

**FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2020 at 7.30pm**  
held remotely using appropriate technology in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crimes Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (“the 2020 Regulations”) which came into force on 4th April 2020.

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

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

**In Attendance:** Mr P Goddard, Town Clerk  
Mrs R Edwards, Asst Town Clerk  
Cllr Heron (HCC)  
Cllr Bellows (NFDC)  
PCSO May  
A representative from the Salisbury Journal  
3 Representatives from the Men’s Shed committee  
Architect for the Men’s Shed

**1. To receive any apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Pete White.

**2. To receive any Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Adams declared an interest in Planning Application 20/10694 as he knew the applicant. Cllr Adams would remain in the meeting but not speak or vote.

**3. To confirm the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020 and to report on any matters arising**

Cllr Paton proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Wilson and therefore **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020 are signed as a true record. All in favour.

No matters arising.

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

No matters raised.

**6. To receive an update on the Men’s Shed**

This item was moved forward in the agenda.

The Men's Shed reported that trustees have been appointed, a management committee has been formed and charity status has been applied for. They intend to focus on handcrafts rather than using machines, they plan to open some evenings, have a modern disabled toilet and the remainder of the space be open and flexible with benches that fold down. They reported that the architect had identified three different schemes. The Co-Op have provisionally offered a grant and want to meet with the Men’s Shed. They haven’t yet established the capacity of the

electricity cable but this will be looked at. The Men's Shed asked for a Town Councillor to be appointed to attend their monthly meetings

The Council was asked about progress on the lease as the Men's Shed aren't able to apply for grants without a lease. Clarification was sought on the situation with the Rugby Club regarding storage and whether the Rugby Club might require the old toilet block after all. The Clerk responded that a lease for the old toilet block was drafted in April 2018 and should be straightforward to amend. He confirmed that there was an element of risk but considered this small and had no real concerns. The Rugby Club would prefer to have storage in the Pavilion if allowed by the planning authority.

Cllrs Adams and Earth expressed an interest in attending the Men's Shed meetings. Cllr Anstey emphasised that Councillors could attend the meetings to listen but not to make decisions. If any decisions need to be made, then the Council must make the decisions, rather than one or two Councillors. Cllr Adams confirmed that this would be the case.

It was agreed that this project should report back to the General Purposes committee in future, rather than to General Council.

*The representatives from the Men's Shed Committee and the architect left the meeting.*

#### **5. To receive a report on any matters under Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act**

Reports were received for March, April, May, June and July. These can be found in the appendix. There were no questions.

*PCSO May left the meeting.*

#### **7. To receive a report from the Town Mayor**

The Mayor reported that it was good to see the play areas open, the Recreation Ground and river being enjoyed by residents and visitors again and more activity in the High Street and in the shops. The Mayor reported on three items which the Town Council has made good progress recently:

- The Residents' Survey – the survey is now agreed and ready to be sent out to residents, hopefully within the next few weeks. The Mayor stressed the need to encourage people to respond to the survey as it's important to get feedback from residents and understand what's important to them. This will ensure that the correct facilities are provided by developers in the future. He thanked Cllrs Wilson and Jackson for their work on the survey.
- Christmas Lights – the Town Council has received tenders to install Christmas lights on the main streets and the working group has made a recommendation which will be considered later in the meeting. He said that hopefully this will ensure that costs are known and there is a continuous contract for at least three years. He thanked the Finance Officer who spent a lot of time preparing and setting the tenders.
- Town Hall Alterations – The Mayor reported that the Council now has plans which show a good way forward in altering the Town Hall so the building can be adapted to offer the best services to residents and visitors; a better information centre, offices for all Town Council staff, improved facilities and use of the main hall. In the long term, there are savings in rent and business rates from operating from one building. The Mayor

hopes that the Council can continue to develop those plans and thanked the Town Clerk for his work and his liaison with the architect.

