

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 6th September 2023 at
7.30pm held at the Town Hall.**

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

Present: Cllr White – Chair
Cllrs Bailey, Cameron, Hale, Hinton, Jackson, Lewendon, Paton, Perkins and Wilson

In Attendance: Paul Goddard, Town Clerk
Rachel Edwards, Asst Town Clerk
Cllr Woods, New Forest District Council

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Shering. Also, from Cllr Heron (HCC) and from the Footpath Officer and representative of Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society (RFFS).

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 August 2023 and to report on any matters arising

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore RESOLVED: that the minutes of the General Council meeting held on the 2nd August 2023 are signed as a true record.

Matters arising

Agenda item 12 – The postponed surface dressing works have all been cancelled and deferred until next year's season. The contractor has removed all signage.

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

No report received.

6. To receive a report from the Town Mayor

The Mayor reported that he

- Is involved with the recruitment process of a new member of our Ground staff. This is still on-going.
- Attended an initial meeting with the Park Run organisation to start the planning process & raising of set up funds to get a Fordingbridge Park Run set up by early 2024.
- Created an initial new Business Continuity Plan for the town & will assist the Clerk to develop this further.
- Attended a discussion/meeting with NFDC to explore the installation of new CCTV around Fordingbridge.
- Involved in planning the Xmas Event for 2023 which will be held on the 1st December supported by FTC, FEG & Rotary.
- Attended the official opening of 'Green Home & Garden', a new shop on our High Street.

7. To receive a report from the County Councillor

No report received.

8. To receive a report from the District Councillors

The District Councillors' report can be found in the appendix.

Fordingbridge Town Council's formal comments regarding the access strategy will be sent to HCC by the end of October and Cllrs Millar and Woods asked to be copied in. The Clerk asked for members' comments by the end of this week to collate.

Cllr Wilson reported that the land at the end of Hertford Close has been cleared of trees.

Cllr Millar said he reports local issues on social media, including grants, sewage, allotments and the land to the rear of the Co-op.

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

- Planning Committee – 9th August 2023 – received Cllr Paton
- Finance and Policy Committee – 30th August 2023 – received Cllr Millar

10. To consider Footways in Fordingbridge

Cllr Wilson reported that some concrete is missing from the footway side of the main bridge in the town.

11. To consider Highways in Fordingbridge

Cllr Lewendon reported that Fryern Court Road has had a succession of roadworks over the past four months and there seemed to be little co-ordination in these works. Often residents and businesses are not notified. Cllr Bailey reported that Trooli is about to dig up the roads to lay fibre optic cables and then Openreach would dig the same stretch of roads to lay their cables alongside. He said that this isn't cost-effective.

Cllr Bailey said that the banners on railings look a mess with everyone putting their own banners up without any permissions from NFDC. Members discussed FTC creating their own signs to promote the town.

Action: Cllr White to find out the cost of printing banners to promote the town

12. To consider a planning application

APPLICATION NO: 23/10762

TYPE: Full Planning Permission

SITE: 2 PARK ROAD, FORDINGBRIDGE SP6 1EQ

DESCRIPTION: Demolish existing property; erect 2no. pairs of semi-detached dwellings together with associated garages/parking and landscaping

APPLICANT: Nord Homes Ltd

Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Millar and therefore RESOLVED: to recommend PAR2: We recommend REFUSAL as this application would further increase the problems with parking along Park Road and the air quality report is incorrect, but would accept the decision reached by the District Council's Officers under their delegated powers.

13. To consider the frequency of sub-committee meetings

The Amenities and General Purposes Committees currently meet every other month. Members considered meeting every month instead, in order to progress projects more quickly. It was decided to continue with the current arrangement of meeting on alternate months but to hold additional extraordinary meetings as needed.

14. To consider the draft report on Tinkers Cross open spaces and agree actions arising therefrom

The Clerk circulated a draft report detailing the implications of managing the new development's open spaces at Tinkers Cross. Members discussed how the land will be managed, possible amounts needed for the commuted sum and the possible need for additional grounds staff and additional equipment. It was decided to hold an Extraordinary General Council meeting in closed session the following week to consider this matter further and to consider agreeing in principle taking on the Tinkers Cross open spaces subject to agreeing a commuted sum with the developer.

15. To report on any Health & Safety issues

Cllr Bailey will meet with the Clerk regarding the latest RoSPA reports and actions required.

The Clerk reported that the paddling pool would be closed and drained on Monday so that the slabs and edge stones could be repaired. It is hoped to reopen the pool for a short additional period after that.

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

Cllr Jackson reported that the Rotary Club are willing to help with the proposed Park Run at the Rec.

