Wilson thought there was a lack of affordable homes. She reported that the Ashford Close proposed site is not sustainable and Augustus Park is too expensive. Cllr Heron replied that the percentage of affordable housing in the local plan is 50%, however there are lots of different types of affordable housing, some with discounted rent rather than discounted purchase. He also mentioned that if 50% of the site is affordable then it changes the viability of the site.

Cllr Adams raised concern that Fordingbridge would become a dormitory town. He said the argument that the town would become more sustainable doesn't hold without local employment. He was concerned there was no land allocated for industry. Cllr Heron replied that more activity takes place in less space due to home working etc. Significant land does not need to be set aside for employment.

*Claire Upton-Brown and Cllr Heron left the meeting.*

#### **11. To receive a presentation from Ringwood and Fordingbridge Citizens Advice**

Jim Sanders, Advice Service Manager, Citizens Advice Ringwood, thanked Fordingbridge Town Council for their generous grant. He gave a presentation about the work of the Citizens Advice service and how it relates to Fordingbridge. Cllr Wilson asked what times Citizens Advice is open in Fordingbridge. Answer: Wednesday 10am – 2pm at the Library.

*Jim Saunders left the meeting.*

#### **5. To receive a report on any matters under Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act**

The Clerk read the following report from the neighbourhood policing team for July and August 2019.

<b>Occurrences</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>
Anti-Social Behaviour	10	5
Violence against the person	1	3
Dwelling Burglary	1	0
Burglary other than Dwelling	1	0
Business Burglary	1	1
Damage	4	5
Theft	1	1
Theft from Motor Vehicles	1	1
Suspicious Incidents	4	4

Cllr Moulard commented that it is good to see the new height barrier in place at the Recreation Ground.

#### **6. To receive a report from the Town Mayor**

Mayor Anstey thought that a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to be controversial and a huge amount of work. However, he is in favour of making a plan and hopes that the Council will find benefit in it. Mayor Anstey reported that Fordingbridge Town Council had commented on several issues deemed unsound in the Local Plan 2016-36.

Mayor Anstey reported that work is ongoing regarding Salisbury Street parking. He is concerned that there is no enforcement of the restrictions already in place.

**8. To receive a report from the District Councillors**

No report received.

**9. To receive the following Committee meeting minutes and any recommendations to General Council contained therein.**

- Planning Committee – 14<sup>th</sup> August 2019 – received Cllr Hale
- Finance & Policy Committee – 28<sup>th</sup> August 2019 – received Cllr Adams

**12. To receive an update on Christmas Lights**

The majority of funding is now in place to pay for the new pole needed to support the Christmas lights in the Market Place. The upgrading of the Christmas lights to LED bulbs will cost a total of £9000, however this can be done over five years.

Fordingbridge Events Groups understand that Fordingbridge Town Council has concerns over using the Council's insurance to cover the Christmas Lights Switch On, as FTC would need to take responsibility for the event that FEG are organising. The Fordingbridge Event Group will be meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September and the matter of insurance will be discussed; Councillors are invited to join this meeting.

**13. To agree a working party to investigate a Neighbourhood Plan**

A discussion about the merit of a Fordingbridge Neighbourhood Plan took place, with some Councillors in favour and some against. Cllrs Anstey, Goldsmith, Jackson, Paton and Wilson agreed to be on the working party to investigate a Neighbourhood Plan, provided the Clerk also attended and minuted the meetings. Cllr Paton raised the importance of information being shared with the rest of the Council.

**14. To report on any Health & Safety issues**

Cllr Lewendon raised his concern about children getting into a large open hole at the Augustus Park development. He reported that the hole is 30ft square, 15ft deep and has large pipes at the bottom. He believes its purpose is to catch flood water.

**15. To receive reports from representatives on Outside Bodies and meetings attended**

Cllr Adams visited the playscheme. He reported that it was very good and thanked everyone involved for all their hard work. He thought the premises at the Junior School were better as they were larger.

Cllr Lewendon gave an update on the issue of parked cars causing obstruction on Salisbury Street. He advised that the local resident who'd originally petitioned the Council on this subject had agreed to join the working party. Also that Cllr Heron (HCC) has said he'd meet on site one evening to see the situation for himself.

Cllr Moulard attended a Sports Pavilion meeting on the morning of 4<sup>th</sup> September. He attended a National Park Authority planning briefing meeting the same afternoon.

Cllr Earth attended an allotments meeting on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. She reported that the allotment AGM will be held on the evening of 26<sup>th</sup> September. Another working party is planned to clear the green bank again.

Cllr Wilson reported on the planned Fordingbridge Market. A meeting with Fordingbridge Greener Living and Fordingbridge Town Council will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> September. The plan is being put to the Highways Authority.

Cllr Hale attended a Conservation Group meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> August. He reported that the hedge around Bishops Pond needs cutting but the hedge cutter is busy for the next three weeks. The trees also need some work. The Clerk responded that the tree survey started this week. Cllr Hale advised that the Conservation Group AGM will be held at the URC on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm.

Cllr Anstey attended the following:

09 Aug. Attended Play scheme and presented flowers to Sue Little.

28 Aug. H&S visit to the Workshop at the Rec.

03 Sep. Xmas lights & Event meeting.

04 Sep. Pavilion enhancement / funding meeting.

04 Sep. NFPN Planning & Training event at Brockenhurst.

#### **16. To note any items of correspondence**

The Clerk read out details of new Adults' Health and Care grants available. All applications must be received by 10am on 18 October 2019 using the online application form.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/community/grants/grants-list/local-solutions-grants/local-solutions-new-forest>

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/community/grants/grants-list/local-solutions-grants/local-solutions-peer-support-networks>

Cllr Wilson advised that Fordingbridge Town Council can apply for one of these grants to fund a community garden for older people at the allotments.

***Action: Cllr Wilson to investigate and apply for grant for Community Garden***

#### **17. To receive a report from the Clerk or any other relevant business**

Before the building work started in the Town Hall, two large paintings were put into storage. It was decided at the meeting to bring them out of storage to once again display in the Council Chamber.

***Action: Town Clerk to arrange for paintings to be returned to Town Hall***

The Gamers have asked if they could use the Council Chamber for their meetings now it has been refurbished. As the group consume food while playing board games, Councillors asked that the state of the main hall after their meetings be monitored before allowing them to play in the Council Chamber.

***Action: Town Clerk to monitor condition of hall after Gamers meetings***

#### **18. To note the date of the next General Council meeting as Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 in the Town Hall**

The meeting closed at 9 p.m.