

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 2nd March 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, Goldsmith, Jackson, Lewendon, Mouland, Paton,
White and Wilson

In Attendance: Paul Goddard, Town Clerk
Rachel Edwards, Asst Town Clerk
Cllr Sevier, NFDC
A representative of Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society (RFFS)
Regional Community Manager, Giganet
A reporter from the Salisbury Journal
2 members of the Public

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Perkins, Cllr Bellows (NFDC) and PCSO Rhys McCormick.

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest.

**3. To confirm the minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 2nd
February 2022 and to report on any matters arising**

Cllr Mouland proposed and it was seconded by Cllr White and therefore RESOLVED: that the minutes of the General Council meeting held on the 2nd February 2022 are signed as a true record. All in favour.

Matters Arising

Agenda item 7 – the bridge repairs are being dealt with

Agenda item 8 – the embankment of spoil at the Augustus Park development has been removed but there is now a dip in the footpath and this fills with water. Spoil remains behind the Glasshouse Studios. **Action: Clerk to report to Sarah Renaut at NFDC**

Agenda item 10 – The hedge still needs cutting and the grass verge is muddy

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

February's report was received after the meeting – see appendix.

Cllr Hale reported that PCSO McCormick was happy to answer questions.

6. To receive a presentation from Giganet regarding the installation of fibre broadband in Fordingbridge

The Regional Community Manager from Giganet reported that full fibre internet will be installed in Fordingbridge; the work will begin in March 2022 and is expected to be complete by January 2023. Permission has been given from Openreach to use the existing ducts if available, otherwise small trenches will be dug instead. There will be minimal disruption with the work being done on a street-by-street basis and no road closures are expected to be needed.

Fordingbridge is not included in Openreach's initial rollout but Openreach will build on top of Giganet's infrastructure in 5 or 6 years' time. Giganet is the only consumer ISP for their network.

Cllr Lewendon asked about the existing telegraph poles and was told that wherever there is a pole, Giganet will use it. The internet speed will not decrease between the pole and the house.

[The Giganet Regional Community Manager left the meeting.]

7. To receive a report from the Town Mayor

The Mayor gave the following report.

On Tuesday 22nd February I attended a thank-you tea for helpers and drivers from the two town Day Centres. Sadly, the tea marked the suspension of both Day Centres for the foreseeable future.

Fordingbridge had two Day Centres for over twenty years. The Rae Straton Lunch Club met on Tuesdays, and the Fordingbridge Day Centre met on Thursdays. Both met at Avonway and used the Avonway minibus for transport, and the hospital supplied the lunches. Up until recently both always had up to thirty members and there was even a waiting list at times.

The Day Centres were suspended at the first lock-down in March 2020 but re-started with the groups operating on alternate Tuesdays from September 2021. Sadly, only twelve members returned and the number of helpers and drivers was also much reduced.

At Christmas Forde Ward announced it would no longer be able to provide lunches, and in February Avonway said it was no longer viable to operate the minibus. Because of these changes and the low numbers it has been agreed to suspend both groups. The names of guests and helpers are being kept on record in case there is a way to start up the Day Centres again in the future.

Cllr Paton reported that she had received a message from an elderly person concerned that the Day Centres were no longer running. Cllr Paton asked if there was anyone who could find out if there were other people wishing to join with a view to perhaps restarting the club. Cllr Hale asked people to get in touch with the organisers if interested.

8. To receive a report from the County Councillor

No report received.

9. To receive a report from the District Councillors

- To discuss the recycling policy of the NFDC

Cllr Sevier reported that there is extra money in the community grant and this is to be spent on the Queen's Jubilee celebrations.

Cllr Sevier reported that the NFDC waste strategy will introduce standard sized wheelie bins and a food waste recycling service. Food waste will be collected weekly. Recycling and general waste will be collected on alternate weeks. Cllr Sevier said that some properties will remain on the current bagged waste system due to access issues. Cllr Goldsmith thought that all of the country should be on the same waste collection system to avoid confusion in different areas.

[Cllr Sevier and 1 member of public left the meeting.]

