



# FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

# A

## Minutes Council

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### **Time and date**

6.00 pm on Thursday 18th July, 2024

### **Place**

Council Chamber - Farnham Town Hall

### **Councillors**

Councillor Alan Earwaker  
Councillor David Beaman  
Councillor Mat Brown  
Councillor Tony Fairclough  
Councillor George Hesse  
Councillor Chris Jackman  
Councillor Andrew Laughton  
Councillor Brodie Mauluka (Mayor)  
Councillor George Murray (Deputy Mayor)  
Councillor Graham White  
Councillor Tim Woodhouse

### **Apologies for absence**

Sally Dickson, Michaela Martin, Mark Merryweather, Kika Mirylees and John Ward

### **Officers Present:**

Iain Lynch, Town Clerk, Iain McCready (Business and Facilities Manager)

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

Prior to the meeting, prayers were led by Revd Jacquelin Drake-Smith of St Peter's Wrecclesham.

### **C28/24 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Dickson, Martin, Merryweather, Mirylees and Ward.

### **C29/24 Disclosures of Interest**

### **C30/24 Minutes**

The minutes of the Meeting held on June 13<sup>th</sup> were agreed as a correct record.

## C31/24 **Questions and Statements by the Public**

Mr Chris Butler raised a question about speeding traffic and noise in Castle Street and Castle Hill. It was clearly well above the legal limit with motorcycles speeding past cars and also making excessive noise despite the speed limit being 20MPH. he had spoken with the Polic & Crime Commissioner and the Borough Commander but they said there was nothing they could do. Whilst he knew this was not a FTC responsibility he wondered if pressure could be put on relevant authorities to install speed and noise monitors.

In response, Cllr White thanked Mr Butler for bringing the question and said he hoped the Farnham Infrastructure Programme proposals would assist in resolving some of the issues. However, he would have the matter raised at the next meeting of the Strategy & Resources Working Group to discuss what measures the Town Council could take.

Local resident Maxine Anderson drew attention to the phased reduction of speed limits in Guildford leading up to a speed camera and wondered if something similar could be introduced in Farnham to assist with problem.

## C32/24 **Town Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor said it was a great honour to welcome some special friends to Council - the Bürgermeister of Andernach, Claus Peitz, and the director of the Andernach City Orchestra, Betram Kleist who were visiting Farnham as part of an exchange with organised by the Farnham Andernach Friendship Association. All councillors, were welcome to join the group for a formal welcome in Victoria Garden on Friday 19th.

The Mayor had had a busy time since the last Council meeting including visiting the Kids Out event organised by the Rotary Club; presenting community grants to community organisations; welcoming visitors to the third UK Repair Café Conference at the UCA; attending the Farnham carnival, the handover lunch for the new Farnham Lions' President, the year six production of Aladdin at Potters Gate school; and Founders Day at More House School.

The Mayor had supported the Lord Lieutenant's reception for groups nominated to receive a King's Award for Voluntary service which this year included the farnham Repair Café and Tice's Meadow Bird Group. He wished them success.

During Armed Forces week, the Mayor had been joined by Brigadier Paul Evans OBE to raise the Armed Forces Week flag, and had hosted the family of former Farnham Mayor Brigadier Paddy Blagden CBE, for the unveiling of his name on the Notable Names of Farnham Wall. He had been recognised for his international work on de-mining.

The Mayor said he had a enjoyed a special opportunity to see the Heathland Artworks at the RSPB site (behind the Museum of Rural Life) and he encouraged everyone to visit the trail.

The Mayor, with Cllr Brown, had met with the judge for South and South East in Bloom and would be welcoming the judges of Britain in Bloom at then end of July.

The Mayor said he had been humbled to meet Martin and Tara Cosser who run Charlie's Promise, one of his Mayoral charities, and he looked forward to supporting them and their important work in helping young people understand the dangers of knife crime during the rest of his Mayoral year.

Finally, the Mayor advised that the 2024 Civic Service would take place in St Andrew's Church on September 15<sup>th</sup>.

## C33/24 **Questions by Members**

There were no questions by members.

## C34/24 **Working Group Notes**

### I. Strategy & Resources

Cllr White presented the Notes of the Strategy & Resources Working Group meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at Appendix B to the Council agenda.

Council noted that the quarterly finance report was as expected with income at 50.8% and expenditure at the expected level for the first three months. It was noted the External auditor had commented on the additional day allocated for the public inspection of the accounts. Cllr White advised that an additional application from the Museum of Rural Life for summer activities had been found in the junk mailbox and a grant of £1,500 had been allocated.

