

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024 at 7pm at Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood

PRESENT: Cllr Rae Frederick (Chairman)  
Cllr Philip Day (Deputy Chair)  
Cllr Andrew Briers  
Cllr Luke Dadford  
Cllr Gareth DeBoos  
Cllr Mary DeBoos  
Cllr Janet Georgiou  
Cllr John Haywood  
Cllr Peter Kelleher  
Cllr James Swyer

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk  
Mrs Jo Hurd, Deputy Town Clerk  
District Cllr Jeremy Heron  
District Cllr Steve Rippon-Swaine

ABSENT: Cllr Ingrid De Bruyn  
Cllr Michael Thierry  
Cllr Glenys Turner  
Cllr Becci Windsor  
District Councillor Cllr Nigel Linford

### **C/7189 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present.

### **C/7190 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Turner and District Cllr Nigel Linford.

### **C/7191 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

### **C/7192 POLICE REPORT**

Sergeant Chris Pell presented the Neighbourhood Policing Team quarterly report (*Annex A*).

*There was a brief break for a fire alarm drill.*

He ran through the crime statistics for the last quarter compared to the previous quarter, which overall showed a decrease in the total number of crimes. He outlined current operations and outcomes and, in relation to Op Hardhome, encouraged use of the Immobilise website (<https://www.immobilise.com/>) to register valuable possessions so that if they are lost or stolen in future and recovered, the Police can easily trace the owners.

He is working with local businesses to focus on shoplifting and is looking to promote the introduction of a ShopWatch scheme so that businesses can share live information. He also gave an update on new members of the team, and additional officers that he hoped would be joining soon.

Cllr Day congratulated the Police and NFDC officers in stopping a recent attempt of incursion on public land.

Other issues that were discussed include use of CCTV cameras in licensed premises, the issue of noisy vehicles (which should be reported as antisocial behaviour) and the reintroduction of Police stations in some areas by the Police & Crime Commissioner (there are no current plans for Ringwood).

Sergeant Pell concluded by encouraging reporting of all crimes as the more information that is available, the easier it is to prevent and solve crimes.

Members thanked Sergeant Pell for his very informative report.

### **C/7193**

#### **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

### **C/7194**

#### **RECREATION, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**

Cllr Briers presented the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024.

OS/6380 - Members were invited to put their names forward for a new Open Spaces Management Review Task and Finish Group – this would take a deep dive into issues including current management arrangements; constraints on management; policy considerations; usage; maintenance; and suggested improvements. Members will need to visit all sites, review paperwork, consider all issues and contribute to discussion.

**RESOLVED:** 1) That the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 be received; and  
2) That Cllrs Briers, G Deboos, M DeBoos, Georgiou and Kelleher be appointed to the Open Spaces Management Review Task and Finish Group.

### **C/7195**

#### **PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Cllr Day presented the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

He updated on the following:

P/6317 – following the successful Referendum, Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan has been made (adopted) by NFDC and NFNPA and is now part of the Development Plan for both authorities.

P/6318 and P/6320 – two applications for land off Moortown Lane were due to be considered by NFDC Planning Committee on 10 July but were withdrawn from the agenda due to material



changes in circumstance, those being the change of government and adoption of the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan. This shows that all the hard work and effort put in to producing the Plan was worthwhile.

He and other Members had attended an informal meeting with Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley Parish Council and an NFDC Planning Officer to hear about the way in which NFDC approaches major planning applications. NFDC anticipates receipt of an application for the Snails Lane strategic site in August, but it likely won't be determined before the end of this year.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Planning, Town and Environment Committee meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2024 be received.

#### **C/7196**

#### **POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Cllr M DeBoos presented the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

She reported that Financial Regulations and Standing Orders had been updated to reflect the fact that the Council is now a Living Wage employer. All those involved in obtaining the accreditation were congratulated.

**RESOLVED:** 1) That the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024 be received, with the exception of *F/6329* which would be considered later on the agenda.  
2) That the updated Financial Regulations (*F/6330*) be approved; and  
3) That Standing Orders as to Meetings, with the proposed addition at 18g, (*F/6333*) be approved.

#### **C/7197**

#### **FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT**

Members considered a recommendation from Policy and Finance Committee to note the annual risk assessment and that the policy statements and management arrangements have been reviewed (*F/6329 refers*).

**RESOLVED:** That the updated Financial Risk Assessment (*Annex B*) be noted.

#### **C/7198**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

Cllr Swyer introduced the final report of the Communications Plan Task and Finish Group and Members considered the recommendations therein (*Annex C*).

The recommendations were as follows:

7.1 That officers assume overall responsibility for communications. This will be reviewed in a year to assess the need for training, resource etc.

7.2 All committees members, particularly chairs, should consider if items not on the projects list are suitable for communication. All members have the freedom to discuss communications matters at the relevant committee.

7.3 All communications plans should be inclusive and accessible, featuring a mix of digital, print and display where possible.

7.4 Ringwood Town Council should run a quarterly advert in Ringwood & Fordingbridge News to ensure communication of events, objectives and progress to the entire

parish.

7.5 To trial school visits for a full academic year and collect feedback from students, staff and members to review its success.

7.6 At its meeting in January 2025, the Council should review the development of Council communications between now and then and members of the Task and Finish Group should monitor these with particular attention and be ready to comment at that meeting.

In respect of 7.5, the Group felt that the Student Advisor Scheme should not be resurrected, and the approach should be changed by Members going to the young people in school and engaging with them in workshop style meetings to gather ideas and obtain feedback.