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

- Planning Committee – 9th February 2022 – received Cllr Paton
- Finance and Policy Committee – 23rd February 2022 – received Cllr Adams

11. To consider Footways in Fordingbridge

The Clerk is to meet on Tuesday with Hampshire Highways regarding the state of the pavements and roads. Cllr Lewendon reported that the path from Tinkers Cross to the Augustus Park development is in a diabolical state and covered with mud; Cllr Wilson reported that as part of the S106 agreement, the developer will upgrade the path. Councillors went on to recommend areas of the town where the paths and roads needed improving, including from Burnham Road to the edge of the Augustus Park site, the Parsonage Park estate roads, the town centre, the pavement alongside Salisbury Road and The Bartons. The Clerk reported that only the town centre would be considered and that if there was a danger then the work was more likely to be done.

Cllr Jackson asked about Fordingbridge Town Council's response to the HCC Transport Presentation. The Clerk reported that it had been submitted and acknowledged.

12. To consider Highways in Fordingbridge

- **To approve a 20's Plenty for Us motion**

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Earth and therefore RESOLVED: to approve a motion that Fordingbridge Town Council:

1. Supports the *20's Plenty for Hampshire* campaign;
2. Calls on Hampshire County Council to implement 20mph in Fordingbridge; and
3. Will write to Hampshire County Council to request that the county:
 - a. Makes 20mph the default speed limit on streets throughout Hampshire in places where people live, work, shop, play or learn, leaving 30mph as the exception on those roads, where full consideration of the needs of vulnerable road users allows a higher limit; and
 - b. Allocates a ring-fenced amount from public health, sustainability and transport budgets to enable 20mph to be implemented county-wide within 5 years.

All in favour.

13. To consider proposals for the Queen's Jubilee

Cllr White reported that the plans to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee are progressing well. The beacon location has been decided, the memorial tree planted, bunting fabric delivered, a town crier booked for the Jubilee Picnic in the Park on Thursday 2nd June, and the event advertised in the local paper.

Cllr Wilson asked if more flowers could be grown in the town, perhaps in planters. The Men's Shed are currently making new planters for the Welcome to Fordingbridge signs and Elliotts Builders Merchants are supplying materials free of charge. Cllr Wilson thought Cllr Sevier's community grant money could be spent on flowers.

Cllr White raised the idea of a gift for local children. The Clerk reported that he had spoken to the school who thought the children would not want a mug; they suggested a picture to hang in the school instead. Cllr White wondered about the possibility of producing a Fordingbridge coin as a memento of the occasion.

14. To receive an update regarding a Strategic Plan

Cllr Jackson gave the following update.

Update on Strategic Plan 2022-27

A meeting was held on 22nd February to progress the resolution passed by General Council on 2nd February. Those in attendance were the Clerk, Cllr Jackson and two members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG).

The KEY questions that need to be answered are:

- 1 What is the purpose of a Strategic Plan?
- 2 What is the vision for Fordingbridge when all the new houses are built and the population has increased by 50%?
- 3 How can the projects identified as being desirable be financed?
- 4 How do we get agreement amongst Councillors of the issues and how they are addressed and implemented?
- 5 How do we get support from HCC & NFDC?

There are many other SUPPLEMENTARY questions that hopefully fall into one of the above sections and these could be listed as:

- How will the road and paths infrastructure be dealt with?
- How will the formal and informal recreational facilities be dealt with?
- How will the social issues which may arise be dealt with?
- How will the basic provision of food etc be dealt with?
- How will the buildings and land which are owned by the Town Council be managed?
- How can the provision of employment opportunities be dealt with?
- How can Town Council business be managed and residents, both existing and new, be engaged and consulted with.

With the advent of significant development in and adjacent to the Fordingbridge area it is imperative that the Fordingbridge Town Council is united in its aspirations and that these are

identified and communicated to the public in an effective manner. The Town Council will have a generational opportunity to determine the future direction and wellbeing of the population.

A crucial first step must be to develop a consensus between all councillors of their views, aspirations and priorities. Once established they can be used to define the collective approach to achieve these. This approach is crucial for success in the council's dealings with other stakeholders in the planning and development process; these bodies being Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council, New Forest National Park Authority, the Environment Agency. The same is equally true of other bodies which can provide external sources for funding such as Wessex Water, Natural England Sports England etc.

