



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

A

Minutes Council

Time and date

7.00 pm on Thursday 18th May, 2023

Place

Council Chamber - Farnham Town Hall

Councillors

Councillor Alan Earwaker (Mayor)
Michaela Wicks (Deputy Mayor) items 1-9
Councillor Brodie Mauluka (Deputy Mayor) from item 9
Councillor David Beaman
Councillor Mat Brown
Councillor Sally Dickson
Councillor Tony Fairclough
Councillor George Hesse
Councillor Chris Jackman
Councillor Andrew Laughton
Councillor Mark Merryweather
Councillor Kika Mirylees
Councillor George Murray
Councillor John Ward
Councillor Graham White
Councillor Tim Woodhouse

Apologies for absence

Michaela Martin

Officers Present:

Iain Lynch (Town Clerk)
Michael Stephens (Town Crier)

There were 30 members of the public and 1 member of the press in attendance.

Prior to the meeting, prayers were led by Revd Dr Michael Hopkins of the Spire Church.

C1/23 Election of the Town Mayor 2023/24

The Mayor handed the chair to the retiring Deputy Mayor Michaela Wicks for this item.

Cllr Merryweather proposed and Cllr Murray seconded Cllr Alan Earwaker to continue as Mayor for 2023-24.

In proposing Cllr Merryweather said he was delighted to speak in favour of Cllr Earwaker. The Mayor had two distinct roles as ambassador upholding the character of the town and supporting Council in carrying out its role. In the previous two years, supported wonderfully by Claire as Mayoress, Cllr Earwaker had represented Farnham Town Council superbly; supporting his charities and excelling in chairing meetings fairly and effectively. Council is incredibly lucky to have such an able Mayor and to his credit Council wishes to have him continue for 2023-24. In seconding the proposal, Cllr Murray echoed what had been said. Having seen Cllr Earwaker in action he was an incredible Mayor and a sage-like figure with helpful advice for all councillors.

There being no other nominations, it was **RESOLVED *nem con* that Cllr Alan Earwaker be Mayor for 2023-24.**

C2/23 **Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Mayor**

Having made his declaration of acceptance of office, Cllr Earwaker said he was deeply honoured and grateful to have been elected as the Mayor of Farnham for a third year and expressed his sincere gratitude for Council's trust and support. It was a great privilege to be able to serve Farnham's wonderful community for another year and to work with all councillors at the start of the new administration.

The focus following the pandemic was "working together with the community, reviving Farnham". Strong foundations had been built, but there was more to do. The Mayor had been pleased to support his two charities, Farnham Assist and the Waverley Abbey Trust and had presented them both with a cheque for £2,500 towards their excellent work.

Cllr Earwaker said that as a theme for his new Mayoral year, he would focus on young people and how they can be better connected with each other and the Council. Farnham's youth is the future of the town, and he would offer what assistance he could to organisations across Farnham who support young people to ensure that they have improved support and opportunities to thrive. T

The Mayor looked forward to working with every one to make Farnham an even better place to live, work, and raise a family.

The Mayor presented the badge of office of Mayoress to his daughter, Mrs Alison Watts and resumed chairing the meeting.

C3/23 **Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Mrs Michaela Martin.

C4/23 **Disclosures of Interest**

There were no disclosures of interest.

C5/23 **Minutes**

The Minutes were deferred to the first business meeting of Council on 25th May.

C6/23 **Town Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor began his announcements by congratulating all councillors on their election and commiserating with long-serving councillor Carole Cockburn who had not been re-elected. He announced the sad news of former Mayor Victor Duckett who had died and whose funeral was on 23rd May, and that former Mayor and Leader Pat Evans was in hospital having broken her hip. He would pass on the good wishes of Council for a speedy recovery.

The Mayor was delighted to conclude with news that the Farnham Youth Choir had won a Gold Medal in the International Choirs Competition held in Hull the previous weekend.

