

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 2nd February 2022 at 7.30pm
held at the Town Hall**

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

Present: Cllr Hale – Chairman
Cllrs Adams, Anstey, Earth, Jackson, Lewendon, Mouland, Perkins and White

In Attendance: Paul Goddard, Town Clerk
Rachel Edwards, Asst Town Clerk
Cllr Heron (HCC)
Cllr Bellows (NFDC)
A reporter from the Salisbury Journal
1 member of the Public

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Goldsmith, Paton and Wilson. Also, from Cllr Sevier (NFDC).

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest.

3. To confirm the minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 5th January 2022 and to report on any matters arising

Cllr White proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Adams and therefore RESOLVED: that the minutes of the General Council meeting held on the 5th January 2022 are signed as a true record.

No Matters Arising

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

No matters raised.

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

Apologies were received from PCSO Rhys McCormick 18330, New Forest West Neighbourhood Policing Team (responsible for Fordingbridge Town), for the absence of a beat report. He asked that the Council rest assured, that he and the team have been achieving good results and the Policing presence has been evident in Fordingbridge.

6. To receive a report from the Town Mayor

The Mayor gave the following report.

I attended two events on behalf of the Town Council since the last meeting:

9th December. Abbeyfield House for Christmas Carols with the residents and Sounds Like Fun singers.

12th December. New Life Church Christmas Service at Burgate School. Lots of attendees and activities going on.

There are two other items I want to raise:

Firstly, Town Council emails. Obviously, I am frustrated to hear there has been another batch of scam emails in my name. I have two levels of anti-virus and am confident it is not my PC at fault. It seems the names are being picked from the Council website, which is very annoying.

On emails, there have been a few recent ones which don't comply with the Town Council Code of Conduct in showing respect to other Councillors. To avoid this happening, please can I ask that any details any of you want to share are emailed to the Town Clerk in future? Paul can then decide what is appropriate to issue to other Members.

Secondly, I think we need to review the plans for the Town Hall again. The lease on the VIC expires again in April 2023 and there is a danger we will drift into renewing it again with no decision reached.

I still strongly believe all Town Council operations should be based at the Town Hall, we can give our staff better working conditions here, and avoid renting any other accommodation in the town. The scheme we have been investigating to upgrade the Town Hall would give many advantages - but now causes me more concerns:

The Conservation Officer opposes the scheme as it removes some original features from the building. They also oppose linking any new structures to the existing which significantly increases the cost of a mezzanine floor.

The cost of the scheme is likely to be much higher than I anticipated. Paul is arranging for an approximate cost for when we discuss this fully. There are other projects in the town which we could spend these funds on.

The loss of space in the main hall. This was raised by Cllr Adams, the Conservation Officer, and a Member of the Public. The size of the hall has been more important for social distancing during the pandemic.

My own preference would be a reduced scheme for the Town Hall. The main office could be in the upstairs Council Chamber, and the VIC could operate in the ground floor office without removing any original walls. The only requirements would be improved access to the first floor (lift or new staircase) and refurbishment of the toilets. We could also replace the roof of this hall, which was recommended after the previous building repairs.

I suggest we have the Town Hall on the agenda at the Finance and Policy Committee meeting in three weeks' time and hope we can all consider the options fully at that meeting.

Action: Clerk to add item to the Finance and Policy committee meeting agenda

[Cllr Perkins entered the meeting during this item]

7. To receive a report from the County Councillor

Cllr Heron submitted a written report in advance of the meeting - see appendix.

Cllr Perkins asked when the railings at the bridge on West Street will be repaired after having been damaged and reported three months ago.

Action: Cllr Heron to follow up repairs

Cllr Hale asked about the damage to pavements. Cllr Heron reported that he had forwarded the Clerk's photographs to the local highways manager and asked if it would be possible for a walk around to be arranged with the Clerk.

