

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Held on Friday 2nd October 2026 at 10.00am at Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood.

PRESENT: Cllr Luke Dadford (Chair)
Cllr Mary DeBoos (Vice Chair)
Cllr Janet Georgiou
Cllr Peter Kelleher
Cllr James Swyer
Cllr Glenys Turner

IN ATTENDANCE: Jo Hurd, Deputy Town Clerk
Nicola Vodden, Office Manager
Cllr Philip Day (*from 10:02am*)
Cllr Gareth DeBoos
Cllr Rae Frederick

ABSENT: Cllr John Haywood

P/6626 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were six members of the public present.

P/6627 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apoloiges for absence had been received from Cllr Haywood.

P/6628 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

P/6629 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2026, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

Cllr Day joined the meeting at 10:02am.

P/6630 SS13 LAND OFF MOORTOWN LANE

The Senior Planning Manager from Persimmon Homes / Charles Church was in attendance to present an update and respond to questions posed. The developer was continuing to work through discharging various pre-commencement conditions. He reported that application 26/10360 to amend the house designs for Phase 1A would go before NFDC Planning Committee for a decision at the October meeting.



In answer to a question about road closures, it was noted that these would be determined by Hampshire County Council and dates had yet to be confirmed.

Looking ahead to Phase 2, the residents of properties on the western boundary of the site will be visited. It was agreed that this would be arranged through the Deputy Town Clerk.

In response to a question regarding RNP Policy R10 (Zero Carbon Buildings), it was confirmed that the proposed dwellings are not R10-compliant. It was explained that planning permission had already been granted and that Phase 1A represents a like-for-like house design substitution. Cllr G DeBoos encouraged the developer to revisit the potential for achieving R10 compliance.

Members thanked the Planning Manager for his attendance at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the update be received.

P/6631

CHURCHILL LIVING – THE CLOSE, RINGWOOD

Representatives from Churchill Living gave a presentation on the proposed retirement development at Land at The Close. A public consultation event had already taken place. Members had the opportunity to ask questions about R10 compliance, demand for retirement properties, proposed mix of 1 and 2 bed apartments, difficulties selling, service charges and affordability.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

P/6632

PLANNING APPLICATIONS.

26/10833 – Cllr M DeBoos objected to the observation made on this application and requested that this be recorded in the minutes.

RESOLVED: That the observations summarised in *Annex A* be submitted and decisions made under delegated powers be noted.

ACTION N Vodden / J Hurd
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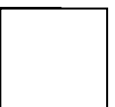
P/6633

STRATEGIC SITES

Land off Crow Lane / Crow Arch Lane (Beaumont Park) – NFDC's solicitors are still progressing the freehold transfer.

SS14 Land north of Hightown Road (21/11042) – no update.

Land off Moortown Lane (21/11723, 23/10707 and 26/10360) – Members heard from Persimmon Homes / Charles Church earlier in the meeting (*P/6630 refers*).



2 Market Place (24/11105) – Application 26/10699 – Variation of condition 2 of application 24/11105 to allow fenestration and internal layout alterations had been approved. Application 26/10419 – 1 x 2-bed flat above parking spaces had been granted.

Snails Lane (25/10114) – The planning inquiry has concluded and a decision is awaited from the inspector.

RESOLVED: That the update on Strategic Sites be noted.

P/6634

APPEAL APP/B1740/6015590 (EN/26/0124)

Members considered whether to comment on the appeal Land at Moortown Farm, Hampshire Hatches Lane, Moortown, Ringwood. BH24 3AT (*Annex B*). There was concern that the site, which is in close proximity to the SSSI, is now being overused for unsightly storage purposes. The Committee were in alignment with the views of NFDC officers.

RESOLVED: That a comment be submitted in respect of the appeal by the deadline (23rd October 2026) and this be agreed in consultation with the Deputy Town Clerk, Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee.

ACTION J Hurd

P/6635

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN

Members considered the development of a Community Emergency Plan for Ringwood and the establishment of a small working group to prepare a draft plan (*Annex C*). This has arisen following a request from Cllr Georgiou and the recent wildfire in the New Forest. A standard template is available from Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum.

