



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

A

Minutes
Council

Time and date

7.00pm on Thursday 22nd June 2017

Place

The Council Chamber, South Street, Farnham

Councillors

- * Mike Hodge
 - * David Attfield
 - * David Beaman
 - * Carole Cockburn
 - * Paula Dunsmore
 - A John Scotty Fraser
 - * Pat Frost
 - * Jill Hargreaves
 - * Stephen Hill
 - A Sam Hollins-Owen
 - * Mike Hyman
 - * Andy Macleod
 - * Kika Mirylees
 - A Julia Potts
 - * Susan Redfern
 - * Jeremy Ricketts
 - A John Ward
 - * John Williamson
-
- * Present
 - A Apologies for absence

Officers Present:

Iain Lynch (Town Clerk)

There were 4 members of the public in attendance.

Prior to the meeting, prayers were said by the Revd Michael Hopkins of the Farnham United Reformed Church

C016/17 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Fraser, Cllr Potts and Cllr Ward and after the meeting from Cllr Hollins-Owen.

C017/17 Minutes

The Minutes of the Farnham Town Council Meeting held on Thursday 11th May 2017 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

C018/17 Declarations of interests

Apart from 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, the following disclosures of interest relating to items on the agenda were made:

Cllr Ricketts – a personal interest in relation to Item 9 on the agenda (Air Quality Motion)

C019/17 Questions and Statements by the Public

- i) Jennifer Scott, Chair of the Upper Old Park Residents Association asked if Farnham Town Council would consider providing signs to celebrate the history and biodiversity of Farnham's Old Park which was the Bishops' garden offering honey, nuts and meat as well as clay for pots and building materials. The Old Park is virtually unchanged for a thousand years and it is a haven for wildlife.

In response the Mayor advised that the matter would be referred to the next meeting of the Tourism and Events Working Group.

C020/17 Town Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor reported on a busy diary since his election as Mayor. He drew attention to the following in particular where he had

- Attended the Council's Greenhouse Open Day to see the spectacular plants and opened the Spring Festival which had been a success despite the heavy rain.
- Been pleased to visit Badshot Lea school where the community and school and community were working together on the school pond with help from a Town Council grant and also visit Creative response to hand over a £2000 grant to support their work with vulnerable adults.
- Visited the Rural Life Centre for the opening of the Frimley Bicycle shop that had been moved and rebuilt by volunteers.
- Given a talk on bee and beekeeping to St Andrew's school and was very impressed with their knowledge.
- Attended the private viewing of the Heathland Artworks project at Tilford seeing impressive work done by UCA students inspired by the heathland and supported by Surrey Arts and the Surrey Hills AONB.

Part I – Items for Decision

Community Enhancement Working Group

C021/17 Cllr Hill introduced the notes of the Community Enhancement Working Group meeting held on 7th June 2017, at Appendix B to the Agenda.

The Working Group had received a presentation on the possibility of introducing street trees in Farnham with a pilot to test the viability and deliverability of the concept. A local resident, employed by Barrell Treecare had offered to progress the project in conjunction with the Town Council and other partners if the idea were acceptable. The Working Group felt the concept was worthy of progressing and recommended a pilot should be undertaken. It was noted that this would also be helpful as part of the emerging Tree Strategy for Farnham.

It was RESOLVED *nem con* that Farnham Town Council pursues the offer of Barrell Treecare and investigates the viability of the project to introduce street trees with Surrey County Council and other partners.

C022/17 Cllr Hill advised that Matt Nicholls of Waverley Borough Council had updated the Working Group on the problem of commercial and residential bins. The Borough Council had begun to issue environmental protection notices and were also looking at how bins could best be masked if left in sensitive locations. Members made it very clear that the preference was to have the bins removed rather than hidden as other businesses were able to manage the situation effectively. The Working Group had suggested there was an area in central car park near the public conveniences that could be used as a bin storage area and Mr Nicholls agreed to take further advice and report back.

C023/17 Cllr Hill updated Council on a number of matters relating to Farnham in Bloom including the success in sponsorship generation; arrangements for judging of South and South East in Bloom (11th and 12th July) and for Britain in Bloom (7th August); and for the FIB video with an additional contribution to enable new aspects to be included. Council noted that the Famous names of Farnham wall would include Jean Parratt and Madge Green. Cllr Hill encouraged all councillors to assist in tidying the town in the run up to judging.

Council noted a number of matters relating to allotments and that the allotment show was taking place on 22nd July.

Strategy and Finance Working Group

C024/17 Cllr Cockburn introduced the notes of the Strategy and Finance Working Group meeting held on 13th June 2017, at Appendix C to the Agenda.

The finance items relating to the Annual Return were deferred for consideration later on the agenda.

