



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

A

Minutes Council

Time and date

7.00pm on Thursday 9 September 2010

Place

The Council Chamber, South Street, Farnham

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

- * Present
- o Apologies for absence

Officers Present:

Roland Potter (Town Clerk)

Wendy Coulter (Members and Committee Services Co-ordinator) (recorded minutes of meeting).

The proceedings of the meeting of Farnham Town Council held on Thursday 9 September 2010 were digitally recorded for Council purposes only.

Prior to the start of the meeting Farnham Town Council received a presentation on the work of the Farnham Society by the Chairman of the Farnham Society, Alan Gavaghan.

QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

There were no questions by the public.

C 057/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Attfield, C Cockburn, Mrs P Frost, C Storey and A Thorp.

C 058/10 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Farnham Town Council Meeting held on Thursday 5 August 2010 were signed by the Town Mayor as a correct record.

C 059/10 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interests.

C 060/10 STATEMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

There were no statements by the public.

C 061/10 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor thanked Councillors and members of the public for the cakes they had provided for the Mayor's charity tea tents at the band concerts.

The Mayor mentioned the following events that he had recently attended:

1 September presented Minden roses to the local forces and TA

5 September attended the Forget Me Not Walk and the dedication of the new building at St Thomas on the Bourne.

8 September attended Battle of Britain fly past at Odiham

The Town Mayor reminded members that the results of the South and South East tin Bloom would be known on the 10 September.

The Town Mayor asked for volunteers to help man the Farnham Town Council stall at the UCCA Freshers Fayre.

The Town Mayor also reminded members that on the 21 September there would be a Business Seminar hosted by Farnham Town Council to encourage partnership working with retailers in the town.

On the 23 September there would be an extra Council meeting and on the 27 September the Farnham Awards Ceremony would take place in the council chamber.

Finally, the Town Mayor reminded members that the Feast of Food would be taking place in Castle Street on the 2 October and help was needed for the day.

The Mayor informed members that the Town Council was attempting to get the Mayor's Diary in to the press and also it would be sent to all members.

The Mayor reminded members that the Town Council had an opportunity to request from Waverley Borough Council, the Planning Authority, where and how 106 monies should be requested and distributed in Farnham. He encouraged all members to submit their suggestions for how 106 monies could be spent to the Town Clerk.

Part I – Items for Decision

C 062/10 GRANTS POLICY REVIEW 2010 – PHASE I

Cllr Fleming, the Lead Member of the Corporate Development & Audit Working Group introduced the item on Grants Policy review. She asked members to consider the following recommendations of the CDAWG.

1. To note the review of the town council's policy on awarding grants including Revenue Grants, Capital Grants, Community Grants (up to £2,000) and small grants (up to £200).
2. To consider the recommendations of the internal auditor regarding the council's policy on grants.
3. To note the financial implications associated when awarding grants.
4. To agree that the Grants Policy should be budget driven as opposed to demand lead.
5. To agree that the grants budget will be administered through the CDAWG
6. To agree that the level of grant funding for 2011/12 be set at 5.76% of the precept.
7. To agree to temporarily suspend all grant administration and awards pending this report and a review of grant procedures until 31 December 2010.

Members noted that officers of the council had undertaken a review of the council's practices and policies over the last 10 years with regard to grant funding to other organisations using best of value principles. The review only considered the council's policy and a further review would be undertaken of the procedures for awarding the grants over the next few weeks.

Members noted that the internal auditors to the council had raised concerns in their last report to the council that the council's current grant making policy had a tendency to be demand lead rather than budget driven.

The recommendation of CDAWG was that the grants budget should be set and applications should be considered based on the available budget not on the basis of applicants' demands and that grants should be considered on a basis of value for money and linked to the council's services and objectives.

Members discussed the implications of reducing grant funding during the current economic climate.

Cllr Lovell proposed reducing the level of grant funding by 10% this was seconded by Cllr Maines.

Cllr Fleming explained that the awards for the small grants would not be reduced and applicants could still apply for up to £200, but the intention was to try to reduce the large Revenue Grants.

