



# FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

# A

Minutes  
Council

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## Time and date

7.00pm on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2015

## Place

The Council Chamber, South Street, Farnham

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

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

- \* Present
- A Apologies for absence

### Officers Present:

Iain Lynch (Town Clerk)

There were 28 members of the public in attendance.

Prior to the meeting, prayers were said by Cllr Jeremy Ricketts.

C053/15

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Attfield, Blagden and Hollins-Owen

C054/15

**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, Cllr Potts registered a non-pecuniary interest in relation to item 11 in view of her position as portfolio holder at Waverley Borough Council for Major Projects which includes the Brightwells Scheme.

C055/15

**Minutes**

The Minutes of the Farnham Town Council Meeting held on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

C056/15

**Questions and Statements by the Public**

i)

Mr David Beaman advised Council that he had asked at question at Surrey County Council's Cabinet regarding Stagecoach's decision to withdraw the section of bus route on service 65 between Alton and Farnham on the long established inter urban bus route that has operated for many years between Guildford and Winchester which to date has been provided commercially with no local authority support apart from reimbursement for proving free concessionary travel.

Mr Beaman had been advised that both Hampshire County Council and Surrey County Council were in discussions with Stagecoach and that tenders had been sought for a sustainable replacement service. Mr Beaman suggested that these discussions should also include proposing an alternative commercial option to reduce the frequency of the entire section of route between Guildford and Alton from hourly to two hourly which would achieve the same level of operational savings yet still preserve the benefits of the existing long distance bus route.

ii)

Miss Jenny Floyer raised concern over the proposed closure of a hole in the wall in West Street Cemetery. She said schoolchildren and dog walkers had gone through the hole in the wall for 25 years and she felt the alternative route down Babbs Mead was a long way and more dangerous. She was concerned that if the hole was repaired more people would exercise their dogs in the cemetery.

In response, Cllr Ward said the Town Council did not share the concerns. He advised that efforts in the past to fence off the hole had resulted in the fencing being removed. Dogs had been banned in the cemetery until 2014 when they were allowed to enable bereaved visitors to visit graves with their pets. The Cemetery was not a through route or dog toilet and many people do not clean up after their dogs. There were health and safety issues with a broken wall, and the wall was continuing to deteriorate. Cllr Ward advised that the wall was also part of the setting of the Grade 2 listed chapels which had just been renovated by the Council. The Historic Buildings Officer had advised the wall should be repaired to preserve the historic setting of the chapels.

iii)

Mr Jack Wingfield spoke about Planning application WA2015/1328 representing neighbours whose properties were adjacent to the application site in Lower Hale. Residents had a number of concerns which included: grave concerns over the integrity

and transparency of the developer's limited consultation; the fact that the Planning Inspector imposed a specific condition requiring a 30m buffer zone to safeguard the privacy and amenity of adjoining residential properties; the fact that there was a covenant dating to 1898 restricting any building to avoid obstructing views; the land is marked as unsuitable for development on the Waverley Strategic Land Availability Assessment as it would have a harmful impact on the landscape; and traffic congestion. As such Mr Wingfield said the local residents ask Farnham Town Council to support them in providing a robust response to the application.

- iv) Mr David Jones, Chairman of the Alton Line Users Association (rail) and also a bus user, advised Council he had been in discussions with Stagecoach and Alton Council about the withdrawal of the 65 bus service. There was a public meeting planned by Alton Town Council, and he hoped Surrey County Council, Farnham Town Council could work with Alton on trying to safeguard the route as its withdrawal would be disastrous.

In response, the Mayor advised that the Town Clerk would be working with the Alton Clerk to support the case. There was also particular concern for residents along West Street as the developer funding for Hoppa route from Coxbridge ceased at the end of August

#### C057/15 **Town Mayor's Announcements**

- i) The Town Mayor reported that she had had a wonderful time with the South & South East in Bloom judges. The town looked stunning and the performing art by the Dance Movement children was excellent.
- ii) The Mayor said she had been honoured to present roses to Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment soldiers at the Minden Day commemoration.

