



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

A

Minutes Council

Time and date

7.00 pm on Thursday 17th March, 2022

Place

Council Chamber - Farnham Town Hall

Councillors

Councillor Alan Earwaker (Mayor)
Councillor Michaela Wicks (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor David Attfield
Councillor David Beaman
Councillor Roger Blishen
Councillor Carole Cockburn
Councillor Sally Dickson
Councillor Pat Evans
Councillor John "Scotty" Fraser
Councillor George Hesse
Councillor Andy MacLeod
Councillor Michaela Martin
Councillor Mark Merryweather
Councillor Kika Mirylees
Councillor John Neale

Officers Present:

Iain Lynch (Town Clerk)
Iain McCready (Contracts & Facilities manager)
Jenny de Quervain, (Planning and projects)

There was 1 member of the public and 1 member of the press in attendance.

Prior to the meeting, prayers were led by Revd Jane Walker.

C110/20 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Dunsmore, Ward and Edmonds.

Councillors Cockburn, Merryweather and Mirylees attended remotely

C111/20 **Disclosures of Interest**

Other than what was noted on the agenda there were no disclosures prior to the meeting.

In terms of item 8ii Paragraph 5, point 6, Cllr Sally Dickson indicated that she had a pecuniary interest and she would not take part in the this matter as an organiser of the Farnham Fringe Festival.

C112/20 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2022 were agreed for signing by the Mayor.

C113/20 **Questions and Statements by the Public**

Mr Mark Stinson asked about the Runfold recreation ground and improving the facilities which were looking tired and under-maintained. Cllr Martin advised that the Crooksbury Residents' Association was looking into it and there may be a possibility of CIL funding. It was not clear whether or not it lay within the Waverley Boundary (possibly Guildford) but the Town Clerk would clarify with Waverley Borough Council.

A further question was put forward regarding the white lines on the road of the Sands junction where there had been a recent accident which could have been avoided. Cllr MacLeod offered to follow up with Surrey County Council Highways as it was in his ward.

C114/20 **Town Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor advised that it had been a very busy time since the last Council meeting. A reminder was given regarding COVID and to take precautions. Numbers in Waverley were again increasing and it was important that everyone still took the advice and encourage having the booster vaccination.

In terms of the Ukraine situation, the Mayor advised that the Council was being very active in supporting the welcome for refugees to the town. This would be discussed further on the agenda.

The inaugural first literacy festival had taken place and had been very successful. Congratulations and thanks were given to all that were involved in its organisation.

The Mayor was pleased to announce that Farnham in Bloom chosen as finalists in RHS Britain in Bloom and would be representing the South East in the Large Town Category. The Mayor announced that 40 trees were planted by the community at the Riverside opposite Hatch Mill on a special tree planting day for the Queen's Green Canopy on the 70th day of the 70th year of her reign. A list of all those involved was being included in a book of the national planting project.

C115/20 **Questions by Members**

There were no questions from Members

C116/20 **Ukraine**

Council received a statement by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) condemning the multiple attacks and violations of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. The statement, outlined in the agenda papers, had already been endorsed by the National Association of Local Councils and the Local Government Association.

It was noted that a lot had already been done from the community and Members were asked that if they had any associations with charities to make contact. The Town Council was doing a lot already and the response from the community had been brilliant. There were already 30 families that would be coming to the town and they would be made most welcome to the community. There would be some people coming with skills to work from home remotely.

It was noted that the Rotary Club was taking donations and that there would be a Farnham Connects meeting to share information with other community groups..

It was proposed by Cllr John Neale, seconded by Cllr Pat Evans and **RESOLVED *nem con* that the statement be supported.**

C117/20 **Working Group Notes**

i) Community Enhancement – 3rd March 2022

Cllr Sally Dickson introduced the report to Council from the Community Enhancement Working Group which had taken place on 3rd March 2022. It was positive news regarding the Farnham in Bloom Launch and the tree planting day. It was an honour to be chosen again as finalists in RHS Britain in Bloom for the South East Region. The Working Group would be looking at possibly changing the route to show out-of-town projects/initiatives moving forward.

ii) Strategy and Finance – 8th March 2022

Cllr John Neale introduced the report to Council of the meeting of 8th March 2022.

In terms of contracts and assets a number of recommendations were made. These were noted in the minutes of the meeting but to summarise the main points: It was proposed to switch to a modern combined radio/smart phone with a dedicated app to ease the flow of information and increase safety when working alone. This would be beneficial for the management of the outside workforce and at a reasonable cost over two years.

The Working Group had reviewed options for replacement grass cutting machines and there were options for battery powered alternatives but these were disproportionately costly. A like-for-like replacement was considered the best alternative until costs for battery operated machines lessened.

Other recommendations were supported but it was noted that they were waiting for assurance from the insurers regarding the use of personal equipment to confirm whether the use of personal equipment by the outside workforce was permitted and to

ensure that the Council was covered for any risk. The Council would want to inspect and service any machinery if permitted to be used on an ad-hoc basis.

Council noted the Working Group would be revisiting the options for solar panels. Cllr Paula Dunsmore was also working with officers on options for the remodeling of the Hale Chapels into a Community Garden.

In terms of the review of Council Policies, the Model Code of Conduct developed by the Local Government Association in discussion with NALC was considered. It had been adopted by Waverley Borough Council and it was proposed that it be adopted by the Town Council with changes relating to referring issues to the Town Clerk rather than the Monitoring Officer for Town Council matters. The Town Clerk would be arranging a training session tailored for Town and Parish Councillors in due course.

