



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes Council

Time and date

7.00 pm on Thursday 25th June, 2020

Place

Held remotely via Zoom

Councillors

Councillor Pat Evans (Mayor)
Councillor Alan Earwaker (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor David Attfield
Councillor David Beaman
Councillor Roger Blishen
Councillor Carole Cockburn
Councillor Sally Dickson
Councillor Paula Dunsmore
Councillor John "Scotty" Fraser
Councillor George Hesse
Councillor Andy MacLeod
Councillor Mark Merryweather
Councillor John Neale
Councillor John Ward

Apologies for absence

Brian Edmonds, Michaela Gray, Michaela Martin and Kika Mirylees

Officers Presents:

Iain Lynch, Town Clerk
Sara Jones, Assistant Town Clerk
Iain McCready, Business and Facilities Manager

There was 1 member of the public and 1 member of the press in attendance.

Prior to the meeting, prayers were led by the Pastor Michael Hall of The Wey Church, Farnham.

C22/20 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Edmonds, Gray, Martin and Mirylees.

C23/20 Disclosures of Interest

In addition to the standard declarations by the dual and triple hatted Councillors, Cllr Merryweather recorded an interest in item 8 on the transfer of assets as Portfolio Holder for Finance, Assets and Commercial Services at Waverley Borough Council.

C24/20 Minutes

The Minutes of the Farnham Town Council meeting held on 14th May 2020 at appendix A were agreed to be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

C25/20 Questions and Statements by the Public

There were no questions from the public.

C26/20 Town Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor thanked all present on behalf of the Farnham community for the outstanding achievements made to support Farnham during the Coronavirus lockdown. The Mayor mentioned the swift implementation by FTC of the most recent Coronavirus recovery project: 'Safer Streets', a Government initiative to help keep customers socially distanced while shopping in the town centre to help the economic recovery of Farnham's retailers and businesses.

The Mayor praised Farnham for being the first community in England to achieve World Craft City status recognising the history and quality of craft in the town. The Mayor congratulated the Farnham Herald for receiving the prestigious accolade of 'Weekly Paper of the Year' at the Regional Press Awards.

The Mayor commented on the gradual return of civic engagements including the attendance to the Raising of the Flag ceremony at the Town Council Offices to mark Armed Forces week and the visit to one of the Mayor's chosen charities, Space2 Grow. The Mayor reported she would be recording a podcast for Greener Surrey on the merits of Space 2Grow and The Repair Café and would also be attending the Farmers' Market.

C27/20 Questions by Members

None were received.

C28/20 Appointment of Councillors to Working and Task Group Member Vacancies

Cllr Neale added his praise for the work of the Councillors and FTC Officers during the Coronavirus lockdown working alongside volunteers.

Cllr Neale reminded Council that the Working Groups and Task Group membership would largely retain the same membership as the previous year but there were some vacancies to fill.

The following appointments were made:

Cllr Earwaker joined the Community Enhancement Working Group.

Cllr Fraser joined the Cemeteries and Appeals Working Group.

Cllr Dickson confirmed she would step down from the Wellbeing Task Group.

C29/20 Tourism & Events Working Groups

Cllr Earwaker introduced the notes of the Tourism and Events Working Group held on 3rd June at appendix B and updated Council on actions since the last meeting. It was reported that due to the Government Coronavirus guidelines planned events could still not take place.

Cllr Earwaker reported on the success of the first Farmers' Market since the Coronavirus lockdown, held in May. He advised that the market was well organised by FTC officers and that social distancing guidelines were well observed by the public. The market was well attended and numbers of people in the market at any one time was carefully monitored.

Cllr Earwaker confirmed Farnham had been awarded World Craft City status by the World Crafts Council. He advised that FTC was working closely with The Maltings to finalise an application for the National Lottery Emerging Futures Fund to help fund promotional activities to heighten awareness of the World Craft City status but that the costs for the Craft month would be underwritten by the Town Council

Cllr Earwaker confirmed FTC was working collaboratively with the Farnham Chamber of Commerce to progress awareness of the benefits of forming a Business Improvement District (BID).