#### C058/15 **Appointment of HM Lord Lieutenant of Surrey**

The Mayor commented on the sterling service given to the County by the retiring Lord Lieutenant Dame Sarah Goad DCVO. The Mayor had joined her at one of her final engagements, the presentation of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service to the volunteers of the Rural Life Centre, which had been a very pleasant occasion.

The Mayor asked that the Council join her in congratulating the new Lord Lieutenant Mr Michael More-Molyneux. She was sure he would ably continue the good work of his predecessor. It was agreed that the Clerk should write on behalf of the Council to Dame Sarah and Mr More-Molyneux, sending the Council's warm wishes on their achievements.

#### C059/15 **Questions by Members**

There were no questions from Members.

### **Part I – Items for Decision**

#### **Tourism and Events Working Group**

- C060/15 Cllr Hargreaves introduced the notes of the Tourism and Events Working Group meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015, at Appendix B to the Agenda. Councillor Hargreaves reported that there was a new Craft Town Co-ordinator and a full programme was planned for October Craft Month. The Working Group had heard about progress on the proposals to commemorate the centenary of the first two minutes silence that had taken place in castle Street alongside the NFU May Fair in aid of the Red Cross on

10<sup>th</sup> May 1916. The plans for the commemoration included a commissioned piece of music and a procession in Castle Street but other ideas were still being developed. A grant had been secured from the Surrey Military Covenant, and it was proposed that a funding contribution from the Town Council be made towards the costs of the event.

**It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:**

**A funding contribution of £3,500 be given towards the costs of the Commemoration of the first two minutes silence in 2016 with the costs met from the New Initiatives budget.**

C061/15

Cllr Hargreaves reported that the plans for the Feast of Food and Food Festival were progressing well with Specsavers as the Principal Sponsor. Cllr Fraser commented that this was one of the occasions when Castle Street was closed with a diversion down the A287 and that the people of Hale should be thanked so that they know they are not taken for granted when such events take place. The Mayor noted that closures did not take place that often for the events organised by the Town Council for the benefit of people living and working in Farnham and said that she would like to thank all the people of Farnham for what they do to make Farnham a better place.

Cllr Hargreaves reported that the Farnham Bike Ride organised by the Round Table had been a great success with its start and finish taking place in Castle Street.

Cllr Hargreaves advised that officers had been working with the retailers group which had devised a new brand and logo called 'Fabulous Farnham'.

C062/15

Cllr Hargreaves reported on the forthcoming European Veterans Rugby Association Festival that was taking place in Britain alongside the Rugby World Cup in September. Farnham was hosting the Festival with an expected 26 teams coming from 14 countries. The Club was inviting Farnham Residents to join in the celebrations and watch the games and enjoy the British wine, cheese and beer available at the festival using the free shuttle bus service being run by the Rugby Club throughout the weekend. The Working Group recommended that the Town Council's small grant towards the Festival be increased to £2,000 to go towards the costs of the Festival and in particular the shuttle buses.

**It was RESOLVED *nem con* that:**

**The grant support towards the costs of Farnham Rugby Club EVRA Festival be increased to £2,000 with the costs met from the Tourism Development budget.**

C063/15 **Strategy and Finance Working Group**

Cllr Ward introduced the notes of the Strategy and Finance Working Group meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2015, at Appendix B to the Agenda. It was noted that Cllr Hill had also been present.

Cllr Ward reported on the quarterly finance considered by the Working Group with documents circulated to all Councillors and the latest payments available for review prior to the Council meeting. The Working group had looked at the spend against budget; the trial balance, bank and petty cash reconciliations to 30<sup>th</sup> June; and statements of investment and debtors at 30<sup>th</sup> June. Overall spend was on target with income also on target. Members noted that the External Auditor had sought clarification on whether the CCLA Mutual investment should be regarded as expenditure rather than an investment and that the Town Clerk had provided the

relevant legislation and advice received that the Town Council was treating the investment correctly.

