



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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Report
Full Council

28th April 2022

Election of Working Groups 2022/23

- 1 Councillors have identified preferences for the Working Groups for 2022/23 in accordance with Standing Order 15.1 e. These are attached at Annex 1, in order of preference for each Working Group as indicated by each councillor.
- 2 Some councillors expressed a preference for only the Working Groups for which they were interested whilst others have given a priority listing for all the Working Groups. This does not mean they are expected to serve on every Working Group and may wish not to take up a provisional allocation as the workload would be high.
- 3 Standing Order 15.1 f states that the overall membership of the Working Groups will reflect as closely as possible the political make-up of the Council with the intention that as broad a range of councillors as possible is represented. By convention the Mayor is not appointed to Working Groups and can attend any Group ex-officio.
- 4 There are four Working Groups plus two Standing Task Groups (HR Panel) and the Planning and Licensing Consultative Group. Standing Order 15 f suggests (not mandatory) how places are to be allocated to ensure that those who are not members of the majority group are fairly represented. As such, with currently 4 out of 18 councillors, those who are not part of the majority group should have [at least] 22% of the available places or five places between the four Working Groups and representation on the Panels and Task Groups where possible. In practice, the Council has normally chosen councillors willing to serve rather than managing places proportionately. If a Task Group has more councillors wishing to serve than places available one place will be prioritised for a councillor not part of the majority group.
- 5 Councillors are invited to opt for or nominate for the remaining places, or withdraw if this is appropriate where there are more places than candidates. If there are more candidates than places available an election will take place for the vacant places only.
- 6 If a councillor wishes to fill a vacancy, this will still be considered by Council so that any further late additions may also be considered. In determining vacancies the intention is usually to avoid overloading individual councillors with too many groups, and allow for as many councillors as possible to be part of Task Groups or Working Groups.

Working Groups

- 6 As a result of the preference exercise, eight councillors expressed an interest in the Strategy & Finance Working Group, all of whom put the Working Group as a first preference. It is proposed that four of the five majority group councillors should be appointed and two of the

three non-majority group be appointed. As a reminder, Lead Members of Working Groups are also Members of Strategy & Finance ex officio if not previously appointed.

- 7 In relation to the remaining Working Groups the following expressions of interest were received.
- **Community Enhancement Working Group** – Three preferences for six places. All would be deemed appointed and three vacancies remain.
 - **Cemeteries and Appeals Working Group** – There are four preferences for six places. As such the proposal is that the four councillors would be deemed to be appointed with two vacancies.
 - **Tourism and Events Working Group** – There are six preferences for six places and as such all are deemed appointed.
 - **Planning & Licensing Consultative Group** – Seven councillors have expressed a preference for the nine places available. The aim is, if possible, to have one councillor from each ward. Council may wish to appoint the nine councillors who have expressed a preference to be on the Consultative Group or elect one councillor per ward.
 - **HR Panel** – There are six preferences for six places. The HR Panel has previously requested that the panel (as far as possible) retains consistency during the life of the Council. All six places should be appointed.
 - **Services to Farnham Awards Panel.** The Panel meets to agree awards and to review nominations to external Trusts (such as the Dempster Trust, the Isabella Schroder Trust, the Hale Chapels Trust and the Farnham Parochial Charity) as and when vacancies occur for which the Council is to make appointments. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are ex-officio members and there are places for two (normally) other councillors. Eddie Pearce is on the panel representing the Tindle News Group as the Awards were the Inspiration of Sir Ray Tindle CBE DL, and there is also provision for an additional independent representative.

Preferences have been received from two councillors. It is proposed that the two councillors are deemed appointed.

- 8 As in previous years, it is proposed that Council is adjourned briefly so that each Working Group can elect its Lead Member to confirm the composition of the Strategy & Finance Working Group.

Recommendation: It is recommended that Council be adjourned for the holding of meetings of the Working Groups to elect Lead Members.

Task Groups

- 9 All Task Groups cease at the end of a Council year Council needs to confirm if the Task Groups are to be reconvened. The HR Panel (technically a Task Group of both Strategy and Finance and Council) and the Services to Farnham Awards Panel are Standing Panels and are expected to continue whilst the remaining Task Groups need a formal resolution to be re-established.

It is recommended that the following be re-established as there is work to be done:

- **Assets Task Group**
- **Community Infrastructure Levy/Section 106 Task Group**
- **Cultural Project Group**
- **Infrastructure Planning Task Group**
- **Museum Task Group**

- **Riverside Sculpture Task Group**
- **Trees and Hedgerows Task Group**
- **Younger People Task Group**

The Well-being Task Group has not met in the past year and its work is undertaken by Strategy & Finance.

10 Subject to Council's decision on Task Groups, the appointment to Task Groups will need to be agreed. In accordance with Standing Order 15 (f) membership of task groups does not need to conform to the political make-up of the council although in practice there should always be a space for the non-majority group on each Task Group. Other people outside the Council can be appointed to or co-opted onto Task Groups.

11 Subject to the decision on paragraph 8:

- The Infrastructure Planning Group has five councillors offering to fill five places All are deemed to be appointed.
- The CIL/Section 106 Task Group has one preference for the five places. If no other councillors step forward for the remaining four places, the work would be undertaken by the Strategy & Finance Working group directly.
- The Trees and Hedgerow Strategy Task Group has three members offering to fill five places. All are deemed elected.
- Younger People Task Group. Four councillors for five places. All are deemed appointed.

Annex I has the proposals for each Task Group for consideration by Council.

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- 1) **the candidates for the Strategy & Finance, Cemeteries and Appeals, Community Enhancement and Tourism and Events Working Groups be appointed as set out in Annex I along with any additional councillors to fill the remaining vacancies as set out in paragraph 4 -7 above;**
- 2) **the councillors willing to be on the Planning and Licensing Consultative Group be appointed;**
- 3) **the Working Groups elect their Lead Members (in order to do which the meeting be adjourned briefly) in order to confirm the complement of Strategy and Finance Working Group Members; and**
- 4) **Council determines which Task Groups be reappointed and the size and membership of each Task Group as set out in Annex I.**