Cllr Cockburn advised that the Farnham Maltings had requested a contribution to replace an ageing projector screen. The Working Group recommended that a contribution of £5,000 towards the £25,000 cost should be made.

It was RESOLVED *nem con* that a grant of £5,000 be awarded to the Farnham Maltings towards the replacement projector screen.

- C025/17 Cllr Cockburn provided an update on a number of Infrastructure Planning matters including:
- i) the fact that a Judicial Review had been held on the Farnham Neighbourhood plan and that judgement was expected in July;
 - ii) Buildings of Local Merit, advising that people may be surprised that many of the much loved buildings nominated did not meet the high standards required for listing;
 - iii) projects being pursued by the Farnham Conservation Area Management Plan; and
 - iv) the Waverley Local Plan Inquiry which was starting on 27th June.

C026/17 Cllr Cockburn provided an update on property matters considered by the Assets Task Group. These included a solution to slipping tiles on the main Council Offices roof; encroachments on Town Council land at West Street and on allotments; the installation of CCTV to cover Victoria Garden and a proposal to replace an aging vehicle with a more appropriate vehicle that supported the outside workforce activities and events.

It was RESOLVED *nem con* that the Town Council:

- i) **secures the roof with tile guards from within the property maintenance budget;**
- ii) **reinstates the Council's boundary lines to secure the sites; and**
- iii) **acquires by purchase or lease hire (whichever the officers deem to be better value) a replacement vehicle at a purchase cost of £24,000.**
- iv) **the Council Seal be used on the Licence to install CCTV on the Methodist Church Building**

C027/17 Cllr Cockburn reported on the Well-being Task Group that had considered a number of matters including the Dementia Awareness week supported by the Town Council; a 20s plenty project which the Working Group had agreed not to progress; and the concept of working with partners for a Wellbeing day later in the year.

It was RESOLVED *nem con* that the Town Council develops a proposal for a Wellbeing Day with local partners.

C028/17 Cllr Cockburn reported that the Strategy & Finance Working Group had heard of significant sporting achievements by many of the teams and clubs in Farnham and wished to recognise this in some way in conjunction with the Farnham Sport Council

It was RESOLVED *nem con* that Farnham Town Council organises an event to recognise recent local sporting achievements.

Cemeteries and Appeals Working Group

C029/17 Cllr Cockburn introduced the notes of the Cemeteries and Appeals Working Group held on 20th June 2017. She reported that it had been a positive meeting with some good updates on work progressing in the cemeteries, suggestions for future enhancements and plans to create a new Friends of West Street Cemetery Group.

C030/17 **Year End Accounts 2016/17**

Cllr Cockburn introduced the series of appendices (E, F, G, H and I) relating to the 2016/17 Accounts.

Cllr Cockburn advised that the detailed year end papers had been circulated to all councillors and had been reviewed by the Strategy & Finance Working Group in preparation for the Audit by BDO. The year-end papers included:

- i. The Council's Report and Financial Statements for 2016/17.
- ii. The Summary Income and expenditure by Committee
- iii. The Summary Income and Expenditure by account code
- iv. The end of year Internal Audit letter 2016/17 and Officers' response
- v. The Governance Statement for 2016/17
- vi. The Trial Balance 2016/17
- vii. The updated Asset Register as at 31st March 2017
- viii. The earmarked and general reserves at 31st March 2017
- ix. A list of variances between the 2015/16 and 2016/17 Annual Returns
- x. A copy of the Annual Return

Council noted the overall outturn for 2016/17 with expenditure £1,266,039 against a programmed budget of £1,219,077 with income being £1,284,779 against budgeted income of £1,219,077 resulting in a small surplus of £18,741 for the year.

Council noted the Asset Register had increased to £1,668,578 and received the draft Report and Financial Statements for 2016/17 with the General and Earmarked Reserves set out.

Council welcomed the Internal Auditor's report which included the cumulative reports from his earlier visits, and noted there were no additional issues raised as part of the year-end visit. Council noted the future work programme included a 'social media policy' and the evaluation of an online payment system.

It was RESOLVED unanimously that:

- 1) The Annual Governance Statement be approved**
- 2) The Internal Auditor's year-end report be welcomed**
- 3) The Report and Financial Statements for 2016/17 be adopted for signature;**
- 4) The Annual Return and associated papers be approved for signature and submission to the External Auditor.**

C031/17 **Planning & Licensing Consultative Group**

Cllr Williamson introduced the minutes of the Planning & Licensing Consultative Group held on 24th April, 8th and 22nd May, 5th June and 19th June 2017 at Appendices J, K, L and M to the Agenda.

