



# FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

# B

## Notes

### Strategy & Finance Working Group

---

#### Time and date

9.30 am on Tuesday 3rd March, 2020

#### Place

Town Clerk's Office - Town Offices

#### Attendees:

Members: Councillors John Neale (Lead Member), David Beaman, Roger Blishen, Carole Cockburn, Brian Edmonds, Mark Merryweather and Pat Evans (ex-Officio)

Officers: Iain McCready (Business and Facilities Manager), Iain Lynch (Town Clerk) and Sara Jones (Assistant Town Clerk)

#### 1. Apologies

POINTS	ACTION
Apologies were received from Cllr Attfield and Cllr Earwaker.	

#### 2. Declarations of interest

POINTS	ACTION
Town Clerk registered a pecuniary interest at agenda item 8 as a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.	

#### 3. Minutes of the last meeting

POINTS	ACTION
The notes of the previous meeting were agreed.	

#### 4. Finance report

POINTS	ACTION
Members reviewed this month's financial report.  Noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Total annual expenditure will be less than originally budgeted.</li></ul>	Action: Business and Facilities Manager to speak to the contractor regarding the cleaning of the Central Car park

<p>Reasons include staff changes and recruitment timings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moneys allocated to spend on the refurbishment of the toilets in Gostrey Meadow had been held back due to the ongoing discussions with the potential change of location of the toilets post transfer of management of Gostrey Meadow to FTC.</li> <li>• Income for the year is better than expected due to additional income from The Arts Council's grant of £50,000, the first payment of CIL and an additional Section 106 payment. Unspent payments would need to be carried forward as earmarked reserves.</li> </ul> <p>Members discussed the refurbishment of the Central Carpark toilets.</p> <p>Town Clerk advised there was a condition survey for the central carpark toilets and for members to decide how extensive the refurbishment should be, noting last year FTC invested money to replace the pipe work to resolve blockages.</p> <p>In summary there was likely be an underspend of approximately £80,000 at the end of this financial year. The Town Clerk proposed using the in-year surplus to now repay the public works loan which would be approximately £25,000. This would allow scope to take a new public works loan (if required) that could be used to fund works for the buildings and parks transferred from WBC.</p> <p><b>Report from the internal auditor.</b></p> <p>Members were reminded the current internal auditor would be retiring at the end of this financial year. The interim report from the last visit on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2020 was reviewed and discussed.</p> <p>Key points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in process for recording 'nothing found' for insurance purposes on allotment inspections was recommended and had been implemented.</li> <li>• ROSPA training will be needed for some staff for playground safety for Gostrey Meadow.</li> <li>• The Government changes on IR35 for contractors and sub-contractors may necessitate FTC ensuring an indemnity is in place for contractors confirming both the contractor and any sub-contractors are paying the correct national insurance contributions.</li> <li>• Auditor needs to correct the date of the allotment increases to January 2021.</li> <li>• Agreed changes to historic staff contracts for clarity on pay progression had been implemented.</li> <li>• Website Accessibility requirements: It was noted Julie Jackson was reviewing the new accessibility standards with the FTC website developer.</li> </ul>	<p>toilets.</p> <p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b>  <b>That FTC repay the outstanding Public Works loan of approximately £25,000 from 2010/20 funds.</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b>  <b>To note the interim report received from the internal auditor.</b></p> <p>Action:  Officers to review whether Charitable Incorporated Organisation CIO status for Farnham South Street Trust FSST was beneficial.</p>
--	---

