



# FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL



## Notes Strategy & Finance Working Group

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### Time and date

9.30 am on Tuesday 8th March, 2022

### Place

Council Chamber

### Attendees:

Members: Councillors John Neale (Lead Member), David Attfield, Roger Blishen, Sally Dickson (online), George Hesse, Pat Evans and Alan Earwaker (ex-Officio)

Officers: Iain McCready (Business and Facilities Manager), Iain Lynch (Town Clerk) and Jenny de Quervain.

### 1. Apologies

POINTS	ACTION
Apologies were received from Cllr Cockburn and Cllr Mirylees	

### 2. Declarations of interest

POINTS	ACTION
In addition to declarations of interest by double and triple hatted councillors the following declarations were made: 1) Cllr Dickson a pecuniary interest as an organiser of the Farnham Fringe Festival in relation to the grant application. 2) Iain McCready in relation to Personal Protective Equipment	

### 3. Minutes of the last meeting

POINTS	ACTION
The minutes of the meeting held on January 18 <sup>th</sup> were agreed.	

### 4. Contracts and Assets update

POINTS	ACTION
The Business and facilities manager introduced the Notes of the Assets Task	

Group at Appendix B.

1. Task Group had reviewed the Outside Workforce's communication and recommended that it would be better to switch to a modern smart phone with a dedicated app which would ease the flow of information and increase safety within the workforce when they worked alone. It was noted that two phones had been trialled and that the preferred type of phone was a combined smart phone and radio which would link with FTC's current 10 walkie talkies used at events. The Working Group agreed that a switch to a new modern phone would be beneficial for the management of the Outside Workforce at reasonably comparable costs over two years.
2. The Working Group reviewed the need to replace 2 zero turn grass cutting machines which had become unreliable and uneconomical to keep running (15 years and 10 years old). The Group noted options for two battery powered alternatives had been considered but as these were currently three times the price of a like for like replacement (at £25,000 for one machine). It was felt that at this time the mowers should be replaced with a like for like petrol driven machine. Battery alternatives should be looked at in the future once the costs had lowered.
3. The Working Group agreed the purchase of a new Mosquito 2 sweeper machine at a cost of £4,000 which could be used on all sites would be a useful addition in clearing paths of moss and detritus.
4. The Working Group reviewed the current situation with the use of personnel protective equipment (PPE) with regards to two members of staff who use chainsaws and are using a mix of Farnham Town Council's own purchased PPE with their own purchased PPE. It was agreed that FTC should purchase PPE for the staff and if they were to leave within two years and wanted to take the PPE with them then a percentage of the purchase price would be withheld on their final salary payment.
5. The Working Group noted that one member of staff had used some personal equipment when needed during the recent storms. It was noted that this could have some potential issues and it was agreed to contact the Insurance company to clarify whether the use of personal equipment (Chainsaws) by the Outside Workforce was permitted and to ensure that the Council was covered for any risk. If permitted to be used on an ad hoc basis, it was agreed the machinery should be inspected and serviced by the Town Council.
6. An update was provided on the potential use of glass greenhouses at Secretts in Milford. With changing circumstances, and the agreement of the insurer to pay for a further period of generator hire, it was considered preferable to purchase a new polytunnel for the Depot for the coming growing season. The polytunnel could be moved subsequently.
7. The Working Group agreed to revisit the options for solar panels,

**Recommendation:**  
It is recommended to purchase 10 new Boxchip S900A phones at a cost of £6,450 for 10 units and to also purchase the Tassta application at a cost of £1,650 for a two year deal from within the 2021/22 IT equipment and software budgets.

**Recommendation:**  
To replace the two uneconomic mowers with 2 Scag Freedom Z machines at a cost of £16,000 from the new machinery budget 2021/22

**Recommendation:**  
To purchase a Mosquito 2 sweeper at a cost of £4000 from the 2021/22 environmental initiatives budget

**Recommendation:**  
FTC To purchase Arboricultural PPE at a cost of approximately £600 for one full kit for 2 staff members with a view to recharging the staff members a percentage of the cost if they were to leave within two years. Cost to be met from 2021/22 PPE budget.

