

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 4th March 2020 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall

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

Present: Cllr Anstey – Chairman
Cllrs Adams, Earth, Goldsmith, Hale, Jackson, Lewendon, Mouland, Paton, Perkins & Wilson

In Attendance: Mr P Goddard, Town Clerk
Mrs R Edwards, Asst Town Clerk
Cllr Bellows (NFDC)
PCSO Stephen May
A representative from the Salisbury Journal

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr White and Cllr Sevier (NFDC).

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest

3. To confirm the minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 5th February 2020 and to report on any matters arising

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Mouland and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the General Council meeting held on the 5th February 2020 are signed as a true record. All in favour.

Matters arising

Item 4 – The Men’s Shed representatives visited the old toilet block in the Recreation Ground

Item 15 – Cllr Perkins reported that former councillor, Mr David Price is much better now

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

PCSO May reported that there will be more frequent police representation at General Council meetings over the coming months and the sergeant will be in touch regarding dates police will attend meetings. PCSO May apologised that for the past 18 months his work pattern has meant that he’s not been able to attend Council meetings. He read out February’s crime report as follows:

February 2020 - Total occurrences reported: 48, 17 of which were recordable as crimes

Anti-Social Behaviour (0)

Violence against the Person (0)

Dwelling Burglary (1) Unknown person have entered the property, taken keys to 3 vehicles and then driving off in 2 of them – investigation is ongoing

Burglary Other Than Dwelling (1) Persons seen attempting to enter an outbuilding, area searched, but no persons found.

Business Burglary (2) 1 relating to a lodger breaking into attached shop and 1 of a ride on mower being taken from a barn.

Damage (6) 2 relating to smashed car windows in unrelated incidents, 2 of fence panel damage to an unoccupied property, 1 of damage caused to an internal flat front door and of a phone box being damaged.

Theft (1) Theft of a school bag at a local park

Theft from motor vehicles (0)

Theft of vehicle (1) Vehicle stolen from the roadside after being abandoned due to flooded road, later found burnt out in a rural location.

Cllr Anstey queried the dwelling burglary and asked whether it shouldn't have been recorded as multiple crimes given that vehicle theft was also involved. PCSO May reported that the more serious crime will always take precedent. Cllr Wilson asked about the two burnt out cars. PCSO May reported that one was in town and one just outside; he doesn't believe they are related. Cllr Wilson expressed concern about drug use in the town. PCSO May encouraged her to report the issues online.

Cllr Perkins asked about the increase in theft of ride-on-mowers. PCSO May reported that there is a currently a peak in the theft of mini-tractors, both in the surrounding area and nationwide. These vehicles are often kept in insecure buildings and easily taken. Cllr Perkins reported that a grinder was used to try to break into a container at Forres Sandle Manor, but the potential thief was disturbed by a member of staff and ran away. PCSO May advised that Hampshire policy for a non-dwelling burglary would be not to receive a visit from an officer and the report would be filed. However, the police are not following this policy locally and still visit to give advice and information.

PCSO May left the mtg

6. To receive a report from the Town Mayor

The Mayor attended the following engagements.

18th February – Sports Club pavilion meeting

22nd February – Bunting sewing workshop at the Town Hall

27th February – Fordingbridge Events Group AGM

29th February – Fairtrade Celebration – Refreshments and stalls in the Town Hall

The Mayor thanked Rev. Nicky Davies for all her hard work in promoting Fairtrade within Fordingbridge. He wished her all the very best in her move to Devon where she will take up the post of Team Vicar Designate in the Axe Valley Mission Community with special responsibility for Uplyme with Axmouth

The Mayor thanked the office staff for sharing information on social media. He mentioned the topical issue of road closures and said they were shared in a timely manner.

7. To receive a report from the County Councillor

No report received.

8. To receive a report from the District Councillors

Cllr Bellows mentioned that she has a Facebook page and is willing to share information from the Town Council.

