



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

B

Notes Community Working Group

Time and date

10.00 am on Wednesday 10th January, 2024

Place

Council Chamber - Farnham Town Hall

Community Working Group Members Present:

Councillor David Beaman
Councillor Alan Earwaker (ex-Officio)
Councillor George Hesse
Councillor Andrew Laughton
Councillor Brodie Mauluka
Councillor Kika Mirylees
Councillor Graham White

Officers: Oliver Cluskey and Iain Lynch (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies

No apologies were received.

2. Disclosures of Interests

None were made.

3. Notes of the last meeting

The notes to the last meeting were agreed.

4. Recent Events

a) October Craft Month

Members were informed that there were over 100 events throughout the event with 40 free of charge and 90% of attendees rating them 'excellent'. A dedicated Social Media co-ordinator had been recruited for the first time which resulted in adding 200 followers to the Instagram page and a much more professional looking profile.

- b) Christmas Lights switch on
Despite challenging weather conditions in the lead up and on the day of the event, members agreed that the event had been a great success and noted the importance of the 500 performers from local schools and theatre groups in making it such a great Community event. A capacity crowd in Gostrey Meadow witnessed the switch on moment as well as a carefully orchestrated marriage proposal on stage.
Members noted that with many of the lights failing due to age, the Christmas lights were being tendered in 2024 with bids for sale or lease being welcomed.
- c) Christmas Market
Members agreed that despite no train service and rain in the morning, the turn out was once again very good with positive feedback from stallholders. The new circular Hoppa Bus route proved very popular on both North and South runs. Members discussed the impact of the FIP on this route with Park Road closed for traffic. The proposed FIP changes including raised kerbs in Castle Street would greatly reduce the number of stalls from 2025. There could also be potential issues with pavement licensing for cafes and restaurants using space previously used for stalls. This could potentially be lifted for special events. Members discussed potential use of Brightwells but it was suggested that this may depend on whether Surrey CC would charge a fee.

5. Future Events and Projects

- a) Music in the Vineyard
Members agreed to not book Music in the Vineyard in March as it clashed with Easter Sunday. January and February were booked with the Vic Cracknell Swing band and the Revivals Band.
- b) Literary Festival
Members were informed that the Literary Festival programme was almost complete apart from a small number of events from partners waiting to be received. Members discussed aspirations for the Festival which was in its third year in 2024. Members agreed that the Literary Festival was a great opportunity to support the arts, educate and promote literature throughout the Town.
- c) Walking Festival
The Events Manager expressed the need to get walk leaders to help co-ordinate. An email had been sent to previous leaders. Members agreed that there should be more focus should on Farnham based walks.
- d) Music in the Meadow
Members agreed to an extended Music in the Meadow 'Folk Festival' to highlight the traditions and sustain the identity of Britain particularly in rural communities. Members discussed ideas of Morris dancing workshops for children, selling ale from local companies and starting the day with traditional folk music then gradually building up to modern folk music.
- e) Sustainability Festival
The Events Manager was due to have a first meeting with Farnham Community Farm and had no further update.
- f) Chillout Picnic
Members agreed to the proposed dates for the Chillout Picnic.
- 18th May, 15th June, 20th July, 17th August

Members discussed possibility of an alcohol vendor but it was agreed that people could bring their own and there would be more unnecessary licensing responsibility. Members noted the need to have license amended with limited Event days in existing license.

- g) Proms and Pop in the Park
Members agreed that the Change of name to 'Proms' had helped attract more people to the Carnival weekend event. Members noted the additional expense of a larger stage to accommodate an Orchestra.
- h) Gin and Fizz Festival
With the Maltings not available in September, Surrey Gin Festival in Loseley Park scheduled for 7th September, Members agreed to not proceed with the Gin festival in 2024.
- i) Markets
West Street Market
Members discussed again residents' concerns on vehicular access but agreed that due to safety concerns there should be no vehicular access under any circumstances apart from Emergency Vehicles. Members agreed to consider moving the market to Brightwells if it were an option.
- j) Activities for younger people
Members discussed that some of the £90K allocation in the precept for young people could be used to underpin activities over holiday periods and would be a way of extending provision and allow the funding to go further/be more sustainable than if Farnham Town Council were to just put on events.