Cllrs Frederick and Swyer had attended the local screening of the People's Emergency Briefing which links into this and reinforced the justification for Ringwood having an emergency plan for the whole town. It had previously been agreed not to develop a plan for each ward.

RESOLVED: 1) That a Community Emergency Plan be developed for the town;
2) That a small working group of councillors be established to work with the Office Manager to prepare a draft plan using the template provided by the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum;
3) That Cllrs Georgiou, M DeBoos and G DeBoos be appointed to the working group and other councillors be invited to join at the next Full Council meeting;
4) That a draft Community Emergency Plan be presented to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration and recommendation to Council.

ACTION J Hurd

P/6636

ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES



The Deputy Town Clerk's report provided an update on the 'engagement with local businesses' item in the Council's Strategy (*Annex D*). She updated on four areas of activity:

- i) Engagement with ongoing business support and town centre work being undertaken by New Forest District Council (NFDC) through its contractor, IncuHive.
- ii) Ringwood & Fordingbridge Business Community.
- iii) Liaison with local businesses regarding emergency contact arrangements.
- iv) Digital Visitor Information and Town Centre Promotion.

Thanks were offered to Cllrs G DeBoos and Frederick for their contributions to the report and time spent on this area of the Strategy.

Cllr G DeBoos updated members on the development of an emergency contacts list for businesses to be held by the Council. He found a mix of views, but it is generally being considered a good idea. Given the number of businesses in the town, contacting them all has been a challenge. The list will need to be handled with care due to personal data included and will only be accessible by the Town Clerk, Mayor and Deputy Mayor. The list will also need to be maintained due to business and staff turnover.

Cllr Frederick reported on the work IncuHive is doing and promoting the benefits of independent businesses communicating with each other and creating a network. It was hoped that Cllr Frederick would continue as the Council's representative for continuity as relationships had been forged with the business community and support from other members was offered to assist with this.

She reported on Ecoboost Business Grants and support available to help businesses reduce costs, improve sustainability and make practical environmental improvements and asked that the Council promote this, as well as free skills training events.

RESOLVED: 1) That the Deputy Town Clerk's report be noted;
2) That 'Strengthen Engagement with Local Businesses' be approved for inclusion on the Committee Project Plan for ongoing monitoring review; and
3) That the free skills training courses and Ecoboost business grants, promoted by NFDC, be publicised.

ACTION J Hurd

P/6623

PROJECTS (current and proposed)

Crow Stream – A large number of volunteers had helped with the crow stream clearance on 1st October and it is now looking the best it has for a number of years, with the return of some fish despite the drought. A meeting to discuss various flooding and drainage issues is planned to be held on 21st October but confirmation of attendance is awaited from HCC Highways and Flood and Water Management team.

Thriving Market Place / Lying down pig sculpture – There had been no further contact from NFDC regarding the main project. The planning application for the sculpture was progressing. HCC has no objection in principle to the location and has advised a licence may be required. The bin that was in the proposed location for the pig, had been moved.



SIDs – NFDC is working on a local delivery model and best practice in the implementation and use of SIDs and this is awaited before the project is progressed.

RESOLVED: That the update on projects (*Annex E*) be noted.

ACTION J Hurd

P/6624

NFDC/NFNPA PLANNING COMMITTEE

NFDC's Planning Committee meeting is on 14th October. Application 23/10707 Moortown Lane is expected to be on the agenda. No one will be registered to speak.

NFNPA's Planning Committee meeting is on 13th October and the agenda is not yet available.

It was noted that new rules on delegation come into force on 31st October. The Deputy Town Clerk will bring a paper to the next meeting to explain the changes to the planning process. Town and parish councils will continue to be statutory consultees but will no longer have the power to call in an application before the planning authority's committee.

ACTION J Hurd

P/6625

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication with applicants should be considered in instances where it would be beneficial to explain the Committee's observations on planning applications. This would be to provide a better understanding of its views and to prevent the potential for an adverse response.

