



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes Council

Time and date

7.00pm on Thursday 24th July 2014

Place

The Council Chamber, South Street, Farnham

Councillors

- * Jeremy Ricketts (Mayor of Farnham)
- * Jill Hargreaves (Deputy Mayor)
- A David Attfield
- * David Beaman
- A Patrick Blagden CBE
- * Carole Cockburn
- * Pat Frost
- * Carlo Genziani
- * Stephen Hill
- A Jennifer O'Grady
- A Stephen O'Grady
- A Sam Hollins-Owen
- A Graham Parlett
- * Dr Jessica Parry
- * Julia Potts
- * Susan Redfern
- A Roger Steel
- * John Ward

* Present

A Apologies for absence

Officers Present:

Iain Lynch (Town Clerk)

Rachel Aves (Team Leader Corporate Governance)

14 members of the public were in attendance

Prior to the meeting prayers were said by Rev Alan Crawley from the Parish of Hale with Badshot Lea.

Presentation by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association

Mr Luqman Chaudery and Mr Nabeel Nasir presented a cheque for £1,500 from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association to Rose Williamson of the Farnham Foodbank and a cheque for £500 to Rob Power of the Post 19 Group and made a short presentation on their community activities. The Community had held its annual Jalsa Salana in Tilford until recently but it had now moved to Alton having outgrown its site. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was founded in 1889 and in the UK in 1913 with a message of Love for all Hatred for none. It serves the community by helping the underprivileged and raising funds for local charities.

Questions by the Public

Mr David Wyle referred to the Government's Screening Directive over the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) at the Farnham Riverside. Mr Wylde said that it appeared that Waverley Borough Council had no intention of complying with the Directive that an EIA was need for the whole site and he asked if Farnham Town Council would press Waverley to follow the EIA requirement and investigate any potentially harmful effects before any further work were done on site.

In response, Cllr Ward said the Council would consider this further and respond to Mr Wyle direct.

C047/14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Attfield, Blagden, Hollins-Owen, J O'Grady, S O'Grady, Parlett, and Steel,

C048/14 Minutes

The Minutes of the Farnham Town Council Meeting held on Thursday 12th June 2014 were agreed for signature by the Mayor as a correct record.

C049/14 Declarations of interests

Apart from the standard declarations of personal interest by councillors who were dual or triple hatted by virtue of being elected to Waverley Borough Council or Surrey County Council, Cllr Ward declared a non pecuniary interest in relation to item 11 of Appendix D.

C050/14 Statements by the Public

- i) Mrs Celia Sandars said that she was delighted as a member of the Farnham Air Quality Campaign to see the motion at item 9 on the agenda and that the Town Council was taking such a thoughtful approach in supporting the interest shown by the MP in 'attempting to resolve Farnham's congestion and air quality problems. Farnham Councillors, with local knowledge must be best qualified to advise what could work on the ground. Mrs Sandars suggested that Councillors press for an initial monitored trial of the two mini roundabouts and two-way section in Victoria Road in the example plan as these measures could reduce a significant number of vehicle movements in the most heavily congested area of the town centre. Mrs Sandars concluded that these proposals would be relatively minor and less costly and should therefore appeal to Surrey County Council.
- ii) Mr Colin Skingle stated his appreciation for the efforts of Kevin Taitt and the Council's Outside Workforce and all responsible for the floral displays in the town which looked fantastic. He hoped that the judges would think the same.

C051/14 **Town Mayor's Announcements.**

Cllr Ricketts said the recent period had been very hectic for him and the Deputy Mayor. He had recently visited Andernach, Farnham's twin town and was initially sceptical about the relevance of the visit. However, he thought the experience was fantastic and outlined three of the main things he had learnt from the visit and the different way Andernach had of doing things for the community. He felt both communities have similar problems of an ageing population and could learn together; secondly, Andernach had got things organised with local people having a say in how services were delivered; thirdly Andernach's Edible City was an inspirational of promoting food production in the city and had many parallels with Farnham in Bloom.

C052/14 **Questions by Members**

None had been received.

Part I – Items for Decision

C053/14 **Community Enhancement Working Group**

Cllr Hill introduced the notes of the Community Enhancement Working Group, held on 18th June 2014, at Appendix B to the agenda.

Cllr Hill advised that the visits from the South and South East in Bloom Judges had gone well, and that preparations were in hand for the visit by the Britain in Bloom judges on 29th July. He congratulated the volunteers for their incredible enthusiasm and was sure they must have bowled the judges over with their knowledge.

C054/14 **Tourism and Events Working Group**

Cllr Hargreaves introduced the notes of the Tourism and Events Working Group, held on 8th July 2014, at Appendix C to the agenda.

Cllr Hargreaves provided an update on the Music in the Meadow programme and thanked the staff and councillors who had staffed the Information Tent.

Cllr Hargreaves spoke of the successful launch of the Feast of Food hosted by Main Sponsor BBS Ltd and Gold Sponsor The Wheatsheaf and attended by other Food Festival sponsors who included Belvoir Lettings, Beetlejuice, Home James Taxis, and Andrew Lodge Estate Agents.

