



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

B

Notes Community & Wellbeing

Time and date

4.00 pm on Wednesday 4th September, 2025

Place

Council Chamber - Farnham Town Hall

Community & Wellbeing Members Present:

Councillor Matthew Brown
Councillor Alan Earwaker (Lead Member)
Councillor Chris Jackman
Councillor Andrew Laughton
Councillor Graham White

Officers:

Iain Lynch (Town Clerk)
Mo Ashdown (Community & Wellbeing Officer)

Prior to the formal start of the meeting, The Working Group listened to a presentation by Roz Aberly and Debbie Warner from Smartphone Free Childhood (SFC). They wished to raise awareness of this national collective action grassroots movement whose mission is "Let's reclaim childhood".

The Working Group was supportive of SFC's aims and considered ways in which The Council could support them to further raise awareness of their "Parent Pact" across Farnham. The Parent Pact is an online tool that helps parents agree to delay the age at which children receive a smartphone to 14.

Suggestions of support that could be offered included was to use Farnham Town Council's communication channels including notice boards and website. It was also suggested that they return to ask a question, based on a much-distilled summary of the campaign, at the next full Council meeting where the press was in attendance, seeking the Council's support.

The use of the FTC gazebo that is present at FTC events to promote community groups was also discussed as well as opportunities to run the charity tea tent at Music in the Meadow.

I. Apologies

Councillor Tim Woodhouse.

2. Declarations of interest

None

3. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the Community and Wellbeing Working Group were agreed. It was observed that the wider remit of the group to include health and community engagement will become more important in the move to Unitary Authorities and the development of Neighbourhood Action Groups.

4. Community Grants

4.1 The Town Clerk gave an overview of the different levels of grants set out in the agenda and also the Small Grants Fund.

As the detailed information on allocations to date was not available at the meeting it was agreed that a fuller financial report would be circulated, before the next full Council Meeting (Attached as Annex 1).

It was noted that the call on the Farnham Support Fund had been quiet with fewer requests for school uniform as previous years.

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| Spending from Farnham Support fund | £3,802.35 |
| (less donations recieved for specific applicants) | £1,108.99 |
| Total spent by FTC | £2,693.36 |
| | |
| FTC spending to help people | £2,693.36 |
| Charities donations to FTC for specific applicants | £1,108.99 |
| Charities spending direct | 1839.48 |
| Total spending to help people | <u>£5,641.83</u> |

It was noted that there was to be a Cost of Living Summit on 2nd October for professionals and organisations supporting the Farnham population. The event aims to bring local partners together to share information, strengthen collaboration, and raise awareness of the services available to help residents navigate the ongoing cost-of-living challenges.

The challenges faced by other community groups in continuing with support they offer was discussed. For example, St Thomas on the Bourne were finding it increasingly difficult to continue providing lunches for children during the summer holiday due to the increase costs of food.

4.2 The timetable for grant applications in 2026/27 was noted:

Community Grants:

Application window 01/09/20 – 17/11/25

Applications considered at Strategy and Resource Working Group – 19/01/25

Decisions made at Full Council – 29/01/25

Applicants will be notified by email of any funding decisions in February.

Payments are made in May.

South St Trust:

Application window 01/09/20 – 17/11/25

Decisions made and applicants notified– Feb/March

Payments are made in May.

5. Considering the Work Programme of the Working Group

5.1 Young People and youth Engagement. The Working Group received reports from Youth Support District Representatives (SLA Funding) Hale Community Centre, 40 Degreez and the Jubilee Hub.

Hale Community and Youth Centre (£15K)

The Working Group noted that the Hale Community & Youth Centre were grateful to Farnham Town Council for ongoing support. The Centre is a standalone charity with no statutory funding; income comes from room hire, gifts, and grants.

Services are delivered free of charge to Sandy Hill, Hale, and Folly Hill and include: Community Fridge and Cupboard; Community Wednesdays (including Seniors Group) ; Pop-In Café and Craft Group Warm Hub on Tuesdays and Fridays; Cooking, crafts, kids' activities, physical sessions, book club, and a family trip to Marwell Zoo

The Youth Centre had a successful summer programme (bushcraft, swimming, high ropes, London trip) funded by FTC, KFC, and Surrey Community Foundation. A new youth partnership with Farnham Heath End School was in development. A craft day showcased young entrepreneurs selling their creations.