Members were informed that in a recent visit to Reel Cinema, initial discussions were had around them hosting a gaming competition in partnership with Farnham Town Council. Members discussed the possibility of creating a Farnham Gaming convention and contacting local developers.

Members agreed to conducting research to determine what young people want and not work on assumption.

6. World Craft Town

Members discussed the key priorities for 2024-25 and aspirations for longer term. These objectives were only made possible with the higher budget allocation that had been agreed. Members were informed that there was now budget to keep the Craft Co-ordinator on throughout the year.

Members discussed the need for a more visual presence in and around Farnham and to improve the general marketing. Members noted that there were plans to have a Farnham Craft Town leaflet created for those visiting Farnham and who may not necessarily be comfortable using a mobile phone.

Members agreed to investigate the possibility of having a sculpture on Coxbridge roundabout to highlight Farnham as a World Craft Town and a destination for Craft.

Members discussed the idea of a Light Festival whereby local schools and craft groups created lanterns that were to be lit in Gostrey Meadow on 31st October to mark All Hallows day and also the end of Craft Month.

7. BID

Members noted that the BID ballot was successful in October and that the company was in the process of recruiting Directors as well as a new Town Centre Manager. It was also noted that the BID were keen to set up a new communication system called DISC that would help combat shoplifting which had become an issue recently.

8. Sponsorship

Members noted current sponsorship position and target for 2024. Two potential sponsors were suggested. Members noted that a non-financial agreement with Reel cinema had already been made whereby they had an advert in the Residents' guide in return for two advert films (Literary Festival and volunteers recruitment) on their screens.

9. Budget

Members commended the current budget position.

10. Community Update

Councillors received an update on younger people and community wellbeing issues.

Members noted that a Young People Directory for Farnham Town Council's website was currently under construction but still required further development by the website contractor. The directory would contain both activities and service providers for young people in Farnham. It is hoped that the directory would be up and running within the next month.

Members noted that the next Younger People Task Group meeting would take place on Friday 19 January at 10am with Andy Jeffery, Town Clerk at Godalming Town Council, giving a presentation on Godalming's youth service and what may be replicable in Farnham.

11. Community Grant Allocations 2024-25

I Service Level Agreements (SLA) 2024-25

The following SLA grant allocations with key partners were agreed by the Community Group for recommendation to Council, with Space2grow becoming an SLA partner organization. SLA organisations are those that receive a contribution to general running costs and projects on a regular basis and are subject to an agreement for what will be delivered. It was agreed that organisations with community buildings (Hale Community Centre, 40 Degreez and Brightwells Gostrey Centre) would receive a general contribution to running costs of £5,000. It was agreed that the SLA grants would not receive a specific inflationary increase. Consideration was given as to whether SLA organisations should receive a 2-year commitment of funding but agreed that that SLA grant recipients continue to provide an annual review of their work and requirements.

Organisation	SLA (Provisional allocations) 24/25
Farnham Maltings	£10,000
Citizens Advice South West Surrey (CASWS)	£20,000
40 degreez	£5,000 (for general running costs only)
Hale Community Centre	£5,000 (for general running costs only)
Hoppa Community Transport in Farnham	£10,000
Brightwells Gostrey Centre	£5,000 (for general running costs only)
Space2grow	£4,000
TOTAL	£59,000

2 Community Grant allocations 2024-25

The following Community Grant allocations, totalling £16,895 were agreed by the Community Working Group for recommendation to Council. Community grants are for one-off projects up to a maximum of £2,000.