#### **8. To receive a report from the County Councillor**

Cllr Heron reported on the consultation which closed in March, looking at changes to the County Council's library service. He reported that Fordingbridge library is very well used compared to libraries of a similar size and that to continue to protect it, the library needs to continue to be used. Cllr Heron reported that it is a particular credit to the staff at Fordingbridge library who do a tremendous amount and that libraries are no longer just about borrowing books. He reported that sadly for his area, Lyndhurst library is due to close following that consultation. There will now be a consultation on changes to opening hours and the opening hours will be reducing across the library service by 20%. HCC are looking to make library hours more uniform across the County and the consultation is to find out what people feel are the right times for their library.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/library-consultation>

Cllr Heron then went on to explain that the consultation came from the County Council's need to find £80M savings over the following two years but that the situation has changed since Covid-19. A report went to a HCC full Council meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> July setting out the medium term financial plan. Cllr Heron said that HCC, unlike many other Councils, has the cashflow and resilience to deal with these issues in the short term, however this isn't the same as being on a sound financial basis going forwards. He reported there are issues in Hampshire with an aging population and the impact that has on adult social care, there is also considerable pressure on children's services. Over the years HCC has tried to diversify their income, for example through cafes at their Country Parks and selling services to other Councils. The report was to the financial year 2022/23 and gives a deficit in the funding of just over £210M. Various financial models have been considered – in three of the four scenarios, HCC was not financially sustainable in the medium term. Cllr Heron reported that even a County Council such as Hampshire, which is nationally recognised as being in a sustainable position, cannot absorb that impact without additional support from Government. Because of HCC's cashflow and reserves, HCC will not have to do emergency budgets or make cuts to services, but something will have to change to be sustainable going forward.

Link to financial report to Hampshire County Council of the 16th July – see paragraph 123 for figures <https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/documents/s53375/MTFS%20-%20Cabinet%20FINAL.pdf>

Cllr Wilson asked Cllr Heron about the possibility of new signs in Fordingbridge to warn motorists that pedestrians may step off the pavement and to remind pedestrians to look before stepping into the road. She was concerned about pedestrian safety and reported that this problem has come about due to the High Street becoming busier and people still trying to maintain social distancing due to the risk of Coronavirus. Cllr Heron agreed it was a sensible suggestion and one he'd raise with the Highways Agency.

### **9. To receive a report from the District Councillors**

Cllr Bellows reported that NFDC have established various Covid-19 response groups consisting of Councillors looking at the effects of Covid-19 on the work of the NFDC in various areas – finances, services, staff, economics and community and these are ongoing. She reported that services such as planning, licences, the environmental services, visiting of pubs and restaurants and waste collections have all been kept going. Cllr Bellows reported that the biggest problem has been the reopening of the leisure centres but that is now all on track. NFDC has had to consider staff and their welfare and redeployment. They've also had to consider economics and have given further support to businesses in the New Forest District Council area. She reported NFDC are working with HCC and other voluntary sectors on the response to the pandemic so far.

Cllr Wilson asked about the planning breach at Sequoia Farm. She reported that there's been planning enforcement on the site for two years and quoted from NFDC's Local Enforcement Plan, adopted December 2013 "Policy 9 We will not allow prolonged negotiation to delay essential enforcement action." Cllr Wilson asked that enforcement be progressed and a time limit to be put on this case. Cllr Bellows reported that Cllr Sevier is looking into this and will report back to the Clerk when she has further information.

*Cllr Heron left the meeting.*

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

- Staff & Remuneration Committee – 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – received Cllr Lewendon
- Planning Committee – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – received Cllr Paton
- Amenities Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – received Cllr Moulard
- General Purposes Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – received Cllr Wilson
- Finance and Policy Committee – 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – received Cllr Adams

It was recommended at the Finance and Policy Committee meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020 that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2019/20 be approved.

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Adams and therefore **RESOLVED**: to approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) for 2019/20. All in favour.

Cllr Lewendon proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Adams and therefore **RESOLVED**: to approve the Annual Accountability Statement (Section 2) for 2019/20. All in favour.

### **11. To approve a quote for the Christmas lights**

Cllr Hale proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Paton and therefore **RESOLVED**: to proceed with the Sparkx Limited contract at a cost of £16.5k + VAT including the leasing of new lights. All in favour.

