

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 7th February 2024 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, Millar, Perkins Shering and Wilson

In Attendance: Paul Goddard, Town Clerk
Rachel Edwards, Asst Town Clerk
Cllr Woods, New Forest District Council
Ruth Croker (Footpath Officer)
3 members of the public

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Paton and Cllr Heron (HCC). Cllr Millar apologised that he would need to leave the meeting early.

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest.

3. To confirm the minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 3rd January 2024 and to report on any matters arising

Cllr Cameron proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Millar and therefore RESOLVED: that the minutes of the General Council meeting held on the 3rd January 2024 are signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

Agenda item 10 – Cllr Lewendon reported that the footpath along Whitsbury Road and Augustus Park was still covered in pebbles. **Action: Clerk to follow up with Pennyfarthing Homes**

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

No matters raised.

5. To consider applications for co-option as a member of the Town Council

There were five applications for co-option onto Fordingbridge Town Council for two vacancies. The Clerk read out the names of the candidates (Paul Anstey, Steve Grose, Mike Howard, Andy Wilson and Phil Woods) and their addresses. The three candidates attending set out why they wished to be considered.

Cllr Lewendon proposed and Cllr Perkins seconded Paul Anstey for co-option. Cllr Cameron proposed Steve Grose for co-option; there was no seconder. Cllr Hinton proposed and Cllr Wilson seconded Mike Howard for co-option. Cllr Millar proposed and Cllr Shering seconded Phil Woods for co-option.

Votes were cast and Mike Howard and Paul Anstey were co-opted into the two vacancies.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to all the candidates.

[Cllr Millar left the meeting.]

6. To receive a report on any matters under Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act
 Members considered the following report.

Current 90 days up to: 05/02/2024

Preceding 90 days up to: 05/02/2023

| | Current R90 | Previous R90 | Difference |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| 1b Violence with Injury | 7 | 7 | 0 |
| 1c Violence without Injury | 18 | 24 | -8 |
| 2a Rape | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 2b Other Sexual Offences | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| 4a1 Burglary Residential | 5 | 6 | -1 |
| 4a2 Burglary Business and Community | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| 4b Vehicle Offences | 8 | 9 | -1 |
| 4d Bicycle Theft | 1 | | 1 |
| 4e Shoplifting | 6 | 10 | -4 |
| 4f All Other Theft Offences | 7 | 12 | -5 |
| 5a Criminal Damage | 11 | 15 | -4 |
| 5b Arson | 0 | 1 | -1 |
| 6a Trafficking of Drugs | 0 | 1 | -1 |
| 6b Possession of Drugs | 0 | 1 | -1 |
| 7 Possession of Weapons Offences | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 8 Public Order Offences | 11 | 11 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 83 | 103 | -20 |

| | Current R90 | Previous R90 | Difference |
|---|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Residential Burglary (Excl Sheds/Garages) | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Cllr Cameron queried whether these figures include the recent spate of damage to vehicles in the town centre car park. She also asked who the Dedicated Neighbourhood Officer for Fordingbridge is. **Action: Asst Clerk to ask PCSO May**

7. To receive a report from the Town Mayor

The Mayor gave the following report.

Firstly, my congratulations to our newly co-opted Council members. I wish you all the best & thanks for joining the team.

The previous month has been quiet in terms of any visits locally.

There has though been a successful meeting in the Town hall with local business owners to discuss the Xmas Light switch on in 2024. We have also continued with our planning & new ideas for the revamp of the recreation ground play area.

It was good to hear that another successful event was put on at the Burgate School last Friday where George Egg entertained the audience. The event was a joint effort between FTC, FEG & Culture in Common.

Lastly for this month's update the installation of the trial CCTV is a real positive for the Town & will hopefully see this expanded in due course.

Paul and I met today with the team from Go New Forest (CIC). Fordingbridge will be their town of focus for March. We will meet with them again later this month to further discuss how we can best promote our town.

8. To receive a report from the County Councillor

No report received.

9. To receive a report from the District Councillors

Cllr Woods reported that NFDC is working with Hampshire County Council regarding their Future Services Consultation: Hampshire County Council is currently asking for people's views on the future of some local services in a public consultation on options to help the Authority meet a £132 million budget shortfall by April 2025.

Cllr Woods reported that NFDC is considering its car park strategy and how underused car parking could be used differently in future, for example for housing.

Cllr Woods reported that the final CIL funding meeting would be held on Thursday to allocate money to projects.

