

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Wednesday 27th November 2024 at 7pm at Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood

PRESENT: Cllr Rae Frederick (Chairman)
Cllr Philip Day (Deputy Chair)
Cllr Andrew Briers
Cllr Ingrid De Bruyn
Cllr Luke Dadford
Cllr Gareth DeBoos
Cllr Mary DeBoos
Cllr Janet Georgiou
Cllr John Haywood
Cllr James Swyer
Cllr Glenys Turner

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Mrs Jo Hurd, Deputy Town Clerk
District Cllr Jeremy Heron
District Cllr Nigel Linford

ABSENT: Cllr Peter Kelleher
Cllr Michael Thierry
Cllr Becci Windsor
District Councillor Steve Rippon-Swaine

C/7248 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present.

C/7249 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Kelleher, Thierry and Windsor, and District Cllr Rippon-Swaine.

C/7250 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none, although it was noted that some Councillors are members of the Ringwood Society.

C/7251 RINGWOOD SOCIETY PRESENTATION

Members received a presentation from the Chairman of Ringwood Society (*Annex A*) about a campaign for the installation of brown signs to raise awareness of our historic market town to passers-by and encourage more people to stop and enjoy all it has to offer. He had discussed this with Hampshire County Council (HCC) who had accepted the report as part of an application for HCC controlled roads, although it was noted this applied to location 3 only (A338 Salisbury Road). An application fee of £280 would be needed in order for the site to be assessed. Locations 1 and 2 are on the A31, so there would be a different application

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process as this is controlled by National Highways. Location 4 (A338 Wessex Way) is in Dorset, so it might also be necessary to apply to Dorset Council. At this stage, the Society is raising awareness of the campaign and looking for support from Members. Funding was yet to be identified. The Society would be reaching out to other stakeholders to see if the scheme has broad support.

There was general support for the scheme from both Town and District Council Members present, and Members thanked Ringwood Society for bringing this forward.

C/7252

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 30th October 2024, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/7253

PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr Day presented the minutes of the Planning Town & Environment Committee meeting held on 1st November 2024.

It was noted that planning applications for land off Moortown Lane (SS13) had been approved by NFDC Planning Committee on 13 November.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning, Town and Environment Committee meeting held on 1st November 2024 be received.

C/7254

RECREATION, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Cllr Briars presented the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 6th November 2024.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 6th November 2024 be received.

C/7255

POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr M DeBoos presented the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 20th November 2024.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 20th November 2024 be received.

C/7256

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

There were no changes proposed to Committee composition.

C/7257

NFDC PARKING STRATEGY CONSULTATION

The Town Clerk reported that the Deputy Town Clerk and four Members had attended a briefing for parish and town councils and noted that the current consultation was the first stage of two, and that there would be further opportunity to comment in the New Year on the draft strategy. Members were encouraged to respond to the survey by the closing date of 1 December 2024 and to invite residents and local businesses to do the same. It was felt that a response from the Town Council should also be submitted, and Members were asked to send comments to the Town Clerk. This might include the wish to protect parking spaces, to cover issues raised during preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, and environmental issues.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk submit an initial response to NFDC, to include comments submitted by Members.

ACTION C Wilkins

C/7258

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE RECEIVED

The Town Mayor reported that she had attended:

- i) Opening of the new facility at Ringwood Community Hub – she thanked the Town Clerk for the considerable amount of work he had done on this project.
- ii) Fireworks event, which had been a great success.
- iii) Remembrance Sunday and Remembrance Day events, both of which had an exceptional turnout.
- iv) Opening of Little Acorns Nursery.
- v) Ringwood Rotary event, where she had given a talk about the town, the Town Council and the role of the Mayor.

She wished to thank Cllrs G & M DeBoos and Day for representing the Town Council at the NFDC Planning Committee regarding the applications for land off Moortown Lane.

She was looking forward to the Winter Wonderland event on Sunday 1 December.

C/7259

REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County and District Councillor Thierry had given apologies; Members wished him well and a speedy recovery. The Mayor read an update from him as he continues to deal with concerns from constituents, one of these being the three way traffic management temporary arrangement at the junction of Southampton Road and Gorley Road. He would be maintaining pressure for an answer from Hampshire Highways on this matter.

