

OPEN SESSION: There were approximately 60 members of the public present to observe the meeting and take part in the open forum, which followed the formal meeting.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Wednesday 29th July 2015 at 7.00pm in Gateway Square

PRESENT: Cllr Michael Thierry (Town Mayor)
Cllr Christine Ford (Deputy Town Mayor)
Cllr Emma Blake
Cllr Andrew Briers
Cllr Philip Day
Cllr Debee Deane
Cllr Jeremy Heron
Cllr Anne Murphy
Cllr Steve Rippon-Swaine
Cllr Mark Steele
Cllr Jacqui Terry
Cllr Christopher Treleaven
Cllr Tim Ward
Cllr Angela Wiseman

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr S Nash, Town Clerk
Mrs J Hurd, Deputy Town Clerk
Mandy Oldfield

The Town Mayor welcomed councillors, staff and approximately 60 members of the public to what was a unique event; the first Council meeting to be held outdoors, giving local people an opportunity to see how the Council works and take part in discussions on topics of interest. He was very pleased to see so many members of the public on what was a particularly cold summer evening.

C/5708

PRESENTATION OF CHEQUE

The Town Mayor presented a grant aid cheque for £500 to SI Shell Bowler of 3 Troop X Company Army Cadet Force towards the cost of replacement equipment.

On behalf of Campaign 4 Carvers Skate Park, Rae Frederick presented a cheque for £200 to the Town Mayor; this was personal donation from Mr Jim Stride towards the cost of the new skate park.

C/5709

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Anne Murphy and Student Advisor Sam Whittingham.

C/5710

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none declared at this time.

C/5711

REPORT FROM INSPECTOR RACHEL STOKES, HAMPSHIRE POLICE

This item was deferred to the public open session, which followed this meeting.

C/5712

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Meeting held on 24th June 2015, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/5713

RECREATION, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Cllr Blake presented the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 1st July 2015.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 1st July 2015 be received

C/5714

PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr Treleaven presented the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meeting held on 3rd July 2015.

P/5217: Cllr Rippon-Swaine commented that authority responsible for the implementation of traffic orders to limit waiting periods was New Forest District Council. Therefore resolved item three requesting that the County Councillor promote the recommendation was not applicable in this instance.

P/5219: Cllr Rippon Swaine commented that requests for schemes to be included in the Local Highway & Transport (Minor Works) Programme must be supported by the local County Councillor before being considered. He confirmed that he had now formally given his support for the Christchurch Road pedestrian crossings.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meeting held on 3rd July 2015 be received.

C/5715

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr Heron presented the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 15th July 2015.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 15th July 2015 be received.

C/5716

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE RECEIVED

There were none.

C/5717

REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Councillor Rippon-Swaine presented his written report (*Annex 'A'*), and commented on the following:

- i) A338 refurbishment would be begin on 6th September and continue until May – one carriageway would be closed during the works necessitating a contraflow with speed restriction on the open carriageway. He advised people to make alternative travel arrangements during this period.

- ii) Works to improve the cycle route and better manage parking in Southampton Road adjacent to Carvers Recreation Ground would be carried out in September. This would prevent vehicles overhanging the footpath and make the area safer for pedestrians and cyclists.
- iii) Ringwood Bus Interchange in Meeting House Lane would soon be provided with digital signs giving real time passenger information.
- iv) A new interactive map, which could be used to report problems on the Rights of Way network had recently been launched (www.hants.gov.uk/rightsofway-reporting)

District Councillor Ford summarised the meetings she had attended during the last month, commenting on the Western Escarpment Conservation Area Steering Group, which was focussing on protecting verges in the area, and a briefing on the New Forest District Local Plan, which outlined the requirement to allocate more land for housing. Cllr Rippon-Swaine added that the Local Plan was currently being reviewed and would cover a 20-year period from 2016 to 2036. Central Government had increased house building targets significantly and the District Council would be required to build between 12,000 and 14,000 houses in the District by 2036.

