



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

A

Minutes Council

Time and date

6.30 pm on Thursday 17th September, 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 Brian Edmonds
Councillor John "Scotty" Fraser
Councillor George Hesse
Councillor Andy MacLeod
Councillor Michaela Martin
Councillor Mark Merryweather
Councillor Kika Mirylees
Councillor John Neale
Councillor John Ward

Apologies for absence

Michaela Gray

Officers Presents:

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

There were 3 members of the public and 1 member of the press in attendance.

Prior to the meeting, prayers were led by Revd Alan Crawley, Parish of Badshot Lea with Hale.

C67/20 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Michaela Gray.

C68/20 Disclosures of Interest

In addition to the standard declarations by dual or triple hatted Councillors, Cllr Merryweather for agenda item 7ii as the relevant Portfolio holder at Waverley Borough Council for property matters and the transfer of Gostrey Meadow.

C69/20 Minutes

The Minutes of the Farnham Town Council meeting held on 30th July 2020 at Appendix A were agreed to be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

C70/20 Questions and Statements by the Public

Tim Stanley a resident of Farnham spoke about the congestion of traffic travelling from north to south through Farnham and expressed concern that there had been a prioritisation of the traffic flow travelling west to east over the traffic travelling north to south. Mr Stanley commented that this had led to the congestion of traffic and pollution in the town centre particularly on Castle Street and asked Councillors if there were plans in place to alleviate this problem.

The Mayor responded that although FTC was not the highways authority as Surrey County Council was responsible for the roads, FTC took a very keen interest in the road and traffic situation.

Cllr Neale added that the Farnham Infrastructure Programme (FIP) was responding to this issue and had with the newly updated CCTV traffic counting system started to gather more data on what traffic was going where. Cllr Neale confirmed that once the data had been reviewed then recommendations would be made for potential solutions to alleviate traffic issues in the town centre and surrounding areas. Cllr Neale encouraged Mr Stanley to be involved in the forthcoming public consultation through the FIP's Local Liaison Forum (LLF).

C71/20 Town Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor said that times were very unusual and that the Mayor's programme was nothing like normal. She had attended the VJ Day commemoration event at the Gostrey Meadow War Memorial supporting the Royal British Legion.

The Mayor reported that Dennis Pratt had sadly passed away. He was one of the first to receive the Services to Farnham Award for his contribution to the town and she had sent a card of condolence to the family on behalf of FTC.

The Mayor commented that the Coronavirus Coordination Group, was now renamed as Farnham Connects and would continue to meet fortnightly. All involved agreed meeting regularly had been valuable.

The Mayor congratulated FTC on the South and South East in Bloom Awards and thanked all the staff, volunteers, councillors and everyone involved in Farnham in Bloom for their huge effort and support.

C72/20 **Questions by Members**

None were received.

C73/20 **Tourism & Events Working Group**

Cllr Earwaker introduced the notes of the Tourism and Events Working Group held on 2nd September at Appendix B and updated Council on actions taken since the last meeting.

Cllr Earwaker commented that the World Craft Town film was available to view on the Craft Town website and YouTube and that a second 8 page Craft Month supplement would be in the Farnham Herald to support the event.

Cllr Earwaker reported that the Food Festival was cancelled due to COVID19 social distancing safeguards and that the Working Group would meet again on 7th October to discuss the plans for the Christmas Lights Switch-On and Christmas Market events. Planning was in progress for the Halloween trail which would include businesses and retailers in Farnham during October half term.

The notes were agreed.

C74/20 **Strategy & Finance Working Group**

Cllr Neale introduced the notes of the Strategy & Finance Working Group held on 8th September at Appendix C.

Cllr Neale advised Council that the budgets for the first half of the financial year would be reviewed at the next Strategy & Finance meeting in October noting that the financial situation was still very uncertain. It was noted that Waverley still intended to pass on some of the Government Grant received to Town and Parish Councils towards costs and losses incurred as a result of Coronavirus.

The Town Clerk confirmed the receipt of grant funding of some £16,000 from DEFRA administered by WBC for the Hardship Fund.

