

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the General Council held on Wednesday 5th July 2017 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall

Present: Cllr Connolly

Clrs Price, Lewendon, Anstey, Wilson, Hale & Adams

In Attendance: Mrs H Richards, Town Clerk
Cllrs Sevier & Bellows, New Forest DC
7 Members of Local Business Community
Katy Griffin, Forest Journal

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Earth, Fulford and Bailey and Cllr Heron, Hampshire CC.

2. To receive declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3. To confirm the Minutes of the General Council meeting held on 7th June 2017 and report any matters arising

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Hale and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on 7th June 2017 be signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

Minute No. 5 – Damage to trees – Cllr Wilson reported that following the posting of notices on the trees, the damage being caused by a dog had ceased. The Clerk informed the meeting that advice had been sought from the District Council Dog Warden, however to date, no response had been received.

4. To confirm the Minutes of the General Council meeting held on 28th June 2017 and report any matters arising

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Price and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on the 28th June 2017 be signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

5. To receive any matters raised by Members of the Public

Following receipt (by the Council) of correspondence from local businesses regarding the decline of the Town Centre, the Chairman then invited Tim Devane, Timothy's, to speak. Mr Devane read out the following statement:

"I hope you have been able to read my e-mail dated 3rd July on the subject of the Car Boot Sale.

As I hope you saw, I outlined a number of concerns regarding the new boot sale and the general state of Fordingbridge.

You may remember back in March I first raised my concerns to you regarding the state of our town, and flagged up that the town was likely to continue in a spiral of decline.

I believe nobody here tonight can deny that the town had indeed continued in its slide and I strongly feel that the image of a Car boot market set up on a Saturday is frankly appalling, and sends out just the wrong sort of message about how Fordingbridge people live.

I have no doubt that if successful, it will turn into a full market with vans coming to the market to sell all manner of products, undercutting your rate-paying retailers and driving even more shops out of business - and out of the town.

I have been very pleased by the responses I have received from many of the town's retailers who took the trouble to respond to me and to say that in general terms they agree with the sentiment of my letter to the council. They are fearful for the future of this town and are unhappy about the car boot sale and its blanket advertising.

The aim of my email and the last one - is not to cause bad feeling - but to encourage a spirit of cooperation between the retailers of Fordingbridge and the Town Council with the aim of strengthening our town centre before it completely dies away.

May I suggest as a starting point we form some committees comprising representatives from the town's retailers and members of the council? Perhaps we could have a couple of separate committees each charged with looking at opportunities for different sections of the town?

What is clear is that we CANNOT JUST DO NOTHING AND LEAVE OUR TOWN TO DIE AWAY BEFORE OUR VERY EYES.

- *We need some **new** and **different** ideas - some **bold** suggestions*
- *we need to appeal to New Forest District Council or to Hampshire County Council*
- *We need to think outside the box!*

*I appeal to you from the bottom of my heart - **we must make this the number one priority for this council - the present and future people of Fordingbridge are depending on you!***

Cllr Paton entered the meeting during this item

The Chairman thanked Mr Devane for raising his and other traders concerns but advised that a full response could not be made at this time.

Cllr Perkins entered the meeting

The Chairman went on to add that it was welcomed that business people were willing to come forward together on this issue. He advised that responsibility for business services lies with the District Council who collect the business rates and the Chairman expressed his frustration over New Forest DC's unsatisfactory commitment to the town. The Town Council support the Town Centre by providing Christmas Lights & Entertainment together with subsidising the summer flower baskets and planters.

Mr Devane advised that the Business Forum is neither active or effective and called for a smaller committee to be formed made up of Members and local businesses; he added that Cllr Heron had been supportive of the town.

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

The Clerk read out the following reports submitted by PCSO May:

	May	June
Anti-Social Behaviour	11	17
Violence against person	3	2
Dwelling Burglary	2	1
Other Burglary	3	1
Damage	7	7
Theft	6	4
Theft from Vehicles	6	16
Suspicious Incidents	13	?

Members raised concern about cars racing around the town centre car park.

7. To receive a report from the Mayor

The Mayor reported that he had been absent during the majority of the month however had attended the following:

Day Centre Garden Party
Musical Event at St Marys Church
Opening of the Regal Cinema

8. To receive a report from the County Councillor

No report received.

9. To receive a report from the District Councillors

Cllr Sevier reported on the Fordingbridge Club Planning Application which had been deferred at the June Development Control meeting (District Council) – Cllr Sevier gave background information relating to the archaeological report (original was not for this site) and the recommendations of the Archaeologist for investigation relating to the Quaker Burial site before excavations commence– foundation design conditions would also be included, Cllr Sevier advised that the application would be considered at the District Council meeting on 12th July 2017.

Cllr Sevier then spoke regarding the continuing issue of public access at Riverside Place and her request (of NFDC officers) to look at and consider the issues again. It was suggested that the best way forward would be to request Hampshire CC to designate the pedestrian route as a public Right of Way.

Cllr Lewendon enquired whether any resolution had been made regarding construction traffic from the proposed Whitsbury Road development site and also reported that the hedges along Whitsbury Road were once again overgrown.

Cllr Bellows advised that increased out of hours parking enforcement had been carried out in the town.

Cllr Perkins enquired about grass cutting within the Town Centre.

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

- Planning Committee – 7th & 14th June 2017 – received Cllr Hale
- Finance & Policy Committee 28th June 2017 – received Cllr Connolly

11. To report on any health & safety issues

Cllr Anstey reported that the ROSPA reports had been received and would be presented to the Amenities Committee in July.

12. To receive reports from representative on Outside Bodies and meetings attended

Cllr Anstey

Advised of a meeting with Melanie Gill from the Turks FC – this would be reported to the Amenities Committee.

Cllr Anstey had also attended 2 training events run by HALC:

15th June – Local Council Finance for Councillors

4th July – Chairing Skills

Cllr Lewendon – advised that a new matron was in post at the Fordingbridge Hospital (shared with other hospitals)

13. To receive any items of correspondence

No items of correspondence to report.

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

Nothing further to report.

15. To note the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 2nd August 2017

The meeting closed at 8.25pm