

## FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2007 AT 7.00PM AT THE HALE INSTITUTE, WINGS ROAD, UPPER HALE, FARNHAM

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

- \* Present
- Apologies for absence

Officers Present: Roland Potter (Town Clerk)  
Sheila Rayner (Assistant Town Clerk)  
Nick Goddard (Assistant Town Clerk)  
Wendy Coulter (Committee & Member Services Officer)  
Ginny Gordon (Receptionist/Administrator)

10 members of the public were also present at the meeting.

Councillor G Beel (Deputy Town Mayor) presided as Chairman in the absence of the Town Mayor Councillor C Cockburn.

Councillor P Frost was invited to preside as Vice Chairman for the meeting.

#### C 113/07 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC - GENERAL

##### Mrs C Sandars – Member of Farnham Theatre Association

Will the Town Council organise a public meeting to take on board the views of the Farnham electorate in respect of the new reduced East Street scheme when the planning application is submitted in the New Year?

Councillor G Beel explained that Farnham Town Council was not the Planning Authority and that it only has the right to make observations about any planning applications received. Councillor Beel reminded the meeting that the most effective method of objecting to a planning application was for individuals to write to the Planning Authority with their comments. Councillor Beel informed the meeting that the request of the Farnham Theatre Association would be forwarded to Waverley Borough Council for their attention.

David Cooper – Farnham Theatre Association

Would Farnham Town Council urge Waverley Borough Council to take due consideration of the Farnham Theatre Association's survey which has recently been completed.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the papers connected with the survey would be distributed to Councillors after the meeting and that the Town Council would give due consideration to the survey within its working parameters.

David Seal – Farnham Crime Prevention Panel

Is Farnham Town Council still paying for CCTV monitoring in Farnham now that the control centre has been moved to Guildford and was the ram raid at the local supermarket observed live?

The Town Clerk confirmed that Farnham Town Council does contribute to the funding for maintenance and monitoring. The ram raid in question had been monitored by the CCTV Control Room and police resources were activated accordingly.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the CCTV cameras had been used effectively in response to other crimes in Farnham.

Gordon Williams – Crime Prevention Panel

Stressed that it was very important that Farnham's CCTV cameras were monitored on a regular basis particularly since the monitoring centre had been moved to Guildford.

The Town Clerk responded that the Town Council was satisfied that the cameras were being monitored regularly by two operators 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and they would respond to any incident accordingly.

Arrangements would be made for new members to visit the monitoring suite at Guildford Police Station.

Peter Buckingham – Local Resident

Would Farnham Town Council suggest to Waverley Borough Council that the Hale Institute Hall be used for Local and General elections rather than closing the local school?

Councillor Beel confirmed that Farnham Town Council would pass on Mr Buckingham's suggestion to Waverley Borough Council.

Mr Waybis – Local Resident

Would there be a speeding up of decisions on planning applications now that the Planning Committees at Waverley Borough Council would be made up from local members and would there be a greater understanding of local needs?

Councillor Beel informed the meeting that the Town Council were not the Planning Authority, however it was hoped that the new system would be more effective.

C 114/07 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC – WARD ISSUES

There were no members of the public who wished to ask a question on local ward issues.

C 115/07 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Attfield, C Cockburn, C Genziani, D Le Gal, R Steel and A Thorp.

C 116/07 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2007, were signed by the Deputy Town Mayor as a correct record.

C 117/07 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

<u>Name of Councillor</u>	<u>Agenda/Minute Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Type of Interest</u>	<u>Reason</u>
G Beel	11	Leisure Centre Funding	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
V Duckett	11	Leisure Centre Funding	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
L Fleming	11	Leisure Centre Funding	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
(Mrs) P Frost	11	Leisure Centre Funding	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
R Frost	11	Leisure Centre Funding	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
G Hargreaves	11	Leisure Centre Funding	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
S Hill	11	Leisure Centre Funding	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
A Lovell	11	Leisure Centre Funding	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
S O'Grady	11	Leisure Centre Funding	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor
J Ward	11	Leisure Centre Funding	Personal	Waverley Borough Councillor

C 118/07 STATEMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

Mrs A Cooper – Farnham Theatre Association

In August the Farnham Theatre Association conducted a survey of Town Centre Traders to find out what the general view was for the entertainment facilities proposed for the East Street regeneration scheme.