## 5. Reports from Task Groups

POINTS	ACTION
<p><b>Infrastructure Planning Group</b>            The Town Clerk provided an update on the recent IPG meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February.            At this meeting Peter Goodman from Farnham Cycle Campaign presented their cycling vision for Farnham.            It was noted that the possible creation of new cycle paths could be a potential project to be funded by CIL. Councillors noted the pathways should be multi use pathways not just for cyclists. Cllr Merryweather noted there was still no further information available regarding the unspent SCC Section 106 money that has been allotted to cycle paths.</p> <p>Cllr Cockburn updated Councillors on the importance of talking to electors regarding the Neighbourhood Plan with emphasis on The Neighbourhood Plan having already prevented 800 homes in Farnham from being built in the wrong place.</p> <p>Further discussion of infrastructure issues was agreed would take place at the informal Council meeting on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p>Crest Nicholson had been invited to the next IPG meeting to discuss the road closures and the Royal Deer junction.</p> <p>Cllr Neale provided an update the creation of the Farnham Project Board by SCC which was still under construction but should give FTC a more direct approach to discuss Farnham matters with SCC. Representation of Farnham at this board was to be finalised. It was queried if there were any Terms of Reference for the Board.</p> <p><b>Community Infrastructure Projects</b>            Cllr Merryweather introduced the notes from the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> February.            Councillors were reminded to submit projects from their Ward to the Assistant Town Clerk.            Community projects would not be considered before 2021 and the process for applications was being developed.            Cllr Merryweather noted WBC would progress CIL for projects that were within WBC control and would not take an active role in CIL bids that were outside their control.            The Town Clerk suggested that with the imminent transfer of public assets from WBC to FTC, initial CIL funding could be prioritised for these projects above others.</p> <p><b>Farnham Air Quality Working Group</b>            The notes from the WBC Working Group were noted with no outstanding actions for FTC.</p> <p><b>Younger People Task Group</b>            It was noted the Task Group met on 26<sup>th</sup> February. The meeting was attended by over 20 people representing various youth groups within Farnham. It was noted it was a positive start to gathering information on the current youth provision available.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b></p> <p><b>1) FTC welcomes a collaborative council approach to Farnham matters and looks forward to FTC playing an effective role in the Farnham Project Board.</b></p> <p><b>2) FTC expects equal representation (by a Member and an Officer) on the emerging Board and looks forward to contributing to the emerging TORs.</b></p> <p>Action: Councillors to submit CIL Projects from their Wards.</p>

<p>The next step for the Task Group was to reflect and agree next steps including gathering information directly from young people.</p> <p><b>FCAMP</b> Cllr Cockburn reported on the recent quarterly meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February, noting progress made on the repair of the Bishop's Steps and ongoing monitoring of the Farnham conservation area.</p> <p>Councillors were reminded Farnham Conservation Area Management Plan was adopted in 2012 by WBC. The representatives meet quarterly as an informal group to review whether the management plan was being adhered to.</p> <p>It was noted there were four other conservation areas in and around Farnham. Cllr Merryweather suggested a review of plans for the other conservation areas, querying the availability of a timeline of dates for key documents.</p>	<p>Action: Officers to report back on other Conservation Area Management Plans (if any).</p>
---	--

## 6. Grants 2020/21

<b>POINTS</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<p>Councillors discussed the additional submission of grant applications for the Community Grant Fund.</p> <p>It was agreed to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Fund the Bells Piece Residential/Wellness and Fitness Project from In Year Community Grant Budget.</li> <li>2) Not to fund Farnham Fringe Festival's The Power of Imagination: Writers Workshop as the Council had previously agreed funding for the Festival.</li> <li>3) Support the Kitty Milroy Mural Conservation Project as it was agreed the murals are of national significance and important to local heritage. It was agreed to fund this project from the 2019/20 Community Initiatives Fund with the proviso there would be public access to the murals and there would be engagement with local schools for educational benefit.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b></p> <p>1) To commit £450.00 for Bells Piece Fitness and Wellbeing Project.</p> <p>2) To contribute £5000.00 for the Kitty Milroy Mural Conservation Project from the 2019/20 New Initiatives Budget.</p> <p>Action: Assistant Town Clerk to arrange visit to the Kitty Milroy Murals for Councillors.</p>