District Cllr Haywood had also been trying to establish the situation with the traffic lights. He said that works were scheduled to start on 6 December to correct a longstanding flooding issue, and perhaps this was why the lights remained in place despite no activity on site.

District Cllr Heron reported that Cabinet would be setting the Council Tax Base on 4 December, noting that this would be 5,507.3 for Ringwood, a change of 5.7.

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C/7260
REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCILLORS

Cllr Day congratulated everyone involved in the new facilities at the Community Hub, Remembrance and Fireworks events. There had been widespread flooding overnight and he encouraged everyone to take photographs and report it to HCC. He congratulated Ringwood Society on the Railway Corner project, and thanks were also extended to Cllr M DeBoos for successfully securing the funding to enable this to happen.

Cllr Swyer praised the successful introduction of online ticketing for the Fireworks event and wished to thank the Events Manager.

Cllr Haywood commented on flooding in the Poulner area and said that, according to old maps online, there used to be a drainage ditch alongside Gorley Road, which was no longer there and may be one of the contributory factors to increased flooding in the area. It was noted that he had been elected as Chairman of Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley Parish Council until the end of May 2025.

C/7261
FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

The following meeting dates were noted:

Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 4 th December 2024
Planning, Town & Environment	10.00am	Friday 6 th December 2024
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Wednesday 11 th December 2024
Full Council	7.00pm	Wednesday 18 th December 2024

C/7262
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 B*).

C/7263
LEGAL MATTERS

The Town Clerk reported on ongoing legal matters relating to 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 7.43pm.

APPROVED
18th December 2024

TOWN MAYOR

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A Simple Proposal

As the 800th anniversary of Ringwood's Market Charter approaches in 2026, The Ringwood Society has a simple proposal. That Ringwood is deserving of its own brown signs, alerting passers by to the prospect of enjoying our our historic market town.

It has been noted that Ringwood has the unusual distinction of having a bypass through the middle of it! There is no doubt that the A31 has some significant negative impacts on our town.

In some small way this would use the road to mitigate those harms. We wish we, or others!, had thought of this at the time of the A31 widening and closure of West Street but better late than never.

The New Forest has a vibrant visitor economy worth in excess of £491m per year* and NFDC's economic strategy recognises the importance of increasing footfall on our high streets.

Fordingbridge benefits from a brown sign but Ringwood doesn't have one, yet.

Supporting local stakeholders to improve High Street and retail environments

7.5 Because the change in culture surrounding the High Street has been relatively rapid, some businesses have struggled to adapt. National campaigns such as Small Business Saturday have been successful in raising awareness as to the need to support small, independent retailers and more can be done at a local level to build on this success. What national campaigns cannot deliver is a local focus, giving attention to local needs and this is where the role of the District Council and its partners is vital.

7.6 Beyond this, for many residents town and village centres remain the location of important retail services, particularly for those who are unable to access 'out of town' alternatives. Whilst facilitating the adaptation of town and village uses, it is important that support is also given to existing retailers, particularly those who provide core retail services.

Action: Work with local partners to increase footfall and spend in High Street and retail businesses