8. To receive a report from the District Councillors

- To discuss the recycling policy of the NFDC

Cllr Bellows read from the Strategic Sites update on the Augustus Park development, see appendix 2.

Cllr Bellows reported that the work behind the Co-op had begun but the high number of electrical ducts was causing delay.

Cllr Bellows reported that NFDC Councillors would receive a full briefing on the Waste Strategy on 18th February and that Town and Parish Councillors will be invited to a virtual update after that. A general discussion about recycling followed.

Cllr Bellows reported that the Government Levelling Up White Paper has been released today, setting out a plan to transform the UK by spreading opportunity and prosperity to all parts of it.

Cllr Bellows reported that an NFDC vehicle had been vandalised overnight in Fordingbridge and then shunted into the middle of the road by another vehicle where it had remained for several hours. The operative lives in Fordingbridge but could not open the van doors due to the damage.

Cllr Lewendon reported that the spoil from Augustus Park had been built into an embankment alongside the footpath. He asked whether this would be removed as no permission had been granted to build the embankment.

Action: Cllr Bellows to find out whether the embankment would be removed

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

- Planning Committee – 8th December 2021 – received Cllr Lewendon
- Extraordinary Planning Committee – 6th January 2022 – received Cllr Lewendon
- Planning Committee – 12th January 2021 – received Cllr Lewendon
- Amenities Committee – 19th January 2021 – received Cllr Moulard
- General Purposes Committee – 19th January 2021 – received Cllr Earth
- Finance and Policy Committee – 26th January 2021 – received Cllr Adams

10. To consider Footways in Fordingbridge

The Clerk emailed photos of the High Street and Salisbury Street pavements to Cllr Heron who has asked the local highways manager to arrange a site visit with the Clerk.

The Clerk reported that he'd emailed the landowners at Whitsbury Road regarding the need to cut back the hedge. Cllr Lewendon asked that this hedge be reported to Hampshire Highways, passing on the landowner's contact details and previous correspondence at the same time. HCC can do the work in default and invoice the landowner to recover the debt. Cllr Lewendon asked that this be done soon due to bird nesting season being imminent.

Action: Clerk to report hedge to Hampshire Highways

11. To consider Highways in Fordingbridge

The Asst Clerk reported on the 20's Plenty for Us campaign, which is asking Parish and Town Councils in Hampshire to pass a motion to support the campaign for 20mph where people, live work and play in order to:

- a. Achieve a 20mph speed limit on roads which are currently 30mph, with exceptions where a higher speed limit is demonstrably safe, particularly for vulnerable road users.
- b. Demonstrate to the Highways Authority the demand for 20mph county-wide, making it both cheaper and easier to implement across the county and achieving better driver compliance.

Members agreed this was a good idea.

Action: Clerk to add to agenda for approval at the next General Council meeting

12. To consider the dates of the ordinary meetings of the Council in June 2022 (Platinum Jubilee)

The Asst Clerk reported that there are two bank holidays on Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd June to mark the occasion of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and asked members whether they'd still like to hold a General Council meeting on 1st June or prefer to postpone both General Council and Planning Committee meetings by a week. Members agreed to consider the dates again nearer the time.

13. To consider proposals for the Queen's Jubilee

Cllr White reported that the Fordingbridge Events Group is hoping to organise, in conjunction with the Town Council, a free community event to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth II. The proposal is for a 'Jubilee Picnic in the Park' on Thursday the 2nd June 2022 at Fordingbridge Recreation Ground from 3.30pm to 9.30pm, with the Council providing the Recreation Ground, the insurance for the event, the beacon and four Portaloo toilets. The risk assessment would be done by a member of the Events Group.

The event would include live music, a disco covering the musical periods of Her Majesty's reign, children's activities, Rotary Club Charity Duck Race as well as the initial lighting of a newly designed & fabricated Fordingbridge Beacon which will be used to mark the Queens 70 years on the throne. Also available on the day would be a fully licensed bar & hot food provided by the Sports Club as well as other outlets supplied by local Fordingbridge businesses.

