

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 6th December 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, Hinton, Lewendon, Perkins, Shering and Wilson

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

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Millar and Paton. Also from Ruth Croker, Footpath Officer.

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest.

**3. To confirm the minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 1st
November 2023 and to report on any matters arising**

Cllr Hinton proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Shering and therefore RESOLVED: that the minutes of the General Council meeting held on the 1st November 2023 are signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

Agenda item 7 – Cllr Hinton reported that he had spoken to the Infants and Junior Schools who would be concerned if the Whitsbury Road school crossing were to be withdrawn.

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

DataMart Refresh		30/11/2023 19:05	
Current 90 days up to: 30/11/2023			
Preceding 90 days up to: 30/11/2022			
Filters applied: FORDINGBRIDGE			
	Current R90	Previous R90	Difference
1b Violence with Injury	8	11	-3
1c Violence without Injury	25	19	6
2a Rape	1	3	-2
2b Other Sexual Offences	6	2	4
4a1 Burglary Residential	9	6	3
4a2 Burglary Business and Community	0	3	-3
4b Vehicle Offences	7	10	-3
4d Bicycle Theft	1	2	-1
4e Shoplifting	11	6	5
4f All Other Theft Offences	11	16	-5
5a Criminal Damage	14	15	-1
5b Arson	1	0	1
6a Trafficking of Drugs	1	0	1
6b Possession of Drugs	1	1	0
7 Possession of Weapons Offences	1	2	-1
8 Public Order Offences	11	15	-4
9 Miscellaneous Crimes Against Society	0	3	-3
TOTAL	108	114	-6
	Current R90	Previous R90	Difference
Residential Burglary (Exc Sheds/Garages)	0	0	0

6. To receive a report from the Town Mayor

The Mayor gave the following report.

The last month has been relatively quiet in terms of official duties. I did have the pleasure of switching the Town lights on last week alongside Father Christmas. Another great event was

enjoyed by the large crowd that attended the light switch on. Thanks to everyone involved particularly FEG, members of FTC & Rotary. Plans for next year's calendar of events are already underway apparently.

It is nice this week to welcome the Men's Shed to the Town Hall on Wednesday mornings for the weekly meetings.

I am looking forward to the Mayor's afternoon tea tomorrow to thank our local volunteers & also to our FTC Xmas buffet at The George in a couple of weeks.

I have this week also sent out a Xmas newsletter to help promote what we have achieved this year as a new look Town Council. Also, thanks to Cllr Cameron we will also be having a regular slot in the local Focus magazine starting this month, again to promote what we are up to.

Finally, just a reminder of the NFDC free parking days on the 1st, 2nd, 16th, 17th December to encourage support for our local businesses in the run up to Christmas.

Best wishes to you all & your families for Xmas & many thanks for all the hard work for the Town this year as FTC.

7. To receive a report from the County Councillor

Reports for November and December were received. Please see appendices.

Actions: Cllr Wilson to attend the HCC meeting on 12th December. The Clerk to circulate Cllr Wilson's draft presentation to members.

8. To receive a report from the District Councillors

Cllr Woods attended the Fordingbridge Christmas Lights Switch On last Friday and thanked all those involved in organising the event, saying it was a super evening.

Cllr Woods reported on the NFDC Corporate Plan which lasts for 4 years and sets the strategic direction for the council. The consultation deadline is 26th January 2024.

Cllr Woods reported on the NFDC Transformation Strategy 2024-28. A workshop with town and parish clerks will be arranged in due course as NFDC start to implement the strategy.

Cllr Woods reported that the National Park Authority are considering using CIL funds to redevelop the old railway line from Burgate to Breamore as a walking route. This will especially benefit the residents of the new housing developments in Fordingbridge as a facility to improve their health and wellbeing.

Many businesses and residents have contacted Cllr Woods regarding the increase in the cost of NFDC parking clocks and the impact on local businesses. Cllr Woods will ask NFDC to consider a local business discount.

Cllr Woods reported that telecoms companies in the UK are replacing the technology they use to provide fixed telephone networks (landlines). For most customers, the upgrade is expected to be complete by 2025. Telecoms companies are required by Ofcom to take all necessary measures to ensure uninterrupted access to emergency organisations for their customers, including in the event of a power cut. The Telephony Universal Service Obligation in the 2003 Communications

Act means all consumers in the UK will still have access to a landline service should they choose to do so, even if they don't have or want broadband.

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

- Planning Committee – 8th November 2023 – received Cllr Hinton
- Amenities Committee – 15th November 2023 – received Cllr Bailey
- General Purposes Committee – 15th November 2023 – received Cllr Hinton
- Finance and Policy Committee – 29th November 2023 – received Cllr Hinton

Cllr Hinton proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Shering and therefore RESOLVED: that if necessary, the Avon Valley Shed be allowed to use the community plot at the allotments, subject to checking the shed size and land title, as recommended by the General Purposes Committee. All in favour.