Name of organisation	Farnham Town Council proposal
Badshot Lea Community Association	£1,100.00
Challengers	£1,320.00
Creative Response	£1,500
FADEG. Farnham Art & Design Education Group	£600.00
Farnham Assist	£600.00
Farnham Brass Band	£195.00
Farnham Voices Together Community Choir	£800.00
Farnham Youth Choir	£1,000.00
Green Up Britain	£415.00 (to come from FIB budget)
Hale Carnival Committee	£1,000.00 (to come from Events budget)
Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity	£1,000
Hive Helpers CIC	£750.00
Home-Start in Waverley	£1,500.00
Kind To Mind	£500
New Ashgate Gallery Trust Ltd	£2,000.00
Rowledge Tennis Club	£1,000.00
Rural Life Living Museum	£1,030.00
Weydon School	£1,500.00
Wrecclesham Fete	£500.00
TOTAL	£16,895

3 Further information required before funding agreed

Councillors requested that further information be sought from the following two community grant applicants before their requests could be considered:

Farnham Hygiene Bank (£1,000)

Whilst sympathetic to the cause, Councillors considered that the project, which was a request to fund storage space, was not eligible for community grant funding.

Since the Communities Working Group meeting, the Farnham Hygiene Bank have confirmed that a new storage space in Weybourne has been sourced with the assistance of Waverley Borough Council, so funding is no longer required.

Sight for Surrey (£750)

Grant funding to support monthly 'Meet Up & Catch Up' events across the county across 3-5 venues to enable the sensory impaired to meet socially. Councillors requested further information about where the Meet Up events would be taking place in Waverley, as no Farnham venue was confirmed.

Clarity was also sought following the low figure given for the percentage of people who live in Farnham that would benefit from the project (3.5%) whilst also stating that Sight for Surrey currently have 306 active clients in Farnham.

A decision on funding allocation, if any, to be made once further information is received.

4 Additional grant considerations

Farnham Repair Café (£1,000)

Councillors considered a grant request of £1,000 to support the 3rd UK Repair Café 1 day conference scheduled to take place at the Art Workers Guild in London in 2024. The grant would be used to contribute towards venue/catering costs, marketing and PR and travel/accommodation costs for staff.

Recommendation: That the full grant of £1,000 be given from the Community Initiatives Fund, however, the grant money should primarily be used towards the promotion and development of the Repair Café in Farnham with a portion of the grant to go towards the conference.

Farnham Youth Choir (FYC) (Up to £5,000)

Councillors considered making an additional contribution to Farnham Youth Choir to support a bursary for those who would not otherwise be able to attend the prestigious World Choir Games being held in New Zealand this summer. Since the Communities Working Group meeting took place, the Farnham Youth Choir sent in a proposal for an FTC funding contribution of £4,000.

Currently the trip will cost £4,029 per singer which includes flights, accommodation for seven nights in Auckland, their competition entries, food, transport, staff costs and insurance.

Fundraising activities to date have reduced the cost of this tour to £3,407 per singer. The FYC has so far secured £4,000 from crowdfunding.

30 singers have committed to travel to Auckland, of whom five are receiving financial support from the choir's funds, and a further five singers wish to travel but are unable to raise the required funds.

A grant of £4,000 could be used to subsidise all 30 singers who are currently committed and this would reduce everyone's cost by £133 to £3,304. Alternatively, an additional grant of £4,000 could be used to support the costs of those who receive a bursary for their termly subscriptions due to their financial circumstances.

Recommendation: to recommend up to £5,000 towards the costs of a bursary contribution to enable financially challenged choir members take advantage of being part of the World Choir Games. The Working Group had provisionally recommended £2,000 (subject to the formal request being received). *[After the meeting a formal request for £4,000 was received and was recommended by Strategy & Resources for approval]*

I Choose Freedom (Women's Refuge) (£2,000)

I Choose Freedom provide refuge to victims of Domestic Abuse. Councillors considered a grant of £2,000 to support children whilst they are in refuge to help them work through their trauma with play therapy. The grant would cover art, craft and play equipment.

Due to safeguarding the location of the refuge cannot be disclosed but they do fall within the required geographical catchment area.

The Community Working Group recommendation to Council is to fund £2,000 requested from the 2023/24 Community Initiatives Fund.