C/5718

REPORTS FROM RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCILLORS

Cllr Day reported that he had been lobbied by various people regarding both the Greyfriars Arts Centre and Regal cinema. In addition, he was very pleased that a pedestrian crossing in Christchurch Road could now be possible, although this would not be for a least another year.

Cllr Ward was disappointed that a member of the business community had not put themselves forward to chair the Town Centre Working Party. However, he hoped that this would be resolved as more businesses become involved. In addition, he wished to recommend that the extension of the footpath alongside Bickerley Road to create a continuation to Pocket Park be put forward for inclusion in the Local Highway and Transport (Minor Works) Programme 2016-17 (the scheme is included in the Ringwood Town Access Plan (AP3)). Cllr Heron commented that the Council had previously tried to facilitate this scheme, but it would have required the need for a Public Inquiry, the cost of which could not be justified.

C/5719

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 2 nd September 2015
Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am	Friday 7 th August & 4 th September 2015
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Wednesday 16 th September 2015
Full Council	7.00pm	Wednesday 30 th September 2015

There being no further business, the Town Mayor closed the meeting at 7.35pm.

Following the meeting, an open forum was held (see separate notes).

APPROVED

30th September 2015

TOWN MAYOR

RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

29th July 2015

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

HAMPSHIRE HIGHWAYS WEST – July 2015.

National Highways Agency Programme 2015-2016.

- i A338 rebuild (closure of one carriageway) Ashley Heath Roundabout to Blackwater Junction starts 6 September 2015 through to May 2016.

Traffic Management Programme 2015-2016 – Agency Programme (NFDC)

- i Southampton Road adjacent Carvers – cycle route and measures to better manage parking. Detailed design agreed, funding allocated and being programmed. Plan of cycle network at:-
<http://www.newforest.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=10737>

Local Highway & Transport Fund Schemes

- i Ringwood Bus Interchange – provision of Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) as part of a network of key public transport hubs & gateway areas entering the National Park.

Traffic Management Schemes 2015-2016 – (County Traffic Management Programme)

- i Linford Road – review speed limit for an extension of the 30 mph past the Church Hall. Preliminary design completed and initial consultation in progress.
- i Review of New Forest 40 mph Zone and 30 mph speed limits for the purpose of progressing a blanket DfT authorisation to cover wide area. Mapping proposed, for areas that are or potentially may be marked using roundels rather than repeater signs, being completed. Application submitted to DfT but consideration by DfT delayed due to resource and TSRGD update expected 2015. Authorisation granted October 2014.

Minor Traffic Management - Reactive Programme

- i Northfield Road/ Gorley Road – replacement of ‘patrol’ plates to ‘school’ plates at children warning sign sites. Design to be completed Q2 2015/16.

HCC Local Highway & Transport (Minor Works) Programme 2016-2017

- i HCC seeking schemes in the prioritisation process for 2016-2017.
- i Schemes need to be less than £50k, e.g. a short section of footway or cycleway, uncontrolled road crossing or minor junction improvements.
- i Total allocation per District is approximately £70k.
- i End date for suggestions is **31 July 2015**.

HCC COUNTRYSIDE PROGRAMME 2015-2016.

- i HCC have new interactive map for reporting problems on public rights of way.
- i Went live 15 July 2015 at www.hants.gov.uk/rightsofway-reporting.

HCC DIVISION & COUNCILLORS REVIEW – Boundary Commission.

- i Boundary Commission “minded to” retain status quo in NFDC.
- i Final decision this Autumn.
- i Process to be completed in place for 2017 Elections.

HCC & DEVOLUTION.

- i HCC supports the Wider Hampshire Model (WHM).
- i WHM comprises HCC, all District Councils, Southampton, Portsmouth & the Isle of Wight.
- i Not another tier of government; all acting together as a Combined Authority.
- i Devolution to include infrastructure, transport, housing, planning, health & social care.

