



FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Report to the Annual Town Meeting of Electors

Thursday 23 March 2017

Council

Farnham Town Council has 18 elected councillors who represent nine wards and a population of around 40,000 people.

The political make-up of the Council is:

- 10 Conservative
- 6 Farnham Residents
- 1 Independent, and
- 1 Liberal Democrat.

*Councillors meet as
full Council and on
a range of
Working Groups*



Farnham Town Council meets as a Full Council nine times a year and it is at these meetings that decisions are taken. Meetings are open to the public, and there is an opportunity for public questions on any matter.

The day-to-day work of the Council is undertaken through a number of working groups. These groups discuss the detail of projects and future plans. Recommendations of the working group meetings go to Full Council for final decision.

Farnham Town Council's working groups are:

- Strategy and Finance (which has the following sub-groups):
 - Infrastructure Planning Task Group
 - Human Resources Panel
 - Assets Task Group
 - Wellbeing Task group

- Cemeteries and Appeals
- Community Enhancement
- Planning and Licensing Consultative Group (which has the following sub-group):
 - Tree Strategy Task Group
- Tourism and Events

The Mayor of Farnham 2016/17



Full Council meetings are chaired by the Mayor of Farnham. The Mayor for 2016/17 is Councillor John Ward. The Mayor represents the town at civic and ceremonial functions. During the mayoral year, the Mayor will attend over 300 community events. The official Mayoral charity for 2016/17 is The Ridgeway School, which is a school for children between the ages of 2 and 19 with severe and complex learning difficulties.

Services

Farnham Town Council provides many services for its residents including graffiti removal, providing allotments, cemeteries and funding CCTV as well as a year-long calendar of events. During 2017/18, based on an average Band D property, each household will pay £61.03 to Farnham Town Council. This helps to fund services with the balance of the budget funded by income from services, events and sponsorship.

Farnham Town Council's services include:

- Allotments
- Annual Town Meeting of electors
- CCTV and community safety
- Christmas lights
- Civic events
- Cemeteries
- Community enhancement including:
 - Farnham in Bloom
 - Noticeboards
 - Street furniture
- Farmers' Markets
- Graffiti removal
- Grants for community organisations
- Planning – statutory consultee
- Managing the South Street Trust
- Managing bookings for street banners above the highway
- Toilets
- Tourism and events
- Town twinning with Andernach in Germany and other friendships
- War memorials



*The 2017/18
Council Tax for
residents living in a
Band D property is
£61.03.*

A look back over 2016/17

Community enhancement

It comes as no surprise that Farnham continues to be cited as one of the best places to live in the UK. In 2016/17, we continued to make improvements to the town and surrounding villages. Community enhancement is about looking after our town and engendering civic pride.

Cemeteries

We have implemented a programme to ensure the safety and preservation of memorials in our cemeteries. We are doing this work with the close cooperation of the memorial owners.



We continue to refurbish the pathways with works being undertaken in West Street, Badshot Lea and Green Lane Cemeteries. The Cemeteries Rules and Regulations were revised and reissued in October 2016 in order to allow a limited amount of planting by each memorial. The Town Council along with the Hale

Chapels Trust are looking to raise funds to restore and extend the Chapels at Hale Cemetery. Badshot Lea Cemetery achieved a Silver Gilt award at South East in Bloom, the highest award for any Cemetery entered into the competition. All trees have been surveyed this year with one identified as being dangerous and needing to be removed. This will take place shortly. Green Lane Chapel has been sold by its owner to the Plymouth Brethren for use as a chapel and we are working with them for some improvements to the entrance to the cemetery.

Farnham in Bloom

2016 saw continued success for Farnham in Bloom. Even more people got involved in a range of community activities and events, which were designed to enhance Farnham.

Farnham in Bloom involves local people and community organisations working together throughout the whole year. The competition is about more than flowers with entries being judged on:

- horticultural achievement
- environmental responsibility, and
- community participation

Since 2008, Farnham has achieved:

- Gold in the Town Centre category six times
- Gold in the Large Town category five times
- Winner of the large town regional category four years in a row



Last year we also received Best in County for the first time. Farnham also won the South and South East In Bloom Chairman's Award for Bishop's Meadow. and Silver Gilt in the RHS Britain in Bloom Awards in 2014 and 2016. We have once again been nominated to be in RHS Britain in Bloom 2017.