10. To consider Footways in Fordingbridge

Action: Clerk to write to Pennyfarthing Homes requesting that the footpath at Tinkers Cross be cleared of mud and other detritus

11. To consider Highways in Fordingbridge

Cllr Lewendon reported that Fryern Court Road had a one-day closure for potholes to be repaired but that several potholes were missed as they were not listed on the paperwork.

Action: Clerk to contact Hampshire Highways

12. To confirm representatives of the following outside bodies and agree arrangements for reporting back:

Following the resignation of Cllrs Hale and Jackson, vacancies on the following outside bodies have arisen. Members decided to co-opt before filling these vacancies.

- Almshouses
- Avonway Community Centre
- Burgate School Community Management
- Fordingbridge Conservation Group
- HALC
- NFALC
- N F Consultative Panel
- Victoria Rooms Committee
- The Rotary Club

13. To report on any Health & Safety issues

Cllr Bailey will attend a Bathing Water Application risk assessment meeting at 11.30am on Friday 15th December at the Rec.

The Clerk reported that Fordingbridge has been chosen as a site for installing real-time water quality monitoring by Wessex Water, subject to further environmental checks, and has requested permission from Fordingbridge Town Council as landowner.

Cllr Bailey reported that the bracket on the wheelhouse of the pirate ship needs replacing.

The lengthsman cleared the High Street and the area behind the Co-op of decomposing fallen leaves.

The Queen's Gardens Play Area has been cleaned free of charge by New Forest Exterior Cleaning, with a payment made towards the cost of the water.

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

Cllr Cameron attended the North West Quadrant meeting on 6th November.

Cllrs White and Lewendon attended a meeting with Morebus today regarding a proposed diversion of the X3 route via the new housing developments. A test bus will trial the proposed route.

15. To note any items of correspondence

Nothing to report.

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

Nothing further to report.

17. To note the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 3rd January 2024.

The meeting closed at 8.10p.m.

**Hampshire County Councillor Report
Lyndhurst & Fordingbridge Division
November 2023**

Update to Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan latest

Over the next two months, an update of the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan is set to be considered by each of the five authorities that contribute to the plan (Hampshire County Council, New Forest National Park Authority, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council and South Downs National Park Authority) to determine whether each authority agrees that further consultation can take place prior to the Plan being submitted to the Government's Planning Inspectorate for examination. HCC's decision will be made on 12 December. Once approved by all authorities, an eight week consultation will be launched in January 2024. The responses to the consultation are then submitted together with the Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for scrutiny. The local policies contained within the Plan guide the decisions that each of the five minerals and waste planning authorities make when determining planning applications for minerals extraction or waste infrastructure and operations.

School Crossing Patrols

Hampshire County Council is looking at our non-statutory services due to the pressure on our budget caused by the legal obligation we have to carry out certain functions. We cannot say 'no' if someone asks for support (for example with social care costs for older people and vulnerable children and support for those with disabilities) It's entirely right we provide these services free of charge for those who need them, the consequence though is a cost that is only limited by the number of people requiring support.

HCC do not have a legal duty to provide school crossing patrols. We do have a legal duty to ensure children can travel to school safely. Before considering any reduction in the services we will therefore be carrying out a thorough review of every crossing patrol location. This may mean we investigate whether putting a permanent safe crossings in place is possible or preferable, or whether the continuation of the school crossing in that location is the most efficient way of continuing to undertake our duty to the county's school pupils.

There are many locations where it has proven very difficult to recruit to vacant crossing patrol positions, they will also form part of our review. If anyone is interested in helping fill those vacancies then we would love to hear from you. Just search 'school crossing patrol jobs' on the HCC website."

Consultation on proposed changes to school and post-16 transport

Proposed changes to Hampshire County Council's School and Post-16 Transport Policies are the subject of two public consultations which run until Wednesday 6 December.

The proposals have been put forward to provide more flexible transport arrangements that better respond to children's needs, demand and external market pressures, while bringing services in line with the latest statutory guidance from the DfE. The proposals

are not part of a savings programme, and do not include any proposed changes to the eligibility criteria for School and Post-16 Transport.

Details of the proposed changes and links to the consultation can be found at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/Post-16-Transport-Policy-for-2024-25> and <https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/schooltransport>

Household Support Fund

Support from this fund has been provided to Hampshire households on 825,000 occasions since its launch two years ago. The £14.2m fund will run until March next year and has included support for community pantries and the provision of food vouchers. Details can be found at www.connect4communities.org

Connecting the Waterside


Hampshire County Council have started work on schemes to make it easier for people to walk, cycle or take the bus between the Waterside area and Southampton – building transport infrastructure that will support greener travel that will be sustainable for the local community in the immediate future and for generations to come.




New bus priority improvements on Marchwood Bypass and Rushington Roundabout will mean bus journey times will be more reliable and waiting passengers will benefit from new bus shelters, while walking and cycling routes will be upgraded and there will be safety improvements to Rushington Roundabout including a better crossing point.

Improvements to the Eling to Holbury walking and cycling route have also begun, which will improve connections between Holbury, Hythe, Marchwood, Totton and Southampton, linking to [Southampton City Council Cycle Network "SCN" route 1](#). The completed scheme will include new Zebra crossings, a Toucan signal-controlled crossing and new signage.

