



# FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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## Minutes Council

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### Time and date

7.00pm on Thursday 20 January 2011

### Place

The Council Chamber, South Street, Farnham

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- \* Cllr J Ward (Town Mayor)
- \* Cllr G Hargreaves (Deputy Town Mayor)
- \* Cllr D Attfield
- \* Cllr G Beel
- \* Cllr C Cockburn
- \* Cllr V Duckett
- \* 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
- \* Cllr C Storey
- Cllr A Thorp
  
- \* Present
- Apologies for absence

### Officers Present:

Iain Lynch (Interim Town Clerk)

Ginny Gordon (Town Clerk's PA) (taking the recording of the meeting)

The proceedings of the meeting of Farnham Town Council held on Thursday 20 January 2011 were digitally recorded for Council purposes only.

## QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

- 1) Mr Skingle asked whether the disappearance of the Town Crest from the Bandstand was because it was due to be painted.

Cllr Attfield confirmed that two new crests had already been painted and were being varnished prior to replacing one on the Bandstand.

- 2) Mr Paul Head, President of Farnham Chamber of Commerce asked whether Farnham Town Council had been involved in any discussion with Waverley Borough Council or Surrey County Council(SCC) to date over the proposals for the introduction of on street parking charges in Farnham as outlined in the report by the Assistant Director Operations, Highways and Countryside SCC , dated 12<sup>th</sup> January 2011, and what action does Farnham Town Council propose to take to ensure that these proposals do not damage activities that Farnham Town Council is proposing within the town, and at the same time protect the aesthetic nature of Castle Street , one of the best examples of a Georgian Street in the Country?

The Town Mayor responded to the question in three parts:

- i) Regrettably Surrey County Council were under no obligation to consult. It would have been kind, courteous and helpful to have had a discussion but they have had none with the Town Council.
- ii) Farnham Town Council will make it well known to Surrey County Council that it is very unhappy with the situation at a time when pushing decisions down to communities is in vogue it is a shame that no discussion took place.
- iii) The question is really whether the proposal will damage Farnham not Farnham Town Council's activities. Will people stay away because of high charges or will they look to park in residential streets? The Town Council had not yet formally discussed the proposal and welcomes the involvement of Farnham Chamber of Commerce and other organisations in putting forward a reasoned and carefully thought out reply.

Cllr Mrs Pat Frost, who was Chairman of the Traffic Task Group for the area and a County Councillor said she had been equally surprised by the proposal and would also invite the Chamber of Commerce and other local organisations to respond through the Traffic Task Group.

- 3) David Attfield asked if Councillors were aware of the devastation being put in place by Surrey County Council in Monkton Lane. Although there had been negotiations with the Leisure Centre developer to minimise floodlighting on site, Surrey County Council had decided without any consultation to upgrade a country lane to a floodlit street, completely destroying the rural environment.
- 4) David Attfield asked if councillors were aware that SITA had withdrawn their IVC planning application in Runfold.

The Mayor thanked Mr Attfield for drawing the Council's attention to these two important matters.

C 111/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lovell, O'Grady and Thorp.

C 112/10 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Farnham Town Council Meeting held on Thursday 09 December 2010 were signed by the Town Mayor as a correct record.

C 113/10 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Name of Councillor	Agenda/Minute Number	Subject	Type of Interest	Reason

There were no disclosures of interest

C 114/10 STATEMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

There were no statements by the public

C 115/10 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor announced that he had:

- Read the lesson at the Farnham ASSIST Baptist Church Christmas Service and at the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols in St Andrews Parish Church;
- Attended The Phyllis Tuckwell 'Light Up A Life' event which was very well attended and moving occasion in the grounds of the hospice;
- Attended the Surrey County Council Chairman's reception at County Hall;
- Presented some of the prizes to young musicians at the Frensham Heights Farnham Music Festival;
- Represented Farnham Town Council at Henry Liu's funeral – a very sad occasion held at Aldershot Crematorium with the reception at the Kar Ling Kwong - and gave the town's commiserations to the family and how much he will be missed as he had done so much for the town and charity.
- Opened an alternative therapy clinic with the Mayoress.

The Town Mayor announced that the Annual Town Meeting of Electors would be held in the Council Chamber on 3 March and all electors are welcome to come and ask questions about the work of the Council.

**Part I – Items for Decision**

C 116/10 TRANSFER OF COUNCIL OFFICES

Members received a report and recommendations from the Corporate Development and Audit Working Group on the Transfer of the Council Offices.

The Interim Town Clerk reported that representatives of Farnham Town Council had met with representatives of Waverley Borough Council and the outstanding matters relating to restrictions of use of the building, boundaries and the proposed overage clause had been resolved satisfactorily. A new overage proposal had been agreed and circulated to Councillors and is attached as an Exempt Annex to these minutes.

Cllr Mrs Frost said she was delighted to have resolution of a matter that had been dragging on for a long time and that the Town Council should celebrate having the offices back.