*Farnham has won
the Large Town
regional category
three years
running.*

Big Pick



Fire extinguishers, tyres, cans and bottles are just some of the discarded items that have been removed from Farnham's streets as part of the twice-yearly community litter pick weeks known as **Big Pick**. Many volunteer hours are donated by individuals,

businesses, councillors, children and voluntary groups towards making the streets cleaner.

Getting involved

Farnham in Bloom inspires people to come up with ideas to get involved. **Bloomin' Kids** offers free gardening workshops for children. **Bloomin' Litter** is a year round litter picking campaign where volunteers adopt an area to help keep Farnham litter free. We now have over 40 people regularly carrying out small scale litter picks. **Bloomin' Arts** provides dance and collage competitions that explore a whole different angle of Farnham in Bloom.

A winter celebration

A hardy bunch of Farnham in Bloom supporters rounded off the year's success by coming along to the winter celebration at Gostrey Meadow. Farnham Brass Band provided the music for the community carol concert.

Improving Farnham's streets



Residents will now be familiar with "Flora" our hybrid electric vehicle that helps us efficiently water the town centre hanging baskets. The new vehicle is smaller than a conventional truck so it is useful for reaching parts of the cemeteries and allotments, which are usually only accessible on foot.

The tipper-style truck can also be used to transport materials needed for repairs and maintenance as well as bulky items such as gazebos, chairs and equipment for events such as the Farmers' Market and Christmas lights switch-on. The vehicle was named by a member of the public who entered our competition to come up with a winning name.

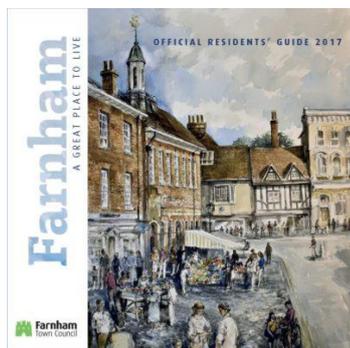
Communication

We continue to use a variety of communication tools to reach a wide range of residents.

Our **electronic newsletter** is distributed every 4-6 weeks and continues to be popular with over 1000 people subscribing to receive it. If you would like to receive a copy contact info@farnham.gov.uk

*Farnham in Bloom
inspires people to
come up with ideas
for getting
involved?*

Social media is an important channel of communication. Our presence has grown and we have seen a large increase in the number of people visiting our website because of a post they have seen on Facebook or Twitter.



The majority of our **press releases** receive coverage in the local media. The reach of the news is extended by additional coverage on the radio and newspapers' associated social media pages and websites. All press releases are circulated to the area's borough and county councillors and residents' association representatives.

The **2017 Official Residents' Guide** was delivered to homes in Farnham. It was packed full of useful information including details about events, councillors' contact details and

how to enjoy the best of living in Farnham.

The guide also includes information about the services provided by Farnham Town Council and how it spends its share of the council tax, as well as contact details for other local authorities and who does what.

We were delighted that Councillor Cockburn was shortlisted as Councillor of the year – a great achievement from a long list of over 10,000 towns and parishes.

Community events and presentations

As home to the 3rd battalion of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment we are always proud to show our support. We participated in **Armed Forces Day** in June and **Commonwealth Day** in March.



In November, as well as marking **Remembrance Sunday**, we were proud to see local schools taking part in a special service of remembrance at the town centre war memorial on **Armistice Day**.

Once a year, we seek nominations for Farnham's unsung heroes. In February, the Mayor of Farnham presented ten people with **Services to Farnham**

awards in recognition of the outstanding or crucial service they provide to the community.



The Town Council was pleased to help coordinate and support the tremendous turnout across the Town for the commemoration of the centenary of the worlds' first two minute silence which took place in Castle Street.

Tourism and events

Tourism and events are important for our local economy and bring thousands of people into the town each year. In 2016, 'food' was a common theme in many of the year's events.

Farnham people continue to support local farmers by buying goods direct from the producer at the monthly **farmers' market**.

Live music was also a key feature in our events programme. The free summer time Music in the Meadow concerts held on a Sunday afternoon continued to be popular. Varying the style of music and providing opportunities for younger musicians to make their debut made the events popular with all age groups.



September's **Food Fortnight**. The two-week long Feast of Food provided people with a chance to try out a different menu every night at specially selected restaurants, pubs and bars. The celebration ended with a day-long **Food Festival** in Castle Street, which was attended by thousands of people.

Tourism and events are important for our local economy and bring thousands of people into the town each year.