**Recommendation:**  
To purchase a polytunnel for the rear of the Depot at a cost of £800.

<p>noting that Waverley was in the process of installing solar panels on the Memorial Hall and could provide updated advice.</p> <p>8. The Working Group noted the refurbishment of the Central Car Park would start on 9<sup>th</sup> March and should be completed by the Jubilee weekend. Additional costs for asbestos removal would be met within the project contingency.</p> <p>9. The Working Group noted the West Street Cemetery Gates were now at Lost Ark in Wigan and should be refurbished by the end of May.</p> <p>10. The Working group noted the Outside Team had not had the capacity to demolish the Gostrey Bowling pavilion and it was agreed (subject to a further quote) to recommend this be done by a contractor.</p> <p>11. The Working Group noted Cllr Dunsmore would be working with officers on a competition to create designs for the remodelling of the Hale Chapels into a Community Garden.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation:</b>  <b>To demolish the pavilion at a maximum cost of £3,492 from the Property Maintenance and refurbishment budget.</b></p>
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## 5. Finance

POINTS	ACTION
<p>1 The Town Clerk introduced the Finance report at Agenda item 5 and appendices C and D. The Bank Reconciliation at Appendix C was noted. The Summary and detailed Income and Expenditure reports at Appendix D was discussed in detail, noting the outturn would be in surplus as a result of the additional grants received because of the Welcome Back Fund and support for the community during Covid as well as the first significant CIL contribution. Some of these funds were ringfenced and would be carried forward as earmarked reserves. Income was running at £1,662,280 against a budget of £1,374,700 (largely as a result of the Section 106, CIL and grant additions that had not been budgeted totalling around £190k) whilst expenditure was running at £1,048,462 against a budget of £1,397,850 with some £281k of project expenditure committed and some outstanding invoices awaited.</p> <p>2 It was noted that there had been some slippage in the contracts as a result of covid and this would contribute to the anticipated surplus. Discussion took place on options to allocate any potential surplus on projects such as the Farnham Flame, the Riverside Art Project and the Farnham Museum, noting that any potential additional earmarked reserves would be considered as part of the year-end finances. Cllr Hesse raised again the potential of making a contribution for a street cleansing machine and undertook to obtain further details and a written request from the Borough Council in order that this could be formally reconsidered.</p> <p>3 The Working Group noted and agreed that some virements could be progressed within the terms of the financial regulations.</p> <p>4 The latest BACS and cheque payments were available for inspection.</p> <p>5 The list of regular direct debits would be considered in April.</p> <p>6 Members discussed a late request for a contribution for the Farnham Fringe Festival that was due to take place in June or early</p>	<p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b>  <b>The Summary Income and Expenditure to the end of February with an anticipated end of year surplus be noted.</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b>  <b>A grant of £1,000 from the 2021/22 balance be earmarked for the Fringe Festival subject to further</b></p>

<p>July noting that the organising team had changed and a smaller festival may take place in 2022. It was noted that clarification on the legal status of the organisation was required but there was a willingness to support the Festival again with a grant towards publicity, printing and brochure costs. It was not expected that much FTC staff resource would be applied to the delivery of the events which are run by volunteers and individual organisations.</p>	<p>information being received.</p>
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Cllr Dickson and Cllr Evans left at this point.

## 6. Review of Council policies

POINTS	ACTION
<p>The Working Group received the revised Model Code of Conduct developed by the Local Government Associations following dissatisfaction with the previous Model Code of Conduct which had proven to be a challenge with investigations into complaints about poor conduct. The LGA and NALC had been working together with input from the Society of Local Council Clerks on a new simplified code. This code had been adopted by Waverley Borough Council. For simplicity, it is proposed that the new version is adopted by Farnham Town Council as well as councillors representing more than one council would be operating to the same code.</p> <p>It was noted that the Town Clerk, along with the clerks of Haslemere and Cranleigh, had been in discussion with the Monitoring officer at Waverley to plan ahead for training of the new code for the new intake of councillors in 2023.</p> <p>A copy of the Model Code is set out at Annex I for adoption.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b></p> <p>1) <b>The LGA Model Code of Conduct, developed in association with the National Association of Local Councils, and any subsequent modifications, be adopted as the code applying to Farnham Town Council;</b></p> <p>2) <b>All councillors attend training on the code and their responsibilities.</b></p>