HCC LABOUR MARKET JUNE 2015.

- i 6,097 unemployed, 342 fewer than May 2015, 2,219 fewer than June 2014.
- i 1,240 in 16-24 yrs group, down 105 on May 2015.

HCC COUNCILLOR MEETINGS – June & July 2015.

- i 27th June – HCC Armed Forces Service, Winchester Cathedral.
- i 11th July – HCC Rep. at Ringwood Political Surgery.
- i 12th July – HCC Annual County Service, Winchester Cathedral.
- i 16th July – Sopley Parish Council Meeting, Village Hall, Sopley.
- i 23rd July – Chairman, Bournemouth International Airport Consultative Committee, Hurn Airport.
- i 28th July – HCC Health & Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee, Winchester.
- i 28th July – Community First New Forest Board Meeting, Ringwood.

W Steve Rippon-Swaine FRICS DipGS
Hampshire County Councillor

New Forest

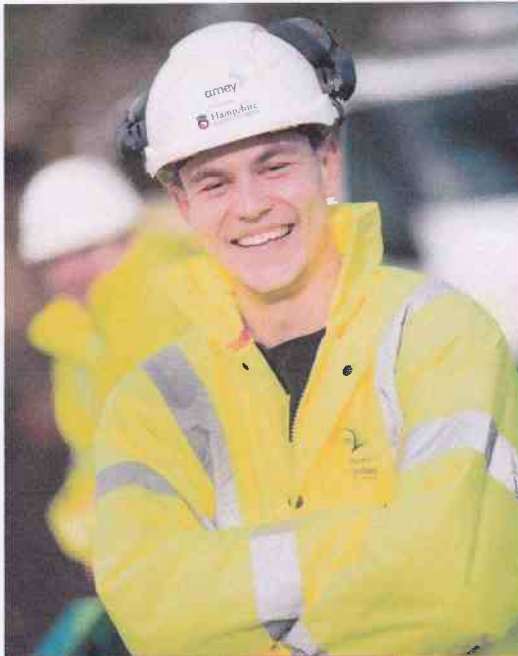
Statistics for June 2015



Working with



Hampshire
County Council



16

Drainage jobs completed

11

Vehicle accesses
completed

317

Potholes repaired

5,188

Square metres of
carriageway
resurfacing completed

39

Two hour response
emergencies attended

677

Square metres of footway
patching completed *not
including vehicle accesses

376

Jobs completed (excluding
emergency, tree and vegetation
maintenance, structures
or planned works)

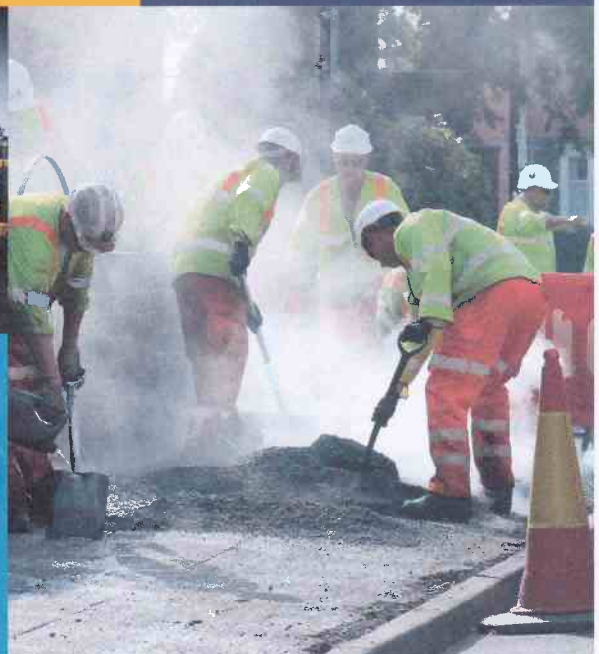


4

Planned works
completed in full

3,438

Gullies and
catchpits cleared



*Conversion – 1sqm = 1.2sq yard

NOTES OF PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

Following Full Council Meeting

7.40pm, 29th July 2015 – Gateway Square

The Town Mayor welcomed councillors, staff and approximately 60 members of the public to what was a unique event; the first Council meeting to be held outdoors, giving local people an opportunity to see how the Council works and take part in discussions on topics of interest. He was very pleased to see so many members of the public on what was a particularly cold summer evening.

