



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

A

Minutes Full Council

Time and date

7.00pm on Thursday 26 June 2008

Place

The Council Chamber, South Street, Farnham

Members Present

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

Officers Present:

Roland Potter (Town Clerk)

Wendy Coulter (Committee and Members Services Co-ordinator)

C 037/08 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

There were no questions by the public.

C 038/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Cockburn, P Frost, R Frost, J Maines and A Thorp.

C 039/08 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest received for any items on the agenda.

C 040/08 STATEMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

There were no statements by the public.

C 041/08 TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor announced that the Town Council Civic Service would be held on 6 July at St Andrew's Church, Farnham. She reminded Members to return their invitation slips to the Mayor's Secretary.

The Town Mayor announced that there would be a 'Mayor's Charity Tea Tent' at the Band Concert in Gostrey Meadow on 13 July. Any donations of cakes would be gratefully received.

The Mayor announced that Gordon Banks would be supporting the Mayor's Charity – the Gatehouse Clock at the Farnham Castle.

C 042/08 FARNHAM TRANSPORT STUDY

Members considered Farnham Town Council's response to the Farnham Transport Study.

Officers had collated suggested comments following a Members Workshop which had been held to discuss the Farnham Area Major Scheme.

Resolved: That the approved comments of the Farnham Town Council's Members Workshop on the Farnham Area Major Scheme be forwarded to Surrey County Council. (Approved comments attached to record minutes)

C 043/08 YEAR END ACCOUNTS

Members received the accounts for the year ending 31.03.08 and were asked to approve the Annual Return.

The Town Clerk explained that Government request that Accounts are signed off by the end of June.

The Annual Return was noted by Members and it was agreed that the Mayor would sign off the Annual Return as the Chairman of the Council.

Resolved: That the Accounts for the year ending 31.03.08 and the Annual Return be agreed and signed by the Town Mayor (Chairman) of the Council.

C 044/08 INTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT

Members received and noted the Internal Auditors report.

The Town Clerk explained that the Internal Auditor goes through all the Council's systems and ensures that the Council is doing everything correctly. In particular paying attention to the Corporate Governance.

The Internal Auditor also paid particular attention to the Council's practice on Risk Management, the restructuring of the organisation and the Financial Regulations.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Councillors would receive a summary and a full set of the Accounts.

Resolved: That the Internal Auditors Report be received and noted.

C 045/08 STAFF RECRUITMENT – ACCOUNTANT AND ASSET CO-ORDINATOR

Members received a report on the recruitment of an Accountant and Asset Co-ordinator.

The Town Clerk explained that during the financial year 2008/09 it was expected that the Council's turnover would exceed £1 million.

When this occurs the Council is required to move to a different method of accounting practice for the reporting of its Accounts. This standard of accounting is known as SORP accounting.

The Town Clerk went on to explain the reasons as to why the Council's turnover would exceed £1 million.

1. The impact of inflation costs on the budget is expected to be in the region of £30,000
2. The impact of utility charges on the budget will be in the region of £2,000
3. The impact of costs of any additional delegated services from Waverley Borough Council
4. The cost of an additional services or projects the Council chooses to implement
5. The costs of Cemeteries Health and Safety Inspections in the Cemeteries and other assets
6. The cost of recruitment of additional ground staff or contractors to deal with grass cutting in cemeteries.

Members were requested to consider the recruitment of an Accountant for up to 18 hours per week. The post would take over the financial administration procedures of the Council from the Town Clerk although the role of Responsible Financial Officer would still remain with the Town Clerk.

This post would also take over the day to day management of any assets currently owned or which might be delegated to the Town Council.

Members noted that the person required for the post would preferably be a qualified accountant or an unqualified accountant with experience in Local Government Accounting, with the appropriate experience to produce the Council's Accounts to SORP accounting standards.

This would allow the Town Clerk more time to manage the Council's team who are responsible for the delivery of projects and services and to implement additional projects approved by Council.