Cllr Hale attended the Victoria Rooms Trustee meeting on 3rd August. He reported that there are now three trustees which is the minimum allowed.

17. To note any items of correspondence

Nothing to report.

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

Cllr Lewendon reported that Ford Ward has closed temporarily due to ongoing staffing challenges.

19. To note the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 4th October 2023.

The meeting closed at 8:52 p.m.

APPENDIX – District Councillors' Report

Title	New Forest District Councillors' Monthly Report
Period	August 2023
From	Councillor David Millar Councillor Phil Woods
To	Fordingbridge Town Council Godshill Parish Council Hyde Parish Council

Overview

There was no scheduled NFDC Cabinet or Council meeting in August.

The Planning Committee met on 9 August and Phil was unable to attend.

NFDC Council meetings

The submission of questions and provision of answers is tightly regulated. Questions have to be submitted in advance and the Councillor who is responsible for the relevant portfolio reads out a pre-prepared answer. Follow up questioning is severely limited.

Most decision-making occurs in Cabinet, which is a smaller group and even less opportunity to influence discussion by the wider Councillor group.

The opposition groups have raised questions about the efficacy of the process with Kate Ryan, the CEO, and some relaxation of the process has been agreed to enable a more vibrant democratic process.

Parkrun

David, Phil and Pete White met with two representatives from parkrun at the Recreation Ground in Fordingbridge on 21 August. The parkrun representatives commented that the location was eminently suitable for a new parkrun course.

Next steps are to identify areas of funding for the £4000+VAT cost, and the cost of additional pathways which will provide a suitable surface for running during the winter months.

David has written to the Ryan Stevens (NFDC grants officer) and Jamie Burton (NFDC Health and Partnerships manager) to request support for the costs.

We will continue to work alongside the Town Council to progress this item.

Access strategy

David and Phil will be meeting with James Smith (NFDC Senior Policy Manager) and Tim Guymer (Service Manager) to receive a briefing about the Fordingbridge Access Plan, which was shared with Fordingbridge Town Council last month.

If anyone would like anything specific to be raised, please let Phil or me know.

Area to the rear of Co-op

Following a request from Fordingbridge Town Clerk, Phil has contacted David Hurd (Environmental Enforcement and Amenities Manager) at NFDC to encourage progress on redeveloping the unsightly area between the library and the rear entrance to the Co-op.

Phil has eventually received a positive response and is pressing for details on timescales and sources of funding. David Hurd confirmed that development activity has been added to the major works plan with a view to work being carried out in the next financial year.

Small developments – residential concerns

David has written to Tim Guymer and Stephen Belli in relation to two matters, the area near to Dudley road where tree felling has just taken place, and the green space land for sale west of Salisbury Street, seeking any information which might help to allay concerns about developments in these areas.

RAAC in Fordingbridge Schools

David and Phil have received assurances from the Federation and the Burgate School & Sixth Form that RAAC is not an issue for their buildings. The Burgate conducted a survey of the site in early August which did not find RAAC in any of their structures.

Councillor grants scheme

Every NFDC Councillor is entitled to allocate up to £600 a year to community causes.

Following a meeting with the Green Gram, David and Phil agreed to provide funding of £100 each to enable this non-profit community shop to purchase new scales for the weighing of the loose products they provide.

Phil has also engaged with Stepping Stones who are also keen to attract funding to support the children's services they provide.

David has also written to South Western Railways Community Grant scheme to understand what opportunity for funding they might provide for our communities.

Augustus Park allotments

David and Phil met with a resident at Augustus Park who raised complaints about the allotments. David and Phil would like to work with FTC to see what support we can gather for affected residents who have not been able to use the allotments this year.

Communication

David and Phil are keen to encourage information sharing with residents to encourage engagement. To this end David and Phil maintain a Facebook page which is regularly updated with activity.

David and Phil can be emailed at david.millar@nfdc.gov.uk and phil.woods@nfdc.gov.uk

Looking ahead

September meetings include:

- Cabinet meeting 6 September
- Service Showcase event at Appletree Court 7 September
- Opening of Hyde Community Hall 8 September
- Full Council 11 September
- Godshill Parish Council meeting 12 September
- Resources & Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting 21 September

This report is from Councillor David Millar and Councillor Phil Woods (Liberal Democrats) of the Fordingbridge, Godshill & Hyde ward of the New Forest District Council. It is not issued or approved by New Forest District Council or the Liberal Democrat party and any views expressed are our own. Whilst every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, some errors and omissions may occur. We will make every effort to correct errors brought to our attention.