Detailed debate on the Farnham Infrastructure Programme (FIP) would be taken in exempt session. In summary, Surrey County Council had prepared sifted options detailed in the exempt papers. Councillors wanted to ensure that there was appropriate consultation on the options before finalizing the any option that was taken forward. It was noted a meeting outlining the options had only taken place the proceeding day and a paper tabled (and circulated by email) for consideration.

Council was presented with some potential signage for the 20mph zone in Castle Street, although the quality of what was shared was poor. There was concern about the position of the signs and proposed build outs within the conservation area and their proximity to the listed buildings and structures and it was felt the zone should be moved further up Castle Street. It wasn't felt that 'Farnham Town Council' or its crest needed to be included on the sign. Cllr MacLeod said any signage would be temporary so that they could be moved if circumstances changed. Council felt it should not be dictated to by Surrey County Council and it was felt the views previously expressed had not been taken on board. Cllr Hesse presented another proposal for temporary signs which, after further discussion, was the preferred option of those seen. It was noted the 20mph zone would come into force in the summer and would be in place for a minimum of 2years. Signs on the road surface would also depict 20mph in addition to the signs.

The Conservation Area Task Group had agreed a list of actions for each of the conservation area improvements be prepared. Cllr Brian Edmonds and Carole Cockburn would be meeting with Sophie Piper at Waverley Borough Council to discuss further.

Contracts and Assets:

It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:

- 1. The purchase of 10 new Boxchip S900A phones at a cost of £6,450 the 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 be agreed**
- 2. The replacement of the two uneconomic mowers with 2 Scag Freedom Z machines at a cost of £16,000 from the new machinery budget 2021/22 be agreed.**

3. The purchase of a Mosquito 2 sweeper at a cost of £4,000 from the 2021/22 environmental initiatives budget be agreed.
4. The purchase of Arboricultural PPE at a cost of approximately £600 for one full kit for each of two staff members with a view to recharging the staff members a percentage of the cost if they were to leave within two years be agreed with the cost to be met from 2021/22 PPE budget.
5. A polytunnel for the rear of the Depot be purchased at a cost of £800; and
6. The demolition of the Gostrey Meadow pavilion at a maximum cost of £3,492 be progressed with the cost met from the Property Maintenance and refurbishment budget

Finance:

It was **RESOLVED** *nem con* that:

7. The Summary Income and Expenditure to the end of February with an anticipated end of year surplus be noted.
8. A grant of up to £1,000 from the 2021/22 balance be earmarked for the Fringe Festival subject to further information being received. (amendment proposed by Cllr Beaman and seconded by Cllr Hesse and agreed to refer to “up to”)

Review of Council Policies:

It was **RESOLVED** *nem con* that:

9. 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; and
10. All councillors attend training on the code and their responsibilities.

20mph signage:

11. It was proposed by Cllr John Neale, seconded by Cllr David Beaman and it was **RESOLVED**, with Cllr Fraser objecting, that temporary gateway signage be implemented similar to that proposed by Cllr Hesse and subject to location being agreed by the Waverley heritage officer and Historic England.

C118/20 Planning and Licensing Applications

Cllr ‘Scotty’ Fraser introduced the report and the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Licensing Consultative Group held on 7th and 21st February and 7th March. There had had been around 151 applications considered with 10 being controversial and 34 needing more detailed review.

Council noted there continued to be issues with the Waverley Planning Portal to access information and that there was also not enough time from receiving applications to comment on them adequately. Council noted that without the Local Plan Part 2 being agreed the Town continued to be at risk.

C119/20 Actions taken under the Scheme of Delegation

There were no actions to report.

C120/20 Reports from Other Councils

- i) Cllr MacLeod advised that following a recent OFSTED inspection SCC Children & Families service was no longer ‘in Intervention’. He also advised that SCC Members

were concerned about removing highways matters from the Local Committee and were making representations.

- ii) Cllr Cockburn advised that there had been a recent presentation at Waverley Borough Council on the AONB review. Of particular note was the positive response to the suggestion of joining the areas from Tice's Meadow, Frensham, Dockenfield and Rowledge to the National Park. Further information was awaited.
- iii) Cllr Cockburn advised that the Farnham Design Statement had been with Waverley since October and a meeting was planned to get a response on any changes needed.

C121/20 **Reports from Outside Bodies**

Cllr Cockburn advised she had attended a webinar arranged by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) regarding updating neighborhood plans using Design Codes. She would bring any further information to the next Strategy and Finance meeting.

C122/20 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was agreed as 28th April 2022 at 7pm. The date of the Annual Town Meeting of Electors was noted as being 31st March 2022.

At 10.05pm, it was agreed for the meeting to be adjourned to hold the Meeting of the South Street Trust.

The meeting reconvened at 10.10pm. Councillors Wicks, Evans and Cockburn had left at this point.

C123/20 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

It was agreed that the Press and Public be excluded for discussion of options prepared by consultants working for Surrey CC that were confidential as they were still in draft.

C124/20 **Any confidential matters arising from discussions of the Working Group notes.**

Council noted there were complex changes to roads proposed. The proposed changes to the gyratory at phase two were feasible.

It was noted that the Phase 3 was an aspiration and there was both positive and negative feelings towards closing off roads. There would be further discussion with local businesses.

It was proposed by Cllr Beaman, seconded by Cllr Dickson and **RESOLVED, with two abstentions, that the Upper Hart Link proposal be moved to the second option.** Councillors Neale and Attfield abstained from the vote.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 10.32 pm