## 7. Annual Town Meeting of Electors

<b>POINTS</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<p>The following arrangements for the Annual Town Meeting of Electors on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The meeting will be held in The Great Hall at The Maltings.</li> <li>• To use the format from previous years, a presentation from each Working Group Leader with power point.</li> <li>• Officers support in drafting power point and presentation.</li> <li>• Introductions and presentations envisaged will take 45 minutes in total followed by a break with refreshments before public questions.</li> </ul>	<p>Action: Officers to discuss presentation with the lead of the Working Groups they support.</p>

<p>Coronavirus/ COVID 19: It was noted the situation was being monitored and FTC were closely following the guidelines from Public Health and others including SCC and WBC. FTC processes had been reviewed and there would be more frequent cleaning of handrails and door handles.</p>	<p>Action: Officers to purchase an additional hand sanitiser dispenser for the front of the building.</p>
--	---

## 8. Pensions Actuarial Review and Pensions Discretions Policy

POINTS	ACTION
<p><b>Pensions Triennial Actuarial Review 2019 Outcome</b> Town Clerk reported to Members the proposed changes to the Surrey Local Government Pension Scheme. It was noted these changes did not affect current pensioners or have implications for staff. The change that needed to be considered was the introduction of local council sector-based pooling. The paper was tabled due to the late availability of information from SCC despite the question being asked in November. It was noted Councillors needed to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector based pooling would increase costs from 14.2% to 18.7%.</li> <li>• If not pooled costs would remain at 14.2</li> <li>• Ill health retirements posed a huge risk as this would involve a large sum of money but these were pooled across all employers anyway.</li> <li>• FTC could maintain the status quo and opt out of the Towns and Parish pool and operate in its own ringfenced pot.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discretions Policy</b> Councillors discussed the policy and confirmed FTC Full Council would decide what constitutes 'exceptional' should the need arise.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b> <b>Subject to additional information ahead of Full Council, it is recommended FTC maintains the status quo and does not participate at this stage in the pooled arrangement.</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b> <b>The Discretions Policy at Appendix Eii be adopted.</b></p>

## 9. Contracts and assets update

POINTS	ACTION
<p>The Business and Facilities Manager joined the meeting and presented the notes at Appendix F from the Assets Task Group meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February.</p> <p>Items considered included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security for West Street Cemetery to be improved following vandalism by extending the Garden of Reflection fence.</li> <li>• Applying for Green Flag status for Gostrey Meadow to identify improvements.</li> <li>• Repair work to the walls at the Council offices.</li> <li>• An acoustic assessment in the Council Chamber.</li> <li>• The purchase of a ride on grass cutter that collects litter and leaves as well as cuts the grass. It was confirmed there was currently no electric alternative for the machine that is recommended. The model suggested was the most environmentally appropriate with the option to part exchange with the company when a more environmentally beneficial version was available.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b> <b>1) FTC extends the wooden fence with a locked gate for emergency access at a cost of approximately £10,000.</b> <b>2) Seek green flag status next year for Gostrey Meadow.</b> <b>3) Necessary repairs by Drake and Kannemeyer with works to be carried out by Oak Services to repair the cracking in the walls at the FTC offices.</b></p>

## 10. Consultations

POINTS	ACTION
There were no consultations to report on.	

## 11. Town Clerk update

POINTS	ACTION
<p>Town Clerk reported:</p> <p><b>Pay Review</b> The Pay Review offered Employers a 2% pay rise which was rejected by the unions. There was no further information available on the pay consultation at this stage.</p> <p><b>Craft Cities</b> The Working Group noted it had been a successful visit for the Craft Cities application. The outcome would not be known for another month. Discussion on how Farnham could capitalise on this if there was a successful outcome and review how to reinforce Farnham as a Craft Town and part of World Craft Cities.</p> <p>Also noted the positive response to the Civic Gifts, vases designed by local potter Lucy Burley and that additional ones were being commissioned with the Town Crest.</p>	<p>Action: It was suggested an earmarked reserve be created for this purpose.</p>

## 12. Date of next meeting

POINTS	ACTION
The date of the next meeting is 21 <sup>st</sup> April 2020.	

The meeting ended at 1.05 pm

Notes written by Sara.jones@farnham.gov.uk