



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

A

Minutes Council

Time and date

7.00pm on Thursday 16 July 2009

Place

The Council Chamber, South Street, Farnham

- * Cllr L Fleming (Town Mayor)
- * Cllr J Ward (Deputy Town Mayor)
- * Cllr G Beel
- * Cllr D Attfield
- o Cllr C Cockburn
- * Cllr V Duckett
- o Cllr (Mrs) P Frost
- o Cllr R Frost
- * Cllr C Genziani
- o Cllr G Hargreaves
- o Cllr S Hill
- o Cllr D Le Gal
- * Cllr A Lovell
- * Cllr J Maines (arrived 7.40 pm)
- * Cllr S O'Grady
- o Cllr R Steel
- * Cllr C Storey
- * Cllr A Thorp (arrived 7.07 pm)

- * Present
- o Apologies for absence

Officers Present:

Roland Potter (Town Clerk)
Ginny Gordon (Receptionist/Farmers' Market Co-ordinator)
Sheila Rayner (Town Centre Development)

C 041/09 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Cockburn, R Frost, Mrs P Frost, G Hargreaves, S Hill, D Le Gal and R Steel.

C042/09 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Name of Councillor	Agenda Item	Subject	Type of Interest	Reason
G Beel	6	SANGS	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
C Cockburn	6	SANGS	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
V Duckett	6	SANGS	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
L Fleming	6	SANGS	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
L Fleming	6	SANGS	Personal	Residence in Farnham Park
A Lovell	6	SANGS	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
S O'Grady	6	SANGS	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
A Thorp	6	SANGS	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
A Lovell	6	SANGS	Personal	Residence backs onto Farnham Park
J Ward	6	SANGS	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
V Duckett	10	Isabella Schroder Trust	Personal	Knows one of the Trustees

C043/09 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Farnham Town Council meeting held on 25 June 2009 were signed by the Town Mayor as a correct record.

C 044/09 STATEMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

Celia Sanders – resident of the Bourne	Spoke on Agenda Item 6
David Seel – resident of the Bourne	Spoke on Agenda Item 7

C 045/09 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor announced the death of Chris Mansell on Sunday 12 July 2009. Mr Mansell was a former Waverley Borough Council and Farnham Town Councillor. The Town Mayor said that he had been a great asset to the Town Council and would be sadly missed. A thanksgiving service was held on Friday 17 July at St Thomas in the Bourne Church at 2.00 pm.

The Town Mayor announced that she was running the charity tea tent at the next band concert in Gostrey Meadow, Sunday 19 July and any donations of cakes would be greatly appreciated.

The Mayor informed the meeting that the statue in The Lion and Lamb Yard had been taken away for cleaning and she had arranged with the Manager of the yard to have the plinth for the day, between 10.00 – 4.00. The Mayor stated she would be happy to consider any suggestions in order to raise money for her chosen charities. As part of the fundraising activity the Mayor planned to sit in a small bath tub for the day, to raise money for her charity for the year, Gostrey Centre at Brightwells.

Part 1 – Items for Decision

C 046/09 WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL CONSULTATION ON THE THAMES BASIN HEATHS SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA DRAFT AVOIDANCE STRATEGY

Before Members considered the report Mrs Celia Sanders a resident of The Bourne addressed the meeting.

Mrs Sanders congratulated the Town Council on its well considered and thorough response to the consultation.

Mrs Sanders asked if the Council could add more emphasis on the issue of the delay in implementing any substantial measures in Waverley's Air Quality Action Plan. Mrs Sanders informed the meeting that poor air quality results from traffic congestion and that this would only get worse if the consultation did not recognise that increases to the current population of Farnham and to traffic would be detrimental to the health of the townspeople and to those who visit the town.

Members received a report on a consultation from Waverley Borough Council on the expansion of SANGS in Farnham Park which formed Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Draft Avoidance Strategy.

The report identified the status of the area which was located adjacent to Farnham at the top of Folly Hill. In order to protect the habitats of protected species, housing development was not permitted within a 5 km zone of the boundary of the area.

