

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 7th October 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 and White

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

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Wilson and from Cllr Heron (HCC).

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest.

3. To confirm the minutes of the General Council meeting held on Wednesday 2nd September 2020 and to report on any matters arising

Cllr Goldsmith proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Anstey and therefore **RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the General Council meeting held on the 2nd September 2020 are signed as a true record.

Matters arising

Agenda item 11 – The Clerk reported that the lines on the football pitch have been dug out and refilled.

Agenda item 12 – Cllr Jackson reported that he'd written the following letter to Claire Upton-Brown, Chief Planning officer NFDC, Cllr Heron (HCC), and Cllrs Sevier and Bellows (NFDC). He said he'd like both HCC (Highways) and NFDC to attend a meeting to consider the problems and possible solutions.

Making the case for Fordingbridge

Fordingbridge is facing a real highways problem, which is set to get much worse as the effects of the NFDC Local Plan start to take effect.

The centre of the town, The High Street, The mini roundabout and Salisbury Street are up to capacity before we start to see the effects of the 1500 new houses coming our way. The problem is caused by

- a) *the decision to site a new commercial zone at Sandleheath instead of at Burgate alongside the A338*

- b) *the constraints of the river with only one crossing point for east/west traffic.*
- c) *The recently adopted Local Plan which did not seem to take into account the traffic issues nor the potential impact the Dorset Local Plan will have in connection with traffic from Alderholt.*

A recent survey we have done on open spaces in Fordingbridge shows the strength of local hostility towards the highway issues. The recent consideration of a planning application for Site 16 showed the problems which Hampshire Highways have identified. Our request to consider some alternative solutions have been rejected by the NFDC Planning Department.

If ever there was a time to consider some long term planning it is now. As Chairman of the Fordingbridge Town Council Neighbourhood Plan Committee I am requesting that a meeting is arranged to discuss these issues.

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

No report received.

Cllr Hale said that The Salisbury Journal has recently reported on two drugs arrests in the town.

6. To receive a report from the Town Mayor

The Mayor gave the following report.

The two main events for Fordingbridge Town Council last month have been the town survey and the meeting to discuss the Site 16 planning application.

On the Town Survey, I thank everyone who has completed the survey. We have had a good response and the results are being collated by the Council team to see what we need to include in our future policies.

On the Site 16 Planning Application, I think the Council held a fair meeting to consider the details and hear the views of residents. My thanks to Cllr Paton for chairing the meeting, and Cllr Anstey for presenting the application.

Sadly, although this development may be delayed, we can't change the fact that the Local Plan has allocated 1,300 new homes to Fordingbridge. Other applications will be submitted again soon. This application has particularly worried me because it has shown we are not prepared for the damage that the additional houses will do to our town. We have no plan to avoid hundreds of additional vehicles using the High Street and existing residential roads.

Our applications so far are cul-de-sacs leading onto already inadequate roads. The possible link to the A338 could be part of the last development site which could be 20 years away.

I really hope we can use the next few months to agree how to move forward on this. Is the Neighbourhood Plan the way to do this? If so, I believe we need to review its Terms of Reference. We certainly need help from the District Council and it is good that two senior Planning Officers have agreed to meet the Town Council again later this month.

[Cllr Perkins joined the meeting.]

7. To receive a report from the County Councillor

No report received.

8. To receive a report from the District Councillors

Cllr Sevier reported that Cllr Heron, portfolio holder for planning and transport for the district, has asked the head of planning at NFDC to discuss planning matters in Fordingbridge with the Town Council. Cllr Sevier said that she'd have liked the roundabout built at Burgate before the other developments were begun but that wouldn't be the case. She reported that it would be some time before the roundabout is built.

Cllr Jackson asked about the possibility of a relief road. Cllr Sevier said this was outside the local plan and it could take some negotiating to achieve. Cllr Hale reported that there will be a meeting with NFDC Head of Planning later in the month and the relief road could be discussed at this meeting.

Cllr Sevier reported that she has been working on NFDC's waste and recycling strategy following the publication of central government's new national waste strategy in December 2018. There will be a public consultation on this in November.

<https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/1636/Our-waste-and-recycling-strategy-October-2020-update>

Cllr Sevier reported that the district is an interesting area with regards to waste collection as it has seagull problems on the coast, narrow lanes and roads in the old towns, and also New Forest ponies and cattle. This has made it very interesting going through the different options.

Cllr Bellows reported that Covid plans have been drawn up by NFDC for local restriction support in preparation that this directive may be given by the Government within the next few months.

Cllr Bellows also reported that cabinet has approved the adoption of the revised statement of community involvement following public consultation which was carried out in July and August 2020.