Members noted the arrangements for the Christmas Market and the special arrangement for exhibitors to stay at the Bush Hotel. Members noted that a meeting with retailers and the Chamber of Commerce was being arranged to discuss Christmas opportunities.

Cllr Hargreaves circulated copies of the new Visitor Guide to Farnham which had been well received by both councillors and members of the public. Cllr Hargreaves also circulated a copy of the Heritage Open Days leaflet and sought volunteers to help staff the Council Offices for the Saturday opening on Saturday 13th September.

C055/14 Cllr Hargreaves spoke of the success of the Round Table Charity Bike Ride and how the ride had become a significant community event. She had held a meeting with the organisers who were planning for the future. and it was thought it could become an event with additional support from the Town Council, Cllr Hargreaves proposed,

seconded by Cllr Cockburn that the Town Council provide some support from the Tourism and Events budget towards the cost of toilets and infrastructure.

It was RESOLVED *nem con*: that the Farnham Charity Bike Ride be added to the list of Community events supported by the Tourism and Events Working Group.

Strategy and Finance Working Group

C056/14 Cllr Ward introduced the notes of the Strategy and Finance Working Group meetings held on 15th July 2014, at Appendix D to the Agenda.

Cllr Ward reported that a new instant access moneymarket call-off account had been opened paying the same interest as an investment up to three months.

It was RESOLVED *nem con*: that the new moneymarket 'call off account be linked to HSBCnet for online access.

C057/14 Cllr Ward outlined the detailed quarterly finance documents that had been circulated and considered by the Working Group, and Council reviewed the Trial balance and bank reconciliation information attached to the agenda,

It was RESOLVED *nem con*: that the quarterly finance papers be received and that the trial balance and bank reconciliation at annexes 1 and 2 be noted.

C058/14 Cllr Ward reported on the progress made in seeking replacement Council furniture to replace the unwieldy tables which also had health and safety issues when the Chamber had to be arranged for civic and community events. The Working Group was recommending purchasing solid oak tables for durability but with folding legs for ease of storage. Cllr Ward advised that the price for the ten tables would be less than £10,000 in total

Cllr Genziani arrived at this point.

Cllr Beaman felt that following the refurbishment of the downstairs area that had yielded benefits there was not the need to spend additional money on new tables. Cllr Cockburn disagreed reminding councillors that meetings used to be held elsewhere with the Council Chamber always staying as a little used meeting room. Now it was used for exhibitions, launches and events as well, and a balance has to be struck. Cllr Potts had concerns about spending money in the current climate following the refurbishment of the offices. Cllr Parry said she had initially been concerned but the tables were not fit for purpose and many more community groups were now using the Chamber. Cllr Hill agreed saying that an enormous amount of effort had gone into finding the right solution.

Cllr Frost said she thought the refurbishment was worth every penny and that the Chamber was now getting shabby. She had not been at the Working Group but supported the replacement tables. She was however disappointed that nothing had been done about the chairs which were very heavy for people with back problems.

Cllr Ward agreed that the chairs should be reviewed further including a solution to make the current chairs easier to use.

It was RESOLVED by 8 votes to 2 with one abstention: that

the Council Chamber furniture be replaced with solid oak tables and that the Town Clerk be authorised to spend up to £12,000 from the earmarked reserves for the tables and associated elements.

C059/14 Cllr Ward advised that the Working Group had reviewed the tenders for the provision of Christmas Lights. After consideration, Members had concluded that the best arrangement was to purchase the lights and have a five year contract for the installation and storage, which would bring year-on-year savings based on the current budget as set out at Exempt Annex 2, with an initially higher cost in year 1 which would be funded from existing budgets or earmarked reserves. The lowest price tenderer was the Council's current contractor. Cllr Frost advised that Surrey County Council had commissioned a structural survey of the lamp columns in Castle Street to ensure they were sound.

It was RESOLVED *nem con*: that Council purchases the Christmas lights and enters into a five year contract for the storage, installation and maintenance of the lights with Festive Lighting as set out at Exempt Annex 2.

C060/14 Cllr Ward advised on the progress of the new website and that a link would be circulated to councillors to test the site prior to a soft launch in September.

C061/14 Cllr Cockburn advised that the work of the Infrastructure Planning Group was ongoing and that there would be a stall at the Food Festival detailing the Options that would be consulted upon in the autumn.

Cllr Ward left the Chamber at this point

C062/14 Council considered the request received to use the Council's Coat of Arms received by the Freemasons of Farnham and agreed that a solution should be found, perhaps for an amended generic crest, that would be consistent for any organisation applying to use an image or brand belonging to the Town Council. Members concurred that any use should be licensed and with the ability to withdraw approval if the use were inappropriate. Cllr Frost proposed an amendment to add that any use would be subject to application to and approval by the Town Council and that terms of use should be drawn up. After further discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Frost, seconded by Cllr Cockburn and

Resolved *nem con* to refer the decision back to Strategy & Finance in view of the wider issues raised to debate the detailed use and terms of a revised generic crest.