We propose/are preparing the collation of views from the council members and their reaction to the previous public survey such that a consensus focussed on the key issues is derived. This to take the form of a short questionnaire survey to present to the full Council?

It should be understood that the preparation of any Strategic Plan requires expertise and experience that is not readily available to the council and will require funding, this funding is a small percentage of that which the Town council will be responsible for in the coming years. It is a fundamental requirement that the future investment in Fordingbridge is made from a point of informed judgement on sound data.

A draft strategic plan template can be found in Appendix 2.

15. To consider a response to the Government consultation on the Glover Landscapes Review

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 are 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>

The consultation can be found at <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/future-landscapes-strategy/government-response-to-the-landscapes-review/consultation/intro/>

The RFFS representative thought it likely that restrictions on recreational activities will be introduced and financial charges implemented for groups to use the national parks. She has asked for clarification and is awaiting a response. She reported that covid restrictions lead to many more people were using the ROW network than normal causing erosion of the paths.

Councillors discussed the proposals and appreciated the fact that residents can enjoy fresh air and get out into the National Park. The RFFS representative thought that stiles should be removed to improve access.

Cllr White proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Anstey and therefore RESOLVED: to submit a statement in response to the Government consultation on the Glover Landscapes Review, saying that Fordingbridge Town Council accept that habitats should be protected but people should continue to have access to the forest for fresh air and exercise and in particular did not wish to stop the use of bicycles and ebikes within the National Parks.

16. To report on any Health & Safety issues

Nothing to report.

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

Cllr Anstey attended on 24th February the 'Town Centre Recovery Launch Event' seminar by the Rural Market Towns Group. He reported that it was interesting but that much of it was only relevant to towns larger than Fordingbridge.

Cllrs White and Wilson attended a meeting with the Fordingbridge Events Group.

Cllr Wilson reported on the Community Garden, saying that the tree work would be done on 4th April and volunteers are organising a clean-up of the area for the 9th April.

18. To approve the Risk Register and Asset Register

Cllr Adams proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Wilson and therefore RESOLVED: to approve the Risk Register. All in favour.

Cllr Adams proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Wilson and therefore RESOLVED: to approve the Asset Register. All in favour.

19. To note any items of correspondence

The following items of correspondence were received.

Consultation Outcome – Hampshire County Permit Scheme (for Road Works and Street Works). Text Amendments August 2021

Part 3 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and The Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) Regulations 2007 gives local authorities powers to design, operate and vary a permit scheme to improve the management of works in the street undertaken by highway authorities and utilities companies.

In August and September 2021 Hampshire County Council undertook a consultation on the HCPS document in order to make text clarifications, refer to the current legislation, technology and processes. This review has been completed and all responses have been considered. Changes have now been made in accordance with the proposals and the comments and the revised scheme is attached a Permit Scheme Rev 2 and the variation plus schedule of changes. Revision 2 of the HCPS will come into force on the 1st April 2022.

The County Council's website for the permit scheme will also be updated to reflect the latest revision.

Avonway's Future Secured

Thanks to generous publicity from local media the Avonway Community Centre is no longer under threat of closure due to a lack of Trustees. To date the Trustees have identified community minded volunteers willing to stand for election as Chairman and Treasurer at the May AGM, nine volunteers who have expressed an interest in becoming Trustees, plus two

further inquiries. This is most encouraging, but Avonway would still welcome more support whether from potential Trustees or from people willing to give volunteer time to help run Avonway. Interested people should contact the Avonway manager, Sara Winteridge (enquiries@avonway.org) to obtain further information.

A very successful meeting has been held between Avonway Trustees and some of the potential Trustees and all the latter declared they were willing to stand for election at the May AGM, with three confirming that they were willing to stand for election as Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary thus ensuring that Avonway has a future. A working party has been set up to consider what direction that future should take and to ensure a smooth transition when the current Chairman and Treasurer retire.

Janet Brown, Chairman of Avonway, said, “there are three things required to run a successful Community Centre; a building which is known, welcoming and fit for purpose, a stable financial position and enough able and hard-working volunteer Trustees to provide effective governance. Over the past 15 years dedicated Trustees have established the first two and I am enormously relieved that, thanks to the good will of the Fordingbridge and District community, we now have the third essential element. Avonway is very much back in business and we look forward to serving existing users, to welcoming new users and – we hope – to becoming even more involved in service to our local community.”