**RESOLVED:** 1) That the notes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July be noted; and  
2) That the final report of the Communications Plan Task and Finish Group be received and the recommendations, as outlined above, be agreed.

### **C/7199**

#### **SPORTS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AT LONG LANE**

The Town Clerk reported that the network provider had begun work on installation of the new 3-phase electricity supply, and this should be completed by the weekend. The service provider will then attend site to change meters, after which the building contractor will return, with final completion anticipated early to mid-September.

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Clerk's verbal report be noted.

### **C/7200**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS TO BE RECEIVED**

The Town Mayor reported the following:

- i) She thanked the Town Clerk for the data entry he had undertaken in his own time to enable the new digital map of the cemetery to be created, and a new service to be offered to members of the public.
- ii) She thanked everyone who had been involved in production of the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan.
- iii) She had attended the official opening of the new polytunnel at Poulner Junior School, which had been awarded a grant by the Council in April 2022, and said it was a joy to see the grant money had been spent on such a successful project.
- iv) She thanked the Events Manager and team for organising a very successful Family Fun Festival, for which there had been nothing but positive feedback.

### **C/7201**

#### **REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

District Cllr Rippon-Swaine provided an update on the Christchurch Bay and Harbour Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy (*Annex D*).

District Cllr Heron congratulated the Council on the success of the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan, with such a high percentage of "yes" votes at Referendum. He commented on the uncertainty about changes in the planning system by the new government, which may lead to some difficult decisions having to be made. NFDC was poised to prepare a new Local Plan but was awaiting more information from government before proceeding. The Cabinet meeting on 7 August would consider the 2023/24 budget outturn and the proposed expansion of CCTV

across the district. One new camera is proposed for Ringwood, at the junction of Christchurch Road with Wellworthy Way. He had hoped one could be secured for Blynkbonnie Car Park but reported that this had not been supported due to the lack of reported crime in the area – he said this emphasised the need to report all crime.

District Cllr Haywood commented on the government’s proposed new mandatory housing targets, and said there would be exceptions where lower numbers could be planned for if there are hard constraints like significant floodplains or National Parks.

**C/7202**  
**REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Day had attended the Family Fun Festival and said it was a privilege to have been invited to crown the Carnival Princes and Princesses at the event.

Cllr M DeBoos expressed thanks to NFDC for the UKSPF grant that had made the Family Fun Festival possible. It was estimated that up to 1500 people had attended, mainly young families. She said the Memories of Ringwood Railway exhibition in the Meeting House had been successful (last day 1 August). She had attended the NFNPA meeting when the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan had been made and took the opportunity to thank David Illsley, Policy & Conservation Manager, who had been so encouraging and supportive throughout the whole process. She reported that one member of the NFNPA thought some of the policies were “inspirational”.

Cllr G DeBoos was pleased to have been involved in production of the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan and, in particular, that it had enabled policies on standards for new housing to reduce carbon footprint and the creation of a wildlife corridor.

Cllr Kelleher had attended a meeting of Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley Parish Council to speak on the role of Flood Warden. He commented on a meeting with a representative of Wessex Rivers Trust to discuss a possible scheme, involving local landowners, to use natural flood defences to hold water back and lessen the impact of flooding.

**C/7203**  
**FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

The following meeting dates were noted:

Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am	Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2024
Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am	Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Staffing	7.00pm	Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Full Council	7.00pm	Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2024

**C/7204**  
**EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That, in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public were excluded because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (*Confidential minutes - Annex E*).

**C/7205**

**LEGAL MATTERS**

The Town Clerk reported on developments in the Football Club project.

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Clerk's verbal report be received.

There being no further business, the Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.41pm.

APPROVED  
*25<sup>th</sup> September 2024*

TOWN MAYOR



# Ringwood Quarterly Report



## Ringwood South

	Current 90 days	Previous 90 days	Difference
<b>1b Violence with Injury</b>	15	15	0
<b>1c Violence without Injury</b>	44	51	-7
<b>2b Other Sexual Offences</b>	3	4	-1
<b>4a1 Burglary Residential</b>	1	4	-3
<b>4a2 Burglary Business and Community</b>	5	9	-4
<b>4b Vehicle Offences</b>	5	12	-7
<b>4d Bicycle Theft</b>	1	0	+1
<b>4e Shoplifting</b>	27	19	+8
<b>4f All Other Theft Offences</b>	10	11	-1
<b>5a Criminal Damage</b>	14	17	-3
<b>6a Trafficking of Drugs</b>	1	2	-1
<b>6b Possession of Drugs</b>	5	0	-5
<b>7 Possession of Weapons Offences</b>	2	1	+1
<b>8 Public Order Offences</b>	19	19	0
<b>9 Miscellaneous Crimes Against Society</b>	3	3	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>-17</b>

	Current 90 days	Previous 90 days	Difference
Residential Burglary (Excl Sheds/Garages)	0	1	-1





# Ringwood Quarterly Report



## Ringwood North (Poulner)

	Current 90 days	Previous 90 days	Difference
<b>1b Violence with Injury</b>	5	4	+1
<b>1c Violence without Injury</b>	19	21	-2
<b>2b Other Sexual Offences</b>	1	0	+1
<b>4a1 Burglary Residential</b>	1	3	-2
<b>4b Vehicle Offences</b>	3	4	-1
<b>4e Shoplifting</b>	1	1	0
<b>4f All Other Theft Offences</b>	2	7	-5
<b>5a Criminal Damage</b>	6	13	-7
<b>6b Possession of Drugs</b>	1	0	+1
<b>7 Possession of Weapons Offences</b>	1	0	+1
<b>8 Public Order Offences</b>	7	5	+2
<b>9 Miscellaneous Crimes Against Society</b>	1	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>-11</b>