Cllr Ward returned to the Chamber

Planning & Licensing Consultative Group

C63/14 Cllr Genziani introduced the minutes of the Planning & Licensing Consultative Group held on 16th June, 30th June, and 14th July. He highlighted the applications emerging in Badshot Lea and the significant cutting down of trees in Rowledge on the borders with Frensham Parish.

Cllr Cockburn raised again the concerns over the use of SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space) and the fact that there was only provision for some 330 homes remaining. She highlighted the problem that just two of the proposed developments in

Badshot Lea could use all the remaining SANG provision meaning that no further building would be possible on brownfield land.

Cllr Frost agreed and proposed, seconded by Cllr Cockburn, that Farnham Town Council should write formally to the Director of Planning at Waverley or Leader about the SANGS problem and invite them to come and discuss with the Town Council.

It was RESOLVED *nem con* to express concern to Waverley Borough Council expressing over the use of SANG for Greenfield development that was using up the remaining supply.

C064/14

Motion

Cllr Ward proposed the motion put forward by the Strategy & Finance Working Group, following the Referendum undertaken by the Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP. The motion was seconded by Cllr Hargreaves.

“This Council is encouraged by the interest shown by our MP, the Rt. Hon. Jeremy Hunt, in attempting to resolve Farnham’s congestion and Air Quality problems.

Council also takes cognisance of our MP’s statement that a “yes” vote in the recent referendum will not be deemed as approval of the specific scheme outlined but an expression of the public’s desire for some mitigation of the Town’s chaotic traffic situation and pedestrian facilities.

The Town Council, which has pressed for an holistic solution to this matter since its inception 40 years ago, notes the vote in favour of action and is always keen to respond to the wishes of its electorate.

Council is delighted with the interest shown by SCC in this result and therefore looks forward to being invited to co-operate with higher authorities and other interested parties in devising and enacting a solution to this long-running problem.”

Cllr Ward underlined the problems of air quality in Farnham and that something positive had to be done. Farnham Town Council should take the opportunity of being involved with Waverley Borough Council and Surrey County Council and other authorities in getting something done.

Cllr Frost said that she very much supported the motion. She had some concerns about the referendum proposals but Surrey County Council does want to work with the MP. Surrey had done a report on preventing HGVs using Castle Street but the police would not support the proposals because of a lack of staff to enforce.

Cllr Parry supported the motion and said that it was important that the Town Council communicated its expectation to be involved in finding a solution.

The Mayor thanked Cllr Frost for the work she did on behalf of the town at Surrey County Council.

It was RESOLVED *unanimously* to endorse the motion.

Part 2 – Items Noted

C065/14

Reports from Other Councils

There were no reports from other Councils.

C066/14 Reports from Outside Bodies

- i) Cllr Beaman reported on the Farnborough Airport Consultative Committee meeting held on 26th June.
- ii) Cllr Frost reported that Wrecclesham Community Centre now had much more use made of it since refurbishment
- iii) The Mayor congratulated the Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP and Mrs Hunt on the birth of their third child, Eleanor.
- iv) Cllr Ward advised members that Corinna Larby had just retired as Chief reporter on the Farnham Herald. She had been a fair and friendly reporter, and he wished her on behalf of the Council a long and happy retirement. Cllr Ward congratulated Daniel Gee on his promotion to Chief Reported.
- v) Cllr Ward reported on the Farnham Public Arts Trust and updated Council on some of its current projects. He drew attention to the proposed plaque outlining the history of Longbridge, and of the art from school and college students in the Farnham Railway Station waiting room.

C067/14 Actions under the Scheme of Delegation

The Town Clerk advised that he had consulted the Mayor and Leader and placed a contract for the replacement of the Catenary wires holding up the Christmas Lights, bunting and banners following a survey that found some of the wires were sub-standard. .

C068/14 Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next Council Meeting would take place on Thursday 25th September at 7.00pm.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8.48 to enable the Meeting of the Council acting as the Trustee of the South Street Trust to be held.

The Mayor reconvened the meeting at 8.55.

C069/14 Exclusion of Press and Public

**It was RESOLVED *nem con* to:
exclude members of the public and press from the meeting at Part 3, of
the agenda in view of the confidential items under discussion.**

Part 3 – Confidential Items

C070/14 Council received an update on a contract for West Street Chapel and the tenders received for the first phase of works as set out at Exempt Annex I to the Strategy & Finance Working Group.

The Town Clerk advised Members that the Council was Opting to Tax West Street Chapel and should be able to reclaim any VAT spent on the works.

It was agreed that Cllr Genziani should review the quotes of the two successful contractors in conjunction with the Council's Surveyors and officers to see if any

elements could be combined with phase two of the project and that the outcome be advised to the Strategy & Finance Working Group

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 9.10pm

Date

Chairman