## 12. To consider the following planning applications

20/10694	Land rear of 14 SHAFTESBURY STREET, FORDINGBRIDGE SP6 1JF	Mr & Mrs Fredericks
New single-storey dwelling		
<p>Cllr Anstey reported on this application which was brought to General Council at the request of the NFDC Case Officer due to time restrictions. Councillors considered the size and shape of the proposed dwelling within the size of the site and thought this to be very cramped. Concern was raised over the impact on neighbouring property number 14 and the loss of outside space and parking.</p> <p>Cllr Wilson proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Paton and therefore <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend REFUSAL under PAR4 due to the size and shape of the proposed dwelling within the site and the impact on residential amenity and loss of outside space and parking at number 14. All in favour.</p>		

Planning application 20/10550, LAND OF THE INGLE, FRYERN COURT ROAD, BURGATE, FORDINGBRIDGE SP6 1NG (NB: PROPOSED LEGAL AGREEMENT) was due to be re-discussed at this meeting at the request of the case officer, but the application had been withdrawn by the applicant.

Councillor Hale asked at which planning meeting planning application 20/10522 LAND NORTH OF STATION ROAD, FORDINGBRIDGE SP6 1JW (Site 16) would be discussed. The Clerk reported that NFDC have allowed this application to be deferred until Fordingbridge Town Council's Planning meeting to be held on 9th September by which time all relevant information would be available for consideration, in particular the report from the Highways Agency. Cllr Paton asked if another meeting could be arranged with NFDC before then.

**Action: Town Clerk to arrange meeting with NFDC regarding planning application 20/10522**

## 13. To report on any Health & Safety issues

The Asst Clerk reported that no response had been received from Pennyfarthing Homes about the overgrown boardwalk at the new SANG.

**Action: Asst Clerk to follow up about the overgrown boardwalk**

Cllr Wilson reported that as the town has become busier after lockdown, pedestrians are increasingly walking in the road in order to social distance. She was concerned this is dangerous and appreciated Cllr Heron raising the matter of warning signs with Highways.

Cllr Anstey reported that an increasing number of people were swimming in the river at the Recreation Ground and asked that the fourth lifebuoy housing be put up so there is less than 100m between each lifebuoy. The Clerk reported that he had ordered the post for the lifebuoy casing and would follow this up. Cllr Anstey asked that the lifebuoys be checked before busy weekends. He reported that he regularly checks them but often needs to rewind the rope as they are used by the public as rubber rings rather than lifebuoys.

***Action: Clerk to follow up about the lifebuoy casing and ask Groundsman to check lifebuoys more frequently***

Cllr Anstey reported that he'd read an article about lockdown and the availability of quality local open space. He thought this should be carried through to planning decisions and used as leverage with developers.

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

Nothing to report.

**15. To note any items of correspondence**

The Asst Clerk reported on the Rural Community Energy Fund grant scheme. Up to £40k is available to look at the feasibility of installing renewable energy technologies. The next application window to apply for feasibility study funds closes on 14th September. The technologies which are eligible are:

- Solar photovoltaic
- Solar thermal
- Anaerobic digestion
- Wind turbines
- Multi-technology approaches
- Heat pumps (air, ground and water-source)
- Heat networks (renewable fuels only)
- Hydropower
- Bioliquids/gas/fuels

**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 General Council meeting as Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020**

The meeting closed at 8:40p.m.

## APPENDIX

### Fordingbridge Beat Reports

#### March 2020 - Total occurrences reported: 64, 31 of which were recordable as crimes

**Anti-Social Behaviour** (10) 1 relating to people sat on the library roof, 1 of youths causing a nuisance, 1 connected to people mixing during lockdown, 2 relating to a neighbour dispute and 5 were personal.

**Violence against the Person** (1) Report of fighting in the street. No persons located

**Dwelling Burglary** (0)

**Burglary Other Than Dwelling** (0)

**Business Burglary** (2) 1 of an attempted break into outbuildings of a school and one break in to post office shop, nothing taken.

**Damage** (6) 4 relating to damage caused to vehicles, 1 of damage to a bike shed roof and 1 of footballs being popped after going into a neighbouring garden

**Theft** (1) Plastic membrane has been taken from a roof during building works

**Theft from motor vehicles** (1) vehicle broken into via a smashed window, documents and £6 in cash taken.

**Theft of vehicle** (1) Vehicle taken by a family member after an argument

#### April 2020 - Total occurrences reported: 68, 29 of which were recordable as crimes

**Anti-Social Behaviour** (6) 1 relating to a suspected drug deal, 2 connected to apparent lockdown breach and 3 were personal.

**Violence against the Person** (3) 1 relating to known persons, 1 during a dispute over property and 1 connected to a domestic matter.