	Current 90 days	Previous 90 days	Difference
Residential Burglary (Excl Sheds/Garages)	1	1	0



[www.hampshire.police.uk](http://www.hampshire.police.uk)

Deaf? Non-emergency text

**07781 480999**

For crime and community information

[www.hampshirealert.co.uk](http://www.hampshirealert.co.uk)







# Ringwood Quarterly Report

## Ringwood East & Sopley

	Current 90 days	Previous 90 days	Difference
<b>1b Violence with Injury</b>	3	1	+2
<b>1c Violence without Injury</b>	12	8	+4
<b>2b Other Sexual Offences</b>	0	0	0
<b>4a1 Burglary Residential</b>	2	4	-2
<b>4a2 Burglary Business and Community</b>	0	1	-1
<b>4b Vehicle Offences</b>	2	1	+1
<b>4d Bicycle Theft</b>	0	0	0
<b>4f All Other Theft Offences</b>	2	2	0
<b>5a Criminal Damage</b>	0	3	-3
<b>6b Possession of Drugs</b>	1	0	+1
<b>8 Public Order Offences</b>	2	3	-1
<b>9 Miscellaneous Crimes Against Society</b>	0	1	-1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>

	Current 90 days	Previous 90 days	Difference
Residential Burglary (Excl Sheds/Garages)	1	0	+1



[www.hampshire.police.uk](http://www.hampshire.police.uk)

Deaf? Non-emergency text

**07781 480999**

For crime and community information

[www.hampshirealert.co.uk](http://www.hampshirealert.co.uk)





## Ringwood Quarterly Report



### Current Operations/Areas of Focus

**Op Keoman** is a New Forest wide operation aimed at tackling car crime with thefts from motor vehicles increasing at the weather improves and the forest becomes more popular. We work to provide crime prevention to those who use car parks in the forest with the emphasis being a desire to encourage people to not leave any valuables on display in their car whilst they are parked and unattended.

**Op Stool** is a local operation which aims to target the issue of non-dwelling burglaries in Ringwood & surrounding areas. As part of this operation we are able to utilise additional resources (such as specially trained Roads Policing officers and dog units) in order to respond to live incidents. Locally, as a neighbourhood team, we endeavour to attend all reported incidents of non-dwelling burglaries in order to carry out a CCTV scope of the area and house-to-house if appropriate to do so.

**Op Hardhome** is a local operation that has been set up alongside **Op Stool** to assist with identification and recovery of stolen property. To date, we have attended 30 addresses, held two events at Aivly Country Store, and attended a number of local shows over the summer, and marked approximately 460 items of property since the operation started, with a number of further events planned before the end of the year. Items are security marked using our Dot Peen machine and then registered by the owner on a nationwide website called Immobilise, so that they can be flagged if stolen, and more easily identified if recovered by Police or sold on. These events are advertised on our Facebook page as well as by other means but please speak to residents about this free service and take details to pass on to enable us to reach as many people as possible.

**Shoplifting** – Business crime has been taken on as an area priority. We are attending all reports, building links to the local businesses and detecting more offences – through CCTV and ID. Use of Out of Court disposals as well as court summons employed. Recent meeting with Waitrose management, the local NPT are looking into enabling the introduction of a shop watch type scheme in Ringwood to allow retail premises to share live information.

### Successes/Outcomes



[www.hampshire.police.uk](http://www.hampshire.police.uk)

Deaf? Non-emergency text

**07781 480999**

For crime and community information

[www.hampshirealert.co.uk](http://www.hampshirealert.co.uk)





# Ringwood Quarterly Report



Ringwood Police have had a busy few months across the board as a team. Some of our successes have included:

- Two persons summonsed to attend Court following a fight at a licenced premises in Ringwood which left 3 persons with injuries earlier in the year.
- The team have identified the person responsible for alcohol related ASB in the town centre and are in the process of gathering evidence to obtain a Community Behaviour Order (CBO, previously known as an ASBO)  
This begins with the issuing of a Community Protection Warning (CPW) which progresses to a Community Protection Notice (CPN) prior to a CBO being sought from the Courts.
- Regular Community Speed Watch sessions have been attended to support volunteers in the Poulner and Hightown areas, which have been well supported, and have a lasting impact by providing a very visible deterrent in the local area, and education towards speeders.
- Proactive shoplifting operation in the town last week involved Officers in plain clothes and others in uniform to act as a deterrent to those who come to Ringwood to steal whilst providing reassurance to the retailers.

## Changes in the Neighbourhood Team

Your 'Bobby on the Beat' or Designated Named Officer (DNO) is PC 28455 Ian Bigland, look out for his updates on social media.

We have recently be joined by PC 29646 Beth Oliver and we hope to have two new officers joining us within the next couple of months, this will assist us in providing an effective service to the residents of Ringwood.





**NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM**

A

# Ringwood Quarterly Report



Inspector: Insp 1904 Darren Ord



[www.hampshire.police.uk](http://www.hampshire.police.uk)

Deaf? Non-emergency text

**07781 480999**

For crime and community information

[www.hampshirealert.co.uk](http://www.hampshirealert.co.uk)

**HAMPSHIRE  
ALERT**

HAMPSHIRE  
CONSTABULARY  
**101**  
IN AN  
EMERGENCY  
ALWAYS  
CALL 999



**REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE – 24th JULY 2024****FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT****1. Background**

- 1.1 The Town Council is required to carry out an annual Financial Risk Assessment. The risk assessment identifies risks in several areas, together with controls that have been implemented to manage that risk. A number of these controls are covered by Financial Regulations which were adopted in July 2022 and subsequently reviewed in July 2023.
- 1.2 The risk assessment was last carried out in September 2023. Since then, whilst risks associated with the wider economic outlook and inflation in particular have declined, other factors are likely to have an increasing impact on Council Finances, such as interest rates and income generation in particular.

**2. Financial risk Assessment 2024/25**

- 2.1 The Town council implemented a new Financial Management system in April 2019 and subsequently added modules to manage Cemeteries and Allotments. The ensuing adjustments to financial procedures have now become embedded and the systems appear to be working well.
- 2.2 Most of the changes were managed within the framework of Financial Regulations and as such, did not require any change to the risk assessment as the risks have previously been identified and managed. The internal audit of the 2023/24 accounts identified no weaknesses in the financial control system.
- 2.3 Further, since the last review, inflation has declined and eased some of the financial risks brought by rapidly increasing prices. Income generation, however, remains challenging and it has not always been possible to pass on inflationary cost increases by raising fees and charges. Revenue income funds around a third of revenue expenditure.
- 2.4 The sharp increase in inflation incurred over the last two years, however, does continue to pose some risks. Whilst budget projections in 2024/25 were based on a less pessimistic forecast of inflation, higher costs are nevertheless now embedded and have required very careful and tight budgeting to avoid the use of reserves to maintain a balanced budget. This means that there is less flex in the system to absorb any unforeseen price changes or additional costs.
- 2.5 The football development project is a major capital project which has significantly altered the budget profile of the Town Council, increasing the annual expenditure budget from around £800,000 to £3.2 million in 2023/24, with a commensurate increase in overall financial risk. Whilst the project is now close to completion, the financial risks remain considerable and require close monitoring to ensure that any cost increases are matched by funding increases.
- 2.6 The increased risks associated with higher inflation have been largely managed and mitigated, however the predicted fall in interest rates may present an additional risk. As far as expenditure is concerned, the Council has very low exposure to fluctuating interest rates with all borrowing secured on fixed rate terms. However any reduction in interest rates will reduce interest generated by investments none of which are subject to long term fixed rate arrangements. Furthermore, any additional net expenditure will reduce the balances held in investments and reduce interest receipts further. For information, interest receipts generated in 2023/24 amounted to £42,714 or 11% of revenue income.
- 2.7 The risk assessment has therefore been further expanded to cover risks around reduced income, reduced interest rates and the specific risks of large capital projects.
- 2.8 These risks have been addressed in the revised risk assessment, Appendix 1.



### 3. RECOMMENDATION

It is **recommended** that: -

- 3.1 The updated Financial Risk Assessment be noted.

For further information please contact:

Rory Fitzgerald, Finance Manager      or      Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk

Tel: 01425 484723

Tel: 01425 484720

[roly.fitzgerald@ringwood.gov.uk](mailto:roly.fitzgerald@ringwood.gov.uk)

[Chris.Wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk](mailto:Chris.Wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk)

## RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

### FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT 2024/25

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Risk weighting</b>
<b>Legal/ Administration</b>	Failure to comply with HMRC PAYE requirements	Maintenance of comprehensive records of Income Tax and National Insurance deductions from payroll and employer's contributions. Specialist payroll agent engaged to submit RTI returns to HMRC and calculate monthly payments (checked by Deputy Clerk and RFO before payment).	Low	Medium	<b>2</b>
<b>Legal/ Administration</b>	Incurring Expenditure without proper legal authority	Clerk holds CiLCA qualification. Minutes record the powers under which expenditure is incurred.	Low	Low	<b>1</b>
<b>Legal/ Administration</b>	Failure to maintain accurate records of Council Assets	Maintain a comprehensive asset register. Record key assets in simplified Asset Register in finance software. Finance staff record all acquisitions and disposals in finance software. Carry out periodical inventory checks.	Low	Low	<b>1</b>
<b>Legal/ Administration</b>	Failure to comply with HMRC VAT regulations	RFO holds CIPFA qualification. Finance staff check VAT coding of all transactions. Refer to HMRC Guidance. Seek further guidance where necessary. Ensure that Input and Output tax are accurately recorded. Register for Making Tax Digital. Complete and submit VAT returns online promptly.	Low	Medium	<b>2</b>
<b>Legal/ Administration</b>	Failure to comply with employment legislation	Retain the services of an HR consultancy to advise on HR matters and disputes	Low	Low	<b>1</b>
<b>Legal/ Administration</b>	Noncompliance with data protection legislation, risk of fines or penalties	Regularly review the data protection measures and ensure awareness of the requirements amongst staff. Ensure that confidential data is only held where necessary, according to the Council data retention policy, that confidential records are held on secure systems.	Medium	High	<b>6</b>