Members had noted difficulties in getting quotations and cost-effective prices for undertaking relatively minor building works in the Council Offices and Depot.

C064/15 Cllr Ward said that Members and officers had met with representatives of the Bishop's Meadow Trust in relation to the repairs to the West Street Cemetery Wall, and they were fully in support of what the Town Council was doing.

### **Planning & Licensing Consultative Group**

C065/15 Cllr Ward introduced the minutes of the Planning & Licensing Consultative Group held on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> July at Appendices D, E and F to the agenda. The Consultative Group had noted the number of Section 73 applications to vary conditions after applications had been approved on appeal which was a concern.

Cllr Cockburn drew attention to the Ridgeway School application for an extension to its car park to accommodate the nursery which at previously been at Pilgrims Way (now Highfield) being moved back to the Ridgeway. The nursery serves children aged 2-19 and previously 16 were able to attend on the Pilgrim's way site. It was a cause of great distress that only 3 pupils with the most complex needs will be able to be accommodated on the Ridgeway site. Too much was being crammed into a cramped site and outstanding provision was being lost by the enforced move. Farnham Town Council should make representations to Surrey County Council that provision should be equivalent to what was on the Pilgrim's Way site. The Mayor agreed saying that Farnham should support Ridgeway School and the wonderful work done by them otherwise there would be inadequate provision in September. Cllr Cockburn suggested options included using a spare piece of County Council land (possibly at another school) to provide a suitable equivalent sized nursery particularly as the number of children with high needs was increasing.

Cllr Cockburn proposed, seconded by Cllr Ward and **RESOLVED *nem con* that: The Leader write to the Leader of Surrey County Council raising the Council's concerns about the move of the nursery and the reduction in provision for young people with high and complex needs.**

### **Significant Planning Applications**

C066/15 Cllr Hodge applauded the robust objection drafted at Annex I to Appendix G for planning application WA2015/1328. He suggested that, in addition, the response include concerns over the additional congestion and traffic which will exacerbate the situation.

Cllr Potts underlined the residents' concerns over the integrity and robustness of the public consultation and her surprise at comments on their website on conversations with individuals. It was important to point out that none of the councillors who had spoken to the developers were speaking on behalf of the Town Council.

The Mayor reinforced this point by reminding Council that individual councillors cannot commit the Council – only Full Council can do so.

Cllr Fraser said he had attended the original consultation which whilst well-rehearsed and glossy was not strong on detail.

C067/15 Members at the Consultative Group had noted that when applications are appealed, Farnham Town Council had not always commented to the Inspector on its views. It was noted that forthcoming appeals could be added to the Planning and Licensing Agenda for consideration. It was proposed that the Town Council also writes to Waverley about the increasing number of applications which were being allowed to vary conditions.

It was **RESOLVED *nem con*** that Farnham Town Council writes to:

- i) **Planning Inspectors in relation to appeals on applications to which it had objected; and**
- ii) **Waverley Borough Council to express concern over the number of applications being allowed to vary conditions particularly where these are Section 73 applications.**

### **Appointments**

C068/15 Council reviewed the report at Appendix H for the appointment of a Wellbeing Task Group. Cllr Ricketts said he was delighted Farnham had been chosen by the North East Hants and Farnham Clinical Commissioning Group for the Better Connections pilot aimed at improving health and well-being outcomes for people who were aged 75 and over. It was proposed by Cllr Ricketts, seconded by Cllr Fraser and **RESOLVED *nem con*** that:

- i) **a Wellbeing Task Group be established as a task group of the Strategy & Finance Working group with four members;**
- ii) **Cllr Ricketts and Cllr Fraser be appointed members; and**
- iii) **other Councillors advise the Town Clerk of their willingness to be Task Group members.**

C069/15 It was proposed by the Mayor and seconded by Cllr Cockburn that

- i) Cllr Ricketts be appointed as the Council's representative on the Better Connections Project of the North East Hants and Farnham Clinical Commissioning Group.
- ii) Cllr Hargreaves be appointed to serve on the Services to Farnham Awards Panel.