Christmas is also a time for celebration in Farnham. The season started with the switching on of the **Christmas lights**, which was a family event enjoyed by thousands. In December, we held a **Christmas market**. Over 100 stalls lined Castle Street selling gifts, Christmas decorations, clothing, jewellery and freshly cooked food. A live Nativity and Father Christmas added to the day's entertainment.



The tradition of Christmas was remembered with the **Civic Christmas Carol Service** that was hosted by the Mayor of Farnham in partnership with the Farnham Herald. The highly acclaimed Farnham Youth Choir performed before the congregation, which was made up of volunteers and members of the public.

Supporting local causes

For 2017 we have **awarded grants** totalling more than £75,000. The grants are given to not-for-profit organisations that can demonstrate how their project will promote the environment and/or community life for residents who live in Farnham and the town's villages.

Many projects have been supported including supporting the Hoppa Bus Service, help for sports clubs, including football, cricket and tennis, grants for youth work and for groups helping the elderly people and people with disabilities.

We also use the allocation of grants to leverage money from other sources. For example, our appeal to buy a new Hoppa bus for Farnham people has succeeded and the new bus has been secured.

We are also trustee of the South Street Trust fund and oversee the granting of around £20,000 to educational art-based projects.



Community grants

During 2016/17, Farnham supported a wide range of local community groups. The recipients were:

We awarded grants totalling more than £75,000.

Tilford Cricket Club

Abbey School

Alder Valley Brass Band

Brightwells Gostrey Centre

Challengers

Creative Response

The Dance Movement,

Farnham Art and Design Education Group (FADEG)

Farnham Brass Band

Farnham Competitive Music Festival

Farnham Maltings

Farnham Sports Council

Farnham Thursday Club

Hale Carnival Committee

Hale Recreation Ground Management Committee

Museum of Farnham

New Ashgate Gallery Trust

Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care

Rowledge Cricket Club

St Peter's Church - Leverton Hall

Voluntary Action South West Surrey

The Woodlarks Centre

Wrecclesham History Project

South Street Trust

Farnham Town Council acts as the Trustee for the South Street Trust. The Trust awards grants from the income of an endowment set up by James Knight and John Knight in 1880 for 'art and allied subjects'. Initially, the income was from the rent of 17 South Street but the building was sold and the funds invested. The Trustees now distribute the interest on the invested funds. Recipients for 2016/17 include:

Badshot Lea Village Infant School

St Mary's C of E Infant School

St Polycarp's Catholic Primary School

Farnham Art and Design Education Group

Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care

Rural Life Centre

40 Degreez

Frensham Heights

Surrey Adult Learning Farnham Centre

Highfield South Farnham School

Farnham Heath End School

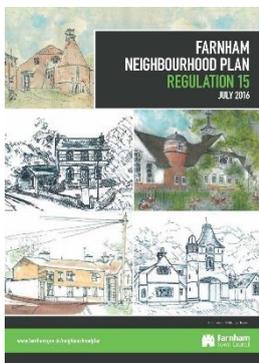
William Cobbett Primary School

Creative Response (Arts) Ltd

Folly Hill Infant School

Hale School

Neighbourhood Plan



During the last year we have undertaken the final round of consultation for our Neighbourhood Plan. This was considered by an Independent Examiner. He also made site visits and held a public hearing. He concluded that the Plan met all the necessary basic conditions and relevant legal requirements and recommended a number of agreed minor modifications.

These have all been accepted by Waverley Borough Council and the Plan must now go forward to a Referendum of the electors of Farnham. Electors will be asked "Do you want Waverley Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Farnham to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?". The referendum will be on 4 May 2017 and all electors are encouraged to vote.