The report identified that in order to permit development within Farnham, Waverley Borough Council had agreed to develop a Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) located in Farnham Park.

The report identified the issues raised at a Members Workshop on the Consultation Document to extend the SANGS to allow further development within Farnham.

The Workshop identified several issues and concerns regarding the consultation.

- This would be a precursor to further development
- This would be a precursor to the loss of green open spaces – the loss of the strategic gap
- There was a concern that the loss of the Park would contribute to the loss of identity for Farnham and its Town Centre
- Members were not convinced that Farnham Park was a true and viable alternative

- This consultation was in direct conflict with the principles of the previous local plan to protect the Park and its surrounding area.
- Members believed this was a Waverley issue focused on Farnham as the housing allocation for the district had been used up in Farnham in 21 months (i.e. 567 new dwellings had received planning permission to date)

Members discussed the current level of new development taking place in Farnham and raised their concern over the speed in which the development was taking place.

Members confirmed that the Town Council was currently working on a Design Statement to help protect and preserve the areas of Farnham that have existing policy and areas that do not have any policy to protect them.

Members expressed concern that, until Waverley Borough Council had produced its Local Development Framework, there would be no protection against new development.

Members suggested that it would be sensible to wait until there was scientific evidence to prove that the SANGS worked before allowing more SANGS to be created and therefore allowing time for the Local Development Framework to be completed, along with the Farnham Design Statement. This would ensure that the correct protection was in place before more development could take place.

Members expressed concern that to identify and put in place SANGS now, before an effective Local Development Framework was in place would be premature and detrimental to Farnham.

Farnham Town Council's Design Statement was crucial in identifying and protecting Farnham to ensure it retained its special character and identity and was allowed to develop within that criteria.

Members expressed concern that increasing the SANGS at Farnham Park would have such a dynamic impact on the town that the Town Council needs to be confident that SANGS work. Such issues as development growth, traffic, schools and transport infrastructure would only be taken into account once the Local Development Framework was in place, therefore any development that was allowed to take place now would not have to take these issues into account. This would put Farnham under considerable risk of losing its character and individuality.

Members considered the responses to the consultation which are attached to the minutes.

Councillor V Duckett proposed and Councillor D Atfield seconded that Farnham Town Council's responses to the SANGS Consultation be submitted with minor amendments to Waverley Borough Council.

Resolved:
That Farnham Town Council's responses to the SANGS Consultation be submitted with minor amendments to Waverley Borough Council. (Farnham Town Council's responses attached to the record minutes)

Before Members considered the report, Mr David Seel a resident of The Bourne addressed the meeting

Mr David Seel informed the meeting that in his opinion

- Approval would bring planning process into disrepute and is also contrary to government guidance, which is against incremental expansion, which is what we are up against here.
- Noise. Planning conditions to limit further deterioration and noise environment have not been proposed. TAG (Transport Aviation Group) claim that a new generation of aircraft will be less noisy than previous generation, but there is some doubt as to how noise should be properly measured in terms of its annoyance factor.
- The increase in third party risk; there exists around Farnborough a public safety zone which has a contour drawn up to represent the risk of one death in a 100,000 aircraft movements and obviously this will be seriously affected if the plans to double flying from Farnborough go ahead.
- The final point which interests us all is the negative impact of increasing flying upon property values. The understanding is that the Land Compensation Act is being investigated by FARA (Farnborough Aerodrome Residents' Association) to establish whether it applies to the problems resulting from increasing flying from Farnborough. The increased movements at London's other major airports would result in increasing pressure on airports like Farnborough which the government might regard as a 'soft option'. Farnborough is located in a densely populated area and it would not be appropriate for increased commercial flying.

Members considered the application and raised the following concerns and issues:

There was general recognition of the intrusive impact which overflying already has on Farnham and particularly to the areas to the north west of the town.

Members expressed concerns about the levels of future flying anticipated in the Master Plan. The area had already experienced a doubling of flight movements in recent years to the extent that was now noticeably intrusive. The prospect of a further doubling to 50,000 ATM during the next 10 years was considered unacceptable and would represent a noticeable reduction in quality of life for residents of the Farnham area.