Cllr Neale reported to Council the Working Group recommendation to adopt the Local Government's Pay Agreement 2020-21 for council employees. The amount of 2.75% with one additional day's leave for those with less than five year's service was effective from 1st April.

**It was resolved *nem con* with one abstension that:
FTC adopt the Local Government Services' Pay Agreement 2020-21.**

C75/20 **Financial Regulations Review**

Cllr Neale introduced the report on the Financial Regulations Review at Annex I to Appendix C outlining the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations which had been revised to follow the NALC National Model. He set out the adjustments made to the financial thresholds and the recommended changes proposed by Strategy & Finance including the retention of occasional cash funds (rather than always banking intact) to top up petty cash as needed.

**It was RESOLVED *unanimously* that:
FTC adopt the Revised Financial Regulations.**

C76/20 **Infrastructure Planning Group**

Cllr Neale introduced the notes from the Infrastructure Planning Group held on 28th August.

I) Planning Consultation

Cllr Neale confirmed that the response to the consultation on the changes to the planning system would be submitted by the 1st October. In addition to the response a supplementary paper would be sent to the Secretary of State and to Jeremy Hunt MP to reinforce Farnham's response.

Cllr Cockburn commented that although there were two consultations, they were intricately combined with both having an impact on the number of new houses in Farnham.

II) Farnham Infrastructure Programme

Cllr Neale confirmed that the Farnham Infrastructure Programme (FIP) would be meeting on Friday to agree the new version of the vision consultation document that was being produced for the community and advised that the Local Liaison Forum (LLF) would be holding a series of meetings to engage the local community.

Cllr Cockburn commented on the merits of using an online survey to encourage wider participation. The Town Clerk confirmed that there were plans for an online feedback survey on the FIP Vision document.

C77/20 **Recovery Task Group**

Cllr Neale confirmed that following the meeting of the Recovery Task Group on 9th September with Surrey CC (SCC) officers and Councillors, the pavement widening scheme barriers had been removed. There was therefore no need for FTC to vote on the original recommendation from Strategy & Finance. Councillors confirmed the difference the removal of the barriers had made and it was **AGREED that FTC welcomes the improvements made.**

Cllr Neale updated Council on progress made to reduce HGVs travelling through the centre of Farnham. He noted that SCC had commissioned Atkins to carry out further analysis of traffic in Farnham using the newly installed updated CCTV cameras and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) where possible.

C78/20 **Community Infrastructure Projects Task Group**

Cllr Neale introduced the notes from the Community Infrastructure Projects Task Group held on 1st September 2020. It had been recommended to request that WBC held an additional Strategic CIL application process in early 2021, however it had since been confirmed that the current application process had been extended until January 2021.

C79/20 **Reports from other Task Groups**

The notes from the HR Panel that met on 14th August, the Wellbeing Task Group that met on 2nd September and the Younger People Task Group that met on 4th September 2020 were agreed.

It was also noted that the Farnham Conservation Area Management Plan Group (FCAMP) had met on 27th August 2020 and that Cllr Cockburn had circulated an informative note on the background to FCAMP and its projects

Contract and Assets Update

Cllr Neale introduced the notes from the Contract and Assets update which included:

- I) Gostrey Meadow electrical works which had to be adjusted

Cllr Edmonds asked why the amount for the works had increased to £16,000 from the £8,000 discussed at Strategy & Finance Working Group. The Town Clerk advised that the Strategy & Finance figure was an estimate and the increase was due to the complexity of the work based on the location of the underground cables and the subsequent quotations received.

Cllr Hesse questioned spending money to improve drainage work if the toilets would be moved in the next couple of years. Cllr Neale confirmed that there was no intention to move the toilets.

It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:

FTC agree to the installation of the brick built cupboard for the electrical supply to Gostrey Meadow and remedial works to the toilet waste pipe up to the cost of up to £16,000.

- II) Gas supply to the Depot

Cllr Neale confirmed that the installation of a gas supply at the Depot would enable the CNG gas powered vehicles to be refuelled more speedily at the Depot than at the FTC offices.

