



# FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

# B

## Notes

### Strategy & Finance Working Group

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#### Time and date

9.30 am on Tuesday 7th December, 2021

#### Place

Council Chamber - Town Council Offices

#### Attendees:

Members: Councillors John Neale (Lead Member), David Attfield, Roger Blishen, Pat Evans and George Hesse. Alan Earwaker (ex officio)

In attendance by Zoom: Cllr Cockburn and Merryweather

Officers: Iain Lynch Town Clerk, Iain McCready, Business and Contracts Manager

#### 1. Apologies

POINTS	ACTION
There were no apologies received.	

#### 2. Declarations of interest

POINTS	ACTION
Cllr Merryweather (in attendance) declared an interest as a Portfolio Holder for assets at Waverley Borough Council.	

#### 3. Minutes of the last meeting

POINTS	ACTION
The Notes of the meeting held on 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2021 were agreed as a correct record.	

#### 4. Contracts and assets update

POINTS	ACTION
1) The Working Group considered the report, at Appendix B to its	

agenda, which set out details of the successful tenderers for the West Street Cemetery Gates and the Central Car Park Toilets refurbishment.

- a. Four tenders were received for the West Street Cemetery Gates, with prices ranging from £41,323 to £118,874. After evaluation and references the contract was awarded to Lost Art of Wigan at a cost of £41,323. Additional costs will apply (to be contained within the agreed budget) relating to some resurfacing of the tarmac entrance to allow the refurbished gates to close. Provision has also be made for retaining some specialist technical advice if required. The Work should be completed by the end of May 2022.
- b. Five tenders were received for the Central car Park refurbishment with prices ranging from £143,085 to £221,477. After tender evaluation by the Council's advisors Drake & Kannemeyer with arithmetical errors adjusted and references taken, the tender was awarded to Endwell Contracts at a cost of £143,085. An additional sum will be required for a site to be created within Central Car Park and discussions are under way with Waverley Borough Council. The cost will be contained within the agreed budget.

**Recommendation to Council:**

**It is recommended that the actions taken by the Town Clerk in issuing the two contracts be endorsed.**

- 2) The Working Group received an update on the dispute Council over the non-performance of the Cleaning Contract. Officers had been unable to agree a fair settlement for the additional costs incurred by the Town Council as a result of the non-performance and were hoping to agree this by arbitration without having to take formal legal action.
- 3) The loss adjustors had finally arranged for the clearance of asbestos following the greenhouse fire. Alternate prices had been obtained for a replacement, but there was a long lead time for supply and installation. As such officers were looking for a temporary greenhouse to grow the plants for the 2022 displays.
- 4) The Business and Facilities Manager advised that prices had been sought for a hoggin permeable path to be created to access the Youth Shelter on Borelli Walk.

It was agreed (proposed by Cllr Blishen and seconded by Cllr Neale) **to recommend to Council that a sum of up to £5,000 be allocated to install the path to be met from the maintenance budget.** It was also agreed to approach Crest Nicholson to see if they could assist with the installation of the path and Youth Shelter.

Cllr Evans arrived at this point.

## 5. Reports from Task Groups

POINTS	ACTION
<p>1) The Working Group considered the report of the Younger People Task Group held on 26 November, at Appendix C to its agenda noting the success of events arranged over the summer and agreeing to explore further events for 2022 including DJ sessions.</p> <p>The Task Group had highlighted the need for a budget for Younger People activities going forward and the Working Group noted the Town Clerk had included a sum of £10,000 in the draft budget for 2022/23.</p> <p>The Working Group noted that the installation of the Youth Shelter was planned for mid-January, and Cllr Mirylees agreed to check if Kelvin Mills had received the relevant confirmations.</p> <p>Strategy &amp; Finance noted that that a presentation had been given to the Task Group by Emma Jones from the Farnham Maltings about the multi-art form Spark Programme. It was hoped this programme could engage with young people at the Youth Shelter once installed.</p> <p>2) The Working Group received a report on the meeting of the Cultural Projects Task Group held on 19<sup>th</sup> November, at Appendix D to its agenda. The report included the detailed slides from Bonnar Keenlyside of the research they had undertaken for a new cultural attraction in Farnham. The key issues emerging were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The benefit of a new structure to drive forward the focus of Farnham as a World Craft City, with more representation of makers involved;</li> <li>• The need to develop the online offer and raise awareness of what Farnham offers (similar points were identified as part of the assessors feedback of the World Craft Town application)</li> <li>• A desire to move from option 1 (slide 56) to option 2 with a new maker-led structure with clear independence and objectives aligned with World Craft City Status</li> <li>• The opportunity to tap into the interest of the audience (buyers and collectors) within a half hour drive time</li> <li>• The need for the evolving organisation to be underpinned by the Town Council but supported by those with an entrepreneurial stake but with a clear focus.</li> <li>• Build on support for makers</li> <li>• Brightwells did not appear to offer a primary location at this stage based on feedback received, but other buildings could be repurposed. This required further engagement with and support of both the County Council and Borough Council.</li> <li>• We must (collectively) maintain the ambition and vision</li> <li>• Applications for funding for the future would need to ensure that diversity was effectively covered.</li> </ul> <p>The Working Group agreed with the Task Group the need to move World Craft Town to the next level rather than continuing to evolve in an adhoc way. It was recognised that this would need</p>	