The survey was presented to Waverley Borough Council and Farnham Town Council was asked to urge Waverley Borough Council to give early consideration to the survey.

### **Part 1 – ITEMS FOR DECISION**

#### **C119/07 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Mayor's announcement was read by the Deputy Mayor Councillor G Beel. The Mayor had attended Annual General Meetings of 'Care Farnham' and Arthritis Research. She attended Sarah Goad's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary as Lord Lieutenant of Surrey.

The Mayor had also attended nativity plays and carol services at Farnham Castle and United Reformed Church.

#### **C120/07 ORGANISATION RESTRUCTURE**

Members received a report on behalf of the Corporate Development and Audit Task Group (CDATG) regarding a review of the Councils Staff Organisational Structure.

Members noted that the current management structure is based on a hierarchical structure and employees the equivalent of five managers. It was noted that the current Corporate management ratio is 4 managers to 3.5 staff and the Outside Work Force management ratio is 1 manager to 5.5 staff.

The members of the CDATG were requested to review the current Town Council organisational structure based on the following changes of circumstance.

- ◆ Changes to Council committee structure
- ◆ Changes to the Aims and Objectives of the Council
- ◆ Changes in the working availability of staff
- ◆ Value for money

Members noted that the review was to restructure the organisation to:

- ◆ Maximise the return on staff time
- ◆ To increase the time available for officers to focus on service delivery
- ◆ Establish a clear delegation of roles and responsibilities
- ◆ Create an organisation which acknowledges the skills of its officers.

The CDATG included in its review the following:

- ◆ A review of job descriptions for all the posts other than the Town Clerks post which is a nationally agreed post.
- ◆ The change of status of posts and the financial implications of redundancy (considered in part 3).
- ◆ The creation of a scheme of delegation from the Town Clerk to officers to reflect the new organisational structure and responsibilities.

- ◆ The future impact on the structure should the organisation take on any additional responsibilities.
- ◆ That the Town Clerk would undertake negotiations with staff regarding the proposed new job descriptions and roles.

**RESOLVED: That the below Recommendations of the Corporate Development and Audit Task Group are adopted:**

- 1. That the structure of the organisation (attached to record minutes) should be adopted, on the basis that the new structure reflects the aims and objectives of the organisation. This has been achieved by changing the organisations emphasis from committee administration to service delivery.**
- 2. That the new job descriptions linked to the structure should be adopted (attached to record minutes).**
- 3. That within the Town Clerk's Scheme of Delegation there is the option for the Town Clerk to delegate certain responsibilities to other Council Officers. The Town Clerk recommends that officers will have delegated budget responsibility for expenditure for the budgets associated with the job descriptions. That each budget holder will be permitted to authorise expenditure for to a maximum limit of £500 for a single invoice. Expenditure over this sum will require approval by the Town Clerk.**
- 4. The Town Clerk will delegate the management of these budgets and the responsibility to deliver the aims and objectives to the relevant officers as they consider appropriate.**
- 5. This process of delegation will be supported by the establishment of a management supervisory structure which will include monthly one to one meetings with individual project managers/budget holders and a monthly team meeting for project managers/budget holders.**
- 6. That the new structure and job descriptions should be implemented from 1 January 2008.**
- 7. That a time recording system be introduced for all staff from 1 January 2008. This will ensure that costs are allocated correctly to budget headings and the Council can obtain the true cost of the delivery of services and projects. In addition the work associated with the job descriptions can be evaluated later in 2008.**
- 8. The salaries of specific posts should be reviewed (considered in part 3).**
- 9. That any new post or vacant post should be evaluated before the vacancy is filled.**
- 10. That in August 2008 all posts will be subject to a job evaluation before the next budget.**

C121/07 BUDGET 2008/2009

Members received a report to consider the draft budget for 2008/09 and the reallocation of the Council's Reserves for 2007/2008.

Members noted that the budget (**attached to record minutes**) had been redesigned to reflect the Council's new organisational structure. The officers had started to reallocate staffing costs where possible to specific areas of work. However, members noted that this is currently based on estimated staff time allocation. As of 1 January 2008 staff will be completing time sheets and the true cost of services can be allocated more accurately although the full impact of this system will not be fully reflected until the year ended 31 March 2009.

Members also noted that some of the Administration Rechargeable figures should in practice be reallocated to other budget costs.