There should also be some publicity about the Crow stream clearance which took place on 1st October.

ACTION J Hurd

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 11:58am.

RECEIVED
28th October 2026

APPROVED
6th November 2026

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Note: The text in the Action Boxes above does not form part of these minutes.



Annex A to Planning, Town Environment Committee Minutes 2nd October 2026
Ringwood Town Council - Planning Observations - NFDC

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
26/10120	93 Hightown Road, Ringwood BH24 1NJ	Demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of a terrace of three houses, with on site car parking and shared vehicular access (closure of existing access) (AMENDED PLANS)	Refusal (4)	The Committee considered the proposal overdevelopment of the site. It is contrary to RNP Policy R10 and Parking Standards as only six parking spaces are provided. Para 4.2 of the Planning Statement refers to the proposal “increasing the choice, mix and supply of smaller-scale residential accommodation in a location with an identified need” – as per Policy R5 of the RNP, the identified need is for small one and two bed dwellings, which this proposal does not meet. The proposal is contrary to Local Distinctiveness SPD which seeks to retain hedgerows and front gardens in Hightown Road.
26/10823	102 Eastfield Lane, Ringwood. BH24 1UR	Re-locate flue from main dwelling to garage, re-roof existing attached garage and utility corridor	Permission (1)	
26/10824	102 Eastfield Lane, Ringwood. BH24 1UR	Re-locate flue from main dwelling to garage, re-roof existing attached garage and utility corridor (Application for Listed Building Consent)	Permission (1)	

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
26/10833	Ground Floor Units of 11 & 13 Meeting House Lane, Ringwood. BH24 1AY	Conversion of the ground floor into 2no. flats (Retrospective)	Refusal (2)	The application results in the two bed flat being below NDSS standards.
26/10856	Waitrose Supermarket, 21 The Furlong, Ringwood. BH24 1AT	Replacement, removal and installation of new signage including replacement of x3no canopy-mounted building letters with new internally illuminated built-up letters; replacement internally illuminated totem sign at the entrance and 3 no. post mounted non illuminated signs and 2 no. non illuminated wall signs. 3 no. new non illuminated directional signs (Application for Advertisement Consent)	Refusal (2)	Members felt that Illuminated signage is unnecessary in the setting and the proposal does not comply with the Shop Front Design Guide and RNP Design Code.
26/10866	79 Eastfield Lane, Ringwood. BH24 1UN	Dwelling with access and parking	Refusal (4)	The application makes no reference to Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan Policy R10 - zero carbon buildings, it was noted that further information has been requested from Natural England and the Environment Agency and the proposal would constitute overdevelopment given the Local Distinctiveness SPD for Eastfield Lane.
26/10868	33, High Street, Ringwood. BH24 1AD	Change of use of first and second floors to 1 no. residential unit Class C3 (residential use)	Permission (1)	

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
26/10885	Adjacent to Church of St Peter and Paul, Ringwood. BH24 1AW	Bronze sculpture of a lying down pig in commemoration of the 800th anniversary of Ringwood's Royal Market Charter	No comment	
TPO/26/0506	34 Salisbury Road, Ringwood. BH24 1AS	Beech x 1 Reduce Ailanthus x 1 Reduce	Permission (1)	

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 - Will accept officer's decision

Ringwood Town Council - Planning Observations - NFNPA

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Observation	Comments
26/00911FULL	Sandford Gables 37, Dragon Lane, Sandford, Ringwood BH24 3BS	Single storey rear extension with balconies above; alterations to doors and windows including relocation of dwelling main access to side with new porch; raised walled terrace; removal of front porch	Permission (1)	
26/00945FULL	Stable Family Home Trust, The Stables, Christchurch Road, Bisterne, Ringwood BH24 3BN	Cabin	Permission (1)	There was no conservation officers report available and members had a concern that the design is not sympathetic to the site, given the listed building and the traditional curtilage of the site.