**Dwelling Burglary** (0)

**Burglary Other Than Dwelling** (0)

**Business Burglary** (1) caravan stolen while having repair work carried out.

**Damage** (3) 3 relating to damage caused to vehicles, 1 connected to a domestic matter

**Theft** (2) 1 incident of a bank card being taken and 1 relating to a domestic matter

**Theft from motor vehicles** (3) All relating to car badges being taken off vehicles on the same night

**Theft of vehicle** (0)

#### May 2020 - Total occurrences reported: 98 , 41 of which were recordable as crimes

**Anti-Social Behaviour** (16) 7 relating to a neighbour dispute, 1 relating to another dispute, 1 in connection to youths kicking a fence, 1 of a BB gun being used on private land, 1 of people fishing, 1 connected to people using a catapult, 1 where people were smashing glass in the street, 1 of a youths causing a general nuisance, 1 relating to people jumping from a bridge and one of a note being left on a vehicle about parking.

**Violence against the Person** (9) 4 relating to domestic incidents, 1 of a delivery driver being stopped and attacked with a wheel wrench, 2 connected to an altercation where persons have turned down another person's advances, 1 3rd party report of 2 known people fighting and 1 of a child spitting at a shop worker.

**Dwelling Burglary** (0)

**Burglary Other Than Dwelling** (0)

**Business Burglary** (0)

**Damage** (10) 7 connected to a series of damages vehicles, 1 of car tyres being slashed, 1 of damage to a field and entrance gate and 1 of damage to stock fencing.

**Theft** (3) 1 domestic related, 1 of a scarecrow being taken and 1 relating to money being taken from a jet wash

**Theft from motor vehicles** (4) 1 of tools being taken from a van, 1 of parcels being stolen from a delivery van, 1 of index plates being removed and 1 of a car badge being taken

**Theft of vehicle** (1) False report of theft made by adult son

**June 2020 - Total occurrences reported: 83 , 32 of which were recordable as crimes**

**Anti-Social Behaviour** (8) 3 connected to a neighbour issue, 2 of people using catapults, 1 of people in a closed play area, 1 of people fishing and one of a family using a portable BBQ in the forest.

**Violence against the Person** (1) this was connected to a domestic issue

**Dwelling Burglary** (1) Home entered while owner was away and only a hidden safe was targeted.

**Burglary Other Than Dwelling** (2) 2 connected burglaries at the same address with a possible 6 months delay in reporting

**Business Burglary** (0)

**Damage** (6) 2 relating to farmland fencing being cut, 1 of a rammed gate, 1 relating to damage to scarecrows, 1 of scratches to a parked car and 1 on a gnome being smashed by an aggrieved patient.

**Theft** (4) 2 relating to theft of scarecrows, 1 of a strimmer taken from the roadside and one of an industrial breaker being taken from a building site.

**Theft from motor vehicles** (2) 1 of a canvas roof being cut and items taken and 1 of aluminium tail bars being removed from a van

**Theft of vehicle** (1) vehicle taken from local carpark and located round the corner.

**July 2020 - Total occurrences reported: 89 , 34 of which were recordable as crimes**

**Anti-Social Behaviour** (12) 3 relating to ongoing neighbour issues, 2 of a general nuisance, 1 of people breaking glass in the street, 1 of a scrape trampoline being used in the skate park, 1 relating to a motorbike going up and down a road, 1 of youths using a catapult and possible drug use. 1 of people using the waterpark out of hours, 1 relation to people messing with a phone box and 1 connected to Nottingham knockers.

**Violence against the Person** (6) 3 relating to a domestic incident, 1 of youths fighting, 1 of a fight in a shop and 1 incident of a person being punched while taking photos in the park.

**Dwelling Burglary** (0)

**Burglary Other Than Dwelling** (0)

**Business Burglary** (3) All 3 where attempt or actual breaks to local independent shops. Small amount of money taken from 1 but nothing from the other 2.

**Damage** (3) 1 domestic related, 1 of a person damaging an ambulance while having a mental health episode and 1 relating to damage to a water park fence.

**Theft** (5) 1 of theft of fishing rights, 1 of work equipment not returned by an ex-employee, 1 relating to a scooter taken from the roadside but later recovered, 1 of a mobile phone being taken and 1 incident of chocolate bars being taken by 6-7 year olds

**Theft from motor vehicles** (1) catalytic converter taken off of a vehicle overnight.

**Theft of vehicle** (0)