Risk	Hazard	Controls	Probability	Impact	Risk weighting
<b>Financial</b>	Poor Financial Management	Scheme of Delegation defines responsibilities for the financial affairs of the Council. Maintain & review Financial Regulations and Standing Orders. Maintain an effective budgetary control and financial reporting system. Commission annual independent internal audit and act upon any recommendations. Continue development of an internal finance procedures manual as a staff training aid. Closely monitor bank balances to ensure maintenance of surplus and avoid any interest charges or penalties.	Low	High	<b>3</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Failure to set a precept and a balanced budget	Ensure that the precept is determined following scrutiny of the detailed requirements for all income and expenditure budgets. Ensure that presentation to Committee of budget proposals follows an agreed timetable. The Annual budget agreed and approved by full Council by the end of January each year.	Low	Medium	<b>2</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Adequacy of Reserves to meet necessary unplanned expenditure	Reserves equivalent to 10% of annual budgeted spend available for immediate use. Maintain General Reserve at around 50% of the annual precept. Carry out an annual review of reserves and maintain balances of earmarked reserves & Provisions according to the Reserves Policy. Keep sufficient proportion of cash investments available for immediate use to avoid any requirement for borrowing.	Medium	High	<b>6</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Actual income and/or expenditure deviating from budget	Annual budget identifies staff members responsible for each budget heading. Effective credit control process in place. RFO monitors actual performance against budget and produces monthly budget comparison reports to Policy & Finance Committee from end of P2. Additional inflationary and other financial risks mitigated by reserves	Medium	Medium	<b>4</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Capital Project costs deviating from budget	Capital projects subject to detailed budget monitoring. Independent advice sought in preparation and control of capital project budgets. Regular stage reviews of progress and performance against budget to be presented to members.	Medium	High	<b>6</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Reduction/Loss of Income	Inflation, interest rates, balances held and the condition of the wider economy puts income at risk. Regular monitoring of income to identify emerging variances and effective credit control to minimize any shortfall. Annual review of charges and service demand to ensure achievable income targets. Where practical, use of long term service contracts to secure income over several years. Maintenance of appropriate reserves to cover any significant and unanticipated loss of income.	High	Medium	<b>6</b>



Risk	Hazard	Controls	Probability	Impact	Risk weighting
<b>Financial</b>	Failure to maintain an effective payments system	Financial Regulations assign responsibilities for control of expenditure. RFO establishes clear payment processes supported by appropriate documentation and monitors compliance. Separation of duties in initiating and authorizing expenditure. Order approval required before order placement or commitment. Goods received before payment.	Low	Low	<b>1</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Control of Payroll and Pension costs	All overtime payments pre-authorized by Clerk. Council agree pay scales and progression. Payroll outsourced to specialist payroll contractor. RFO monitors spend against budgets and prepares annual payroll budgets on a zero based approach. Payments only to bona fide employees. Monthly returns to HMRC and HCC (pensions)	Low	Medium	<b>2</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Failure to ensure proper use of funds under specific powers (e.g. s137)	Ensure that all expenditure under specific powers is separately recorded in the General Ledger when required. Ensure that statutory limits on such expenditure are not breached. Ensure that grant applications are complete and fully supported prior to submission to Council for approval and that all approvals are recorded in Council minutes.	Low	Medium	<b>2</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Risk of claims from other parties as a result of providing a service	Undertake risk assessment before providing any new service. Committee approval of business case required before any new and/or commercial venture is undertaken. Ensure that appropriate insurance cover is in place.	Low	Medium	<b>2</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Loss of money through phishing scams, CEO fraud bogus account details change, or other fraud	Financial Regulations and payment processes instituted by RFO. All payments to authorised recipients. Expenditure only against agreed budgets and according to authorised and receipted orders. Restricting access to Finance software. Bank reconciliations to ensure that all transactions correspond with those duly authorised in the General Ledger. Maintain awareness of scam and fraud techniques.	Low	High	<b>3</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Loss of money through theft or misappropriation	Determine responsibility for cash at all locations. Issue numbered receipts for all income. Ensure that effective arrangements are in place for prompt recording and banking of all cash received. Carry out monthly bank reconciliation. Ensure that the Council holds adequate fidelity guarantee insurance. Ensure that secure arrangements are in place for all monies held pending banking. Reconcile petty cash monthly with all expenditure backed by receipts and allocated against approved budgets.	Low	Medium	<b>2</b>

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Risk weighting</b>
<b>Financial</b>	Incorrect or inappropriate use of Council Credit Cards	Monthly statements checked by the RFO to ensure that expenditure is against approved orders. Accounts settled in full each month. Use of credit cards subject to Council Financial regulations and standing orders. Cards subject to a modest credit limit. Cards only to be used where the standard ordering system cannot be used.	Low	low	<b>1</b>
<b>Assets</b>	Protection of Assets	All assets over a prescribed de minimis level recorded in an asset register and that register audited at least bi-annually.	Low	low	<b>1</b>
<b>Assets</b>	Security of buildings	Buildings fitted with alarms and/or CCTV as appropriate. Adequate insurance cover maintained against loss through theft or vandalism.	Medium	Medium	<b>4</b>
<b>Assets</b>	Maintenance of Assets	Buildings to be subject to a planned maintenance schedule. An earmarked buildings reserve fund to be maintained to cover any unplanned buildings repairs or maintenance costs. Vehicles, plant and machinery to be regularly serviced and replaced at end of life.	Low	Medium	<b>2</b>

## Communications Plan Task & Finish Group

### Notes of meeting held on Tuesday 16 July 2024 at 1.30pm in Teams

Present: Cllr James Swyer  
Cllr Mary DeBoos  
Cllr Rae Frederick  
Cllr Janet Georgiou

In attendance: Christopher Wilkins – Town Clerk  
Charmaine Bennett – Events and Clubhouse Manager

Absent: Jo Hurd – Deputy Town Clerk

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Jo Hurd.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No disclosable pecuniary interests were declared.