1 - Recommend Permission, but would accept officer's decision 2 - Recommend Refusal but would accept officer's decision 3 - Recommend Permission 4 - Recommend Refusal 5 -
Will accept officer's decision

Applications decided under delegated powers: to be noted on 2nd October 2026

Number	Site Address	Proposal	Decision
26/000953 CONS	Acre Cottage, Hangersley Hill, Hangersley, Ringwood. BH24 3JN	Fell 1 x Plum tree (T1 on the plan) Fell 1 x Strawberry tree (T2 on the plan)	4.9.26 P(1) Recommend permission, but would accept the Tree Officer's decision.
CONS/26/ 0477	78 Southampton Road, Ringwood. BH24 1JD	Corkscrew Willow x 1 Re-Pollard this link	15.9.26 P(1) Recommend permission, but would accept the Tree Officer's decision.

A

Nicola Vodden

From: planning.appeals@nfdc.gov.uk
Sent: 17 September 2026 14:51
To: Nicola Vodden; Jo Hurd
Subject: Appeal recieved on EN/26/0124

Please be cautious

This email was sent outside of your organisation

An appeal has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in respect of the Enforcement Notice detailed below. The appeal will be considered by means of Enforcement Ref: EN/26/0124

Planning Inspectorate Reference: APP/B1740/6015590

Site: Land at MOORTOWN FARM, HAMPSHIRE HATCHES LANE, MOORTOWN, RINGWOOD, BH24 3AT

Description of alleged breach: Unauthorised storage of scaffolding planks and poles

Reason for enforcement:

It appears to the Council that the above breach of planning control has occurred within the last 10 years.

The intensification of the existing container storage use by multiple-stacking amounts to a material change of use, in that the extent and nature of the change (i.e. the multiple stacking) amounts to a change in the character of the authorised B8 use. Such a material change of use amounts to 'development' for the purposes of Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requiring express planning permission.

It is considered the introduction of the Scaffolders' Yard use involves a materially greater degree of noise, disturbance and activity and constitutes a material change of use from the authorised B8 use.

The unauthorised mixed use of the land as described above has unacceptable adverse impacts upon the residential amenity of adjacent dwellings contrary to policy ENV3 of the adopted local plan and the aims and objectives of the NPPF.

The Council do not consider that planning permission should be granted because conditions could not overcome the objections referred to above.

Proposed Steps:

1. Cease the mixed use of the Land. For the avoidance of doubt this includes ceasing the intensified storage use of the Land by the multiple stacking of shipping/storage containers and ceasing the use of the Land as a scaffolders' yard.
2. Remove all scaffolding and associated equipment from the Land.
3. Remove all shipping/storage containers positioned above/on top of groundlevel containers, leaving only single ground-level shipping/storage containers in place on the Land.

To view the grounds of appeal please refer to the "Appeal Form" document attached to the case on our website:

<http://planning.newforest.gov.uk/online-applications/enforcementDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal= NEWFO ECAPR =28023>.

The Planning Inspectorate have an online appeals service which you can use to comment on this appeal, these must be made by 23/10/2026. You can do so online at <https://appeal-planning-decision.service.gov.uk/comment-planning-appeal/enter-appeal-reference>.

If you prefer to write in, please send three copies to the Planning Inspectorate, Room 3/23, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN to arrive no later than 23/10/2026.

Representations received after the deadline will not be accepted. The Planning Inspectorate will send copies of your letter to the Council and to the appellant.

A copy of the decision letter on the appeal will be published on-line at <https://appeal-planning-decision.service.gov.uk/comment-planning-appeal/enter-appeal-reference>.

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COMMITTEE REPORT

Report title	Community Emergency Plan
Committee	Planning, Town and Environment
Date	2 October 2026
Report author	Charmaine Bennett

Decision Summary

Purpose	To consider the development of a Community Emergency Plan for Ringwood and the establishment of a small working group to prepare a draft plan.
Decision type	To approve
Financial impact	None identified
Budget provision	Not applicable/other
Confidential / exempt	No

1. Introduction and reason for report

The purpose of this report is to seek members' support for the development of a Community Emergency Plan for Ringwood and to establish a small councillor-led working group to assist with its preparation.

