



# FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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## Minutes Council

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### **Time and date**

7.00 pm on Thursday 14th September, 2023

### **Place**

Council Chamber - Farnham Town Hall

### **Councillors**

Councillor Alan Earwaker (Mayor)  
Councillor David Beaman  
Councillor Mat Brown  
Councillor Sally Dickson  
Councillor Tony Fairclough  
Councillor Chris Jackman  
Councillor Andrew Laughton  
Councillor Michaela Martin  
Councillor Brodie Mauluka  
Councillor Mark Merryweather  
Councillor George Murray  
Councillor John Ward  
Councillor Tim Woodhouse

### **Apologies for absence**

George Hesse, Kika Mirylees and Graham White

### **Officers Present:**

Iain Lynch (Town Clerk), Jenny de Quervain (Planning & Civic Officer)

There were 5 members of the public and 1 member of the press in attendance.

Prior to the meeting, prayers were led by the Revd David Uffindell Rector of Farnham..

### **C51/23 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Hesse, Mirylees and White.

### **C52/23 Disclosures of Interest**

There were no disclosures of interest.

C53/23 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> August were agreed with the addition of Cllr Dickson in attendance, observing the meeting remotely via Zoom.

C54/23 **Questions and Statements by the Public**

There were no questions or statements from the public.

C55/23 **Town Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor said he was delighted to announce that the transformation of the Hale Chapels into the Hale Chapels Garden had won a coveted British Association of Landscape Industries Award. He was very pleased to see that this is one of two awards that Landform Consultants had won this year, the second being the SuperBloom project at the Tower of London. The Mayor advised that the Garden had also been entered the Garden in the Civic Trust awards, and the scheme was being assessed in early October.

The Mayor reported on the special reception held to thank Alberto Ceccatelli, who had brought a special exhibition from Italy about Pauline Baynes, well known for her illustrations on Lord of the Rings, Narnia and Watership Down as well as around 200 other publications. He also referenced other talks and events being held for this year's Heritage Open Days programme in Farnham.

The Mayor advised Council that October would have a World Craft Town focus and would include a special delegation from Kilkenny, one of Farnham's World Craft Town partners.

C56/23 **Questions by Members**

There were no questions from members.

C57/23 **Working Group Notes**

Cllr Beaman introduced the Notes of the Strategy & Resources Working Group meeting attached at Appendix B.

- i) The Working Group had reviewed the month end finance reports, noting variations in income for ticket sales because of the relocated Gin & Fizz Festival but that overall there were no matters of real concern.

Council noted a request from the Boom Credit Union (which specifically covers Surrey and Farnham) for an investment by the Town Council to sustain its lending of small loans locally to those in hardship. Statistics on those being assisted in Farnham prior to a decision being made were awaited, and the Chairman and Chief Executive of Boom had been invited to present its new No Interest Loans Scheme to a wider meeting of Town and Parish Councils in Waverley which would be hosted by FTC prior to a decision being made.

Some additional grant applications had been considered and:

**It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:**

- 1) **A new radar gun be purchased for Community speedwatch at a cost of £516.50;**
- 2) **A contribution of £450 be made to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Farnham Sports Council;**

**3) Grants applications for both the Community Grants and the South Street Trust for 2024-2025 be open from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 4<sup>th</sup> December.**

- ii) Matters arising from the Assets Task Group had been considered in detail and several items were recommended to Council for approval. Council noted that the pre-application advice from Waverley for Gostrey Meadow was awaited; that the lift refurbishment and audio improvements in the town Hall had been completed with the updated entry control system awaited; that there continued to be problems in resolving the faulty CNG equipment at the depot that changes to the external CCTV were being made in Central Car Park (covering the public conveniences) and Longbridge (covering the Hands Turn sculpture) at a combined cost of £1,900 which would be met from the CCTV budget and noted the plans for Christmas Lights for 2023 and the intention to only replace those where the LEDs had failed pending discussion on a new scheme for 2024 (which would be subject to a further report prior to tendering).

The Working Group recommended to Council received an update on the Goupil electric vehicle that had been out of action because of difficulty obtaining a part and it could not pass its MOT because the main battery appeared to have failed. One option was to purchase a second hand Goupil for around £12,000 (plus any import costs as most are available in France, Holland and Germany) with the old one retained for spares or sold.

The Working Group noted that the energy audit survey of the Council offices and depot by Hazel Hill, was awaited, and there a bid to be part of the reverse auction for solar panels led by Surrey County Council and Solar Together. It was also noted that there may be synergy with Waverley's installation of panels on Wey Court House.

The Working Group recommended that works to resolve squirrel damage to the CCTV at Wrecclesham Community Centre be implemented and also that the long awaited new fence be progressed.

