

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of the General Council held on Wednesday 6th
September 2017 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall**

Minutes Subject to Approval at the next Meeting of the Council

Present: Cllr Connolly

Cllrs Adams, Anstey, Earth, Fulford, Hale, Lewendon, Paton, Perkins, Price & Wilson

In Attendance: Mrs H Richards, Town Clerk
Mrs R Edwards, Admin Assistant
Cllr Heron, Hampshire CC
Cllr Sevier, New Forest DC
A representative from the Forest Journal
Three members of the public including two applicants for co-option as a Member of the Town Council

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Bellows

2. To receive declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3. To receive applications for co-option as a Member of the Town Council

Applications were received from Georgina Wilson and Wendy Archer who gave their reasons to members as to why they'd like to be councillor. There were no questions from members. A third application was received from Mr Peter White who was unable to attend the meeting, however he submitted a statement in advance which the Clerk read out.

4. To confirm the Minutes of the General Council meeting held on 2nd August 2017 and report any matters arising

Cllr Fulford proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Lewendon and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd August 2017 be signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

Cllr Lewendon raised the matter of the hedge on Whitsbury Road which still needs cutting back. Cllr Sevier will follow this up with Cllr Bellows.

Action: *Cllrs Sevier and Bellows to arrange for hedge to be cut.*

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

A resident enquired as to whether the current 30mph speed limit in the High Street and part of Salisbury Street could be reduced to 20mph. He thought a 30mph limit

was inappropriate for the volume of traffic and the narrow roads and pavements. He mentioned areas in which a voluntary “20 is Plenty” scheme had been set up and that drivers slowed down as a result. Cllr Heron advised that previously there needed to be physical measures in place to share space, before a 20mph limit could be implemented. However, there is currently a trial of ten pilot schemes of 20mph across the county that will be coming to an end soon and the results published. Cllr Fulford raised the lack of pedestrian crossings in the town and the problem elderly residents had, of being unable to cross the roads safely.

Action: *Cllr Heron to look at the results of the 20mph trials on their completion and report back for members to review.*

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

There was no report from PCSO May this month due to him being away on annual leave.

An email from a member of the public about a car being driven recklessly across the Recreation Ground on 28th August was read to the meeting. This has been reported to police (crime reference number 44170335973) who have sent a formal request to the registered owner for disclosure of driver on the day, with a view to dealing with offences.

A letter of apology received from a resident for the burning of a memorial bench on the green at Allenwater Drive was read to the Council. Also read out was the bench owner’s acceptance of this apology.

7. To receive a report from the Mayor

Nothing to report during August.

8. To receive a report from the County Councillor

Cllr Heron reported on the ongoing budget cuts at County, District and local levels and the impact they are having. Hampshire County Council need to make £140M savings by April 2019. New Forest District Council has had vast sums of money taken from their budget but the services are still good – for example, bins are still collected weekly and there isn’t a pest control problem. However, change is coming – grass verges will be cut four times a year in towns or once a year otherwise, more reporting will need to be done online, the service will be slower and more will need to be done at a local level. People will need to do more themselves.

Cllr Connolly said that although people used to help, a lot are frightened of litigation now. Cllr Heron responded that most people have household insurance with public liability cover that will protect them in the event of a problem.

Cllr Connolly queried the rights of ownership of pockets of land around Fordingbridge that the Town Council would willingly take on and maintain. The Clerk recently met with the Tree Officer Bernice McGral who is looking into who owns which pieces of land.

Cllr Wilson queried the wages County Council Directors are paid and whether these have been considered for cuts. Cllr Hale responded that there are now fewer directors and the top pay bands and the number of people earning those amounts are published online. He mentioned the recruitment problem caused by a public sector 1% pay rise, especially in Planning where the private sector pay is good.

Cllr Fulford asked if money would be passed down to local Town Councils from County Councils in light of the extra responsibilities that they would need to take on. Cllr Heron said that the answer was generally no. However, if a council can show competence, compliance and willingness to deliver, then they may get some money if available.

Cllr Connolly thanked Cllr Heron for his report and asked him to visit Fordingbridge Town Council more often.

Action: *The Clerk to follow up rights of ownership of land with Bernice McGral.*

9. To receive a report from the District Councillors

Cllr Sevier talked about how to get the best value from the money available. Cllr Fulford reported that the little bridges had been repaired at the water meadows but that nettles are growing over the path. Cllr Connolly suggested that New Forest District Council looks at the functions of Fordingbridge Town Council and works together with the Town Council to help each other. Cllr Sevier will talk to Mrs Richards. Cllr Fulford suggested Cllr Sevier should talk to members too.

Action: *Cllr Sevier to talk to The Clerk and also to members.*

Cllr Sevier said that New Forest District Council is required by Government decree to build more housing. The only place possible to build in Fordingbridge is north of the town, due to geographical constraints in other directions. There are plans for Burgate School that will be out for Public Consultation after Christmas. Cllr Connolly mentioned a 58 page report online. Mrs Richards will send a link to members. Cllr Sevier said there's a lot that can be done to keep the feel of a village with less urban design. Cllr Heron pointed out the need to take a wider view – for example shops need customers i.e. people living nearby. Also that there's no need to wait until formal consultation to have conversations. Cllr Connolly said that he drafted several letters to NFDC Planning but had no reply. Cllr Heron said that not everything will be taken on board but that it needs to be said; talk to site promoters and feed in the town's priorities. Developers can choose to talk to people or not.

Action: *The Clerk to email link to report to members.*

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

- Planning Committee – 9th August 2017 received Cllr Fulford
- Extraordinary Amenities Committee 30th August 2017 Received Cllr Anstey
- Finance & Policy Committee 30th August 2017 – received Cllr Connolly

11. To report on any health & safety issues

No reports.

Cllr Lewendon advised that the board walk across Sweatford water is now mended.

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

Cllr Hale – 8th August 2017 Fordingbridge Conservation Volunteer meeting to discuss the AGM due to be held on Tuesday 12th September 2017 at the URC. Possibility of applying for grants for the restoration of Bishops Pond.

Cllr Anstey – 8th August 2017 Skate Park Sub Group

11th August 2017 Clock Tower Meeting

11th August 2017 Playgroup

14th August 2017 NFDC Activity Roadshow

14th August 2017 Sports Club

15th August 2017 Skate Park meeting

22nd August 2017 Youth meeting

23rd August 2017 Five year plan meeting

13. To receive any items of correspondence

No items of correspondence

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 4th October 2017

The meeting went to closed session at 8.36pm

Members discussed the applications for vacancy in closed session and voted to co-opt Mr Peter White onto the Council. As Mr White was not present, it was agreed that the Acceptance of Office could be signed before or at the next meeting of the Council.

Members were asked for their 5 year plan priorities as written comments.

The meeting closed at 9.03pm