

**Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly for the Town of Ringwood  
held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 7pm  
at Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood**

**Present:** Cllr Andy Briers  
Cllr Philip Day (Deputy Town Mayor)  
Cllr Rae Frederick (Town Mayor)  
Cllr Peter Kelleher  
Cllr James Swyer  
Cllr Glenys Turner  
District Cllr Jeremy Heron  
plus approximately 18 members of the public

**In Attendance:** Chris Wilkins – Town Clerk  
Jo Hurd – Deputy Town Clerk  
Charmaine Bennett – Clubhouse & Events Manager  
Paul Ventham – Grounds Manager

*Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Dadford, G DeBoos, M DeBoos and Haywood.*

*The Town Mayor welcomed those present to the Annual Town Assembly.*

**1. To Approve the Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The Minutes of the Annual Town Assembly held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024 were approved.

**2. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

There were none.

**3. Presentation of Community Awards**

The Town Mayor presented an Award for Outstanding Community Service to Ringwood & Poulner Toad Patrol.

“We Ringwood Town Council, desire to acknowledge your extraordinary effort and achievements in keeping toads, frogs and newts from being killed by passing traffic. Your tireless work at anti-social hours in difficult conditions has made a massive contribution to the wildlife and ecology of the parish that is worthy of celebration. You do this safely and without fuss or much recognition. We loudly applaud and sincerely thank you for your passion and devotion to the town.”

The Award was accepted by some key members of the Toad Patrol team, all of whom were awarded individual certificates. In total, there are 65 members of the team, including some teenagers.

**4. To Receive the Annual Report of the Town Mayor Cllr Rae Frederick**

The full report is attached as *Annex A*.

**5. To Receive the Annual Reports of Town Council Committee Chairpersons**

Cllr Andy Briers, Chair of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee, presented his report. The full report is attached as *Annex B*.

Cllr Peter Kelleher, Deputy Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee, presented Cllr M DeBoos's report. The full report is attached as *Annex C*.

Cllr Philip Day, Chair of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee presented his report. The full report is attached as *Annex D*.

The Town Clerk presented a report on behalf of Cllr Haywood, Chair of the Staffing Committee. The full report is attached as *Annex E*.

**6. Accounts from the Parochial Charity**

District Cllr Heron, a trustee of Ringwood United Charities, presented his annual report.

He explained it was not possible to present the accounts for 2024/25 at this time but gave an update on recent expenditure. Work to replace several chimney stacks and the entire roof of Clark's Almshouses had been taking place over the last two years. The roof had yet to be completed but bespoke ridge tiles had now been manufactured, and it was hoped work would proceed later this month. These works had cost in the region of £150,000 and the Charity was now looking to replenish the building maintenance fund. All the flats had now been refurbished and were fully occupied.

**7. To hear about important developments the Council is planning for the year ahead**

The Town Clerk presented a summary of projects the Council would be undertaking over the next few months including the conclusion of refurbishment of 92 Southampton Road so that it can be re-let, installation of a new skate ramp at Poulner, and Multi Use Games Area at Carvers. It was also hoped that work would begin on upgrading the Poulner Lakes access road, including a dedicated footpath and cycleway funded by NFDC.

Over the next few years, the Council would be considering options for the future management of the Cemetery, pursuing a dedicated facility for the grounds department and proceeding with delivery of the Carvers Masterplan. Local government reorganisation may present opportunities for the Council to take over some assets and services, and the Council would need to consider the implications of this and the benefit to the community.

**8. To consider any other item of business by permission of the Town Mayor, Cllr Rae Frederick**

A member of the public asked about plans for the columbarium for the Cemetery. It was noted the costs had been prohibitive and it was agreed not to proceed. Alternative options would however be considered.

With regards to the possible transfer of assets and services as part of local government reorganisation, there was a query as to whether the public would be consulted on this. It was expected that, if possible, the Council would wish to consult, particularly if additional costs are likely to be incurred.

There followed a discussion about devolution and local government reorganisation, noting that no decisions had yet been made and that the government's decision would be final.

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.06pm.