



Farnham Infrastructure Programme

Farnham Board minutes
18 October 2024



Minutes

Date and Time:	18 October 2024, 10:00-11:30
Venue:	Hybrid Meeting – Farnham Town Council Offices
Chair:	Cllr Tim Oliver
In attendance:	Greg Stafford MP, Cllr Michaela Martin, Cllr Catherine Powell, Cllr Andy MacLeod, Cllr Tony Fairclough, Cllr David Beaman SCC: Elaine Martin, Ben Funning, Hannah Simpson, Aurelie Pot, Neil McClure FTC: Iain Lynch, Jenny de Quervain
Observers:	David Stempfer, Rich Franklin
Apologies:	Cllr Paul Follows

	Item
1	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the Board.</p>
2	<p>Actions and minutes from the last meeting</p> <p>The Chair noted that most of the actions from the previous meeting would be picked up as the meeting progressed.</p> <p>Action 4: The chair confirmed that EM can share the approved plans now but that they will not be up for discussion as they have been agreed.</p> <p>ACTION: FIP project team to share heritage plan.</p> <p>The Chair noted that we are now starting to move into the delivery phase of the project so to that extent we need to keep momentum behind it so if there is not agreement on certain decisions then they need to be flagged during this meeting. The Chair emphasised the importance of all three Councils being comfortable with decisions going forward.</p>
3	<p>Short and Medium-Term Interventions: 20mph Limits and Speed Restrictions update</p> <p>Weydon Lane and Town Centre have already been implemented. Upper Hale Road construction started as night works on 7 October for 5 weeks and the Order will be made at the end of the construction programme.</p> <p>Cllr Powell asked for an opportunity to do a lesson learned exercise as a group due to a few issues that have arisen during the works.</p>
4	<p>Short and Medium-Term Interventions: Borelli/Riverside Cycle Improvement Scheme update</p> <p>This is the first part of the LCWIP that is being delivered early. The red route on the slides is what SCC will be delivering – designs are currently being finalised which will include widening and resurfacing the path, new lighting, and landscaping works. Liaison with the Countryside Access Team has been happening to secure the temporary diversion route which has now been done and notices will be put up on site next week.</p>

	Item
	<p>Still working with the contractors to set the programme for this section. The current plan is to do this ahead of the town centre works.</p> <p>Discussions have taken place with Crest Nicholson for them to deliver the blue route on the slides as they are already mobilised in this area. Awaiting a confirmed programme from Crest Nicholson but our understanding is that it will be done in February 2025.</p> <p>The Chair asked for clarification on plans for the bridge. HS stated that we are advised that the bridge will be removed at the end of November and there will be some preparation works going on until February 2025 and then the new bridge will go in. There will be a gap where there will be no bridge in place.</p> <p>Cllr Powell asked if the installation of the new bridge will require closure of the A31. HS confirmed that Crest Nicholson would require lane closures of the A31 to take the bridge out. HS noted that the team would be working with them and the Streetworks team to ensure works are not clashing with other work taking place.</p> <p>IL raised that the lighting columns suggested were not as expected. Previous conversations had been that the lights would not be on permanently, they would be sensor related and not of the height detailed in the design. IL requested for a conversation around the actual lighting columns, not necessarily around where they will be placed.</p> <p>Cllr Martin asked how long the lane closures for the bridge removal will likely be, especially considering it will be the run up to Christmas. HS said understanding from Crest Nicolson is one night.</p>
5	<p>Short and Medium-Term Interventions: LCWIP update</p> <p>Meeting held between Surrey County Council, Waverley Borough Council (WBC) and Farnham Town Council (FTC) councillors last month. This was the delegated authority item that came from WBC Executive for agreement of how to proceed with the LCWIP priority routes and other bits that are looking to be included within the Farnham LCWIP report addendum.</p> <p>The agreement of priority routes scheme to take forward, which is now within scope and budget for the LCWIP Stage 2 (feasibility design development stage). Now commencing this stage of work.</p> <p>WBC additions and updates to the published LCWIP report including additional core walking zones have been agreed.</p> <p>SCC additions and updates to the LCWIP report including improved North/South connectivity through the town centre linked to the development sites in the area have been agreed. These are all now captured in the LCWIP report addendum together with the original full LCWIP report for Farnham – this provides the agreed strategic plan for developing the improved cycle/walking routes and connections in the local area.</p> <p>Then will work to secure the necessary funding for construction, which will come after feasibility and subject to funding</p> <p>Cllr Powell asked whether NM’s team can provide input into both the Hawthorns and the cemetery appeal to state that they are priority routes. NM confirmed that they can help and already have met with SCC Transport Development Planning (TDP) colleagues after the September meeting during which all pieces in the Farnham LCWIP report were agreed so TCP have a full understanding of the agreed strategic plan for the LCWIP and therefore this</p>