1. Local Policing

Inspector Rachel Stokes reported that she had met with the Town Clerk and Youth Coordinator to discuss antisocial behaviour issues with young people at Carvers Recreation Ground. The Police and Town Council would be working together to address these issues, which would include visits to parents.

Cllr Rippon-Swaine had asked for assistance from the Police to stop dangerous parking in Salisbury Road near to Wells Garage. The Road Traffic Unit had attended and issued several warnings; vehicles would be removed if they were found to be repeat offenders. Cllr Rippon-Swaine thanked Inspector Stokes for the quick response to this matter.

Mr Russell Webb referred to Chief Constable Sara Thornton's announcement the previous day stating that burglary victims should no longer expect police officers to come to their homes. He asked for assurance that this would not be the case, as burglaries were a great concern in rural areas. Inspector Stokes gave assurance that dwelling burglaries continued to be the top priority for Hampshire Police.

Cllr Day asked if there was any prospect of the Police Station re-opening. Inspector Stokes stated that the decision had been made by the PCC to close all but Lyndhurst station in the New Forest. Members of the public could utilise the yellow telephone on the outside of the building and, if there were officers available nearby, they would attend the station.

There was a question relating to congestion near schools at drop-off and pick-up times, which was affecting the Ringo bus service. It was noted that the Police had plans to work with Ringwood School in the new term to address parking issues.

2. The Place (new youth building at Carvers Recreation Ground)

Jenny Critchlow, the Council's Youth Coordinator, spoke about the new youth facility, The Place, which was nearing completion. She gave thanks to all the people in the town who had supported this provision since Peter Ellis allowed a drop-in to open in his shop 18 years ago. She wished to particularly thank the previous Town Clerk Terry Simpson and Cllr Jeremy Heron who had been instrumental in getting the new building off the ground. She was looking forward to working in this fantastic new facility, which would not only be a place for young people to have fun and call their own, but would provide services such as a health clinic and housing and benefit support. It would have a well equipped kitchen, where young people could learn to cook, sports facilities, technology, a pool table and traditional games. A full programme of summer activities would be launched on Saturday 8th August, and continue every weekday for the following three weeks.

Cllr Heron wished to thank Jenny, who had run the drop-in on a voluntary basis for 15 years, and her husband Phil, who still offered his time voluntarily 18 years on. Their support had been very important and it was no small thanks to them that the new building had finally come to fruition.

It had been hoped that the building would be ready for hand-over at the end of July, but there had been some slippage and it was now expected that it would be ready in the first week of August. It was noted that the building could not have been achieved without the substantial contribution from Hampshire County Council, together with funding from New Forest District Council and Ringwood Town Council. Also, the young people themselves had raised just over £5,000 towards the building.

3. The Furlong Phase 2

Joanna McClure said there was no evidence that the development would be sustainable in terms of meeting the challenge of future energy shortages and climate change, and felt that this needed to be addressed by the local community.

It was suggested that the opportunity should be taken to improve facilities for pedestrians in the Furlong area, as currently there was no safe crossing from the car parks to the town centre or The Furlong Shopping Centre. There was also no traffic calming, uneven roads and cambers on the pavements which were difficult to negotiate. This suggestion received a round of applause.

Mr Mike Tuck understood from the developers that the façade of the old cinema building would be renovated, but that the building behind would be demolished and replaced with a restaurant and open courtyard. He would like to see a purpose built theatre/cinema in this town centre location, similar to Tivoli Theatre in Wimborne and The Regent Centre in Christchurch, both very successful facilities run by volunteers.