Cllr Ward congratulated FTC for the success of the Farmers Market and for Farnham being one of only thirty-six Craft Cities in the World.

The notes of the meeting were adopted.

C30/20 Community Enhancement Working Group

Cllr Dickson introduced the notes of the Community Enhancement Working Group held on 10th June at appendix C. Cllr Dickson congratulated the Business and Facilities Officer and the Outdoor Workforce for having planted over 36,000 plug plants and over 200 hanging baskets as many of the normal volunteers were having to self-isolate as a result of Coronavirus.

The Town Clerk updated Council on the location of proposed car charging points in Farnham and confirmed that FTC had sent the proposed locations to SCC for consideration.

The notes of the meeting were adopted.

C31/20 Cemeteries & Appeals Working Group

Cllr Cockburn introduced the notes of the Cemeteries and Appeals Working Group held on 11th June at Appendix D. Cllr Cockburn praised Officers and the Outdoor Workforce for the good service residents had received on cemetery issues.

Councillors had raised the ongoing issue of the Hale Chapels. Cllr Cockburn commented that FTC was determined to achieve closure on Hale Chapels. The Town Clerk advised that as the commissioned report author had presented only one option, officers would present a summary of the options considered for the Hale Chapels to enable a decision to be made.

The notes of the meeting were adopted.

C32/20 Strategy & Finance Working Group

Cllr Neale introduced the notes of the Strategy and Finance Working Group held on 16th June at Appendix E.

Cllr Neale presented the direct debit list that had been reviewed by members of the Working Group.

**It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:
The Direct Debit List at Annex I be agreed.**

C33/20 Grants Update

Cllr Neale reported that due to Coronavirus some of the Community Grant payments had been deferred due to the cancellation of events.

Council noted that a report on the activities of the recipients of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) grants confirmed that for five of the SLA recipients services were continuing, albeit different to normal due to Coronavirus. The Working Group was waiting for further information regarding the Waverley Hoppa services.

C34/20 Wrecclesham Community Centre

Council discussed the Working Group proposal that as Wrecclesham Community Centre had been closed due to Coronavirus the rent paid by the Wrecclesham Community Centre until September be waived.

**It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:
FTC waive the rent paid by Wrecclesham Community Centre until September 2020, amounting to £3,750.**

C35/20 Assets Task Group

Council received the report on assets and contracts considered by the Working Group noting the redecoration of the Council Chamber would start in July and finish during August; arrangements put in place for public safety as a result of coronavirus; and that the repairs to the cracked wall in the front of the Council office had been completed.

Council considered the extension to the electric supply in Gostrey Meadow as part of the planned environmental improvements to Gostrey Meadow to avoid the use of diesel generators during future FTC events.

**It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:
£15,000 be invested in the new and improved electric supply to Gostrey Meadow to be met from the Tourism and Events Budget.**

C36/20 Infrastructure issues

It was noted a date would be arranged for the Community Infrastructure Projects Task Group to meet ahead of comments on the Waverley Infrastructure Development Plan Review in September. Councillors were reminded of the need to submit project ideas to utilise CIL to support projects within their wards and across Farnham. It was noted that the Younger People Task Group was considering forwarding project proposals to increase provision for young people throughout Farnham.

Cllr Cockburn updated Councillors on the Farnham Design Statement advising that a Survey Monkey consultation had been sent to all the residents' associations to validate comments received to date and as a precursor to a more formal consultation which would be arranged for September.

C37/20 **Farnham Infrastructure Programme**

Cllr Neale provided an update on the work of the Farnham Infrastructure Programme and Farnham Programme Board. He advised that the inaugural Local Liaison Forum (LLF) event would be an open forum for all Farnham Councillors on 2nd July prior to a wider public forum. He advised that it had been agreed that there would be joint chairs, the Leader of Farnham Town Council and Cllr MacLeod and a vice-Chair Cllr Ramsdale.