2. Background Information

Recent incidents affecting Ringwood East have highlighted the importance of communities being prepared to support residents during emergency situations. While the recent heath fire prompted discussion of this issue, a Community Emergency Plan would also help Ringwood prepare for a wider range of risks, including flooding, severe weather, utility failures and other incidents that may become more frequent or severe as a result of climate change.

New Forest District Council and the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum recommend that town and parish councils develop Community Emergency Plans and have made guidance and templates available to support this work - [Communities - Local Resilience Forum | Hampshire & Isle of Wight](#).

The template provides a structured framework for gathering local information, identifying community resources and contacts, and establishing arrangements to assist residents during emergencies. It is anticipated that much of the information required is already known through the Council, local councillors, community groups and partner organisations.

The proposed plan would not replace the role of the emergency services or principal authorities, but would support local community resilience and improve preparedness.

3. Financial Implications (if applicable)

There are no identified financial implications arising from the preparation of the draft plan. The work is expected to be undertaken using existing officer resources and councillor input.

4. Issues for Decision and Recommendations

Members are requested to:

1. Agree that Ringwood Town Council should develop a Community Emergency Plan for the town.
2. Establish a small working group of councillors to work with the Office Manager to prepare a draft plan using the template provided by the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum.
3. Request that a draft Community Emergency Plan be presented to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration and recommendation to Council.



COMMITTEE REPORT

Report title	Engagement with Local Businesses
Committee	Planning, Town and Environment
Date	2 October 2026
Report author	Deputy Town Clerk

Decision Summary

Purpose	To provide an update on the item in the Council's Strategy: Strengthen Engagement with Local Businesses
Decision type	To note
Financial impact	None identified
Budget provision	Not applicable/other
Confidential / exempt	No

1. Introduction and reason for report

The Council's Strategy for 2026/27 includes an objective to strengthen engagement with local businesses. In order to monitor progress and ensure that Members remain informed of relevant developments, this item has now been added to the Committee Project Plan as a standing item for periodic review.

This report provides an update on four areas of activity relevant to this objective:

- i) Engagement with ongoing business support and town centre work being undertaken by New Forest District Council (NFDC) through its contractor, IncuHive.
- ii) Ringwood & Fordingbridge Business Community.
- iii) Liaison with local businesses regarding emergency contact arrangements.
- iv) Digital Visitor Information and Town Centre Promotion.

2. Update

i) NFDC Business Engagement and Town Centre Review

New Forest District Council (NFDC) has commissioned IncuHive to deliver a two-year business support programme until March 2028. As part of this programme, IncuHive is undertaking focused work in five towns across the district, including Ringwood, to identify opportunities to strengthen local

economies, support businesses, improve the vitality of town centres and promote their long-term sustainability and resilience.

IncuHive is engaging with a wide range of stakeholders in Ringwood, including retailers, market traders, property agents, customers, the Town Council and other organisations. The purpose of this engagement is to gain a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing the town centre and market area. Officers and Cllr Rae Frederick have been involved in these discussions and have facilitated introductions to a number of relevant local stakeholders.

A report containing recommendations is expected to be presented to NFDC by the end of October 2026. Areas currently being explored include:

- Measures to encourage occupation of vacant commercial premises.
- Business engagement, networking and communication opportunities.
- The performance and future development of town centre markets.
- Wider initiatives aimed at enhancing the attractiveness, vitality and sustainability of town centres.

IncuHive is also delivering a wider business support programme on behalf of NFDC, providing local businesses with access to advice, training, mentoring and other support services.

The Thriving Market Place project has been discussed as part of the wider review of Ringwood town centre, with NFDC's Economic Development and Regeneration teams working closely together.