The Town Clerk explained that in the current financial year 2008/09 the cost of employing an Accountant & Asset Co-ordinator would have no additional impact on the current budget.

This was due to the fact that savings have been made during the year as a result of recruitment vacancies and salary savings in the recruitment to new posts.

In the financial year 2009/10 it was anticipated that the annual cost of the post would be approximately £9,000.

In addition the changes to accounting procedures would require additional auditing fees for the Council as a result of moving over the £1 million threshold of £5,000 pa.

Resolved:

- 1. To recruit a permanent part time Accountant and Asset Co-ordinator**
- 2. To note that the Council is expected to pass the £1 Million accounting threshold and that it will be required to change its procedures for the reporting of accounts**
- 3. To note that once the Council has passed the £1 Million threshold there will be additional charges for the annual audit.**

C 046/08 AMENDMENTS TO CEMETERY REGULATIONS AND MEMORIAL MASONS CHARTER

Members were asked to consider and approve amendments to the Cemetery Regulations originally adopted in October 2006.

Members noted that the reason that amendments were required was due to minor issues raised over ownership of Exclusive Rights of Burial responsibilities and administration practices.

The proposed amendments to the Cemeteries Regulations were as follows:

To provide cheque payment with all paperwork three clear working days before the burial.

To provide a drawing as well as measurements of the coffin.

The maintenance of the Grave Plot associated with the Exclusive Rights of burial is the responsibility of the Owner of the Rights.

A copy of a photograph is to be provided to the Council if a photograph is requested on a memorial.

A certified translation of any inscription in any language (other than English) must be provided to the Council before approval of an inscription on a memorial.

Amend the Complaints and Appeal procedure to reflect the Council's newly adopted Complaints procedure.

BRAMM REGISTRATION SCHEME

The Members were also requested to consider the Registration of the Town Council with the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM) scheme.

The BRAMM scheme which is a partnership between burial authorities, the National Association of Memorial Masons, the Institute of Cemeteries and Crematorium Management, was established in 2004 with the aim of establishing a network of nationally accredited businesses and registered fixers (of Memorials) that would ultimately replace individual Registration Schemes.

The BRAMM scheme has established a recognised uniform standard of workmanship and business practice and would assist and make easier the Council's management of its cemeteries.

It was explained that if the Town Council became a registered member of BRAMM, any Memorial Mason could work in the Council's cemeteries provided they were BRAMM certified and registered. If the quality of work that was carried out did not meet with National Standards it would be investigated by BRAMM, on behalf of the Council. Thereby eliminating some of the problems that had arisen during the Health and Safety Inspections.

In addition all the legal paperwork regarding the registration is administered by BRAMM, thereby removing the need for the Town Council to have a locally administered Memorial Masons Scheme.

Members noted that there would be no financial cost to the Town Council to enter the BRAMM registration scheme. Members discussed the time scale for the implementation of the scheme and considered the impact on implementing the scheme within 6 or 9 months.

Resolved:

- a. **To approve the amendments to the Regulations for the Management of Farnham Town Council's Cemeteries. (attached to record minutes)**
- b. **To approve the amendments to the Farnham Town Council Memorial Masons' Registration Scheme.**
- c. **To approve Farnham Town Council's Registration with BRAMM to take effect from 1 April 2009.**

Part 2 – ITEMS NOTED

C 047/08 ITEMS TABLED

Local Development Framework

Members noted that in order for the Council to progress its involvement with the Local Development Framework there may be a necessity to employ professionals to assist with the composition of the Town Council's information on its Wards.

It was proposed by Councillor Steel and seconded by Councillor Attfield to allocate up to £5,000 from Reserves in order to employ Independent Planning Consultants to assist with the LDF project.

Resolved: That up to £5,000 be allocated from Reserves in order to employ Independent Planning Consultants to assist with the Town Council's Local Development Framework Project.

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 9.15pm.

Date

Chairman