



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

A

Minutes
Council

Time and date

7.00pm on Thursday 24th September 2015

Place

The Council Chamber, South Street, Farnham

- * Pat Frost (Mayor of Farnham)
- * John Ward (Deputy Mayor)

- * David Attfield
- * Patrick Blagden CBE
- * Carole Cockburn
- * Paula Dunsmore
- * John Scott Fraser
- * Jill Hargreaves
- A Stephen Hill
- A Mike Hodge
- Sam Hollins-Owen
- A Mike Hyman
- * Andy Macleod
- A Kika Mirylees
- A Julia Potts
- A Susan Redfern
- * Jeremy Ricketts
- * John Williamson

- * Present
- A Apologies for absence

Officers Present:

Iain Lynch (Town Clerk)
Rachel Aves (Team Leader)
Kevin Taitt (Team Leader)

There were 4 members of the public in attendance.

Prior to the meeting, prayers were said by Revd Michael Hopkins of the Farnham United Reformed Church.

C075/15 **Apologies for Absence**
Apologies were received from Cllrs Hill, Hodge, Hyman, Mirylees, Potts and Redfern.

C076/15 **Declarations of interests**
In addition to the standard declarations of personal interest by councillors and by those who were dual or triple hatted by virtue of being elected to Waverley Borough Council or Surrey County Council, all Councillors registered a personal interest in relation to planning application WA2015/1694 as the applicant was a fellow councillor. The Town Clerk allowed a dispensation in relation to this item.
Cllr Williamson declared a personal interest as Chairman of the Old Park Lane Residents Association in relation to planning application WA2015/1694.
Cllr Ricketts declared a pecuniary interest in relation to planning application WA2015/1694 as the applicant.

C077/15 **Minutes**
The Minutes of the Farnham Town Council Meeting held on Thursday 30th July 2015 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

C078/15 **Questions and Statements by the Public**

- i) Mrs Sandars Members referred to the lead article in the Farnham Herald, which promised 'a multi-million pound overhaul of Farnham town centre's road network' concerned that there was no promise on when this significant spending and the scheme it would fund would emerge from the Surrey Highways' drawing board for consultation. Councillor Pat Frost highlighted major problems of congestion and air pollution but, to date, Surrey County Council's record in attending to these concerns had been abysmal. According to WBC's 2015 Air Quality Progress Report pollution levels in the town centre had again exceeded permitted limits. Mrs Sandars pointed out that it was eight years since Waverley published an Air Quality Action Plan for Farnham but it had gone nowhere. Many thousands of new homes were planned for Farnham and neighbouring areas in Hampshire and Surrey. These could all produce overwhelming levels of additional traffic to add impossible levels of congestion and pollution in Farnham and more worrying impacts on the health of local people and on the health of the local economy as residents, customers and visitors were deterred from coming into the town centre. Mrs Sandars asked what Farnham Town Council would do to pressure Surrey CC and Government for urgent and serious solutions?

In response the Mayor said that trying to regenerate the road network took time and it was hoped that a draft plan for the town centre would be available at the end of the year. Farnham Town Councillors sat on the Task Group that was looking at the problem and would be able to contribute to the process.

C079/15 **Town Mayor's Announcements**

- i) The Town Mayor reported on Farnham's further success in South and South East in Bloom with Gold for the Town Centre and Gold and Category winner for the Large Town entry which befitted from so much community input. The Mayor thanked the staff team led by Kevin Taitt and Michal Lagiewka and the community effort which heled the town score so highly.

- ii) The Mayor informed Council of her visit to Mayen Koblenz and that 2016 represented the 25th anniversary of the founding of the twinning partnership and it was hoped that the Andernach Orchestra would be visiting Farnham to put on a special concert.
- iii) The Mayor advised that Farnham had also hosted successful visits from the Andernach Stockerau Friendship Association and from the Waverley Mayen-Koblenz Friendship Association.
- iv) The Mayor complimented Farnham Rugby Club on hosting a very successful European Veterans Rugby Association Festival in September, noting it was the first time the festival had been held in the UK.