#### 3. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the meeting held on 18 June 2024 were approved.

#### 4. REPORTING TO THE FULL COUNCIL

Cllr Swyer presented the draft report circulated prior to the meeting as Report A. Members commended this and had very little to add. Cllr DeBoos suggested that item 5.3 be moved to the list of recommendations and re-numbered accordingly. The Town Clerk suggested that a recommendation for a review after six months be added.

Cllr. Swyer will present the report at the Council meeting on 31 July. It will be for the Mayor (or whoever is chairing that meeting) to decide whether the recommendations are voted upon individually or *en bloc*.

**ACTION AGREED:** Town Clerk to ensure that the agenda for the Council meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> July includes an item relating to the report amended as attached.

#### 5. DIGITAL EVENTS CALENDAR

Cllr Frederick suggested that the Council investigate providing a facility on its website for anyone to post details of events in the town (including provision for them to alter and cancel them) without any need for staff time to be taken up. This could help de-conflict events, promote greater awareness of and support for events and drive traffic to our website.

The aims were generally approved but concerns were expressed about purely commercial promotions and doubts expressed about the practicality of allowing unmoderated access. It was felt that someone would have to check and approve content (and change) requests.

Cllr DeBoos observed that proposal is quite like functions already performed by GoNewForest and wondered if it might be possible to create some sort of cross-

referral system between the Council website and theirs filtered to Ringwood content only which would be of mutual benefit.

**ACTION AGREED:** Town Clerk to check with our web-hosts what might be possible and with NFDC if the surplus and 'at-risk' UKSPF funding could be used for this purpose and report back to the Events Management Sub-Committee.

There being no further business, Cllr Swyer noted that the Group had now completed its allotted task and thanked all members for their contributions. The meeting closed at 2.10pm.

RECEIVED  
29 May 2024

APPROVED

TOWN MAYOR

WORKING PARTY CHAIRMAN

## TOWN COUNCIL

31<sup>st</sup> July 2024

### Final Report of the Communications Plan Task and Finish Group

#### 1. Introduction and reason for report

1.1 The Communications Plan Task and Finish Group was formed in October 2023 to create a proactive and successful Communications Plan for Ringwood Town Council, aligning with the Council's overall Strategy.

#### 2. Background information

2.1 Prior to the inauguration of the group, the Deputy Town Clerk undertook training with Breakthrough Communications, which outlined an eight-step approach to communications planning. With this foundation and the input of the group, it was decided that the Council would attempt to create a plan without seeking further professional help.

2.2 The group agreed the following purposes of the Group:

- i. To make more efficient use of resources by focusing face-to-face engagement on those who most need it and encouraging other forms of engagement.
- ii. To re-engage with young people following the demise of the Student Advisor Scheme.
- iii. To build confidence that the Council is engaging with people about things that matter to them and focusing resources on these; and
- iv. To promote Ringwood businesses and support the local economy.

#### 3. SWOT analysis

3.1 The group undertook a SWOT analysis, which allowed them to focus on areas of improvement. These included insufficient training and resource, a need to celebrate 'everyday' successes, breadth of communication channels (including physical means), and the fact that no committee has communication within its remit.

#### 4. Setting objectives

4.1 The group decided that the type of objectives required were most easily distinguished by the type of projects they related to: funded projects (cemetery memorial wall, football facilities), scoping projects (Carvers masterplan, thriving marketplace etc.), events, local businesses, major planning applications, and business as usual.

4.2 The objectives document (Appendix A) will serve as a useful reference for officers when considering appropriate activity for each project type.

4.3 The group produced communications plans for the Neighbourhood Plan, Carvers masterplan, the memorial wall, thriving marketplace and a standalone plan for business as usual (Appendix B).

#### 5. Delegation of responsibilities

5.1 Officers will use the existing plans as a framework for the communications and lead in the creation of press releases etc.

5.2 All members of this task and finish group have offered to take on a consultative roles for communications work, if requested.

## 6. Engagement with young people

6.1 As outlined in 2.2.ii, this group was tasked with reviewing the former Student Advisor Scheme.

6.2 The group felt that there were many barriers to this scheme being a success and felt a lighter approach would be beneficial. Several ideas were put forward, but the preferred option was to hold one school visit per term (three per year), with members presenting topics relevant to a school audience (ideally projects) in an accessible fashion, building relationships and engaging the sharing of ideas.

6.3 All councillors should be afforded the opportunity to participate across a year, so that no cohort of councillors felt either overlooked or prioritised.

## 7. Recommendations

7.1 That officers assume overall responsibility for communications. This will be reviewed in a year to assess the need for training, resource etc.

7.2 All committees members, particularly chairs, should consider if items not on the projects list are suitable for communication. All members have the freedom to discuss communications matters at the relevant committee.

7.3 All communications plans should be inclusive and accessible, featuring a mix of digital, print and display where possible.

7.4 Ringwood Town Council should run a quarterly advert in Ringwood & Fordingbridge News to ensure communication of events, objectives and progress to the entire parish.

7.5 To trial school visits for a full academic year and collect feedback from students, staff and members to review its success.

7.6 At its meeting in January 2025, the Council should review the development of Council communications between now and then and members of the Task and Finish Group should monitor these with particular attention and be ready to comment at that meeting.