Doubling of flights would have a very significant impact that would be detrimental to the residential amenity of the area and cause a deterioration in the environment.

Members expressed concerns about the potential increase in traffic travelling to and from the airport particularly on the A325.

Members noted the Town Council's previous responses to the TAG Consultation together with the comments of the local Residents' Associations.

Members commented this was an aggressive expansion, which needed action. The Members noted that Waverley Borough Council were opposing the action and Members felt their objection needed strengthening and it would be helpful if some kind of expertise were enlisted to strengthen the response.

(7.40 pm Councillor Maines arrived and apologised for being late)

The Town Clerk suggested that the Members who had worked on the previous response worked with the Officers to put a response together, as the deadline for the response was the 27 July 2009. The response would be put together based on what had been said in the Town Council's previous letter together with the comments from the Council meeting to build a more formal response in more detail.

Resolved:

- 1. That the Council objects to the application.**
- 2. That Members be invited to form a Task Group to help co-ordinate a response to support the objections.**
- 3. The response would be sent to Rushmoor Borough Council, Waverley Borough Council and Surrey County Council.**
- 4. That the Task Group consist of Councillors Hill and Lovell and any other Members who wished to attend.**

C 048/09 TELEPHONE & RECORDING SYSTEM

Members were asked to consider a report from Corporate Development and Audit Working Group on the replacement of the telephone exchange and improvements to the IT infrastructure. These improvements would include a facility to record all incoming and outgoing external calls.

The report explained that the Town Council has already approved the replacement of the Council's current Siemens telephone exchange which had now reached the limit of its capacity.

The Corporate Development and Audit Working Group had received requests from the Cemeteries and the Tourism Working Groups to consider the installation of a recording system for telephone calls.

This request has been considered after the Council's Officers have had to deal with an increasing number of aggressive and rude telephone calls, together with accusations of misleading and inaccurate information being supplied by the Officers.

Two quotes had been obtained from telecommunications companies with three options to include the already approved improvements to the telephone exchange and IT infrastructure and in addition to include a telephone recording system:

The cost of Option1 including cabling was £11,716

The cost of Option 2 was £11,776 plus the cost of cabling £3,994. Total cost £15,770

The cost of Option 3 was £14,377 plus the cost of cabling £3,994. Total cost £18,331

The Town Clerk explained that the current office telephone system was run off 15 – 20 metre patch leads as opposed to systems being attached to the walls with short leads, to connect to computers.

The current wires for the computers were hanging from the server and the ceiling to connect up behind Officers' desks.

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that the issue of Health and Safety regarding the wiring had to be addressed in order to make the working area safe.

The Town Clerk explained that the bulk of the cost was to make the current Council offices safe, however the move into the reception area required some extra work to put in 2 new points and running one cable from Farnham Town Council's system into Waverley Borough Council's system to allow us to connect into the Waverley Borough Council IT system.

The Town Clerk explained that an additional cost of £2,600 approximately would allow Farnham Town Council to have 4 members of staff, to work remotely i.e. for business continuity in case of a pandemic.

The cost of a new telephone exchange which Farnham Town Council would need to purchase as current system is starting to fail was approximately £4,500. The Town Clerk informed the meeting that there would be an additional cost if the Council were to approve the Cemeteries Working Group and Tourism Working Group request to have all external received and outgoing telephone calls recorded.

Councillor A Thorp asked the following points:

- If the spectrum of prices for each option would be able to deliver against the Town Council's requirements.
- Had each specification been seen to know if they would suit Farnham Town Council's requirements.
- Was it known if introducing a new connection would be compatible with the existing IT.

The Town Clerk clarified the different options as follows:

- The first option was an enhancement and extension of the current system so the functions were known. Unfortunately, Option 1 was from the company which had not been able to get back to Farnham Town Council in time with the particular answers needed to ensure all three quotes are compatible. Most telecommunications suppliers do not supply recording equipment, but have to buy it as an "add on" from another company.
- Option 2 was basically a straight forward replacement of our current system, but just a different make.
- Option 3 had not been seen in full, but had received good advertising in national papers and was a complete all in one system.