Jenny de Quervain joined for the next items

## 7. Farnham Infrastructure Programme

POINTS	ACTION
<p>Cllr Neale provided an update on the Farnham Infrastructure Programme and details of discussion held by the councillor members of the Board on the emerging proposals for the Town Centre. These had been circulated in draft form to all councillors but were not yet ready to be published for the wider public as they were being refined by Surrey CC and its consultants.</p> <p>It was noted that the three draft options would be consulted upon in the summer and each option could be phased if required. The Working Group agreed the ideas needed a more detailed discussion at the Infrastructure Planning Group (IPG) as there were a number of elements that still were of concern and did not appear to reflect the matters previously discussed at the Town Council. An IPG meeting would be arranged after Council. If any specific discussion were needed at Council this would be held in exempt session at this stage.</p> <p>The Working Group noted that the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Project was also progressing and a workshop was scheduled</p>	<p><b>Recommendation to Council:</b></p> <p>1)</p>

to take place in the near future.

The Town Clerk advised that the outcomes of the 20MPH consultation was also due with the potential for a wider area to be brought in at a later date. He was concerned that the significant issues raised by the Borough and Town Councils in relation to the Castle Street streetscene and listed buildings/structures did not appear to have been taken on board and it was likely members would wish to have further consideration of the revised plans when they were available.

## 8. Reports from Task Groups

### 1) HR Panel

POINTS	ACTION
<p>The Working Group received the Notes of the HR Panel that had met on 2<sup>nd</sup> March noting that the staffing establishment and pay rates and agreed incremental rises (except for the Town Clerk) from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 had been reviewed.</p> <p>The 2021 National Pay Award had been agreed at 1.75% and incorporated in the March pay under the scheme of delegation under delegation by the Town Clerk, Mayor and Leader. This was endorsed by the Working Group. It was noted that no staff were paid below the National Living Wage.</p> <p>It was agreed that officers should bring forward a report on potential salary Sacrifice schemes which would be beneficial to both employees and FTC as the employer.</p> <p>Arrangements for the Town Clerk's appraisal by the Mayor, Leader and Cllr Cockburn were agreed.</p> <p>The Panel received updates on recruitment and on a confidential staffing matter</p>	

### 2) Riverside Sculpture Task Group

POINTS	ACTION
<p>The Working Group noted the recent Task Group meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> February had reviewed whether or not to increase the budget allocation for the commission but had agreed to work with the approved sum. The Commission brief was to be circulated widely and councillors were encouraged to raise awareness of any potential sculptor.</p> <p>It was noted that the New Ashgate Director Dr Outi Remes had joined the group.</p>	

### 3) Conservation Areas Task Group

POINTS	ACTION
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The Working Group noted the first meeting of the new Conservation Areas Task Group had been held on 24<sup>th</sup> February with some discussion on the Terms of Reference and scope of the new Group. It had been agreed that a list of the actions for each of the Conservation Areas Improvements would be prepared to ensure that the focus was wider than the Town Centre Conservation Area. All Conservation Areas had been invited to have a representative on the Task Group.

### 13. Consultations

POINTS	ACTION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Working Group the Waverley Affordable Housing Strategy had been considered by the Planning &amp; Licensing Consultative Group as not enough time had been allowed for it to go through Council. The draft was being circulated for councillors to add comments or submit their own.</li> <li>2. Concern was expressed that the Coxbridge site could be made all affordable housing with the impact that there would then be no CIL contribution for the required infrastructure improvements.</li> <li>3. The Working group noted the response to the Surrey Hills AONB consultation had been submitted.</li> </ol>	

### 14. Town Clerk update

POINTS	ACTION
<p>The Town Clerk advised that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The presentation for the Annual Meeting of electors was scheduled for 31<sup>st</sup> March</li> <li>2) The Commonwealth Flag raising ceremony was scheduled for Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March.</li> <li>3) Arrangements for the Ukrainian vigil were noted. The Ukrainian Flag would be flown on the Green Flag Flagpole in Gostrey Meadow. Cllr Hesse suggested FTC undertook a role in making lists for those interested in hosting refugees. The Town Clerk advised this was premature given the arrangements had not yet been published and the responsibility would lie with the Principal Authorities and it would be important not to duplicate.</li> </ol>	

### 15. Date of next meeting

POINTS	ACTION
<p>The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April at 9.30am.</p>	

The meeting ended at 1.15 pm

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