Officers will continue to engage with IncuHive and NFDC as the project progresses and will report any significant developments to Members.

ii) Ringwood & Fordingbridge Business Community (RFBC)

The Town Council supports the work of the RFBC through its appointed representative, Cllr Rae Frederick, recognising the important role the organisation plays in engaging with local businesses and promoting collaboration across the area.

An update report from Cllr Frederick is attached as **Appendix 1**.

iii) Liaison with Businesses Regarding Emergency Contacts

Cllr Gareth DeBoos has been exploring the potential benefits of establishing a confidential out-of-hours emergency contact list for businesses within the town centre. The proposal arose following an incident involving an alarm sounding at a vacant property over a weekend, causing disruption to neighbouring businesses and residents, where it proved difficult to identify and contact an appropriate key holder.

Initial discussions with a number of local businesses have indicated broad support for the concept, particularly amongst retailers who would welcome being notified promptly of incidents affecting their premises outside normal business hours.

Under the proposal, a confidential list of emergency contacts would be maintained by the Town Council and accessed only by authorised officers and councillors where there is a genuine need to contact a business regarding a significant incident affecting its property. Businesses are being invited to participate on a voluntary basis if they determine the scheme would be of benefit to them.

Work is continuing to assess the level of interest from local businesses and to consider the practical arrangements that would be required should the initiative be developed further.

iv) Digital Visitor Information and Town Centre Promotion

The Town Council has recently been approached by the developers of a digital self-guided walking tour platform which could provide visitors with access to information about Ringwood's heritage, attractions and local businesses through mobile devices.

Initial discussions have explored whether a pilot scheme could be developed at no cost to the Council to demonstrate how the platform might operate and complement existing visitor information and tourism provision within the town. Any future commitment beyond a pilot would be subject to further consideration by the Council and the normal budget-setting process.

At this stage, discussions remain exploratory. However, the initiative has the potential to support the Council's objective of strengthening engagement with local businesses by promoting the town centre, encouraging visitor activity and increasing awareness of local businesses and attractions.

A further update will be provided should the project progress.

3. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Any future proposals requiring Town Council resources or funding will be brought to Members for consideration through the Council's normal decision-making processes.

4. Issues for Decision and Recommendations

It is recommended that Members:

1. Note the report.
2. Approve the inclusion of "Strengthen Engagement with Local Businesses" on the Committee Project Plan for ongoing monitoring and review.

Ringwood & Fordingbridge Business Community – Update Report from Cllr Rae Frederick

D

1. Background

The Ringwood & Fordingbridge Business Community (RFBC) was established in April 2024 following conversations between two local business owners about how businesses in Ringwood and Fordingbridge could work more closely together, promote their businesses and support the local economy.

A steering group of local business members was subsequently formed and RFBC developed as a business-led networking group.

Since its formation, RFBC has continued to develop and now has formal representation from both Ringwood Town Council and Fordingbridge Town Council.

The steering group meets approximately four or five times a year to plan and organise the programme of events.

2. Networking Events

RFBC events provide an opportunity for local businesses to meet, make connections, share ideas and support one another.

During 2026, RFBC has increased its activity and has been meeting monthly. However, as RFBC is run on a voluntary basis, the intention is to return to quarterly networking meetings from 2027.

Membership is open to businesses based in Ringwood or Fordingbridge. Events are promoted through Eventbrite and typically attract 60–70 registrations, with approximately 30–40 people attending each event.

Historically, many events were held at Moyles Court School. Following its closure, RFBC has taken the opportunity to use a variety of venues across Ringwood and Fordingbridge. This has provided local businesses and organisations with the opportunity to showcase their premises and services while hosting the networking events.

The most recent networking event was hosted by Yarnley Care Home in Ringwood. The Yarnley team welcomed the opportunity to showcase their facilities, and the venue provided a welcoming setting for a successful networking evening.

Upcoming events include:

- **21 October 2026 – Fordingbridge Town Hall**
Networking event with a guest speaker.
- **13 November 2026 – Ringwood**
Networking event to be hosted at a new local business premises.
- **8 December 2026 – The Fish Inn**
RFBC Christmas drinks and networking event.