**It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:**

- 1) A new Paxton Access Control system for the Town Hall be installed by Shield Integrated Solutions at a cost of £5,698;**
- 2) A second hand Goupil be purchased via Bradshaws with a budget allocation of up to £20,000 earmarked;**
- 3) An initial Solar Panel pilot scheme with battery storage for the depot be pursued at an indicative cost of £11,000 to be met from the Environmental Initiatives budget;**
- 4) The front fence at Wrecclesham Community Centre be replaced by Jackson's fencing at an estimated cost of £3,600; and that Shield Integrated Solutions install a replacement wireless alarm system with the costs met from the Wrecclesham Community Centre budget.**

- iii) Council discussed the proposed Strategy Workshops scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> October and 4<sup>th</sup> November, which was to review first impressions of councillors on the work of the council, including the Council's Vision and consider any areas which may need a change of focus for the coming year and the life of this Council. Councillors felt a single day with a facilitator would be better than two half days, and on a recommendation from Cllr Beaman, seconded by Cllr Jackman

**It was RESOLVED by 10 votes to 2 with one abstention to change the**

### **Strategy workshop to a single day on 4<sup>th</sup> November.**

Cllr Dickson left at this point.

- iv) Council welcomed the Farnham Business Improvement District (BID) Draft Business Plan noting that the promotion of Farnham and businesses within the BID area along with proposals to improve access and safety and reduce crime would be key to the continued success of Farnham businesses. Farnham Town Council had supported the development of the BID by allocating resource for a co-ordinator to work alongside the business-led board, and the team was thanked for the work done to get to the vote stage.  
**It was RESOLVED unanimously that Farnham Town Council as a business ratepayer within the BID designated area, vote 'Yes' in the forthcoming ballot.**
  
- v) Cllr Beaman provided an update on the FIP projects underway, including the 20MPH scheme implementation and on Surrey's request for an indication of support for a CIL contribution from the neighbourhood CIL despite no details of the request being received. The Working Group recommended in kind and a financial contribution. It was noted that Surrey, as a signatory to the Farnham Conservation Area Management Plan should be using materials consistent with what had been agreed for the Conservation Area.  
**It was RESOLVED *nem con* that Farnham Town Council:**
  - 1) **welcomes the investment in Farnham through the Farnham Infrastructure Programme; and**
  - 2) **would be pleased to support the town centre project through in-kind support and a financial contribution which would be considered further when the expected application for CIL funding was received.**
  
- vi) Council discussed the timescale for the review of the Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that the NPPF consultation outcomes were still awaited which would have a bearing on the Farnham Review. It was also noted that the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan would be impacted on the uplift in housing numbers and these were still awaited from Waverley. Council expressed a desire to get moving on the Neighbourhood Plan Review as soon as possible and that a meeting with community groups should be scheduled. It was agreed this would take place after the Strategy Workshop in the second half of November.  
On a motion by Councillor Ward, seconded by Cllr Merryweather **it was RESOLVED *nem con* that Farnham Town Council makes a start on an update of the Neighbourhood Plan and organise a meeting with local community groups to get their input on what needs changing.**
  
- vii) Council noted that Cllr White, Cllr Jackman and Norma Corkish had met to consider how to build on the work for young people to date and would be looking to involve young people. The next meeting of the Task Group would consider matters further.
  
- viii) Council had been advised by Waverley Borough Council that an Independent Remuneration Panel was to meet in the autumn to review Members' allowances. The Working Group had recommended that FTC should await the outcomes of the Independent Review before considering the matter further, but it was important that no-one was prevented from standing as a councillor because they could not afford the costs associated with the role.

**It was RESOLVED *nem con* that FTC supported a review being undertaken, but was not obliged to adopt it.**

- ix) Council received an update (and exempt report at Exempt Appendix I) on the Waverley Lane Judicial Challenge and further details were awaited from the Council's solicitor after Wates and the Secretary of State had objected to the timing of the delivery of the documents to them. Following discussion of the matter in Exempt session, it was agreed that the Town Clerk and local ward members would brief the South Farnham Residents' association on the latest position.

**C58/23 Planning and Licensing Applications**

Cllr Laughton provided an overview of issues that had arisen in the two meetings of the Planning & Licensing Consultative Group which had been held on 21<sup>st</sup> August and 4<sup>th</sup> September and were listed at Appendices C & D.

**C59/23 Actions taken under the Scheme of Delegation**

There were no actions to report under the Scheme of Delegation that had not already been reported.

**C60/23 Reports from Other Councils**

Council welcomed the launch of the Surrey Connect minibus service for Farnham run by Hoppa funded by the Department for Transport.

**C61/23 Reports from Outside Bodies**

Council noted that the Farnborough Airport airspace change consultation event was being held at the Farnham maltings on 21<sup>st</sup> September and that a report would go to the next Strategy & Resources Working Group.

**C62/23 Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was agreed as 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

**C63/23 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

On a recommendation of the Mayor, **it was RESOLVED *nem con* to exclude the press and public in view of the discussion on the legal challenge to the Waverley Lane Appeal Inspector's decision.**

**C64/23 Any confidential matters (if required) arising from discussions of the Working Group notes.**

Council discussed the latest position on the Judicial Challenge to the Waverley Lane Appeal and noted the significant efforts undertaken by staff and the Council's barrister to complete and deliver the documentation to Court by the due date, despite the very tight timescale.

The court's decision on whether or not the challenge would be given Leave to Appeal was awaited.

Council discussed various scenarios for the next steps dependant on the decision of the court and agreed to provide a confidential interim update to the South Farnham Residents Association who had been assisting in the challenge.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 9.10 pm

Chairman

Date