Fordingbridge Twinning Association Summary of Events 2022

12 March 2022: Murder Mystery Evening: ‘*Pasta, Passion and Pistols*’ –St Mary’s Church Hall 7.30 pm

5 May 2022 – AGM with cheese and wine – Avonway 7.30 pm

1-3 July 2022 – 40th Anniversary celebrations in Vimoutiers: do come along for an excellent long weekend just the other side of the Channel!

21 August 2022 – Members Tea Party –Victoria Rooms 3 pm

29 October: Musical Soiree with ‘*Blue Tides*’ including supper – Town Hall 7.30pm

Rotary Club of Fordingbridge Citizen of the Year

The Rotary Club of Fordingbridge is asking for nominations for the Citizen of the Year award. The award is intended to recognise local men and women who have voluntarily served the local community without concern for themselves. The person selected will receive a certificate and their name will be added to the Citizen of the Year recognition board which is currently displayed in the Information Office. In addition, the Rotary Club will make a donation to the charity of their choice. Nominations should be made before 31st March 2022.

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

Nothing further to report.

21. To note the date of the next General Council meeting as Wednesday 6th April 2022

The meeting closed at 8:49p.m.

APPENDIX 1

Fordingbridge Town Beat Report

Hello to all and thank you for taking your time to read February's Beat Report. I am PCSO Rhys McCormick 18330 covering Fordingbridge Town. I have recently taken over from PCSO Steve May 16170. Although, we are both working collaboratively to tackle local community-based issues. I am committed to tackling community-based issues and working collaboratively with local stakeholders, partners and the council to tackle issues identified.

Figures for February 2022 – 62 reports to Police, 24 of which were recorded Crimes.

4x Thefts (One being a Theft of a vehicle, One theft from vehicle, One shoplifting and One report of a male stealing tyres from a property.)

5x Anti-social related behaviour incidents (namely youths banging on doors/windows and running away)

6x Burglary's (Three of which were non-dwelling, shed & garages and Three attempted Break Ins causing damage to properties)

1x Criminal Damage (Padlock drilled open but entry not gained)

1x Making of without Payment (Filling with petrol and making away without paying)

5x Public Order (One suspect given a Community Resolution and two Public Order/ASB warnings given)

2x Suspicious Packages (Both containing Cannabis, Drug Offences)

2x Rape (One being a historic Rape)

1x Sexual Assault

1x Sexual Activity

APPENDIX 2

SUGGESTED STRATEGIC PLAN TEMPLATE

A strategic plan for the organisation will include the authorities Vision statement for the area as well as its Objectives and Priorities and the actions to achieve these.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Introduction

- Purpose of the Strategic Plan
- Why do we need a Strategic Plan
- Overview of the Town Council
 - responsible for
 - governance
 - resources: budget and staffing
- What has informed the plan
 - general representations to the Council
 - public consultations
 - Neighbourhood Plan evidence gathering

Fordingbridge Past and Present

- overview of town's history and character
- key facts / information about the present
- challenges faced

Vision Statement

where you want to get to / want to achieve for the area

The vision should be locally distinctive. It must therefore draw on what makes the area unique. The vision should set the direction for your plan, identifying the changes you would like to see over the strategic plan period. A vision is ordinarily a single statement but it can also be a set of concise vision statements.

Key Objectives

what you want to achieve / see happen

set out under themes or subject matters

The objectives will set out the intent of the plan in order to deliver the vision. The objectives must therefore relate to each of the key subjects raised in your vision. It is best to divide objectives into common local themes. These themes can broadly reflect the issues identified by the Council through its consultations and evidence gathering for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Key Projects

how you will achieve Objectives

a listing of projects intended to deliver or contribute to delivery of the Objectives

Action Plan

A set of timed and resourced actions to achieve the projects

Action	Objective	By Whom	Timing	Resources	Outcomes
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Monitoring and Reviewing the Plan

commitment to monitoring the plan and reviewing through the Action Plan implementation

how will this be carried out / reported i.e. to Full Council every quarter