3. A31 Business & Economy Recovery Group

Following the A31 wildfire and subsequent road closure, I am representing RFBC on the A31 Business and Economy Recovery Group.

The group brings together representatives from local authorities, business organisations and economic development bodies. Its work includes assessing the economic impact of the wildfire on

local businesses, land use, affected communities and responder organisations, together with the wider economic consequences of the A31 closure.

The group is also considering opportunities to support business recovery, economic resilience and future preparedness.

I have been able to bring the perspective of local businesses through RFBC to these discussions, ensuring that the experiences and concerns of businesses in Ringwood and the surrounding area are represented.

4. Encouraging High Street Businesses to Engage

One of my ongoing priorities has been to encourage greater involvement from high street businesses within RFBC.

This has proved more challenging than initially anticipated. RFBC has a strong and regular network of participating businesses, but there is an opportunity to broaden participation and ensure that Ringwood's town-centre retail and hospitality businesses are more fully represented.

I have therefore been working with the Economic Development Manager at New Forest District Council and IncuHive to explore ways in which high street businesses could be better engaged and included.

The IncuHive report also considers this issue and provides further context and potential opportunities for strengthening business engagement.

The intention is not to duplicate existing initiatives, but to explore how RFBC can complement and connect with other business and high street activity already taking place in Ringwood.

5. Future Activity

RFBC will continue to provide regular networking opportunities for businesses in Ringwood and Fordingbridge, while exploring ways to:

- Continue growing participation from local businesses.
- Provide opportunities for businesses to showcase their premises and services.
- Encourage stronger links between businesses in Ringwood and Fordingbridge.
- Increase engagement with high street businesses.
- Share information and opportunities relevant to the local business community.
- Feed local business concerns and ideas into wider economic development discussions.
- Continue contributing to the A31 Business and Economy Recovery Group.
- Explore opportunities to strengthen the resilience of the local economy.

6. Summary

Since its establishment in April 2024, the Ringwood & Fordingbridge Business Community has developed into an established, business-led networking group, with regular participation from businesses across both towns and representation from both town councils.

The continued development of RFBC provides an opportunity for the Town Council to maintain a positive relationship with the local business community, while ensuring that the views and experiences of local businesses can feed into wider economic development and recovery work.

A particular focus going forward will be finding effective ways to increase engagement with Ringwood's high street businesses and ensuring that their voice is represented alongside the wider business community.

Planning, Town and Environment Project Oversight Report

1. Introduction and reason for report

This report provides the Committee with an overview of live projects within its remit, enabling members to monitor progress, risks, and financial implications, and to identify where further information or a separate report is required for decision-making.

2. Background

The project planner is updated weekly by officers and forms part of the Council's wider arrangements for project oversight and governance. Projects are reported by exception, with operational delivery managed by officers under existing delegations.

3. Scope of report

This report includes projects within the remit of this Committee only. Projects governed through other Committees are reported separately and are not included here.

Project title	Purpose/intended outcome	Status	Progress update	Key risks/ issues	Next milestone/ decision point	Committee interaction required	Senior Officer (Oversight)	Delivery Lead	Financial position
Crow Stream Maintenance	Annual maintenance of Crow Ditch and Stream in order to keep it flowing and alleviate flooding.	Annual recurrent	Annual spraying of stream banks completed March 2026 has been very effective. Annual flail completed. Stream clearance to be carried out by volunteers on 01/10/2026. HCC F&WM team investigating issue around The Gate House at the bottom of Crow Hill. Meeting to discuss flooding and drainage issues arranged for 21 October - awaiting confirmation of attendance by HCC Highways and F&WM team. Shared document for flood incident logging created.	Delivery: Volunteer work currently dependent on coordination by and knowledge of Dr Peter Street (also a Council Flood Warden). Annual clearance is dependent on sufficient volunteers coming forward.	Awaiting response from HCC F&WM team after intervention by County Cllr Eyre.	Note - project update only.	Deputy Town Clerk	Deputy Town Clerk	Budget of £1,000 funded by transfer from earmarked reserve.
Thriving Market Place	Concept for town centre shared space identified through work on the Neighbourhood Plan. Aim is to create a more vibrant and flexible public space and improve connectivity, whilst achieving wider economic benefits.	In progress	Project being led by NFDC with funding allocated from Strategic CIL programme. NFDC officers are progressing work to identify a suitable delivery approach, with the intention of returning the project to Cabinet once that work has been completed. Animal sculpture in progress, to be funded by NFDC from project costs.	Financial: Funding for delivery yet to be confirmed. Dependency: Progress at this stage is dependent on NFDC.	Awaiting contact from NFDC officers.	Note - project update only.	Deputy Town Clerk	Deputy Town Clerk	HCC funded survey work. £10,000 grant from UKSPF (via NFDC). NFDC Cabinet agreed on 02/10/2024 to allocate a share of £4.5 million CIL funds to the scheme. Additional CIL funding to be considered by NFDC Cabinet.