Members were reminded that the Town Clerk has delegated authority to vire between budgets, as appropriate to deliver services and due to the reallocation of staff time members noted that the comparative actual figures for 2006/2007 had been presented as total service expenditure.

Members noted that the Draft Budget contained three sections.

1. The Draft Budget for 2008/09 with notes on variations between the budget for 2007/08 and 2008/09.
2. The Consolidated budget for 2008/09 with notes on significant variations between 2006/07 actual costs and the 2007/08 budget which was based on the anticipated outcomes of the previous year.
3. The Reserves Schedule: Contains recommendations for the reallocation of reserves between Earmarked Reserves and General Reserves.

Members noted that there was a projected Excess of Expenditure over Income of **£44,091** and that the issue of how it would be funded would be considered at the Council's January meeting when the Council is required to agree it's precept for 2008/2009.

**RESOLVED: That**

- 1. The draft budget for 2008/2009 (attached to record minutes) be approved.**
- 2. The reallocation of Reserves for 2007/2008 be approved.**

C122/07 PROJECT UPDATES

Members received a report on the current status of Council Projects and action taken under Delegated Authority to the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk directed members to note the approval of a grant of £2,000 towards the cost of the classroom at Farnham Museum.

Cllr J Maines commented once again that the only Town Council projects that were outstanding were the ones that were dependent on Waverley Borough Council and Surrey County Council.

**RESOLVED: That the progress report on the current status of Council Projects and actions taken under Delegated Authority to the Town Clerk be noted.**

C123/07

CEMETERIES – HEALTH & SAFETY INSPECTIONS

Members received a report on the current position regarding the Health and Safety Inspections in the Farnham Cemeteries.

Members had been informed at the Council meeting held on 1 November 2007 that Health & Safety Inspections would begin at Badshot Lea Cemetery on 5 November 2007.

The initial Health and Safety Inspections were carried out at Badshot Lea and out of the 1,000 memorials inspected, at least 17% required attention.

The memorials that were considered unsafe were temporarily secured and notices were placed on the grave plots indicating that the memorial had been found unsafe and that the owner or anyone with any information regarding the plot should contact the Council.

The data from the inspections was being entered onto the Council's Cemeteries Management System and letters were being prepared to be sent out to grave owners at the last known address in the Council's records.

Members also noted the trigger dates for work to commence in other Cemeteries would be as follows:

<b>Name of Cemetery</b>	<b>Trigger Date</b>
Green Lane	25.02.2008
Hale	07.04.2008
West Street (1 <sup>st</sup> Section)	16.06.2008

It was noted that the initial project would be completed by December 2009.

Members further noted that once the initial review had been completed there would be a rolling 5 year programme of more rigorous inspections commencing in 2010 in Badshot Lea Cemetery. The proposed programme would be as follows:

<b>Name of Cemetery</b>	<b>Year of Inspection</b>
Badshot Lea	2010
Green Lane	2011
Hale	2012
West Street	2013
West Street	2014

Members noted the procedure for the administration of the project for informing the public generally of the Council's actions and of contacting grave plot owners and families.

Members noted that there would be cost implications for:

1. Staff diverted from other duties
2. Overtime cost – Project Manager and data input @ cost
3. Security of memorials
4. other actions

Officers brought to members attention a number of issues that have arisen out of the project. Attached to record minutes is a list of issues on which the Members were requested to consider and to give direction to officers and a list of the current charges for cemeteries administration.

Members discussed the various issues that had arisen so far from the project and it was proposed by Councillor V Duckett and seconded by Councillor L Fleming that a Cemeteries Management Group be formed out of the Cemeteries Appeal Group to consider the issues and help officers work towards a resolution.

Members noted that the Burial Authority under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Occupiers Liability Act 1957 has to ensure that, as far as reasonably practical, their sites are maintained in a safe condition.

The Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 in Article 3(2) (b) provides for the Burial Authority to take action which is necessary to remove danger which arises by reason of the condition of the vault, or tombstone or other memorial, itself.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the current situation regarding the Health & Safety Inspections in Badshot Lea Cemetery be noted.**
- 2. That the Timeline for the Health & Safety Inspections for the project be noted.**
- 3. That the cost of implementing the project should be regularly reported to Council and additional funding drawn from Reserves.**
- 4. That a Cemeteries Management Group with the following membership, Councillor G Beel, Councillor C Cockburn, V Duckett, Councillor G Hargreaves and Councillor L Fleming, should be set up to consider the issues raised by the initial Cemeteries Health & Safety Project.**

C124/07 CROSS STREET BANNERS

Members received a report on cross street banners in Farnham Town Centre.