Cllr Steel congratulated the team that had been leading on this matter and was pleased they had been able to conclude negotiations.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) **to welcome the conclusion of negotiations over the Transfer of the Council Offices to Farnham Town Council;**
- 2) **to approve an application to lower the height of the kerb to optimise car parking at the Council Offices with any associated costs being met from reserves.**

C 117/10 PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD

Members received a report and recommendations from the Corporate Development and Audit Working Group on the outstanding loan from the Public Works Loan Board.

The Interim Town Clerk advised Members that the early repayment of the 26 year loan from the Public Works Loan Board which is still has twelve years to run would attract a premium to reflect the loss of interest to the Public Works Loan Board. In addition, the Town Council was now taking on a significant asset in owning the Council Offices and Members felt it would be prudent to retain reserves at this stage in case of unforeseen expenditure.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1) **the loan from the Public Works Loan Board should not be repaid early at this stage;**
- 2) **Officers review the situation during the life of the outstanding term to see if early repayment may be advantageous.**

C 118/10 PRECEPT 2011/12

Cllr Fleming presented a report from the Corporate Development and Audit Working Group recommending a freeze, for the second year running, in the amount of money raised from the average Band D Council Tax payer in Farnham for the Town Council's 2011/12 budget.

It was noted that the cost of £51.06 per Band D household would produce an income of £878,400. The Council's budget for the coming year had been agreed at £895,679 leaving a shortfall of £17,279. Corporate Development and Audit Working Group Members felt this shortfall could be met by targeted in-year savings or from reserves.

Cllr Le Gal asked whether the shortfall took into account work done so far by the Working Groups in identifying additional potential savings. Cllr Fleming confirmed that these additional potential savings had not been included.

Cllr Mrs Frost asked whether the Council's Reserves had been formally reviewed. Cllr Fleming replied that this had not been done but was on the work programme for the Corporate Development and Audit Working Group.

Cllr Maines asked whether there was any impact as a result of the Government's Council Tax Freeze Grant. The Interim Town Clerk confirmed that there was no impact for the Town Council as the Freeze Grant applied to Principal Authorities and the earlier confusion over links with precepting authorities had now been resolved.

Cllr Le Gal confirmed that both Surrey County Council and Waverley Borough Council were also expected to freeze their Council Tax requirement for 2010/11.

Cllr Steel was very pleased to see this proposal and very pleased for residents who pay for all the costs of the Town Council as unfortunately the Town Council does not receive any income from the rates paid by businesses.

Cllr Duckett said he was very concerned about the proposal to reduce grants by a further 20%. He suggested considering increasing the precept by two pence per week to help fund local organisations such as the CAB. The Mayor reminded Councillors that the Council had agreed to reduce grants over three years to 5.67% of the budget and this year sees that achieved.

Cllr Cockburn reminded Council that when the current administration inherited its budgets the percentage spent on grants was considered unacceptable and the reduction had been part of a long term plan over four years. External organisations had been advised in advance of this and it was felt to be the correct policy.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1) The Farnham Town Council proportion of the average Band D Council Tax should remain unchanged for the financial year 2011/12 at a cost of £51.06 (98 pence per week) to provide a total collectable precept for Farnham Town Council of £878,400**

The vote was carried with thirteen in favour and two against with Councillors Duckett and Storey voting against.

- 2) The shortfall of £17,279 be met from in-year savings or from General Reserves**

This was agreed unanimously

### **Part 2 – Items Noted**

- C 119/10 A discussion took place on whether Working Group Notes should be in Part 1 or Part 2 of the Agenda. It was agreed that items requiring discussion should have discussion, as had always been the case, but the business of the meeting needed to be streamlined. Where Working Groups had not had delegated decision making responsibilities, their decisions needed to be endorsed by Council.

**Resolved that the Town Mayor and Town Clerk review how Working Group Notes are considered ahead of the next Council Meeting.**

C 120/10 WORKING GROUP NOTES

Members received the notes from the Tourism and Events Working Group held on 12 January 2011 – copy of notes **attached to record minutes**.

Members received the notes from the Corporate Development and Audit Working Group held on 12 January 2011 – copy of notes **attached to record minutes**.

C 121/10 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Maines reported that Hale Recreation Management Committee was very happy to have a Town Council representative involved in its work

C 122/10 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Members received the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Group held on the 16 December 2010 and 13 January 2011.

It was noted that Cllr Duckett was present on 13<sup>th</sup> January.

There was a lot of debate over Application WA10/2119. Members felt that the objection was not strong enough given the sites location in the AONB and at an important entry point

to the town. Councillors had received a number of representations about the application and it was agreed that further comment be made to Waverley objecting to the proposal.

**RESOLVED:** That the observations made by the Planning Consultative Group held on 16 December 2010 and 12 January 2011 and dealt with in accordance with delegated authority, be noted but that the objection in relation to WA/10/2119 be strengthened on the grounds that the site was in the AONB and that it was a visually important site at one of the main entrances to the Town.

C 123/10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the date of the next Council Meeting was Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2011 at 7pm in the Council Chamber.

C 124/10 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

**RESOLVED:** That in view of the confidential nature of business to be transacted at Agenda Item 13, Staffing Situation, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw at the end of Item 12.

**Part 3 – Confidential Items**

C 125/10 STAFFING MATTERS  
to C130/10

Members considered the staffing matters.

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.45.

Date

Chairman