## Appendix A

## Objectives for the Communication Plan

Subject Area	What do the communications need to deliver? <i>(e.g. Greater awareness, more self-sufficiency, greater appreciation of the council's work, increased attendance, increased engagement)</i>	Who will they need to engage? <i>Try to be specific</i>	What do we want the audience to do? <b>Awareness:</b> Prompt knowledge, build understanding, gain recognition. <b>Action:</b> Join, visit, sign up to, attend, disseminate, support. <b>Engagement:</b> Create information exchange, attend meetings, volunteer to help	How will we know if we've succeeded <i>What targets or indicators can show that we have achieved the above?</i>	When must we do this by?
Neighbourhood Plan	Greater awareness of the benefits of the Neighbourhood Plan	All potential voters in the referendum	Vote in the referendum	The turnout and the result at the referendum	The date of the referendum
Scoping projects (Carvers Masterplan, Grounds building, Thriving Market Place, Open Spaces Management Plan)	Increased understanding of the rationale for, status and evolution of each project	Residents, business-owners and potential users of each facility	Provide constructive feedback and be more engaged (attend meetings, submit comments & suggestions, etc.)	The number of comments received and the degree to which these provide ideas for improvements.	Depends on project.
Funded projects (Cemetery Memorial Wall, Football facilities)	Wider appreciation of the nature of each project and interest in its progress.	Residents and potential users.	Comment on the project, spread information about it and prepare to use the new facility.	The number of comments and likes. Early usage of new facilities.	Regularly until the project is complete.
Events advance plan	Increased awareness of upcoming and planned events.	Residents, business-owners, potential attendees and	Attend events, spread information, volunteer and suggest improvements and/or	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance</li> <li>Financial outcomes</li> <li>Volunteer-helper numbers</li> </ul>	Continuou s but prioritised around each event date.

		volunteers	ideas for new events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likes and shares</li> <li>• Comments received.</li> </ul>	
Linking to local businesses (Business Event, Business Network)	Greater awareness of the benefits of doing business in Ringwood and collaborating with other businesses and with us.	Local business-owners	Join Ringwood & Fordingbridge Business Community, engage with us and sponsor our events and facilities.	Membership of RBC rises. The number of comments received. Sponsorships secured.	Continuou s.
Major planning applications	Greater awareness of applications, our influence upon them and the work we and others put in to enhance the town.	Ringwood residents	Comment on applications and support our comments.	Comments received, likes and shares.	The closing date for comments for each applicatio n
The “business as usual” items below all have one overarching objective	Wider interest and engagement in our work and understanding of our key decisions.	Ringwood residents	Attend and speak at our meetings. Comment on our business. Stand for election as councillors or apply for job vacancies.	Number of people attending / commenting on decisions. No decisions being reviewed or reversed. No unfilled vacancies.	Continuou s
Town Council					
- Community Awards					
- Town Assembly					
Planning, Town & Environment Committee					
- Planning/Tree works comments					
- Licensing					
- Flood Wardens					
- REAL WP					
- Public rights of way					
Policy & Finance Committee					
- Information Service					
- Markets & fairs					
- Grants					
Recreation Leisure & Open Spaces Committee					



- Allotments					
- Clubhouse/Cars vers WP					
- Cemetery					
- Events/sub- cttee.					
- Open Spaces					
- Play facilities					
- Tree Warden					
Staffing Committee					
- Recruitment					
Other agencies					

## Appendix B

### Communications Plan for Carvers Recreation Ground

#### What will communications about this need to deliver?

*(e.g. Greater awareness, more self-sufficiency, greater appreciation of the council's work, increased attendance, increased engagement)*

Greater awareness about the facilities at Carvers, what is available and who it is targeted at (young through to OAP)

Central location for activities

A welcoming place

A safe and secure place

#### Who will they need to engage?

Residents of Ringwood

Groups who can hire the clubhouse

Coaches and sports clubs

Charities and organisations who can hold events at Carvers for example RACE could hold bug hunts and other activities here

#### What will we want the audience to do?

##### **Awareness:**

Have a greater awareness of what is available to do at Carvers

Want to use the facilities and have positive outcomes

Share on social media

##### **Action:**

Use the clubhouse in a variety of way i.e. hiring it out, using it as a café destination

Use the sports facilities join sports clubs

**Engagement:** Create information exchange, attend meetings, volunteer

Become a destination site where residents want to be involved in volunteering and promoting activities on site

#### How will we know if we have succeeded?

The site will be busier residents choosing to sit and stay in the quiet areas

Families using the facilities

Clubhouse will be hired out more

Clubs and sports coaches will be using the site

Events will be held on site i.e. Skatejams organised by the users

#### What tone should we adopt?

*(Formal/informal, neutral/encouraging, factual/upbeat, etc.)*

Encouraging informal in its general use

Encouraging factual regarding what is available

Always upbeat and positive tones

#### What positioning and key messages should we adopt?

*(Positioning: Leading, ambitious, responsible, open and truthful, etc.)*

Leading, responsible, open

#### What will be the triggers and deadlines for communications?

When we have received funding

When elements of the masterplan can be implemented

When outside organisations use the facilities

## Communications Plan for the Memorial Wall

### What will communications about this need to deliver?

*(e.g. Greater awareness, more self-sufficiency, greater appreciation of the council's work, increased attendance, increased engagement)*

Greater awareness of the new Memorial Wall.  
Availability of spaces.  
Appreciation of the council's investment in infrastructure.

### Who will they need to engage?

Ringwood Residents. Funeral directors.

### What will we want the audience to do?

Book places in the Memorial Wall. Be aware of the Town Council investing in infrastructure.

### How will we know if we have succeeded?

Number of bookings.  
Number of funeral directors engaged with it.

### What tone should we adopt?

(Formal/informal, neutral/encouraging, factual/upbeat, etc.)

Formal, encouraging.