Bus Shelters	Review of Council owned bus shelters to identify works required to repair and/or replace.	In progress	Action Plan prepared and in use. Funds secured from HCC Parish Council Bus Shelter Grant for new roof on shelter in North Poulner Road and seat behind shelter in Eastfield lane. Funds secured from NFDC CIL to provide a new larger bus shelter in Gorley Road. Taxi Shelter refurbishment approved.	Delivery: Asbestos identified in roof lining of both shelters in Salisbury Road and the one in Mansfield Road - professional removal would be required if any works are proposed.	All works now complete.	Note - project update only.	Deputy Town Clerk	Deputy Town Clerk	£1081 allocated from RTC CIL funds and spent on general repairs. Grant of £8505 secured from NFDC CIL for Gorley Road shelter. Grant of £6319.50 secured from HCC for North Poulner Road and Eastfield Lane shelters. Taxi Shelter £1383 to be funded from RTC CIL.
Speed Indicator Devices	A joint project with Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley Parish Council to deploy Speed Indicator Devices at agreed locations around the parishes.	In progress	NFDC CIL funding awarded for purchase of 2 x SIDs. Protocol and locations to be determined. NFDC Community Safety developing a local delivery model - awaiting outcome of this work before proceeding.	Delivery: Dependent on agreement of deployment protocol and locations by both councils, and consent from HCC/Enverveo for locations and use of lampposts.	Awaiting outcome of NFDC delivery model work before proceeding.	When more detail is available from NFDC, to consider implementation plan and proposed locations.	Deputy Town Clerk	Deputy Town Clerk / Cllr Haywood	Grant of £6689 secured from NFDC CIL.
Strengthen Engagement with Local Businesses	Action identified in the Council's Strategy for 2026/27	In progress	Various initiatives including compilation of emergency contacts for town centre businesses, working with NFDC supporting local businesses, Ringwood & Fordingbridge Business Community, and a possible pilot for a digital self-guided walking tour.			Note updates	Town Clerk / Deputy Town Clerk	Cllr G DeBoos, Cllr Frederick	No financial implications at present.
Projects delivered by external partners and monitored by officers									
Crow Lane Footpath	New footpath to link Beaumont Park with Hightown Road, alongside west of Crow Lane	In progress	Developers' contributions transferred from NFDC to HCC to implement. HCC preparing project appraisal report for approval, after which the scheme will be tendered for likely start in August or September 2026.			Note - project update only.		HCC	Developers contributions held by HCC.
Greening Ringwood	Phase 3 - Adaptation	In progress	Cllrs Kelleher and Haywood appointed to represent the Council for Phase 3; training sessions arranged for June, September and November.			Note - project update only.		Greening Ringwood	

Review of Speed Limits and Road Safety Measures in Kingston	Request from resident to support addressing speed issues and road safety on B3347 at Kingston.	In progress	Advised resident further evidence is required prior to submitting proposal to HCC. Cllr Frederick liaising with Police and residents regarding setting up Speedwatch group for Christchurch Road.						
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4. Recommendation Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

For further information,
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