

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 20th January 2021 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 draft until approved at the following meeting of the Committee)

Present: Cllr Wilson – Chair
Cllrs Adams, Earth, Goldsmith, Hale, Jackson & Lewendon

In Attendance: Mr P Goddard, Town Clerk
Mrs R Edwards, Asst Town Clerk
Cllrs Anstey, Moulard, Paton, Perkins & White (Public Gallery)
A representative from the Salisbury Journal
A representative from the Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Bellows (NFDC).

2. To receive any declarations of interest

No declarations were made.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th November 2020 and report on any matters arising.

Cllr Adams proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Goldsmith and therefore **RESOLVED**: to sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th November 2020 as a true record. All in favour.

Matters arising

Agenda item 3 – an Extraordinary General Council meeting is yet to be arranged to discuss the Avon Valley Shed.

[Cllrs White and Paton joined the meeting during this item.]

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

No matters raised.

5. To report on any matters concerning St Marys Closed Churchyard and Stuckton Road Cemetery

The Clerk reported that three cars have been parking at the cemetery all day recently. Notes were left under the windscreen and posters will be put up at the cemetery making it clear that the parking area is for the use of those visiting the cemetery only.

The Clerk reported that he has asked for more information from NFDC regarding taking title to the land at Stuckton Road Cemetery and the benefits to Fordingbridge Town Council. The Clerk would like to review the costs of ASG who cut the grass at a cost of £289 every two or three weeks. It may be that the groundsman could do this work instead.

Cllr Hale asked whether NFDC would buy more land to extend the cemetery. Cllr Adams reported that NFDC maintain seven cemeteries and recently bought more land at Waterside to be developed into a cemetery.

6. Matters relating to the Town Hall

The Clerk reported that the architects have been in touch with the Conservation Officer to ask if the Heritage report is sufficient to submit a planning application and are awaiting a response.

7. To report on any matters relating to the Information Office

The Clerk reported that NFDC took the decision to close all the Information Offices when the latest Government lockdown was announced at the beginning of January. They have since this week partially reopened four Information Offices (Lyndhurst, Lymington, New Milton and Hythe) for vulnerable customers. The hours are reduced and services limited - no parking clocks or recycling services for example. NFDC are encouraging customers to pay rent and Council Tax online wherever possible, however they are accepting payments in person at the reopened offices.

The Clerk is waiting to hear from NFDC whether Fordingbridge Information Office will be reopened.

Cllr Wilson asked whether the Information Office staff would come in to help with paperwork while the office is closed.

8. To report any matters concerning footpaths

- Jobs for Lengthsman – 5th February 2021

Cllr Wilson thought that December's lengthsman jobs have not been done.

Action: Clerk to check whether December's jobs were completed

The Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society representative reported that footpaths are very wet and muddy, especially the path alongside the Junior schools (footpath 84). Cllr Wilson reported that this path will be resurfaced as part of the new development work but not until a later stage of the project. She wondered if NFDC may spend some CIL funds resurfacing footpath 84. Cllr Lewendon reported that a parking area for 20 cars would be made at the end of footpath 83 so children could be dropped off there to walk to school.

The Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society representative reported that the new pathway laid at the water meadows floods and she thought some of the new gravel surface had already been washed away. Cllr Lewendon recommended a boardwalk or a culvert underneath the path.

The Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society representative reported that the new Avon Valley Path information board has been installed and looks very smart.

9. Matters concerning Highways

Cllr Hale reported that locals would like a pedestrian crossing on the A338 at Surma Valley, in order to walk the Avon Valley Path safely. Cllr Lewendon reported that the road will become even more difficult to cross once the new Metis Homes development is built as it will become a three-way road and much busier. The Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society representative agreed it is a dangerous crossing point which requires a traffic island. Cllr Wilson said this could be incorporated in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and raised with Hampshire Highways.

[Cllr Perkins joined the meeting during this item.]

10. Matters concerning Allotments

Cllr Wilson reported that allotment rent will not be due until April this year (later than usual) due to the temporary closure of the information office. Tenants will receive a letter advising of the new date and notices will be placed on the notice boards in the allotments to the same effect.

Cllr Wilson reported that the new allotment markers are ready to go in.

Cllr Wilson reported that six pumps are no longer sufficient for the allotments now that many plots have been split in half and there are 65 people working them. She reported that the cost of installing two bore holes would be just over £1100 in total. The RFO thinks the budget would be available for this, due in part to the savings made by not renting a toilet in 2020. Members agreed to ask the Finance and Policy committee for the funds to install two bore holes.

Cllr Wilson reported that the Fordingbridge Greener Living Group has requested a grant from HCC to buy a large composter for local residents to compost their waste.

11. To note any items of correspondence

There were no items of correspondence.

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

Nothing further to report.

13. To note the date of the next meeting as 17th March 2021

The meeting finished at 7.58pm.