### What positioning and key messages should we adopt?

Positioning: Responsible, open, reliable, respectful.

Key messages:

- Ringwood has a new, modern, affordable way to be remembered.
- This is an important addition to Ringwood Cemetery.
- Remember your loved one locally.

Language: memorial wall rather than columbarium.

### What will be the triggers and deadlines for communications?

The start of construction  
Completion of project (formal opening)  
Anniversary of completion.

## **Communications Plan for the Thriving Market Place**

### What will communications about this need to deliver?

*(e.g. Greater awareness, more self-sufficiency, greater appreciation of the council's work, increased attendance, increased engagement)*

Increased engagement with the Thriving Market Place Project.  
Greater appreciation of the council's work.

### Who will they need to engage?

All residents of Ringwood, especially those directly affected i.e. High Street and Market Place. Stakeholders including:- owners/traders/Church/Market Charter Holder/hospitality providers/event organisers.

### What will we want the audience to do?

Engage with the Council to make sure that all views are appraised.  
Get behind the project.

### How will we know if we have succeeded?

Setting up a new on-line poll to research reaction. Analysing the results and moving forward with conclusions.

### What tone should we adopt?

(Formal/informal, neutral/encouraging, factual/upbeat, etc.)

Upbeat, factual, informal, enthusiastic. Putting across that the Council listens to the residents and are actively "batting for the team", and that "we are champions for their town".

### What positioning and key messages should we adopt?

Positioning: Responsible, open, reliable.

Key messages:

- This is an opportunity for Ringwood.
- Understanding that times have changed. The Market Place needs to survive and thrive in order to ensure that it does not just become residential.
- The Council listens to the people – NP Survey and vision.
- The Council cares about the Town's future and is putting its efforts into maintaining Ringwood as a signature Market Town within the New Forest.

### What will be the triggers and deadlines for communications?

First plans/designs.

Posting of on-line survey to gauge suggestions/reactions.

Publishing of analysis of findings.

Any ongoing steps that may arise – funding discussions/grant applications/etc.

## Communications Plan for general council or committee business

### What will be the triggers for communications?

Typical triggers will be:

1. Changes of RTC personnel (especially election of a new Town Mayor or staff in public-facing roles)
2. Changes to RTC services (e.g. in their opening hours, our charges or methods of delivery)
3. Changes to RTC facilities (especially those affecting the appearance or use of prominent or popular features)
4. Significant milestones in major projects;
5. RTC's responses to changes to services or facilities delivered in Ringwood by others
6. Planning developments or changes of use that are of public interest (by reason of scale, nature or whatever)
7. Local news or events of public interest or concern
8. Major changes or clarifications of RTC policy which are likely to affect others (through the precept or otherwise) or by means of which RTC desires to show leadership or effect change (e.g. Living Wage Employer accreditation).

Communications should form part of the discussion and decision about all such business raised at meetings and handled by officers between meetings.

Once a need for communication has been identified, the following questions should be considered (the answers are likely vary depending on the particular need):

### What will communications about this need to deliver?

*(e.g. Greater awareness, more self-sufficiency, greater appreciation of the council's work, increased attendance, increased engagement)*

### Who will they need to engage?

*(Try to be specific)*

### What will we want the audience to do?

**Awareness:** *Prompt knowledge, build understanding, gain recognition.*

**Action:** *Join, visit, sign up to, attend, disseminate, support.*

**Engagement:** *Create information exchange, attend meetings, volunteer to help*

### How will we know if we have succeeded?

*(What targets or indicators can show that we have achieved the above?)*

Wherever possible, we should try to describe in advance what success will look like, check the results afterwards and learn from those results.

### What tone should we adopt?

*(Formal/informal, neutral/encouraging, factual/upbeat, etc.)*

We will need to consider carefully if it needs to be kept consistent over time and across differing channels or whether variations would be suitable. We should always avoid sounding patronizing or defensive though.

### What positioning and key messages should we adopt?

**(Positioning:** *Leading, ambitious, responsible, open and truthful, etc.)*

These will vary according to the business under consideration but (unlike tone) should remain consistent.

The following key messages should always be considered for adoption/inclusion:

- RTC works to provide benefits for local people
- RTC wants to hear from local people and always listens to what they say
- RTC always tries to provide the things that local people say they want

### What are the deadlines?

# RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

## FULL COUNCIL MEETING

31<sup>st</sup> July 2024

-----

### DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

#### **NFDC PLACE & SUSTAINABILITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL Meeting 18 July 2024.**

(Recommendations to NFDC Cabinet and Council.)

#### **1. Christchurch Bay & Harbour Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy.**

- Since Spring 2021 with a £525,000 grant from central Government, BCP Council, NFDC & the EA have worked collaboratively, with a private specialist company to develop a new FCERM Strategy for the Bay & Harbour.
- Due to the connectivity of the physical processes across the Bay & Harbour, the Strategy extends from Hengistbury Head Long Groyne to the western end of Hurst Spit at Milford-on-Sea on the open coast, and to Tuckton Bridge and Knapp Mill on the lower Rivers Stour & Avon within Christchurch Harbour respectively.
- The FCERM Strategy can be viewed on both NFDC & BCP Councils website.
- The Panel recommended to Cabinet & Council the leading options identified in the FCERM Strategy, subject to securing the necessary funding contributions.
- As Coastal Protection Authorities, BCP and NFDC do not have any statutory duty to undertake coastal protection work, but can use permissive powers to protect the coastline.

**Cllr W Steve Rippon-Swaine FRICS DipGS  
New Forest Councillor for Ringwood South**