Cllr Potts left at this point

### **C070/15 Motion**

Cllr Hyman introduced a Motion in accordance with Standing Order 6 with some amendments to the Motion printed on the Agenda replacing the title "NMA2015/0039 - The case for a challenge" with "NMA2015/0039 -The case for a review" and substituting the penultimate paragraph with "Thus the residents of Farnham could rightly expect their Town Councillors to immediately seek legal advice on the status of the NMA Consent and how best to protect Farnham against further unlawful development until all the legal requirements relevant to this EIA development have been met". The reason for the amendment was that the date for a judicial challenge had expired on 29<sup>th</sup> July.

The revised motion was seconded by Cllr Mirylees and accepted as the new motion for debate by Council.

Cllr Hyman stated that Farnham's response in strongly objecting to NMA/2015/0039, was supported by an overwhelming majority of Town Councillors making it abundantly

clear, not only that the NMA was **not** Non-Material, but also that various legal requirements for the development have not yet been satisfied, such as the Environmental Impact Assessment, which is incomplete and out of date, confirming that it would be unlawful to grant consent to the Application.

Cllr Hyman said that the residents of Farnham could rightly expect their Town Councillors to immediately seek legal advice on the status of the NMA Consent and how best to protect Farnham against further unlawful development until all the legal requirements relevant to this EIA development had been met.

Cllr Mirylees said it was important to ascertain the legal status of the NMA and she supported the motion. She was amazed and dismayed how Waverley overruled objections in a way that seemed irresponsible and negligent.

Cllr Cockburn was opposed to the NMA process, and was happy to ask questions but was not sure whether the statements in the motion were true and was not prepared to accuse without evidence.

Cllr Hyman clarified that the purpose of the motion was to seek the necessary evidence and that the law was there to protect the people of Farnham.

Cllr Williamson agreed that getting evidence was important and worth doing for Farnham.

Cllr Fraser considered the matter to be very complicated. It seemed apparent that there was divergence from established law and it needs someone to assure people that the law hadn't been broken.

Cllr Macleod was not convinced that advice on the NMA was useful. Time had passed and, although he did not believe the East Street development was appropriate, it had a valid consent. The thing that was likely to stop the development was the fact that the developer had still not raised the funds to deliver it.

Cllr Cockburn said she would rather seek reassurance for the future being worried that more things would slip through. There was need for more consultation on future changes.

Cllr Mirylees said that reassurances and promises were fine, but they kept being broken. There needed to be more leverage to ensure things were lawful.

The Mayor called the proposer to summarise, and on a vote the motion was LOST by 6 votes to 4 with 2 abstentions.

The matter was referred back to the Planning and Licensing Working Group for further consideration to consider how future requirements be met.

Cllr Potts returned at this point

## **Part 2 – Items Noted**

C071/15 **Actions under the Scheme of Delegation**  
None reported.

C072/15

**Reports from Other Councils**

Cllr Potts reported that Waverley Training Services had launched a community Gardening Service in conjunction with the Probation Service and Waverley Housing and asked that Councillors raise awareness of the scheme and refer any residents who might benefit.

C073/15

**Reports from Outside Bodies**

- i) Cllr Potts reported on the recent Farnham Maltings Board meeting. The Maltings was doing some exciting work with the University for the Creative Arts with a new performing Arts course at the Maltings. The refurbishment of the Great Hall was progressing well although the builders had identified areas of low grade asbestos that was leading to an additional cost in excess of £30,000 for the refurbishment. Cllr Potts hoped to bring a proposal to the next Council meeting via Strategy & Finance for a small discretionary grant towards the extra costs.
- ii) Cllr Potts reported that the Museum of Farnham had a new Education Officer and that the Museum was reapplying for accreditation.
- iii) Cllr Hodge reported on the recent meeting of the Farnham River Management Committee and that Thames Water were completing remedial works in Monkton Lane and on the Nadder Stream

C074/15

**Date of next meeting**

Members noted that the next Council Meeting would take place on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September.

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 9.04pm

Date

Chairman