More information can be found on our website:

 [Marchwood bypass improvements](https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../tcfmarchwoodbypassimprovements)
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../tcfmarchwoodbypassimprovements>

 [Rushington roundabout improvements](https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../tcfpushingtonroundaboutimpro...)
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../tcfpushingtonroundaboutimpro...>

 [Eling to Holbury improvements](https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../tcfelingtoholburyimprovements)
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../tcfelingtoholburyimprovements>

Reporting Highway Problems

Links to report road issues are here:

Potholes:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/potholes>

Tree/hedge problems:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/treehedge>

Flooding/drainage issues:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/flooding>

Pavement problems:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/paving>

Problems with rights of way:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem>

When reporting an issue, you'll be sent an email confirming a reference number for the report. If you would like me to follow this up for you then do please forward that message to me and I will chase for you

Councillor Edward Heron
edward.heron@hants.gov.uk

**County Councillor Report
December 2023
Lyndhurst & Fordingbridge Division**

1. HCC budget reductions

Public consultations will now begin on the implementation of budget reductions approved by the County Council at our meeting in November, to reduce the £132m budget gap forecast by 2025/26. We identified that £90.4m could be generated through the savings proposals, of which £75m is expected to be delivered by 2025/26, leaving a forecast unmet budget gap of £57m in 2025/26.

The Council remains in a precarious financial position, although one considerably better than many other County and Unitary councils. Hampshire continues, along with other council's with responsibility for adult's and children's services, to make the case to government for sustainable funding, most recently sending a joint letter to the Secretary of State which has been widely reported (<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/dec/06/english-town-halls-face-unprecedented-rise-in-bankruptcies-council-leaders-warn>).

As I have stated on many occasions, without changes to government funding for adult's and children's social care services, Hampshire County Council is not financially sustainable in the medium term and it is of little solace that, given its history of good financial management, will be one of the last councils to reach effective bankruptcy.

2. Schools

Hampshire parents and carers with children due to start school in Reception Year or move to Year 3 at a junior school next year, can now apply for their child's school place for September 2024. School applications are open until 15 January 2024. Parents are being reminded to name three schools on their applications, to give them the best chance of being offered a place at one of their preferred schools.

Three Hampshire schools (located in Fleet, Chandlers Ford and Eastleigh) are set to benefit from greener energy following the approval of a scheme to install ground source heat pumps and provide low-carbon heating systems. The project is being financed from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and the council's school buildings improvement budget.

The council is separately consulting on proposed changes to the admission arrangements for 2025/26 for community and voluntary controlled schools within its area. Check whether local schools are effected and how to respond, at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/admission-arrangements25-26>. The consultation will run until Friday 29 December 2023.

3. Wintry Weather Ahead

Hampshire County Council's highways service is geared up for the cold weather! With overnight frosts and potential snow on the horizon, our dedicated teams are ready day and night. Our gritter fleet is on standby with 15,500 tonnes of salt, and our blue and yellow community salt bins are stocked up too.

We are prepared for any winter challenges, from freezing conditions to heavy rainfall. Remember, just one tablespoon of salt can treat up to one square meter of road or pavement, making a huge difference, especially for less mobile individuals.

With high groundwater levels after recent wet weather, we're taking extra measures, cleaning roadside gullies, and urging landowners to clear watercourses. Our winter vehicles are equipped with the latest tech, ensuring accurate and efficient salting with full satellite navigation guidance. Priority one routes, covering major roads and emergency hubs, are treated first, taking about 3-4 hours. Priority two routes, including remaining B roads and village access roads, may be treated during prolonged severe weather.

For more info:

Salting routes and community salt bin locations:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/severeweather>

Clearing snow and ice advice: <https://www.gov.uk/clear-snow-road-path-cycleway>

Follow @hantshighways on X (formerly Twitter) for real-time updates on salting lorries throughout winter.

And remember, your input is crucial! Report surface water flooding on the highway:

www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems. For flooding from a main river, contact the Environment Agency: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency or call 0800 80 70 60.

4. New HCC app

The County Council's has launched its new mobile app, 'OurHants', which is available for Apple and Android mobile devices. The intent is to offer many online services through the app, beginning with the full range of County Council web pages, to allow residents to access all services.

It also contains new functionality to book appointments for Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRCs). Details can be saved to make future booking quicker and the app will allow people to see and manage their bookings in one place and will notify the user of any important updates about their booking. So why not give it a try?

[OurHants - Get it on Google Play](#)

[OurHants - Download on the Apple App Store](#)

5. Police

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Donna Jones, is carrying out a consultation on her precept and priorities for the year ahead. The consultation closes on 10 December. You can find the survey here: <https://survey.alchemer.eu/s3/90633344/Precept2024-25>.

You can also read Donna's annual report here - <https://www.hampshire-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Annual-Report-2023-Online-Version.pdf>

6. Merry Christmas!

December is here already, I'm not sure where the year has gone! I hope everyone has a great Christmas break and my best wishes for 2024.

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vision**



Serving the people of
Hampshire with **purpose
and pride to improve lives**
today and for tomorrow.