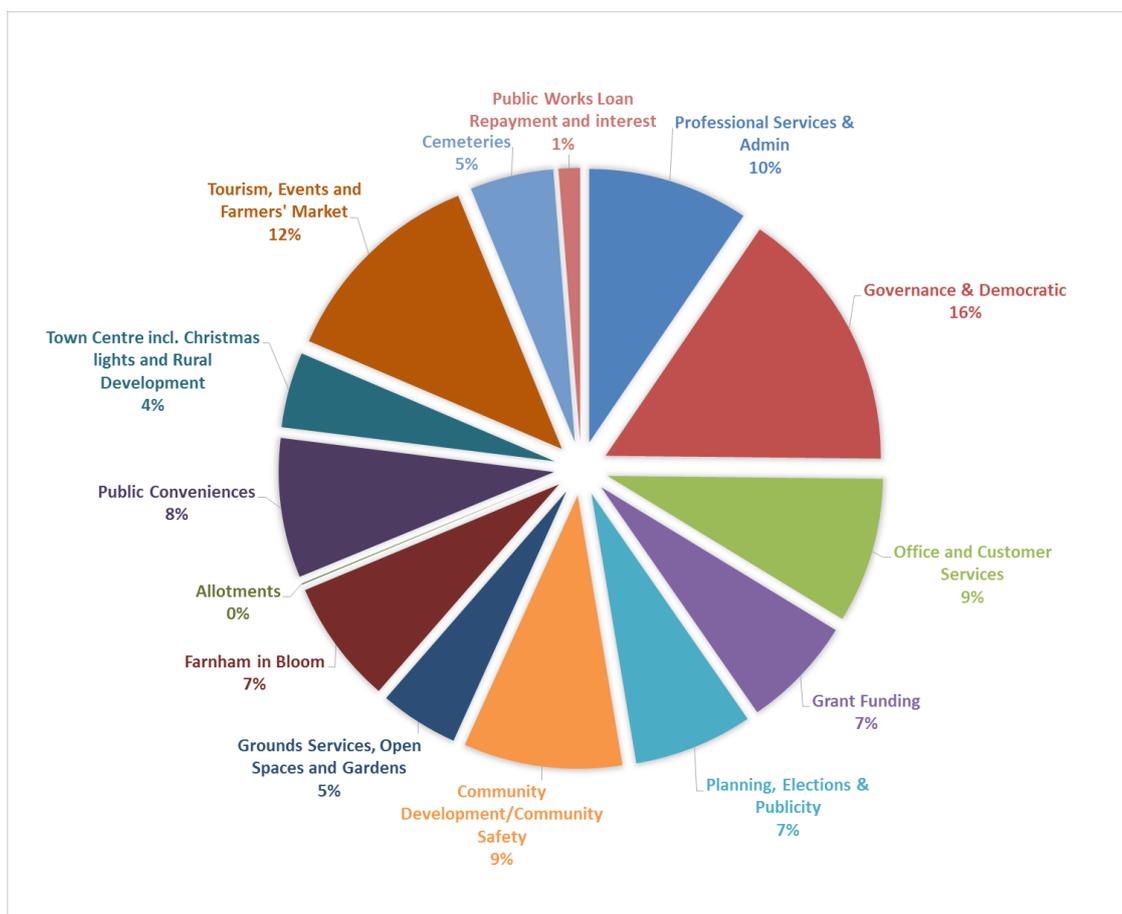
Finances

FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPT 2017/18

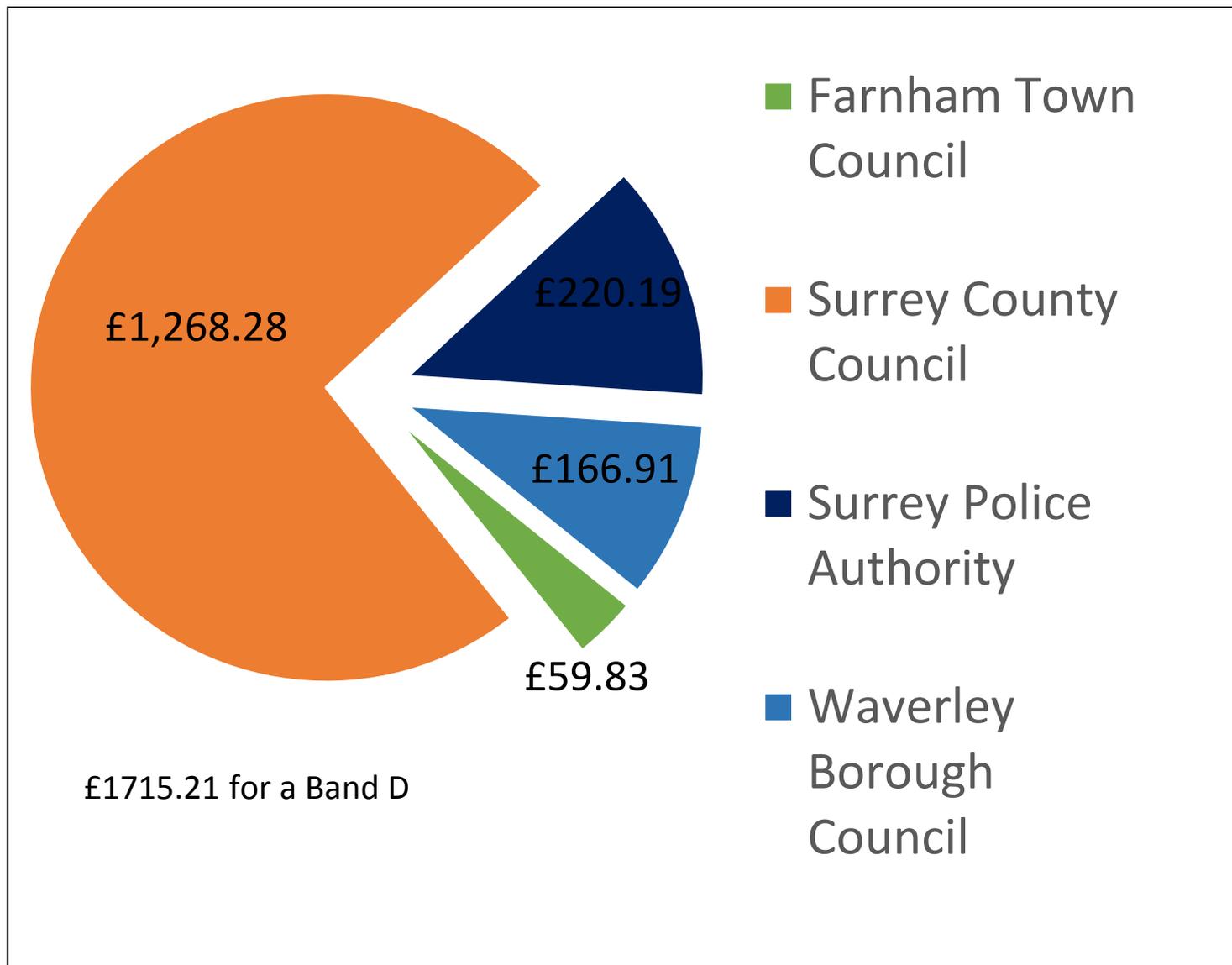
Town
Council
precept
2017/18

Service Area	Estimated 2017/18 Expenditure			Estimated 2016/17 Expenditure		
	Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Budget	Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Budget
Professional Services & Admin	£99,750	£0	£99,750	£95,500	£0	£95,500
Governance & Democratic	£167,500	£2,000	£165,500	£156,350	£2,000	£154,350
Office and Customer Services	£91,050	£500	£90,550	£89,050	£0	£89,050
Grant Funding	£70,000	£0	£70,000	£54,500	£0	£54,500
Planning, Elections & Publicity	£73,700	£0	£73,700	£86,700	£0	£86,700
Community Development/Community Safety	£103,800	£5,500	£98,300	£95,800	£4,500	£91,300
Grounds Services, Open Spaces and Gardens	£58,850	£10,000	£48,850	£64,500	£7,000	£57,500
Farnham in Bloom	£100,150	£23,000	£77,150	£96,950	£20,000	£76,950
Allotments	£15,850	£16,500	-£650	£15,525	£15,500	£25
Public Conveniences	£87,000	£0	£87,000	£86,500	£0	£86,500
Town Centre incl. Christmas lights and Rural Development	£53,000	£6,000	£47,000	£53,200	£6,000	£47,200
Tourism, Events and Farmers' Market	£186,576	£56,001	£130,575	£180,775	£49,500	£131,275
Cemeteries	£123,350	£71,700	£51,650	£123,350	£76,500	£46,850
Public Works Loan Repayment and interest	£18,227	£5,000	£13,227	£18,227	£5,000	£13,227
TOTAL	£1,248,803	£196,201	£1,052,602	£1,216,927	£186,000	£1,030,927
Less Government Local Parish Council Tax Support Funding			-£16,783			-£19,745
PRECEPT			£1,035,819			£1,011,182

2017/18
budget at
a glance



Where council tax went in 2016/17



Farnham Town Council will sign off its accounts for 2016/17 at its June meeting for submission to its external Auditor BDO.

The Audited accounts for 2016/17 will be available from September 2017.

Feedback

If you have any comments or questions, please do get in touch.

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Mayor of Farnham 2016/17
Councillor John Ward
Deputy Mayor of Farnham 2016/17
Councillor Mike Hodge
Leader of the Council
Councillor Carole Cockburn
Town Clerk
Iain Lynch
Town Crier
Jonathan Jones

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