Cllr Williamson said it had been a busy period and that he had noted a number of trends taking place in planning. These included:

1. Removal of Trees
2. Small bungalows being replaced by significantly larger dwellings meaning that the number of affordable homes or homes for retired people was being reduced
3. The development of cellars in older houses as happened in London
4. Developers making significant amendments to rejected applications when an appeal was submitted. One recent application had over 60 amendments changing the application completely and meaning that the decision made by the Inspector would not have the benefit of local councillor input.

Cllr Dunsmore noted that the tree applications that were for the maintenance of trees should be welcomed and felling should be the last straw. She was also concerned about the loss of bungalows but noted that people did not seem to want to buy them except for development.

Cllr Cockburn advised that there were a large number of consultations at the moment and that Farnham Town Council would be actively involved in both the Local Plan (Part 1) Inquiry and the Local Plan Part 2 consultations to represent matters that were important to Farnham. Cllr Cockburn advised that the Infrastructure Planning Group was likely to meet to formulate the Council's position on a number of emerging matters.

C032/17

Motion

Cllr Ricketts introduced a Motion in accordance with Standing Order 6. He advised that the Government was asking for the help of local authorities to tackle the air pollution within their areas. He felt that Farnham Town Council was ideally placed to take up this challenge.

He said that air pollution hastened the death of many of residents and caused untold suffering from asthma, strokes, cancers and dementia and that Farnham Town Council had resolved that public health was important and it should use openness, transparency and admit mistakes. However the collective attitude meant that it seemed difficult to do anything.

Cllr Ricketts said that the Neighbourhood Plan was an important document on land use but had been unable to consider health issues in its recommendations and as a result, 94% of all the development for the next generation was being concentrated into the most polluted part of our town. He felt that if Public Health had been prioritised then the houses would have been allocated somewhere else.

Now the Neighbourhood Plan was completed there was an opportunity to support it through other documents to improve the health of Farnham's residents. Cllr Ricketts proposed that a related review should now be undertaken to look at the impact of planned housing development on the areas of high air pollution. He wanted to release common sense of people and change the mindset.

Cllr Dunsmore seconded the Motion, arguing a different approach. The Government had set a National Clear Air day and was recognising the need for improvement. In her work she had seen initiatives developed by pupils in Winchester schools which were making a difference, including car stickers, 6th form pupils taking 'selfies' at Park and Ride stops, 20s plenty initiatives and a new Tree Strategy. Councils were also working together to address congestion and she felt these initiatives or similar ones could be replicated in Farnham.

Cllr Cockburn said she was keen to improve air quality and initiatives but was not supporting the Motion. It was nonsense for a councillor to blame future air pollution on one document. The Motion showed a lack of understanding on land-use policies.

Cllr Beaman felt that there was no link between air pollution and the Neighbourhood Plan and to suggest so was a mistake. He had submitted suggested

alternative wording for the Motion ahead of the meeting and enquired whether this was to be considered. The Town Clerk advised that the wording should have been discussed with the mover of the Motion ahead of the debate (as it was substantially different to the Motion) or be put forward as a formal amendment.

Cllr Frost was surprised to see the Motion laying the blame for air quality at the Neighbourhood Plan but felt there were some ideas that could be taken forward as suggested by Cllr Dunsmore and that the Council should have more information on its website raising awareness of air quality.

Cllr Hyman raised the issue of congestion around the Royal Deer Junction and asked that Council supported the Motion and undertake an Air Quality Review.

Cllr Hill felt that it was appropriate to campaign for improved air quality but it was an enormous problem which the Town Council could not solve on its own. Cllr Macleod agreed and said that the link to the Neighbourhood Plan was wrong, as the problem was essentially caused by cars.

Cllr Frost suggested that the Well-being task Group be asked to come back with a plan and an education package to put to young people in Farnham and Cllr Mirylees agreed that such ideas in dealing with this huge problem needed to involve Surrey County Council the Neighbourhood Plan should not be put in jeopardy.

The Mayor invited Cllr Ricketts to withdraw the Motion and refer the matter to the Well-being task Group. He declined to do so and when the Motion was put to the vote it was lost with three votes in favour and eleven against.

Part 2 – Items Noted

- C033/15 **Actions under the Scheme of Delegation**
The Town Clerk advised that a response to the Consultation on Air Quality had been sent to DEFRA following consideration by the Strategy & Finance Working Group.
- C034/15 **Reports from other Councils**
Cllr Macleod reported that he had met with a senior officer of Surrey County Council to discuss matters raised at the FCAMP Group including the bollards at the Library and the Library gardens. Cllr Frost advised that she had discussed the Gardens with the Chief Executive of Surrey County Council prior to the May elections and offered to write to him again to follow up the discussion.
- C035/15 **Reports from Outside Bodies**
There were no reports from representatives on Outside Bodies.
- C036/17 **Date of next meeting**
Members noted that the next Council Meeting would take place on Thursday 27th July 2017.

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 8.20pm.

Date

Chairman