C7/23 **Presentation of Councillor badges to new Councillors**

The Mayor presented all new councillors with a Farnham badge of office of councillor.

C8/23 **Presentation of Past Mayoress' Badge**

The Mayor presented a past Mayoress' Badge and a bunch of flowers to Mrs Claire Earwaker Dos Reis for her support as Mayoress over the past two years.

The Mayor also presented a bunch of flowers to the outgoing Deputy Mayor, Michaela Wicks, for her assistance between 2021-2023.

C9/23 **Election of Deputy Mayor**

Cllr George Hesse proposed, seconded by Cllr Kika Mirylees, that Cllr Brodie Mauluka be Deputy Mayor for 2023-24. Cllr Hesse said that he had known Cllr Mauluka for seven years and had always enjoyed the music nights he put on at the Plough. Before coming to Farnham, he was working in Hampshire Youth Service and had a great passion for helping young people. He had no hesitation in commending him as Deputy Mayor. Cllr Mirylees agreed and said Cllr Mauluka would be a great asset to the Mayor and the Council.

There being no other nominations, it was **RESOLVED *nem con* that Cllr Brodie Mauluka be Deputy Mayor for 2023-24.**

C10/23 **Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Deputy Mayor**

After making his declaration of office and receiving his badge of office, Cllr Mauluka thanked Council for welcoming him so warmly and for giving him the honour and opportunity to be Deputy Mayor. He was looking forward to supporting the Mayor in carrying out his duties and serving the people of Farnham. He said it was a little daunting, but he was sure it would also be a very exciting year ahead.

The Mayor presented Mrs Caroline Mauluka with the badge of office of Mayoress.

C11/23 **Appointment of Leader or Spokesperson of the Council**

Cllr Ward proposed, seconded by Cllr Laughton, the continuation of a Joint Leader for the Year ahead with Cllr Graham White as Leader of the Council and Lead Member of Strategy & Resources and Cllr David Beaman as the lead for the Farnham Infrastructure Programme.

He explained the background to the importance of having a spokesperson who held a position of responsibility and as such the role of Leader avoided having a fallback situation

with a 'spokesperson' who, in many organisations is there because someone did not wish to face the public.

With the arrival of the Farnham Infrastructure Programme (FIP) and the amount of money to be invested in the town the job of Leader had become more than was appropriate for one person. Cllr Graham White had a strong business background and was an ideal leader with common sense, drive and the common touch. Cllr Beaman was an experienced councillor and had carried the FIP burden with ease in the past year and Cllr Ward was pleased he had agreed to take it on for another year.

It was **RESOLVED *nem con*** that **Cllr Graham White be Joint Leader of the Council and Lead Member of Strategy & Resources Working Group and Cllr David Beaman be the Joint Leader and Lead for the Farnham Infrastructure Programme.**

C12/23 Adoption of the General Power of Competence

Council considered the report at Appendix C, noting the requirement to readopt the General Power of Competence following the recent election. The Mayor confirmed that Farnham Town Council met the eligibility criteria as i) all councillors held office as a result of being declared elected (as opposed to being appointed or co-opted); ii) the Town Clerk was suitably qualified (holding the Certificate in Local Council Administration -CILCA) and iii) the Town Clerk had completed the relevant training in the exercise of the power.

It was **RESOLVED *nem con*** that **Farnham Town Council confirms that it is eligible to use the General Power of Competence and readopts the General Power of Competence as a power of first resort.**

C13/23 Appointment of Town Council's representative on the Farnham Infrastructure Board.

The Mayor advised that Council had appointed Cllr Beaman to lead on the Farnham Infrastructure Programme in the year ahead. It was **RESOLVED *nem con*** that **Cllr Beaman would become the Town Council representative on the Farnham Infrastructure Programme Board, along with the Town Clerk.**

C14/23 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Council was agreed as 25th May 2023.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 7.45

Chairman

Date