#### a) Task Groups

##### i) Younger People Panel

Cllr White reported that the Younger People Panel had considered in detail two proposals for the Younger People research one which was more traditional quantitative research whilst the other had an added dimension of training young people to survey other young people.

#### **It was Resolved *nem con* that**

- 1) Westco Communications be commissioned to undertake its proposal at a cost of £11,850 to inform the 2025-26 budget;**
- 2) Participation People be commissioned to work with younger people on the basis of their proposal during the forthcoming academic year at a cost of £10,710;**
- 3) an additional allocation may be required to achieve the optimum outcomes from each proposal and that subject to a review of the outcomes, budget provision for further research may be beneficial for 2025-2026.**

ii) Neighbourhood Plan Task Group. Council noted that the timeline for the Neighbourhood Plan had been agreed by the Working Group to operate to the end of 2026 to be in general conformity with the emerging Local Plan update. The Government's King's Speech had included a large amount on planning with the National Planning Policy Framework to be changed with a consultation expected by the end of July. This meant timescales and other matters for Neighbourhood Plans and Local Plans were very uncertain. There was a Waverley councillor briefing being held on 30<sup>th</sup> July which may have further information. The Community briefing (rescheduled because of the General Election) would now take place on 11<sup>th</sup> September.

b) Cllr White reported that the Statutory Challenge on the Waverley Lane had taken place on 16/17 July. The Council's barrister had done a fantastic job on what was a very technical exercise. The merits of the case rested on paragraph 10c of the Neighbourhood Plan and the outcome depended on which way the Judge viewed it. The result was expected at the end of the summer. The case had demonstrated that the Neighbourhood Plan was very important and the Council was keen to have the community involved. Cllr Jackman said he was more assured that the Council had done the right thing and residents were very positive about the Town Council response to the offer of money to the Bourne Club if the Council withdrew its legal challenge.

- c) Cllr Murray reported on the Business Improvement District Board meeting. The Council loan of £30,000 had been received and was due back in November when the levy payments had been received. The Board was looking at Christmas lights contributions and setting up rangers/ambassadors to assist with a welcome to the town and help address issues of anti-social behaviour and shoplifting. Council discussed the role of these ambassadors (paid or voluntary) and noted there was a fine line between what these did and the roles of other agencies such as the police. Council noted all BID income was spent by the business-led board on business matters in Farnham.
- d) Council noted that a Website brief was being prepared based on issues identified by councillors and the surveys of staff and the public, and that another meeting of the Task Group would be held in August.
- e) Council noted that a pre-specification meeting had been held to help develop the Christmas Lights tender specification which would include options for lease or purchase. Some elements would be sought for 2024 with the new scheme in 2025. A meeting of the Task Group would be scheduled.
- f) Cllr White reported that the Gostrey Meadow Toilets, Storage and Playground Project architects drawings had been developed in accordance with the Council decision. However, there were some issues for further discussion and a meeting involving Cllrs White, Hesse and Murray and to which all councillors were invited would be held and reported back to full Council for approval. Council heard that a consultation on the playground element would be held in parallel with the submission of a planning application.
- g) Cllr Beaman introduced the report on the Farnham Infrastructure Programme. He advised that ostensibly Farnham Town Council was an equal partner in the Farnham Board, but FTC views were not being seen as important as they should be. Whilst the aim of FIP was for the good of the town he was not sure the town was ready and implementation would be difficult over an 18 month period, with significant disruption, that he felt residents and businesses do not appear to have appreciated. Cllr Beaman believed the role of the FIB Board should be changed for the implementation phase and involve businesses and residents.

Cllr Fairclough, as the Waverley representative on the Board, felt the Board was not perfect but a revised Board would face the same challenges. The Board gave Farnham councillors a voice which in turn gave residents a voice. He said the FIP must recognise the importance of Farnham business and he had been impressed by a meeting with residents and businesses instigated by the Surrey county councillors. He disagreed with the idea to disband or rebrand the board and suggested the principal objective was to improve communication with residents and businesses and to make it clear Farnham remained open for business.

In discussion other councillors agreed that communications with FTC, WBC and SCC working together was going to be very important with a single point of information such as the SCC website. It was clear that SCC would own the process and timelines, but FTC would also need to inform residents to help them understand things such as deliveries. It was suggested there needed to be a Communications Working Group which included representatives of all councillors, the BID and local businesses to begin sharing messages and promoting general awareness that the FIP was coming in 2025.