A commemorative hornbeam tree will be planted by the Town Council in the Recreation Ground this Spring and a ceremonial plaque unveiled during the celebration. The beacon would be located

close to the bank of the river so the reflection can be seen in the water and it can be seen from the bridge. The Clerk reported that some money has already been set aside for the Jubilee and that the Mayor's allowance and S137 funds can also be used.

Councillors discussed whether to provide a souvenir for the children of the town such as a commemorative mug or coin.

Cllr White reported that there would be no Summer Festival this year and that the Events Group would like to work together with the Town Council to organise a Christmas event.

14. To consider the recommendation from the planning committee to proceed with a strategic plan for Fordingbridge

Cllr Jackson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Mouland and therefore **RESOLVED**: to proceed with a strategic plan. All in favour. The strategic plan would be implemented through the existing Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

15. To report on any Health & Safety issues

Nothing to report.

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

Cllr Lewendon attended the Hampshire Passenger Transport forum on 27th January, looking at Hampshire's Bus Strategy. He reported that £1.4Billion would be spent on important bus routes, for example from Southampton to Portsmouth. The discussion groups identified various problems with the bus services as they are, in particular:

- Times of early morning / evening / late buses.
- Frequency of buses outside of peak times
- Lack of bus shelters
- Live bus information only being available in busy town centres

Cllr Lewendon reported that the X3 is funded by Dorset and Wiltshire Councils, rather than Hampshire County Council and that there is no bus service from Fordingbridge to Southampton. He said that over 1000 vehicles use the B3078 from Fordingbridge to Southampton in the early morning each weekday and that a frequent bus service is needed to get people out of their cars.

Cllr Anstey attended the North West Quadrant meeting on 31st January. He reported that under national permitted development rights, temporary campsites can currently legally operate for 56 days a year without express planning permission. The NPA is proposing introducing an 'Article 4 Direction' in the National Park which would require a planning application for all new and the larger existing sites.

Cllr White attended a Fordingbridge Event Group meeting making plans for the Queen's Jubilee celebrations in Fordingbridge.

17. To note any items of correspondence

The Asst Clerk reported on an upcoming cycle event 'The New Forest Classic Road Cyclo Sportive' to be held on Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th April 2022, beginning and ending at Gang Warily, Newland Road, Southampton, SO45 1GA. Those riders on the longest route (127km) will cycle East on the B3079 Roger Penny Way to Fordingbridge and then turn South along Stuckton Road.

Cllr Jackson reported that Alderholt Parish Council is asking Alderholt residents for their views on the future development of Alderholt before drafting their Neighbourhood Plan. Residents can visit the village hall on Saturday 5th February 2022 from 11am – 5pm to comment. The aim of the day is to make sure the plan reflects the views of the village.

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

Nothing further to report.

19. To note the date of the next General Council meeting as Wednesday 2nd March 2022

The meeting closed at 8:34p.m.

APPENDIX 1

Hampshire County Councillor report February 2022

1. HWRCs update

The system of booking to visit Hampshire's household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) is to be made permanent following feedback from users who overwhelmingly supported the approach. It was introduced in June 2020 in response to the pandemic but also helped smooth visits and reduce queuing. The ability to book multiple trips will remain.

2. Support for Community Transport

With the COVID 19 pandemic still having an impact on levels of all public and community transport use across the county, Hampshire County Council has agreed to maintain contract payments for community transport operators at 100% from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Community transport operators have reported that around 35% fewer passengers are travelling than before the pandemic. The move will assist those operators in the recovery and operation of their services, supporting them to maintain service levels whilst they experience lower than usual passenger numbers, and user confidence rebuilds during the coming financial year.