<p>further resource and commitment and that further work should be done on clarifying an independent structure recognising that the leadership of the Town Council, working alongside partners was required. It was noted that there was the opportunity to create a ten year strategy and to seek some further Arts Council funding to underpin the development. It was agreed that further engagement with Surrey CC cabinet member for culture and relevant officers would be helpful and that the 2022/23 draft budget required funding for the Craft Month Co-ordinator to undertake work throughout the year.</p> <p><b>Recommendation to Council. It is recommended that:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1) That the report carried out by Bonnar Keenlyside be welcomed;</b></li> <li><b>2) That the recommendations and actions contained within the report be progressed with a further report coming back to Strategy &amp; Finance via the Task Group;</b></li> <li><b>3) The Craft Town Co-ordinator be employed for additional days throughout the year to extend awareness and programming for Craft Month throughout the year; and</b></li> <li><b>4) An application be developed in conjunction with the Farnham Maltings for submission to the Arts Council to underpin the programmed development.</b></li> </ol> <p>3) The Working Group noted that progress for the Makers spaces that had been considered for the Pump House or Montrose appeared to have stalled as the land at Kimbers Lane was earmarked for housing. Cllr Merryweather agreed to check the current situation.</p>	
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## 6. Farnham Infrastructure Programme

POINTS	ACTION
<p>The Working Group considered the report at Appendix F to its agenda on the Farnham Infrastructure Programme consultation on 20MPH zones and build outs. Whilst FTC welcomed the introduction of 20MPH zones, there was concern over the impression the consultation gave that the detail of the proposals had the support of Waverley Borough Council and Farnham Town Council when both had objected strongly to the proposed build outs in Castle Street given the conservation area and listed building status that would be compromised.</p> <p>It was agreed to recommend to Council that the following points be incorporated into the Farnham Town Council response.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The concept of 20MPH zones is welcomed and should have material benefit for residents and for businesses in the town centre. The proposed Weydon Zone is welcomed for the benefits it will have for the two schools. The proposed Upper Hale Road limit is welcomed for the benefit it will have for the school, church and junction safety. The Zone at Hale should be extended to cover the Recreation Ground by Wood Road, and go beyond the immediate school zone in Alma Lane to Quennels Lane.</li> </ol>	

2) FTC reiterates the comments it has made previously for additional 20MPH zones and traffic calming measures to be introduced in all approaches to schools in the town as well as those areas set out in the consultation document.

3) A formal objection is specifically raised in response to the proposed 20pmh zone 'gateway' on Castle Street with the following points:

- Farnham Town Council has previously raised concerns and objections about obstructing the view both up and down Castle Street with inappropriate structures and is disappointed to see that the build-outs marking the proposed start of the 20mph zone are still included within the consultation, by the entrance to Guildford House on the east side and no. 42 Castle Street on the west side.
- Additional clutter such as signage, build-outs and street furniture must be minimised in the Town Centre Conservation Area and especially in the historic setting of Castle Street. The HGV signage on The Borough is an example of inappropriate size and positioning of signage, having a detrimental impact on the setting obscuring the Grade II Listed buildings.
- Castle Street is highly valued for its Listed buildings, wide carriageway and the uninterrupted vista of the Castle to the north and grandeur of The Borough to the south. The build-outs are proposed to be immediately adjacent to Grade II listed light columns (individually listed in their own right) and both build-outs would have a negative impact on their setting.
- Historic England's guidance 'Streets for All' details the general principles of traffic calming measures stating 'Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that new traffic calming measures respect the character of designated conservation areas.' See page 42:
- ['Streets for All: Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places'](#).
- Farnham Town Council strongly objects to the start of the 20mph in this location and believes the 20mph zone should be moved further north on Castle Hill outside of the Town Centre Conservation Area.
- As an alternate to build-outs, FTC would like the idea of on-road Roundels to be reviewed and incorporated.
- The 20MPH zone at Weydon Lane should be extended to the traffic lights on the A31.

Cllr Neale agreed there was need to be more vociferous on the Town perspective at the FIP Board meetings and there was need for a meeting between the Lead Officers and Members of each of the three councils. There was opportunity to co-ordinate the approach between the Town Council and Borough Council to get the best outcome for the Zones across the Town.

<p>The Working Group discussed the benefits of a delineated narrow carriageway to help slow down the traffic, but there was no single view that emerged on the preferred option and overall there was a desire to have a trial of a scheme to understand the impact.</p> <p>4) The Working Group noted that the next FIP Board would be receiving options, following the technical evaluation by Atkins of the Western Strategic Link Road and the Wrecclesham Bypass. It was understood that evaluation showed that the economic and environmental case made it difficult to argue for the Western relief road. Cllr Cockburn said that funding needed to be demonstrated as part of the major road network. If Farnham needs the relief road/strategic link road, then it must fight for it.</p> <p>The Working Group agreed <b>to recommend to Council that if the Strategic Western Link Road should not be considered possible at this stage then, given the importance of connectivity between the A3 and M3, Farnham Town Council seeks agreement for Surrey County Council to have the Strategic Link Road kept as a priority on the Major Road Network programme and also seeks collaboration with Hampshire County Council to achieve this objective.</b></p> <p>5) Cllr Neale agreed to reinvite the Leader of Surrey to a meeting with FTC councillors.</p>	
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## 7. Finance report

POINTS	ACTION
<p>1) The Town Clerk introduced the Finance report with three grant proposals</p> <p>a) From the Aston Defibrillator as set out at Appendix G to the agenda, to install a new defibrillator in one of the newly adopted telephone boxes.</p> <p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b>  <b>It is recommended that: £1,900 be awarded to the Aston Defibrillator Fund, from within the balance of 2021/22 grants.</b></p> <p>b) From Frensham Ponds Sailability that their 2021/22 grant (of £2,000) towards their activity centre be reallocated to a project to replace one of their boats (now coming to the end of its useful life and previously part funded by Farnham Town Council). The Boat would be named Farnham Flyer 2. The activity centre project had been delayed by the planning process by at least 12 months.</p> <p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b>  <b>It is recommended that the request by Frensham Ponds Sailability to reallocate the approved funding towards a replacement boat be agreed.</b></p> <p>c) Proposal for a contribution towards the replacement of the Hoppa buses in Farnham with electric vehicles. The Working group noted</p>	

that at the update meeting with Hoppa, FTC members learnt that the two of the Farnham dial-a-ride buses were being funded to be electric (one from a match-funded government grant). If the cost for a for third bus (£70,000) could be raised, a fourth bus for Farnham would also be funded through the Government grant scheme. The Working Group considered that the running of electric Hoppa buses in Farnham would be a clear and positive climate change message and a marker for all bus services in the town to be electric.

**Recommendation to Council :**

**It is recommended that:**

- 1) Farnham Town Council launch an appeal with Hoppa to fund a third electric bus to be match funded from the Government grants;**
- 2) A sum of £20,000 be earmarked from the 2021/22 environmental initiatives budget to match fund community contributions;**
- 3) FTC seek funding from Surrey County Council, Waverley Borough Council and other organisations to meet the balance of the costs.**

**2) Budget 2022/23.**

The Town Clerk introduced the budget papers at Annex H which included a covering report, a detailed budget by committee, a detailed budget by account code and explanations of relevant budget explanations. The Working Group noted the detail of what was proposed and the areas set out in the report for additional expenditure. The level of inflation (currently at 4% and expected to remain high for at least eighteen months) and costs being faced by the Town Council for utilities and contracts would present challenges going forward. The Working Group noted the significant post covid increase in discretionary income proposed and that if the budget were agreed there would be a shortfall at this stage of just over £41,000 without any precept increase.