Members were informed that until recently Surrey County Council had made the necessary arrangements to approve the installation of individual banners and managed the booking system. However, following a review, Surrey County Council had asked Farnham Town Council to take over the management of the facility.

Members noted that it was suggested whilst Surrey County Council as the Highway Authority would continue to issue the necessary licence, it would be on the recommendation of Farnham Town Council. The Town Council would therefore need to be satisfied that any application met the requirements set out by Surrey County Council. Farnham Town Council would also have control of the booking system for banner space.

Surrey County Council would make no charge for the licence and would require 5 working days notice from Farnham Town Council before the issue of a licence.

Members were made aware that Farnham Town Council had sought the permission of the owners of the premises which currently hold the fixing bolts to agree to the continuation of the arrangement.

Whilst the owners in The Borough have agreed (Breaking Free and Boots Opticians) one owner (Ruby and Dom) in Downing Street had decided to withdraw from the arrangement.

An alternative location was identified and negotiated between Robert Dyas and Rowland's where the owners have agreed to the installation of fixing bolts.

Members were requested to consider if the Council should make an administrative charge to Surrey County Council or to the applicants for administering the system.

Members questioned how much Surrey County Council had charged for administration purposes and it was proposed by Councillor (Mrs) P Frost and seconded by Councillor V Duckett and agreed that the Town Clerk be given the delegated authority to approach Surrey County Council to find out the administrative charges and then in consultation with the Town Mayor to agree a scale of charges for Farnham Town Council for the booking of the cross street banners.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the Town Clerk be given the delegated authority to approach Surrey County Council to find out the administrative charges.**
- 2. That the Town Clerk and the Town Mayor be delegated authority to agree a scale of charges for Farnham Town Council for the booking of the cross street banners.**

C125/07

LEISURE CENTRE FUNDING

Members were asked to consider a letter from Waverley Borough Council asking the Town Council if it wished to contribute any of its resources to funding additional capital improvements to the Farnham sports centre, which is owned and run by Waverley Borough Council in partnership with DC Leisure.

Members discussed the letter and after due consideration it was agreed that Farnham Town Council could not contribute any of its resources to fund additional capital improvements to the Farnham sports centre.

**RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk write to Waverley Borough Council informing them that Farnham Town Council would not contribute any of its resources to fund additional improvements to the Farnham Sports Centre.**

## Part 2 – ITEMS TO NOTE

### C126/07 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

**RESOLVED: That the observations made by the Planning Consultative Group held on 25 October, 8 November, 22 November and 29 November 2007 and dealt with in accordance with delegated authority, be noted.**

### C127/07 FINANCE REPORT

Members received a tabled report on the current budget and noted the authorisation of payments.

### C128/07 STAFFING GENERAL – APPRAISALS

Members noted that all staff appraisals had been completed and that the Corporate Development Task Group had instructed that the Town Clerk's Appraisal will be undertaken by Councillors (Mrs) P Frost and J Maines.

### C129/07 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

Members received reports from the Farnham River Management Committee and Councillor J Maines reported that she and Councillor Storey had attended the Waverley Borough Council Towns and Parishes meeting.

### C130/07 ITEMS TABLED

None

### C 131/07 PUBLICITY

Council agreed that a Press Release would be issued regarding the Town Council's concerns over proposals to close Post Offices in the local area.

### C132/07 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

**RESOLVED: That in view of the confidential nature of business to be transacted at Agenda Item 19, Organisation Restructure - Staff, Agenda Item 20, Staffing – Annual Pay Increases and Item 21 Staffing – Disciplinary Action, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw at Item 19.**

## Part 3 – CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

### C133/07 ORGANISATION RESTRUCTURE – STAFF

Members considered confidential issues relevant to individual Members of Staff as a result of the Organisation Restructure.

C134/07     STAFFING – ANNUAL PAY INCREASES

Members noted that the national agreed pay rise under the National Joint Council has been confirmed and adjusted on staff salaries as appropriate.

C135/07     STAFFING – DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Members noted the outcomes of disciplinary procedures.

The Deputy Town Mayor closed the meeting at 9.00pm.

Date

Chairman