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

- Planning Committee – 12th February 2020 – received Cllr Hale
- Extraordinary Finance & Policy Committee – 19th February 2020 – received Cllr Adams
- Finance & Policy Committee – 26th February 2020 – received Cllr Adams

10. To consider arrangements for VE Day and approve funding

A meeting was held with representatives from the Council and Fordingbridge Events Group and another meeting is planned for next week. The proposal is for a Party in the Park with a DJ, bands and a toast at 3pm. The cost of the event would be £1725 for the entertainment and security. The Events group are willing to pay £1000 towards it and asked if the Council would pay the remaining £725.

Cllr Perkins asked who would pay for the insurance. The Clerk said the event would be covered by the Town Council's insurance.

Cllr Paton proposed and Cllr Mouland seconded and it was therefore **RESOLVED**: to pay £725 towards the VE Day Anniversary Party in the Park. All in favour.

11. To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Jackson reported that he is optimistic of the Neighbourhood Plan being completed within an 18 month period. Cllr Jackson has written a draft paper called 'Planning for the future in Fordingbridge' asking for residents' views. A number of meetings have been set up with interested parties such as BrightSpace, Burgate School, Metis Homes, Penny Farthing Homes and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

Cllr Jackson mentioned affordable homes and social housing and said that he didn't know how many are on the District Council's waiting list. New Forest District Council is still updating the housing list and therefore demand for these properties is unknown. Cllr Bellows (NFDC) reported that affordable and social housing are very different things; social housing is for people who really need housing, affordable is below market rates. Cllr Jackson advised that the neighbourhood plan must be evidence based and he will therefore require this information from NFDC.

Cllr Wilson raised the S106 agreements between NFDC and developers and the importance of the Town Council being involved in discussions at an early stage. She mentioned specifically the proposed new allotments, which according to current plans, would have no metered water supply, no marked plots and no hedging. FTC is currently negotiating with developers about these matters. The Town Council would eventually be expected to take on responsibility for new facilities, without receiving any money for maintaining them, and therefore they must be suitable.

Cllr Jackson said that the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan must be registered and advised that until registered, NFDC don't officially know that Fordingbridge Town Council is writing

a Neighbourhood Plan. He asked whether the National Park should be included in it. Members agreed that it should.

12. To approve the risk register

The risk register was approved by the Finance and Policy committee at their meeting in January. Members had no further comments. Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Adams and therefore **RESOLVED**: to approve the risk register. All in favour.

13. To approve the use of the Recreation Ground by Fordingbridge Events Group for the Summer Festival 2020

The proposed date of the summer festival is 18th July 2020. The hire charge will be discussed and agreed at the Finance and Policy committee meeting on 25th March 2020.

Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Hale and therefore **RESOLVED**: to approve use of the Recreation Ground for the Summer Festival 2020. All in favour.

14. To report on any Health & Safety issues

No issues to report.

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

Cllr Moulard – 18th February – Sports Club pavilion meeting

Cllr Wilson – 22nd February – Bunting sewing workshop at the Town Hall

Cllr Jackson – 13th February – Rural Community Energy Fund workshop. Cllr Jackson reported that grants are available for energy saving projects such as solar panels and wind farms.

16. To note any items of correspondence

No items of correspondence to report.

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

The Clerk asked members who they'd like to invite to speak at the Annual Town Assembly on 15th April 2020. Members wished to invite someone from the Environment Agency to speak about flooding and the work that they do to combat it. Cllr Perkins reported that the Environment Agency do a lot of work and often don't receive credit for it.

Cllr Perkins reported that even though the pigeons were no longer being fed by a neighbour, they still congregated on the Town Hall roof.

Cllr Perkins raised the matter of the recent High Street road closure for water service connection works. He expressed frustration that the High Street was fully closed when the works only took up half of the road. Cllr Adams reported that the digger dug the trench from the other side of the road and therefore a full closure was necessary. Cllr Perkins also expressed frustration that HCC had not repaired the potholes at the same time as the road was closed for utility works. Members agreed that this would have been desirable.

18. To note the date of the next General Council meeting as Wednesday 1st April 2020 in the Town Hall

The meeting closed at 8:20p.m.