Council discussed the formation of the LLF and the process for the appointment of the Joint Chairs and vice chair expressing frustration and reservations on the way in which the appointments were agreed. It was stated that decisions made by members of the LLF needed to be open and transparent and that the Farnham Programme Board needed to follow the Governance procedure for appointing the LLF chairs. Concern was raised that consultation on decisions with Farnham stakeholders would be made too late and that decisions would be too far progressed for Farnham's opinion to make a difference. Council was advised by the Leader that this would not be the case.

Councillors debated the benefits of the informal arrangement agreed, and after much discussion, the Town Clerk advised that FTC needed a formal recommendation to endorse the role of Joint Chairs for the LLF as the assumption otherwise was that the FTC representative would Chair the LLF. It was noted that FTC could not propose Cllr Macleod as Joint Chair as his was a WBC appointment.

Cllr Fraser proposed, seconded by Cllr Merryweather and **RESOLVED unanimously that FTC:**

- 1) **Endorses the concept of joint chairs from Farnham Town Council and Waverley Borough Council in view of the benefits accruing;**
- 2) **Confirms the leader of FTC as the Joint Chair from FTC.**

Cllr Cockburn commented that the key stakeholders needed to include all community and business groups within Farnham and to be an 'engage with' Farnham not a 'done for' Farnham.

Cllr Beaman commented that the meetings needed to be public and the Programme should start with a 'clean sheet of paper'.

C38/20 **Coronavirus Recovery Task Group**

Council considered the Government's pavement widening scheme and the swift implementation in Farnham and initial feedback on the impact of the scheme.

Cllr Neale reported on the implementation of a new CCTV system to be installed with funding from SCC to monitor the impact of the pavement widening scheme on traffic and pedestrians as well as replacing the obsolete cameras used for crime prevention.

Councillors discussed the relationship between FTC and SCC during the implementation of the scheme and noting changes that were made to the scheme following consultation with

FTC. Continued changes were being implemented which included the use of more planters to help soften the look of the streets.

The Recovery Task Group had worked swiftly and effectively to support the implementation of the scheme with Surrey supporting HGV advisory notices and a 20MPH zone and it was noted that the implementation of the scheme was covered by the Scheme of Delegation.

C39/20 Planning and Licensing Applications

Cllr Blishen introduced the notes of the Planning and Licensing Consultative Group meetings held on: 18th May, 1st June and 15th June 2020, appendices F, G and H to the agenda.

Cllr Cockburn commented the appeal against the land on Green Lane would need to be robust. It was noted that this appeal was on the next agenda for the Planning and Licensing Consultative Group.

The Notes were agreed.

C40/20 Actions taken under the Scheme of Delegation

No additional items to advise other than those already reported.

C41/20 Reports from Other Councils

- i) Cllr MacLeod informed Councillors of the sad news of the sudden passing of David Hill CBE, the SCC Executive Director for Children's Services.
- ii) Cllr MacLeod advised that SCC had announced the new £100m Communities Projects Fund which would be funding capital projects over the next 5 year. Details on the fund application process would be announced in the autumn.
- iii) Cllr MacLeod informed Councillors that he would be chairing a new task group to look at the tendering process for the Surrey waste contract as the Suez contract would expire in 2024.
- iv) Cllr Dickson reported on recent Western Planning at WBC and noted that all Councillors had voted against the Berkeley Group change to planning on the Woolmead development.
- v) Cllr Ward commented that WBC was in the process finalising an emergency budget for the current year due to the impact of Coronavirus on the Council's income and expenditure. The Government had allocated grants to councils but the amount allocated for Waverley was less than 20% of the additional spend.

C42/20 Reports from Outside Bodies

- i) Cllr Blishen congratulated Brightwells Gostrey on the delivery of double the usual amount of community meals during the Coronavirus lockdown.
- ii) The Mayor reported on her attendance at the management meetings at The Farnham Maltings and the Hale Community Centre.

- iii) Cllr Attfield commented on the passing of Marion Stockley, a previous recipient of the Services to Farnham Award, and key member of the Farnham Sports Council for many years.

C43/20 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 30th July.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 9.10 pm

Chairman

Date