C080/15

Questions by Members

There were no questions from Members.

Part I – Items for Decision

C081/15

Tourism and Events Working Group

Cllr Hargreaves introduced the notes of the Tourism and Events Working Group meeting held on 3rd September 2015, at Appendix B to the Agenda. Councillor Hargreaves reported that the Music in the Meadow programme had worked successfully but that an alternative contingency for poor weather was being investigated.

Councillor Hargreaves provided an update on arrangements for the Food Festival and plans for Christmas which were progressing well with income and sponsorship on target.

Cllr Hargreaves provided an update on partnership working with retailers, Heritage Open Days, Craft Town and the University for the Creative Arts. Council also noted plans for celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday including supporting street parties, bunting and a photographic competition.

Council heard an update on the plans, being led by the Farnham Maltings, for the commemoration of the first two minutes silence in Castle Street that would be taking place in May 2016.

C082/15

Cemeteries and Appeals Working Group

Cllr Cockburn introduced the notes of the Cemeteries and Appeals Working group held on 27th August and attached at Appendix C to the agenda.

Council was pleased to note the update on the Cemetery Chapels.

Cllr Cockburn reported on the successful tour undertaken by the Working Group to the Council's cemeteries and those in neighbouring areas to compare approaches to maintenance and management and inform the planned review of Farnham's cemeteries which would be considered by the Working Group at its November meeting.

Cllr Cockburn reported that Working Group members remained concerned that the implementation of the rules and regulations, especially in relation to planting and kerb memorials had been inconsistent and were disregarded. It was noted that a reminder of the current regulations would be put on the noticeboards advising that items and planting not allowed in the regulations (such as large rooted trees which disturb neighbouring graves and plastic in the cemetery) would be removed.

Strategy and Finance Working Group

C083/15

Cllr Ward introduced the notes of the Strategy and Finance Working Group meeting held on 15th September 2015, at Appendix D to the Agenda.

Cllr Ward advised that the Working group had considered three Grant applications including one from the Farnham Maltings for a special grant towards additional work during refurbishment as a result of the discovery of asbestos. Members noted the work and high reputation of the Maltings and that the work proposed was outside the original scheme of refurbishment and beyond the contingency in the contract. The Strategy & Finance Working Group had recommended a grant of £3,000 be paid, but a higher sum of £10,000 was proposed being a third of the additional expenditure. Cllr Cockburn suggested a grant of £5,000 could be paid with a further £5,000 held in reserve if required. In response to a question, the Town Clerk advised this would be an exceptional grant as the normal Community grant level was £2,000. It was proposed by the Mayor and seconded by Cllr Ricketts that a grant of £10,000 be paid. On a vote with five votes in favour and five votes against the proposal was carried on the casting vote of the Mayor.

**It was RESOLVED on the Mayor's casting vote that:
a contribution of £10,000 be made to the Farnham Maltings towards the costs of the removal of asbestos.**

C084/15

Cllr Ward said that the Working Group had considered support for community and resident groups wishing to hold events to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday. A number of activities were proposed for support by the Council and it was agreed these should be led by the Tourism and Events Working Group.

It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:

- i) Farnham Town Council should assist with the costs of insurance for local communities wishing to arrange street parties to celebrate HM the Queen's 90th birthday;**
- ii) the Tourism and events Working Group should co-ordinate other activities to mark the occasion.**

C085/15

Council noted progress on a number of contracts and arrangements for the Councillor Strategic Planning Workshop that would be taking place in October. Council also heard on progress made in creating the Hale Chapels Trust to work with the Town Council in progressing the refurbishment of the Hale Chapels if funding could be achieved. It was agreed that the next stage was applying for Planning Permission and proposed that Robin Crane Associates who undertook the Chapels Study in 2013 should be commissioned to update the drawings and assist with seeking planning permission. Council noted that planning permission was a prerequisite for funding application success but also noted that if planning permission or sufficient grant funding was not achieved then the chapels may need to be demolished.