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

- Planning Committee – 10th January 2024 – received Cllr Lewendon
- Amenities Committee – 17th January 2024 – received Cllr White
- General Purposes Committee – 17th January 2024 – received Cllr Hinton
- Finance and Policy Committee – 31st January 2024 – received Cllr Hinton

11. To consider disbanding the Transport Committee

Cllr Lewendon explained that there was overlap between the Transport and other committees and recommended that it be disbanded. Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Bailey and therefore RESOLVED: that the Transport Committee be disbanded. All in favour.

12. To agree the terms of reference of the sub committees

Cllr Bailey proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Shering and therefore RESOLVED: that the terms of reference for the Amenities Committee be agreed. All in favour.

Cllr Hinton proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore RESOLVED: that the terms of reference for the General Purposes Committee be agreed. All in favour.

Cllr Hinton proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Wilson and therefore RESOLVED: that the terms of reference for the Finance and Policy Committee be agreed. All in favour.

As the terms of reference for the Planning Committee and the Staff and Remuneration Committee had not yet been agreed by the respective sub-committees, members decided to postpone these items until a subsequent meeting.

13. To consider Footways in Fordingbridge

The footpath officer reported that many footpaths are currently flooded or very muddy and unsuitable for family walks. She said that the Avon Valley Path westwards from the A338 (footpath 83) is covered in vegetation which is increasing rapidly and that this is the responsibility of the landowner to clear. She reported that there is a strong smell of sewage at the junction of footpath 84 and Fordingbridge Junior School. Also, that it would be possible to

To consider Highways in Fordingbridge drive a vehicle onto some of the footpaths.

In response to concerns about speeding raised by a resident of Shaftesbury Street, NFDC has confirmed that it is in the process of arranging an SDR (Speed Detection Radar). If speeding is detected on Shaftesbury Street, then NFDC will possibly be able to deploy a SID (Speed Indicator Device) or SLR (Speed Limit Reminder sign) on the western end (Fire station end) of the road.

Cllr Bailey reported that Cllr Heron (HCC) had written on Facebook that repairs in Fordingbridge High Street would be carried out in 2025, not in 2024 as previously thought.

Action: Clerk to contact HCC about this

Councillor Hinton reported on recent communication with HCC regarding the carrying out of the intended footway, access, and footpath improvements in connection with the Tinkers Cross Development. He commented that such infrastructure improvements are frequently referred to as positives that flow from such development but are often not delivered on time and delayed. He said that the issues being encountered should be raised with NFDC Planners when meeting with them later in the month.

14. To consider a response to the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan Regulation 19: Proposed Submission Plan Consultation

Members raised concerns about the process of preparation and consultation associated with the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan Partial Update and in particular the proceedings and decision of Hampshire County Council's December Cabinet Meeting.

Action: Clerk to write a letter of complaint to HCC

Members agreed to submit the same response given to the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan Regulation 18: Proposed Submission Plan Consultation in response to the Regulation 19 Consultation.

Cllr Shering commented that contaminated material will leach into the Avon Valley. He was concerned about the proximity of this site to both Fordingbridge and Alderholt.

[One member of the public left the meeting.]

15. To consider a response to the New Forest District Council consultation about proposed changes to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (The Taxi Policy)

Members were in support of the proposed changes to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy (The Taxi Policy).

16. To report on any Health & Safety issues

Cllr Bailey reported that he has recorded the assets and maintenance work done, and he has carried out risk assessments for the outdoor play areas. He will do the same at the Rec.

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

Cllrs Cameron and Lewendon attended the HCC Transport Forum Teams meeting on 24th January. They reported that cuts are being made to save £17m with the rest of the deficit made up from reserves and income generated. Highway repairs will be reactive rather than preventative. There may be some funding for bus shelters.

Cllr Wilson attended the Cemex Liaison Committee meeting on 12th January.

Cllr Hinton, Shering, White and Wilson attended a Local Business Forum meeting at the Town Hall on 25th January regarding the 2024 Christmas Lights Switch On event.

Cllr White attended a Go New Forest meeting.

Cllr Cameron attended a North West Quadrant meeting.

The Asst Clerk attended a Ringwood and Fordingbridge Business Community Networking Event at Moyles Court School on 6th February, which included an update from the new charity Stronger Together Across Ringwood and Fordingbridge (STARF). The next Business Community Networking Event will be held on Wednesday 15th May.

18. To note any items of correspondence

Nothing to report.

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

Cllr Hinton asked that an enquiry be made to the Health Trust asking about their intentions for Fordingbridge Hospital which is now closed. He said this is an important social facility in a prime location.

Action: Clerk to enquire

20. To note the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 6th March 2024.

The meeting closed at 8.49p.m.