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

- Planning Committee – 9th September 2020 – received Cllr Paton
- General Purposes Committee – 16th September 2020 – received Cllr Earth
- Amenities Committee – 16th September 2020 – received Cllr Mouland
- Extraordinary Planning Committee – 23rd September 2020 – received Cllr Paton
- Staff and Remuneration Committee – 30th September 2020 – received Cllr Lewendon
- Finance and Policy Committee – 30th September 2020 – received Cllr Adams

10. To report on any Health & Safety issues

The Rugby Club have asked if they'd be allowed to play in the Recreation Ground on Remembrance Sunday this year. There are plans for a small service in the morning to commemorate and lay wreaths but there would be no parade and no road closure. Councillors agreed that sports fixtures could go ahead on Remembrance Sunday this year.

Cllr Anstey referred to the Amenities meeting held on 16th September 2020 and the discussion of the dangers of people jumping into the River Avon from the town bridge. Cllr Anstey said that Fordingbridge Town Council has concerns of injury both to those jumping and to members of the public involved in any rescue attempt, as well as concerns about the waste of time to the emergency services. He then stated that Fordingbridge Town Council shouldn't be confused with Civil Law obligations and H&S law. These were members of the public, not employees or volunteers of FTC, who were using HHC road and bridge for this activity.

Action: Clerk to write to Hampshire County Council to raise concerns and request a sign on the bridge.

Cllr Paton reported that the tree still hasn't been removed from the river at the Recreation Ground. The Clerk responded that the Environment Agency is due to do this but no date has been set.

Cllr Lewendon reported that the ground is collapsing around the sewers at Whitsbury Road.

Action: Clerk to follow up with SSE

The Clerk reported that the replacement lifebuoy post has now been put up in the Recreation Ground.

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

Cllr Jackson attended an online Finance for Councillors course. He reported that reserve levels should be between 3-12 months.

Cllr Hale reported that Rev Graham Long, Chairman of the Fordingbridge Conservation Volunteers, has sadly died.

Cllr Paton attended an online Twinning meeting and reported that all events have been cancelled this year. Membership fees that have been paid will be carried over to next year.

Cllrs Adams and Earth attended an online Men's Shed meeting. Cllr Earth reported that the Men's Shed now has charity status, has applied to join the Co-operative bank and is applying to join the UK Men's Shed Association. Cllr Adams reported that plans for an additional building have been drawn up for further development in the distant future. He said the plans haven't yet been costed but this will be done before a request for CIL money is submitted. Cllr Adams reported that the Men's Shed have requested an outdoor area in the lease that could be developed in the future.

Cllr Anstey attended the online North West Quadrant meeting. The Government's planning white paper was discussed and concerns raised.

Cllr Anstey assisted the Groundsman working on the lines on the football pitch. He reported that the new grass seed didn't grow and this will need readdressing at the beginning of the football season.

12. To note any items of correspondence

The Clerk reported that the Police and Crime Commissioner's Safer Communities Fund grants round is now open and accepting applications until 16:00 (4pm) on Friday 30th October 2020. This is to apply for funding for the period 1st April 2021 until 31st March 2022 for projects up to the value of £50,000. Examples of items that could be funded are

- Security equipment such as CCTV and lights for community buildings vacant/or in less use due to COVID-19 restrictions
- General environmental improvements to reduce secluded hiding spots and open up areas for community use.
- Projects that seek to reduce anti-social behaviour

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

The Clerk reminded members that the next Finance and Policy meeting will be on 21st October (rather than 28th October). He reported that grant applications are anticipated from Fordingbridge Greener Living, the Men's Shed and FDCA (Avonway). An Extraordinary Finance and Policy meeting on 4th November will be held so the trustee of FDCA (Avonway) can make his presentation to Council as he is unavailable on 21st October. All applications will be submitted by 21st October.

The Clerk reported that the Christmas lights will be put up on 9th and 10th November and can be switched on any time after this, however Remembrance Day also needs to be considered, in particular the poppy display on the Town Hall balcony. The Clerk said that traditionally the lights have been turned on the last Friday in November during a town Christmas Lights Switch On event. Due to Covid restrictions, there will be no large switch-on event this year.

Councillors agreed that the lights be turned on earlier than usual this year. A small private switch-on event will be held and reported in the Salisbury Journal afterwards.

The Clerk reported that the Fordingbridge Events Group are hoping to organise a Santa parade around the streets of Fordingbridge in December.

Cllr Moulard asked for an update on the tenders for the Pavilion. The Clerk reported that there has been a good level of interest and tenders have been sent out to interested parties.

14. To note the date of the next General Council meeting as Wednesday 4th November 2020

The meeting closed at 8:23p.m.