It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:

- i) Robin Crane Associates be invited to revise the drawings for a planning application;**
- ii) Planning permission be sought for the refurbishment of the chapels for community use;**
- iii) Officers work with the emerging Hale Chapels Trust in seeking funding for the refurbishment.**

C086/15 Cllr Cockburn prided an update on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan and on a recent meeting with other communities in Waverley that were progressing Neighbourhood Plans to exchange notes and try and ensure common terminology was being used in discussions with Waverley.

It was noted that the Waverley Strategic Housing Assessment numbers were still awaited and that the lack of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace was still an issue. Once it was resolved, the Neighbourhood Plan could go to the next stage. Farnham Town Council was meeting with natural England to clarify its interpretation of how the issue should be addressed, and seek its support.

Cllr Macleod reported on work being undertaken on Buildings of Local Merit and asked all councillors to review suitable buildings in each ward.

Cllr Ricketts left at this point

Planning & Licensing Consultative Group

C087/15 Cllr Ward introduced the minutes of the Planning & Licensing Consultative Group held on 10th and 24th August and on the 7th and 21st September at Appendices E , F, G and H to the agenda.

In response to the questions raised by the Consultative Group on 10th August, the Town Clerk advised that legal advice had been taken on relevant matters particularly in relation to the discharge of conditions. There had been some surprise by double hatted councillors that the haul road for the creation of the bridge was being dealt with by Waverley planning officers as a discharge of conditions rather than a separate planning application as its impact was potentially significant given the applicants 2012 comments that it would have a highly damaging impact upon the character and amenity of Borelli Walk and South Street and that there was difficulty in providing a satisfactory highway junction to South Street. The Clerk advised that any challenge to discharge of conditions was also time limited as had been discussed at the last Council meeting and he offered to amplify the advice received with individual councillors if required.

The Mayor advised that individual councillors could raise the matter with Planning enforcement directly if there were concerns that needed to be investigated, and that these concerns did not need to be raised through the Town Council first.

Cllr Williamson thought it was incumbent on Farnham Town Council to take advice to get action if something was being done incorrectly. Cllr Attfield felt that if Waverley Borough Councillors could not get the information they required they could not expect Farnham Town Council to do so.

It was proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Cllr Attfield, and agreed by 6 votes to 4 that no further action be taken on this issue.

C088/15 Councillor Cockburn reminded all councillors that it was essential that comments were provided by ward members on applications in each ward.

There was great concern about the number of Section 73 applications to remove conditions that had been set by Inspectors and the Local Planning Authority as these were fundamental to the granting of planning permission in the first place.

Cllr Williamson referred to application WA 2015/078 and the removal of trees which was detrimental to the street scene. It was agreed that the comments would be strengthened to strongly object.

Part 2 – Items Noted

C089/15 Actions under the Scheme of Delegation

None reported.

C090/15 Reports from Other Councils

None reported

C091/15 Reports from Outside Bodies

- i) Cllr Cockburn reported on the success of the Farnham Community Games, despite the weather, organised by the Farnham Sports Council. The Sports Council was doing an excellent job in getting people active.
- ii) Cllr Fraser reported on the Hale Recreation Committee meeting. There was concern over the wear on the cricket square and on the removal of a number of mature trees on the recreation ground by a local resident and surprise that Waverley Borough Council had claimed ownership of the ground when it was held in trust.
- iii) Cllr Cockburn reported on the development of the PLACE project which had resulted from the Farrell review. The design centred approach should be helpful in determining the development of areas such as Badshot Lea. It was noted that the Infrastructure Planning Group was the ideal group to develop ideas for the PLACE project.

C092/15 Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next Council Meeting would take place on Thursday 29th October.

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.28pm

Date

Chairman