Gloria O'Reilly said that people feared change but needed to look beyond this. She gave an example of a street in her home town of Auckland where the façade of the original buildings remained, with all new buildings behind, and said that this looked great.

Sue Joy agreed that the best place for an arts facility would be in the town centre. She said there would be issues with noise and parking at the Greyfriars site, and this could affect the type of performances permitted, such as live bands. A Save the Regal petition had been set up, which she had available to sign and had copies for people to take away to collect signatures.

Cllr Treleaven said that, as the developers own the building and policy states that the site must be used for mixed use, it would not be possible to insist on the provision of a cinema/theatre. As the developers did not currently own all of the land required, it may be necessary to consider compulsory purchase, which could be a long and expensive process.

Mr Julian Peckham understood the desire to have such a facility, and said that planning permission had already been approved for a theatre, cinema and community hall adjacent to Greyfriars. There was a management team in place and they were now working to raise funds for the building's construction.

Cllr Rippon-Swaine supported the Greyfriars project, stating that all the land was now in the control of the project group and, with planning permission already granted, it was just a matter of finding the funding. This would be a significant building for both the town and region and he expected that it would meet the criteria both for National and EU funding. He said it was not possible to support two projects – the old cinema building was in the ownership of the developer who would be looking to get some return on the original investment.

Mr John Challenor, a member of the Save the Regal campaign, was not against the Greyfriars project but urged everyone to work together. He asked why the RMDS did not want to return to the Regal, which was its old home. He added that Development Securities, the company that owned The Furlong and the old Regal building, did not have a good track record of finishing developments. As they still did not own all the land required for the proposed Phase 2, he felt that it could still be years away from resolution. He asked if anyone knew the whereabouts of the original plans and drawings for the building, as there was a need to ensure the façade of the building was returned to its former glory.

Mr Jeff Wickens said that the future of cinema in general was under threat, and as there was no proposed business plan for a scheme in the town centre, it was impossible to assess if such a facility would work.

Mr Julian Peckham explained that the RMDS had been given the opportunity to purchase the old cinema building back in the 1980s but had been informed that they would never obtain permission to use it as a theatre. They had looked at the site again before deciding on the Greyfriars site and had chosen not to pursue this option for three reasons:

- 1) The site is too small to fit the size of building required for a multi-use community hall/theatre.
- 2) It is owned by the developer and they couldn't afford to buy it.
- 3) It would need someone to run it as RMDS could not do this alone.

By choosing to work with Greyfriars, which already runs a successful facility with a management team in place, and with the project team having full control of all the land required, there will be no cost to the rate-payer.

4. Other Issues

Mr Brian Walters asked why an area of pavers at the junction of High Street and Kings Arms Lane had been replaced with tarmac. This was the case in several other areas of the town and was very unsightly.

Cllr Rippon-Swaine explained that pavers were very difficult to relay and what often happened was the area was filled with tarmac, which was then allowed to settle for up to 6 months, and then the pavers were replaced onto the solid base. The difficulty could come in getting the contractors back to finish the job, but any issues should be reported to Hampshire Highways.

Mr Jeff Wickens queried why the A338 roadworks would take 9 months to complete.

Cllr Rippon-Swaine explained that the road had come to the end of its life and the carriageway needed to be completely rebuilt, and not just resurfaced. In order to manage the traffic, one side of the carriageway would have to be completely closed, with a contraflow operating on the other side. The works would cover an 8½ mile section from Ashley Heath to the Blackwater junction.

Cllr Ford advised everyone present to do their Christmas shopping in Ringwood rather than sit in traffic trying to get to Bournemouth!

Mr John Challenor thanked the Town Council for being brave enough to hold this meeting outdoors.

The open forum concluded at 8.40pm.