Funding challenges continue: A fundraising event will be held on 26th September with live music, food, and drinks and a "100 Plus Club" will be set up to raise ongoing funds.

40 Degreez (£30K)

The Working Group noted 2024/2025 was a successful financial year but the Alternative Curriculum team who were using the first floor of the building have ended their lease leaving a considerable gap in funding. 40 Degreez were hopeful that a donor would be found and that WBC and FTC would maintain their support. The Chair and CFO are staying on in their roles and three new trustees have been elected.

Jubilee Hub (15K)

The Jubilee Hub had been very active in progressing a substantial package of work during the past (24/25) and current (25/26) SLA period. Significant preparatory work was carried out including developing the strategic plan, networking, setting up and holding meetings, producing promotional materials, running a pilot café, running an information evening drawing key professionals together, weekly visits to Weydon School, outreach to parents, a holiday event, growing the youth club, and The Den Club nights.

Immediate work targets include engagement with the new Headteacher at Weydon School and further interaction and support from a new franchise initiative accessing professional Councillors, Speech Therapists and Occupational Therapists etc.

The February 25 Jubilee Hub Report to FTC outlined the activities accomplished and their ongoing programme. A copy of this report would be provided for circulation to councillors. The Working Group discussed additional funding for the Jubilee hub recognizing that the initial year's activity had started part way through the first year but this had been backed by preparatory work which merited an additional contribution from the funds that had not been allocated.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Jubilee Hub should receive £4,875 (out of the remaining £7,500) for the additional work they were undertaking in 2025/26. The residual amount of £2,625 will remain in the budget to be reallocated.

Participation People Support Programme Administration and Research

Members noted it had not been possible to organize the planned in-person meeting with Participation People over the summer period. It was felt to be important that Councillors to discuss this matter and take time out to understand in more detail the methods adopted and outcomes achieved. It was noted this discussion had been scheduled for Wednesday 24th September at 1.30pm. It was proposed that this meeting be extended to review the PP response and discuss the next steps for the Working Group's research program to include collaboration with other Youth Support providers and NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) organisations.

5.2 – Support for Older People

The Working Group noted that Brightwell's Gostrey had relocated to Brambleton Hall. A report would be given at the next meeting once they had settled into the new accommodation. It was suggested that Jessica Wells from Brightwells Gostrey be invited to the next meeting to give an update of their work and to what extent they need the Council's continued support. They are at Brambleton Hall four days a week and at Falkner Court one day a week.

Other groups discussed were Farnham Assist (known to the WG through them being a charity supported during a previous mayoralty) and Age UK. Its work in Farnham would be further investigated, and its services in Farnham would be signposted from the FTC website.

5.3 Community Safety

Two new high resolution CCTV cameras had been installed in Gostrey Meadow and provide a clear picture of the entrance to the park, the new Amenity Building site. One is a 'hunt' camera that moves every 15 seconds and offers a degree of visual deterrent because of the movement. The new cameras were funded by Section 106 funding from Brightwells Yard development

New lighting was proposed for Borelli Walk – similar to that provided by Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Partnership (LCWIP) in the Riverside walk. This would be part of the FIP works in November. CCTV has been commissioned for the Youth Shelter.

Councillor White left the meeting (17:55).

The state of Brightwells Bridge was discussed. It remained closed as it had not yet been adopted (additional guard rails may be required). Members noted it was covered in graffiti which would need careful treatment because of the risk of chemical contamination of the river and aquatic life.

5.4 Community Engagement.

It was agreed to support local campaigns for residents that will improve wellbeing, such as Smartphone Free Childhood and other ways of changing behaviours that will come to the fore as time goes on.

6 Changes in Health

The Working Group noted a briefing from Interim Chief Executive of the Frimley ICB regarding the proposed changes to the ICB and NHS had been organised for Wednesday 17th September.

Councillors would get a good update of the changes to the NHS affecting Farnham noting that it was proposed that Farnham would move to Surrey Heartlands. It is unclear whether Farnham people will continue to be directed to Frimley Park (or its replacement) or the Royal Surrey.

It was noted that health representatives would be part of the Neighbourhood Area Committees and fit well with the remit of the Community & Wellbeing Working group. **It was agreed it would be appropriate to recommend that the lead member of the Working group to be one of the Council's representatives on the Neighbourhood Area Committee.**

7 **Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Thursday 20th November at 4pm.