New Forest Economic Development Strategy 2018 – 2023

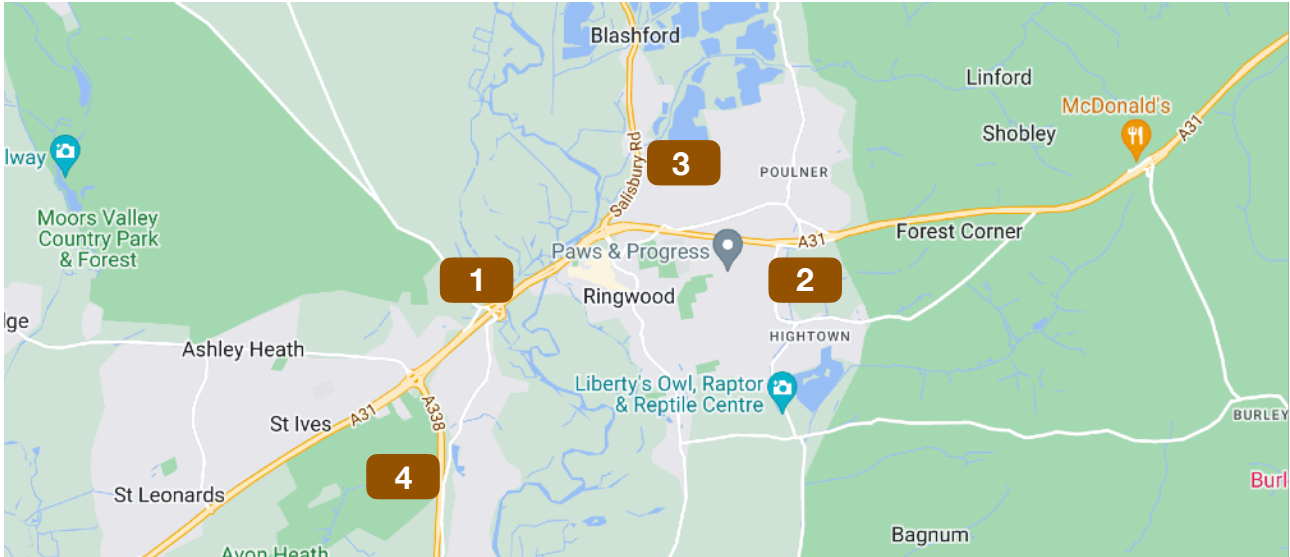
At this stage The Ringwood Society would like to gather opinion from local Councillors and groups who may be able to help us better understand the level of support and identify a route to success.

Let us know if you support this idea info@ringwoodsociety.org.uk

Where

We have identified 4 locations where brown signs could be placed to inform people who may otherwise be passing by.

Clearly 1&2 would reach the most passers by but 3&4 would also be beneficial.



1. Eastbound on A31
2. Westbound on A31
3. Southbound on A338
4. Northbound on A338

What Do We Have Now?



Exit signage for Ringwood



Marking the fact that the A31 passes through Ringwood (Westbound only)

Ringwood Attractions

A suggested list of attractions that *could* feature on the signs:

The Barn



Theatre or Concert Hall

Ringwood Meeting House



Historic Building

Liberty's Owl, Raptor and Reptile Centre



Birds of Prey Centre

Parish Church



Church

Ringwood Gateway



Information Point

Picnic Gardens



Picnic Area

Pubs & Restaurants



Restaurant

Inns & Hotels



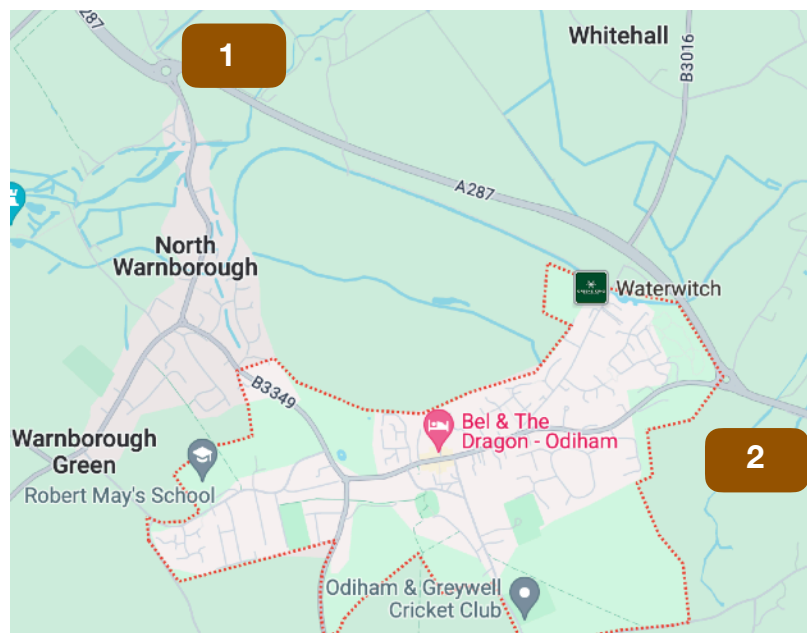
Hotel or Overnight Accommodation

Examples of Other Brown Signs

Wimborne, Dorset



Odiham, Hampshire



Fordingbridge, Hampshire