In conclusion Cllr Beaman said the FIP was good for the town.

- h) Cllr White advised that the agents acting for the owner of Dyas Yard (between Central Car Park and Downing Street) had been in discussion with the Town Council about potential options to transfer the land which could be beneficial. **It was RESOLVED *nem con* that Officers discuss potential options with Waverley Borough Council, Surrey County Council and agents for Dyas Yard to improve access to Downing Street.**

## 2. Community & Culture Working Group

Cllr Earwaker presented the Notes of the Community & Culture Working Group held on 10<sup>th</sup> July, attached at Appendix C to the Council Agenda. Council noted recent events and plans for future events and projects include World Craft Town and the suggestion to discuss with Waverley options to utilise unused building and make craft more visible with a hub, potentially in Waggon Yard. Council also noted the need for updated signage at entrances to Farnham.

Cllr Earwaker drew attention to the sponsorship position which was positive against the budget and thanked sponsors for their ongoing support.

On a proposal to host craft in the Tindle Suite, **it was RESOLVED *nem con* to purchase a display cabinet to show the artwork created by Fiona Byrne as part of the World Craft Town Residency.**

## 3. Environment Working Group

Cllr Brown provided an update on the work of the Environment Working Group advising that judging for South and South East in Bloom had taken place and the RHS Britain in Bloom judging would take place at the end of the month. He also announced that Green Flags had been awarded to West Street, Badshot Lea and Hale Cemeteries, and for Gostrey Meadow. He said the next Working group meeting would take place on 10<sup>th</sup> August.

Cllr Jackman encouraged everyone to attend the Tice's Meadow Bioblitz that was happening on 20 July.

## C35/24 **Planning and Licensing Applications**

Cllr Laughton presented the minutes of the Planning & Licensing Consultative Group meetings held on 17<sup>th</sup> June and 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> July at Appendices D, E and F to the agenda. He wanted to draw attention to four particular issues:

1. Land at Bourne Wood. There had been two separate applications to vary conditions allowed for overnight filming to 2.30am. The Consultative Group noted strong demand to film in the Bourne Woods which brings significant local income to the Forestry Commission and indirect benefit to the local economy but was primarily protect local residents as well as wildlife from unnecessary filming noise and light pollution. FTC is seeking further clarification as to why night filming cannot be accommodated within the agreed conditions to 11pm.
2. West Street developments. The Consultative Group was keen to protect local residents from overdevelopment within the town centre areas, whether from new dwellings (17 West Street) or from odour and noise control from proposed exhaust flues for new food & beverage outlets (14-15 West Street).
3. The Luxe (Lion & Lamb Yard) licensing. At the recent licensing hearing It was suggested that the application to extend trading hours until 01.30am was premature and time

should be allowed to demonstrate that negative impacts (noise and cooking smells) on neighbours had been addressed. It was noted The Luxe could appeal this decision.

4. Castle Street licensing issues. As The Farnham Infrastructure Project starts major street works a key change will be the widening of many pavements including in Castle Street. The Consultative Group is encouraging a 'pavement cafe culture' whereby outlets can increase tables and chairs on the pavements but is mindful to ensure there remains adequate walkways.

Cllr Laughton confirmed that Cllr Fairclough had stepped down from being a member of the Planning & Licensing Consultative Group.

**C36/24 Actions taken under the Scheme of Delegation**

The Town Clerk reported that a King's Counsel, Mr David Blundell, had been appointed under the scheme of delegation to represent the Council at the Waverley Lane Statutory Challenge. The appointment, authorised in conjunction with the Mayor and Leader, had been based on a reduced fee if the Council were not successful.

**C37/24 Reports from Other Councils**

- 1) Cllr Beaman announced that Waverley Hoppa had lost the Farnham Connects contract which had been awarded to a Woking-based organisation.
- 2) Cllr Fairclough announced that there had been a complete change of senior managers at Waverley Borough Council over the past twelve months. There was a new Chief Executive, a new Section 151 Officer and a new Monitoring Officer. He was involved in the recruitment of two new Strategic Directors and was impressed by the extraordinarily high quality of the candidates. He was confident Waverley was well-placed to face the challenges ahead.

**C38/24 Reports from Outside Bodies**

There were no reports from council representatives on outside bodies.

**C39/24 Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 6pm.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 8.03 pm

Chairman

Date