- III) Council Chamber redecoration

Cllr Neale praised the work of the decorators and that the chamber redecoration was nearly complete.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the proposal to upgrade the Chamber audio equipment did not include the replacement of the table microphones.

It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:

the obsolete audio equipment be replaced at a cost of £6,930 (with costs met from Council Chamber ear marked reserve) to support the best audio experience for members and visitors to the Chamber.

- IV) CCTV

Cllr Neale commented that following the installation on the new CCTV cameras the main server would need to be updated to maintain the data connection with the analytic server and that the future Section 106 money earmarked from the Brightwells scheme would be used for this.

The Town Clerk confirmed that he had clarified with Waverley Borough Council that the money from the S106 agreement could be spent on the server upgrade ahead of receiving the money.

Cllr MacLeod commented that the CCTV system would also be effective in counting the footfall in the town.

It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:

FTC replace and install a new server for the CCTV cameras with the costs to be met from the future Section 106 allocation.

V) Additional items

It was confirmed that the Gostrey Meadow play area would be discussed at the next Contracts and Assets Task Group meeting.

It was confirmed that the Citroen Berlingo had outlived its use and, as it had already been replaced, should be disposed of with an estimated value of £650.

**It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:
FTC dispose of the Citroen Berlingo.**

C81/20 **Consultations**

CLlr Neal introduced the notes to the discussion on the WBC Street Trading Review. It was agreed that the FTC response should request that Waverley Borough Council (WBC) waive the fee for Community or 'not for profit' events.

CLlr Cockburn commented that the response would need to be robust.

**It was RESOLVED *nem con with 1 abstention* that:
FTC respond as set out in the Strategy and Finance notes.**

The Town Clerk informed Council that he had received formal notification that says that the WBC Locality Office would not be reopening to the public in the FTC offices and would continue with the remote delivery that had been in place since the start of COVID19. The booked appointments previously held at the FTC offices would be relocated to the Memorial Hall.

CLlr Cockburn commented that the Memorial Hall was not accessible to the people who would need to access it.

The Town Clerk confirmed that FTC was working towards re-opening the council offices to the public on 28th September.

C82/20 **Planning and Licensing Applications**

CLlr Edmonds introduced the notes of the Planning and Licensing Consultative Group meetings held on: 10th August, 24th August and 7th September 2020, appendices D, E, F to the agenda.

CLlr Edmonds reported that FTC was always recommending that hours be restricted on developments for the amenity of neighbours.

C83/20 **Actions taken under the Scheme of Delegation**

The Town Clerk commented that all matters had been raised in earlier agenda items.

C84/20 **Reports from Other Councils**

- I) CLlr MacLeod commented on the progress of SCC's single unitary proposal. SCC had announced an extraordinary meeting of Council on 29th September but had changed this meeting to a briefing since it was mooted that the Government might delay the publication of the White Paper.
- II) CLlr Ward commented on three priorities WBC was focused on:

- Covid19 – WBC was pressing for increased testing availability for care homes and vulnerable residents.
- Planning – WBC was preparing its response to the Planning Consultations focussed on the increased number of housing and suggesting penalizing developers who did not develop land which had planning approval.
- Unitaries – WBC and the other Surrey districts were firmly against SCC's proposal for a single unitary authority and had jointly commissioned KPMG, to prepare a response to the Government's White Paper.

C85/20 Reports from Outside Bodies

- I) The Mayor had attended the Management meetings for both the Farnham Maltings and The Hale Community Centre.
- II) Cllr Cockburn had attended the Farnham Sports Council Zoom meeting and commented that although clubs had lost members the facilities were being kept afloat through being Covid secure. There was discussion about holding an awards evening in recognition of the hard work by members to keep the clubs and facilities active.
- III) Cllr MacLeod commented that 40 Degreez was struggling with no revenue and cancelled events. The Town Clerk confirmed that a special grant application could be taken to Strategy & Finance if required

C86/20 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Thursday 22nd October at 6.30pm.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 8.20 pm

Chairman

Date