3. County councillor grants

A reminder that applications for County Councillor grants for this financial year need to be submitted to me by Monday 14th February. The 2022/23 County Councillor grant window will open on 1 June. The link for applications is

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/community/grants/grants-list/county-councillor>

4. Roads, Transport and Environmental investment

Hampshire County Council is to be asked to approve on 17 February an increased 2021/22 capital programme of investment in countywide highways maintenance, road safety, transport improvements, flood alleviation, waste management, and bridge strengthening, as well as economic development and town centre improvements, amounting to £112.885 million. This includes £7 million additional financial support for highways maintenance.

Planning continues for the next generation of waste infrastructure to support the county's ability to recycle a wider range of materials. As part of the capital programme of work is the continued development of a plan for [a new materials recovery facility in Eastleigh](#).

The proposed [programme and appendices](#) highlight an Integrated Transport Programme of over 100 million in value. Local schemes to enable people to walk and cycle more for local journeys represent a £11.3 million investment.

Separately, Hampshire County Council is the first council in England to trial plastic bollards made from sugar cane on its pavements; these are being installed as a lower carbon alternative to the traditional concrete ones. The plant-based bollards are also lighter, easier to install and cheaper costing 150 compared with 190 for concrete. They are also just as resilient in the event of a crash and do not splinter if they are hit by a vehicle. The proposal is part of the county's plans to meet its climate change targets to be Carbon Neutral by 2050 and resilient to a two-degrees rise in temperature.

In recognition of the importance of building resilience, the council has declared 2022 the "Year of Climate Resilience". This presents an opportunity for it to increase awareness of the importance of resilience and to develop some showcase projects in partnership with key stakeholders. More information can be found on the Council's Climate Change website:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/climatechange>

5. Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Hampshire County Council is putting plans in place to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee this year. These will provide opportunities for residents across the county to participate, including through schools, libraries, care homes, and outdoor sites. The primary focus is during the extended bank holiday weekend of Thursday 2 to Sunday 5 June 2022.

The plan also has a significant focus on complementing The Queen's Green Canopy theme, with 0.5 million to be made available to help organisations and communities plant trees across the county.

The celebrations will be launched on Thursday 10 February at a high-profile event in Winchester attended by HRH The Prince of Wales, who will unveil 'Licoricia of Winchester' a new life size bronze statue of a prominent medieval Jewish woman, designed by award winning sculptor Ian Rank Broadley.

Councillor Edward Heron
Lyndhurst & Fordingbridge Division



APPENDIX 2

Strategic Sites Update (February 2022)

FORD 1 – Augustus Park, (Land East of Whitsbury Road), Fordingbridge SP6 1NQ Planning Permission Ref: 17/10150 – 145 dwellings

A lot of the site had muddy roads. This is probably because the contractor is beginning to pull the welfare units, materials and equipment off site. Having said that, the roads do need more cleaning. I have updated the Planner as he has been dealing with this issue on behalf of residents.

There are a lot of highways works being carried out across the site as the road gullies are being raised ready for the final road surfacing to be laid.

The temporary car parking area at the Northern end, adjoining the site, has been cleared of the majority of the equipment and materials. The temporary grasscrete parking surface has also been removed from half of the area.

The spoil removal from the Northern end, adjoining the site, is still ongoing.

Works to install the gabion baskets to cover the ends of the drainage pipes in the swale and the swale construction in certain areas of the linear SANG are still due to be completed.

The playground is open. The play surfacing work has been completed. The hard stand edging at the play area gate entrance will be completed at the same time as the adjoining new footpath construction.

The maintenance parking area and widened maintenance access into the Western SANG has not commenced yet.

Some of the remedial planting has been undertaken, but more is due to go in. This needs to be completed within this planting season, before the end of March.

Plots 1 and 2 are not yet occupied. The landscape contractor is currently planting up this area. Plot 119 is now occupied, the remaining Plots to be occupied are 121, 129 and 130. External and landscaping works are still being completed on these plots.

Regular monitoring of this site by the Site Monitoring Officer will continue in the short and medium term.