

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 19th January 2022 at 7:30pm

(Minutes draft until approved at the following meeting of the Committee)

Present: Cllr Wilson – Chair
Cllrs Adams, Earth, Hale, Lewendon & Perkins

In Attendance: Rachel Edwards, Asst Town Clerk
Cllrs Anstey, Jackson, Mouland, Paton & White (Public Gallery)
A representative of Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society (“RFFS”)
A representative from the Salisbury Journal

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Goldsmith. Also, from Cllr Bellows (NFDC).

2. To receive any declarations of interest

No declarations of interest.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 17th November 2021 and report on any matters arising.

Cllr Earth proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Hale and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on the 17th November 2021 be signed as a true record. All in favour.

No matters arising.

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

No matters raised.

5. To report on any matters concerning St Marys Closed Churchyard and Stuckton Road Cemetery

Cllr Wilson reported that the spoil from the cemetery is no longer to be deposited at the Recreation Ground and will instead be disposed of in the cemetery skip with other cemetery waste. The cemetery skip may need to be emptied more frequently as a result.

6. Matters relating to the Town Hall

The Asst Clerk reported that Sheerin Bettle Architecture will photograph the steel works in the Town Hall roof tomorrow and the photographs will form part of the response to the Conservation Officer comments on the Town Hall planning applications 21/10980 and 21/10981.

7. To report on any matters relating to the Information Office

The Asst Clerk reported that the new opening hours at the Information Office are still causing confusion amongst members of the public. This was especially a problem at the beginning of January when people expected to be able to purchase their parking clocks and were frustrated to find the office closed on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The Clerk is liaising with the Information Office staff regarding projects to do when closed to the public, beginning with organising and filing paperwork.

8. To report any matters concerning footpaths

- Jobs for Lengthsman – 4th February 2022

No jobs identified.

Concerns were raised about footpath 83, part of which forms part of the Avon Valley Path. Cllr Wilson reported that the Penny Farthing Homes construction traffic drives across footpath 83 without permission. The representative from the Ringwood and Fordingbridge Footpath Society reported that a new road is to be built across the footpath. The new cycle way is planned to go along this footpath too. Councillors were concerned about the safety of walkers, and also about the future of the Avon Valley Path which is an important walking route in the area.

Action: Asst Clerk to report concerns regarding footpath 83 to HCC and to Cllr Edward Heron.

[Cllr Perkins entered the meeting]

The representative from RFFS reported that HCC has suffered a considerable loss of staffing over the years but has recently appointed new people which is good news.

The representative from RFFS reported that plans to boost nature recovery and safeguard England's iconic national parks for future generations have been set out by Environment Secretary George Eustice. The proposals, which will be subject to consultation, are set out in the Government's response to Julian Glover's independent [Landscapes Review](#) which looked at whether the protections for National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are still fit for purpose. The Government's response sets out ambitious changes to increase access to nature and ensure protected landscapes can deliver more for climate, nature, people and places for the next 70 years and beyond. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ambitious-proposals-to-strengthen-our-protected-landscapes-announced> She said that in the future, groups may need to seek permission and be restricted in what they can do in the New Forest National Park, in order to protect the heathland. She has concerns over accessibility and has written to express her views to the Government.

Cllr Lewendon reported that the hedge on the eastern side of Whitsbury Road between the farm shop and Fryern Court Road needs cutting back and the owners are responsible for this work.

9. To report on any matters concerning Allotments

- To consider purchasing a shed for the Community Plot

New allotment agreements have been sent to the Fry's Field allotment tenants. Terms and conditions have also been written for the new Augustus Park allotments. The Augustus Park allotments are yet to be handed over to Fordingbridge Town Council. Cllr Wilson reported that there are 22 people on the waiting list for the existing Fry's Field allotments and 27 people on the waiting list for the new Augustus Park allotments. There will be a total of 18 plots at Augustus Park.

Cllr Wilson reported that Milestone Infrastructure will be supplying a lot of materials and labour for the new community plot at Fry's Field allotments. Cllr Wilson reported that £700 of S137 grant money is available and recommended that it be spent on a shed for the Community Plot.

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Earth and therefore **RESOLVED**: to request from the Finance and Policy Committee that £700 be transferred from the S137 funds to be spent on a shed for the Community Plot.

10. To note any items of correspondence

No items of correspondence.

11. To receive a report from the Clerk or any other relevant business

Nothing further to report.

12. To note the date of the next meeting as 16th March 2022

The meeting finished at 7.51pm.