Cllr Le Gal agreed that the grant funding should be budget driven and should be set at 6% of the precept.

Cllr Steel reminded members that large levels of grants had been awarded, but that the council in the current economic climate could no longer afford to award these high levels of grants. He reminded members that whilst setting the budget for grants the council should not rely on using reserves. Help should be given to organisations with definite needs.

The Town Mayor clarified that members were considering the amendment proposed by Cllr Lovell to reduce the level of grant funding by 10% rather than 20%, which would mean that the council would be spending 6.5% of its precept on grant funding.

Cllr Le Gal confirmed that the proposal by the Corporate Development and Audit Working Group was to set the grants budget at a percentage of the precept and not to reduce the grants budget year on year.

Cllr Maines as seconder to the proposal by Cllr Lovell, confirmed that she was not against the proposal for the grant awards to be budget lead rather than to be demand driven. However, she was concerned that the Council should not reduce the grant funding by 20% for this year.

Cllr Maines confirmed that she would support and second Cllr Lovell's proposal of a reduction by 10% on the grants budget for this year.

Cllr Lovell reiterated that as the Town Council had reduced the grants budget by 20% year on year for the past three years, during the current economic situation the Council should only reduce the budget by 10% for this year.

The Town Mayor confirmed the proposal by Cllr Lovell that the grant funding for this year should only be reduced by 10% and the grants budget be set at 6.5% of the precept.

The Council voted on the proposal.

The vote was 3 for, 8 against and 1 abstention, therefore the motion was lost.

Members then took a vote on the recommendations included in the report. The vote was 10 for, 1 against and 1 abstention.

Resolved:

- 1. That the review of the town council's policy on awarding grants including Revenue Grants, Capital Grants, Community Grants (up to £2,000) and small grants (up to £200) be noted.**
- 2. That the recommendations of the Internal Auditor regarding the Council's policy on grants be noted.**
- 3. That the Financial implications associated when awarding grants be noted.**
- 4. That the grants policy should be budget driven rather than demand led.**
- 5. That the grants policy will be administered through the CDAWG.**
- 6. That the level of grant funding for 2011/2012 be set at 5.76% of the Precept.**
- 7. To temporally suspend all grant administration and awards pending this report and a review of grant procedures until 31st December 2010.**

A copy of the Grants Review report is attached to record minutes together with the recommendations of the Internal Auditor.

C 063/10 WORKING GROUPS TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members were asked to consider the recommendation of the Corporate Development and Audit Working Group to extend the terms of reference of working groups to allow for the reporting of additional council services.

Members noted that there were a number of services which reported directly to the Town Clerk and were essential to the delivery of Town Council projects. However, these services did not currently report directly to the relevant working groups.

There were also a number of task groups which met on an ad hoc basis, as required, to consider issues of major importance to Farnham and the Town Council e.g. the Minerals Task Group. It was noted that the CDAWG had recommended that the terms of reference for the current working groups should be extended as it would improve and help coordinate the shared delivery of these services by allowing them to report to the relevant working groups and to reduce the need for the ad hoc meetings of task groups.

Resolved:

That the Terms of Reference be amended to allow for the reporting of additional Council services. (Amended Terms of Reference for Working Groups attached to record minutes).

C 064/10 INSTALLATION OF ADDITIONAL LIGHTING IN GOSTREY MEADOW AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Members considered upgrading the power output, installing additional lighting columns to the park and war memorial and having additional power for the bandstand and stalls in Gostrey Meadow.

Members noted that the Town Council uses Gostrey Meadow as its main location for its delivery of an annual programme of very successful events. As these events were becoming more popular there was a growing demand to improve the quality of service the Town Council provided to support these events. In particular the need for additional electricity to stalls and for music.

The Town Council has a statutory obligation to consider community safety implications in the delivery of all its services. As a result of this obligation and a request from local organisations, the Council in partnership with these organisations installed a lighting scheme across the park. The lighting scheme had proved to be very successful, but now required extending and the lighting around the bridge required improvement.