Members noted that the FTC precept was a small part of the overall Council Tax paid by local residents but were also mindful of the pressures being faced by local residents. The Working group felt it was important to be mindful of the pressures on Principal authorities and that some additional services would inevitably come the way of Farnham Town Council.

The Working Group noted that there were no increases proposed at this point in the staffing budgets given the management of vacancies that had occurred and that there was a proposal to increase the rate for additional staffing costs at events within the overall budget total. The Town Clerk advised that this level could be maintained for 2022/23 but it was likely an increase in the budget would be required in 2023/24 once the known cost (of National Insurance increases, and expected cost of living salary increases) had been taken into account.

**Recommendation to Council**

**It is recommended that the budget for 2022/23 be set at £1,473,800 with discretionary income (at this stage) of £284,423**

## 8. Farnham Town Council Strategy Workshop

POINTS	ACTION
<p>The Working Group reviewed the outcomes of the FTC Strategy Workshop that had met in November to consider any matters that may assist with the development of the FTC budget for 2022/23 and subsequent years, attended by 14 councillors.</p> <p>Councillors did not wish to reduce any services provided by FTC or divert resources but would like to concentrate on what was being done and continuously improve where possible. The current vision (set out in the slides at Appendix I) was reaffirmed.</p> <p>Councillors had discussed detailed areas of activity in smaller groups and identified a number of areas of focus which would not necessarily have a significant resource impact in the coming financial year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage further with UCA</li> <li>• Support community safety and well-being</li> <li>• Extend Young people focus</li> <li>• Extend World Craft Town focus</li> <li>• Improve communication and website</li> <li>• Continue to work with business community on development of Business Improvement District.</li> <li>• Focus on the Infrastructure Programme and other Infrastructure matters</li> <li>• Consideration of the wider public estate (properties held by other public bodies)</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that the proposed Café in Gostrey would be subject to more detailed reports and may potentially be subject to a Public Works Loan.</p> <p>The paper circulated in advance by the Leader on broader strategic topic was not discussed in detail at the workshop and would be subject to further consideration in the Spring of 2022.</p> <p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b>  <b>It is recommended that:</b>  <b>1) The outcomes of the Strategy Workshop be endorsed;</b>  <b>2) A further Strategy workshop be held in the spring of 2022.</b></p>	

## 9. Farnham Museum

POINTS	ACTION
<p>Cllr Merryweather left the meeting at this point.</p> <p>The Leader advised the Working Group of a meeting with Bowles Green, the Consultants appointed by Waverley Borough Council to seek views on the future of the Museum. He also advised that a follow-up meeting of the Task Group with WBC and other partners was scheduled for January 2022. Cllr Neale was concerned that FTC was being treated as a consultee just like any other consultee and not as a partner council and this put the Town Council in a difficult position.</p>	



<p>The Leader had circulated an email to the Working Group setting out options. [A revised paper drafted by the Leader is being circulated under separate cover to all councillors].</p> <p>The Working Group were concerned that the Museum issue should be managed through a Waverley Special Interest Group to which the FTC Task Group should be invited and it was agreed that the Leader should raise this with the Borough Council.</p>	
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## 10. Consultations

POINTS	ACTION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The Leader updated the Working group on the status of the Waverley discussions on the Boundary Commission Review of the Waverley Wards. The Town Clerk confirmed that the preferences expressed by Council at its last meeting had been forwarded to the Borough Council and would be passed to the Boundary Commission.</li> <li>2) Cllr Cockburn updated the Working Group on the Surrey Hills AONB Review and it was agreed to confirm to the consultants that FTC wished to be an active participant and provide evidence to the review.</li> <li>3) The Working Group noted that the adoption of Local Transport Plan 4 had been delayed for further engagement.</li> </ol>	

## 11. Town Clerk update

POINTS	ACTION
No additional points were raised.	

## 12. Date of next meeting

POINTS	ACTION
The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> January.	

The meeting ended at 2.33 pm

Notes written by Town.Clerk@farnham.gov.uk

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