Councillor D Attfield commented that the telephone handsets did not need to be replaced, but a few new extra ones could be bought and the switchboard replaced and recording equipment bought. The enhancement of the existing system would be the cheapest option. Councillor Attfield questioned the ability of the supplier to supply the goods within the timescale.

Members recommended that the project be delegated to a small group of Members to work with the Town Clerk to review quotes and obtain additional information where necessary, make an assessment and have delegated authority to purchase the best value system on behalf of the Council.

Members considered potential budgets and the Town Clerk explained that the highest potential cost for the project would be £18,331 with £3,000 costs for maintenance, but clarification would be sought on the maintenance costs.

Councillor A Thorp proposed and Councillor V Duckett seconded a budget of up to £20,000 be identified from Reserves for the project. and that each supplier should be requested to demonstrate how their system would fulfil the Town Council's requirement.

Resolved:

- **That a Task Group of Members to include Councillors D Attfield, G Beel C Genziani, S O'Grady, and J Ward review the three options for a new telecommunications and IT system for the Town Council.**
- **That the Telecommunications companies be invited to present their options to the Task Group.**
- **That the Task Group have delegated authority to assess and choose the most appropriate system for the Town Council with a budget of up to £20k to be taken from earmarked reserves.**

C 049/09 WORKING GROUP UPDATES

Members received the notes of the Corporate Development and Audit Working Group Meetings held on 18 June 2009 and 7 July 2009.

C 050/09 ISABELLA SCHRODER TRUST – NOMINATED TRUSTEE

Members received a request from the Isabella Schroder Trust, to nominate two Trustees.

The Trust had nominated Mr Skeet and Col Crawford.

Resolved:

That the nominations of Mr Skeet and Col Crawford be approved as Trustees of the Isabella Schroder Trust for the next four years.

C 051/09 CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS 2009 – 2014

Members received a report on from the Christmas Lights Task Group to consider:

1. Approving a capital project for the installation of a new independent electrical service infra-structure for the Christmas lights in Farnham Town Centre.
2. Approving additional funding from General Reserves to fund the cost of the project.
3. The results of a tendering exercise to award a 5 year contract to provide Christmas decorations in Farnham Town Centre.
4. The recommendations of the Christmas Lights Task Group on the preferred supplier.
5. Approving additional funding from General Reserves to fund Year 1 of the Christmas Lights project.
6. The additional cost of electricity in the supply of the Christmas Lights.

Members discussed the report and the recommendations of the Christmas Lights Task Group. The report informed the meeting that the Town Council had provided the Christmas Lights for Farnham for the last five years. However, there were a number of concerns which had been raised over this period including, the rising cost of electricity, the quality and safety of the light connections and the dependence on retailers to maintain the timing switches.

The Task Group had considered the provision of an independent lighting infrastructure at a cost of £33,356.

The Task Group had also considered seven tenders for the Christmas Lighting Scheme from 2009 – 2014 and recommended to Full Council that the contract be awarded to Festival Lighting at a total cost of £149,970 (in total for five years).

Resolved:

1. That Council appoints Balfour Beatty to undertake the one-off decorations infrastructure in the sum of £33,356.
2. That additional funds totalling £8,356 are approved from General Reserve Fund.
3. That Council accepts the proposals of tenderer number 3 as presented and agrees to enter into a 5 year contract in the sum of £149,971.85.
4. That additional funds totalling £13,818 are approved from General Reserve Fund in year 1 of the contract.
5. That the Council notes that there will be an additional cost for the provision of electricity.

Part 2 – Items to Note

C 052/09 DATE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Members noted the date of the next Council meeting – 3 September 2009.

C 053/09 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted at Agenda item 10 receiving a confidential report from Councillor Ward, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw at item 10.

Part 3 – Confidential Items

C 054/09 FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL AWARDS

Members received a confidential report to consider Town Council awards.

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.32pm.

Date

Chairman