Members noted that an extension of the scheme would provide additional lighting around the war memorial which is owned and maintained by the Council as well as providing additional illumination in the darker areas. This would enhance the capability of CCTV camera coverage which was due to be installed.

Option 1 would provide additional lighting and upgrade the power available within the park at a cost of £15,291. However, this project would require power leads to be laid from one feeder column over the ground on a temporary basis to all stalls potentially creating a trip hazard which would have to be managed at each event.

Option 2 would provide two additional feeder columns near to the path thereby reducing the need for long power leads across the park. The additional estimated cost of this would be £6,000.

Members noted the following legal and policy implications:

1. As per Financial Regulation 11.1(b) three quotes should be obtained for the electricity and lighting works to Gostrey Meadow.
2. Under Financial Regulation 11.1(c) that the council waive Financial Regulation 11.1(b) to obtain three quotes for the electricity and lighting works to Gostrey Meadow due to Southern Electric Contracting being the largest company and having won the tender contracts for both Waverley Borough Council and Guildford Borough Council and the difficulty in obtaining a further two quotes within the timescale.

Members noted the following financial implications:

1. Within the council's earmarked reserves there was £15,000 identified for this project.
2. The total cost of the project was £15,291.19 plus VAT (subject to the confirmed quote from Scottish and Southern Energy about the cost of the increased power supply) without the additional two market feeder pillars near to the police station.
3. The total cost of the project including the marker feeder pillars near to the police station side of the park is estimated at £21,291.19

The members further noted that once the order was placed there would be an eight week lead time for works to be completed and if the work was to be completed for the Christmas Lights Switch On Ceremony it would only leave two weeks for any delays.

Resolved:

1. **That under Financial Regulation 11.1c that Council waive Financial Regulation 11.1b to obtain three quotes.**
2. **The order for the above works to be placed with Southern Electric Contracting.**
3. **The project under Option 1 at a cost of £15,291.19 be approved.**
4. **The release of earmarked reserves for Option 1 of £15,000 be approved.**

C 065/10 GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

Members considered a consultation on local referendums to veto excessive council tax increases.

Resolved: that members would forward their comments to the Town Clerk and the Town Clerk would respond on behalf of the Town Council.

C 066/10 CONSULTATION ON POLICING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Members considered a consultation on policing in the 21st Century – reconnecting police and the people.

Resolved that: members would forward their comments to the Town Clerk and that the Town Clerk, together with the Lead Member of the Corporate Development and Audit Working Group would form a response on behalf of the Town Council.

C 067/10 WORKING GROUP NOTES

Members received the notes from the Corporate Development and Audit Working Group Meeting held on 20 August 2010 – **attached to record minutes.**

Members received the notes from the Tourism and Events Working Group meeting held on 28 July 2010 – **attached to record minutes.**

Members received the notes from the Farnham in Bloom Group meeting held on 18 August 2010 – **attached to record minutes.**

C 068/10 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Maines reported that she had recently attended a meeting of the Towns and Parishes at Waverley Borough Council. Among the items discussed were the promotion of neighbourhood watch, Waverley Borough council's new contracts for grounds maintenance, the opportunity for Town and Parish Councils to suggest where 106 monies should be spent in the towns and parishes, through the planning process.

Cllr Maines encouraged members to forward any items that they wished the Town and Parish Council meeting to consider, to the Town Clerk.

C 069/10 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Members received the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Consultative Group held on the 29 July 2010 and 12 August 2010.

RESOLVED: That the observations made by the Planning Consultative Group held on, 29 July 2010 and 12 August 2010 and dealt with in accordance with delegated authority, be noted.

C 070/10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the date of the next council meeting was Thursday 23 September 2010 at 7.00pm in the council chamber.

C 071/10 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That in view of the confidential nature of business to be transacted at Agenda Items 16, Confidential Minutes and 17, Farnham Awards, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw at Item 15.

Part 3 – Confidential Items

C 072/10 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

The confidential minutes of the Farnham Town Council meeting held on Thursday 5 August were signed by the Town Mayor as a correct record.

C 073/10 FARNHAM AWARDS

Members considered the nominations for the Farnham Awards.

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

Date

Chairman