	Item
	<p>has been taken into account in terms of their response to the planning pieces and future development sites going forwards.</p> <p>The Chair asked for an update on Woolmead. IL advised Homes England are talking to potential developers in terms of what can be achieved on site in terms of Government objectives such as UCA. In early stages but hope to complete it by the end of the year.</p>
6	<p>Short and Medium-Term Interventions: Water Lane Roundabout update</p> <p>Construction of the crossing and toucan crossing is complete and post-construction safety audit has been undertaken and SCC will start monitoring onsite post-construction.</p>
7	<p>Town Centre Improvement Scheme update</p> <p>In terms of design, further discussions have taken place on the CCTV and bus shelters.</p> <p>Currently making sure all works packages are aligned and co-ordinated. Engaging with utility companies such as BT Openreach who will be needed to do some up front works.</p> <p>In terms of preparation for construction, since the last Board meeting in June, the team have been developing the construction phasing plan with the contractor to agree the order that the scheme will be built and the traffic diversion routes is being reviewed with emergency services, Members and has taken on comments from businesses regarding avoiding closures over Christmas. SCC have had a detailed review with Stagecoach including mitigations for each phase so will move onto looking at impacts on parking, deliveries, refuse collection etc.</p> <p>Working towards January 2025 start date starting with compound set up and utilities works.</p> <p>IL attended recent Business Improvement District meeting and noted that businesses seem to have a lack of understanding/have not been shared information about the phasing programme. They know that work will start in January and that there is an indicative list of zones. FTC still has not seen the phasing programme. It would be helpful to get an indicative timeline of when the zones are taking place and whether there are any adjustments following discussions with contractors. AP confirmed the phasing is draft but can be shared as the scheme progresses.</p> <p>ACTION: FIP project team to share phasing plan.</p> <p>Cllr Martin was surprised businesses and retailers are not aware of the scheme. The three Surrey Councillors are happy to have a meeting with as many business retailers and residents as possible to try to heighten the awareness of works going forward and ease concerns with as much public information as possible.</p> <p>Greg Stafford MP has received concerns from residents regarding parking, buses, access to schools, etc. More public information is needed.</p> <p>Cllr Powell flagged residents were shocked by the communication regarding changes to the buses for the Upper Hale Road 20mph construction. Specifically, changes to the routes for the hospital at night which meant hospital staff/residents had difficulty getting home. If we allow Stagecoach to continue with the standard diversion routes, then large parts of the town will be left without bus routes for months. It was asked for engagement to be made with the three County Councillors on the plans for buses so they can communicate it early.</p> <p>The Chair noted that he had a meeting with the Managing Director of Stagecoach and SCC has agreed to fund an additional bus for up to 2 years, which will help to address the timing</p>

	Item
	<p>issues that Stagecoach were raising. Part of the conversation was on communication of phasing.</p> <p>The Communications Plan was presented – see slides. The Chair reinforced that comms need to be accurate, good quality information, timely and started before Christmas and in January to reinforce and highlight key information for residents and retailers.</p> <p>Cllr MacLeod flagged that staff in shops may not be the correct person to speak with regarding the town centre scheme.</p> <p>Cllr Powell asked for a SCC officer presence commitment for the Farnham Town Christmas light switch on and Christmas market.</p> <p>ACTION: BF to speak to FTC and FIP project team to see what can be put in place for the Christmas Lights switch on and Christmas Market.</p> <p>Monthly newsletter will be circulated and will be working with Farnham BID, and this can be increased if there are any urgent issues or changes to communicate. Opportunity to include in Farnham Residents Guide being issued in January.</p> <p>Agreed to start the communication now – noting that some have already started.</p> <p>Social media channels will be utilised, and comms team will be trying to engage with certain social media groups. BF flagged that often these are private groups so can be difficult to gain access, but Comms team will liaise with local councillors to see if they can help.</p> <p>ACTION: BF to share more detailed comms plan.</p> <p>Cllr MacLeod raised concerns around Castle Street speeding and that is causing anxiety for residents of Castle Street. Cllr MacLeod has raised this at the previous meeting. Acknowledged the scheme will be putting in measures on Castle Street to control speeds. EM advised post-scheme studies will be undertaken which will indicate whether further measures are needed.</p>
8	<p>Farnham A31 Corridor update</p> <p>Reviewing the cost effectiveness benefits of A31 corridor scheme. When the scheme was submitted in November 2021 it was recommended by approval by the Department of Transport (DfT). The current review will give a direction on the design and the key steps needed to pursue the Business Case. The team are talking to DfT and Active Travel to make sure that it is a relevant and appropriate scheme. The Chair noted that we need to see what comes out of the Government budget and what projects are to go ahead.</p> <p>Cllr Powell raised that the project is primarily being driven by the economy and East/West connectivity which does not benefit Farnham because that is aimed at through-traffic. The issues in Farnham are more around North/South connectivity (walking and cycling) and so there is concern that as we seek to be more cost-effective, we may lose the mitigations for the work being done in the town centre (e.g. Coxbridge developments, signalling the northern junction of the A325).</p> <p>EM offered reassurance that the team have had a major workshop with officers from various SCC teams including Passenger Transport to ensure we have holistically looked at all parts of the scheme and not just travel times but also Active Travel and the North/South link.</p>

	Item
	<p>IL raised the opportunity to incorporate improvements into the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan and linking into housing developments. EM advised SCC have been speaking with Network Rail and SCC Property about development of the site.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Programme and risks</p> <p>EM talked through the key milestones – see slides.</p> <p>Cllr Powell raised the School Street and road safety improvements on Weybourne Road. School Streets is being delayed and will go in once technology has been selected. Road safety improvements are being progressed ahead of the town centre works.</p> <p>On the North and South Farnham Studies, Cllr Powell noted that over the summer additional traffic monitoring took place and looking at the year-on-year comparison we are seeing increases in traffic on most of the roads around Farnham. Is there anything that came out of the work that indicates that we need to do anything differently now and whether that modelling work is being used by TPD? EM advised that the cameras which were set up for the North and South Farnham studies are held with our Traffic Modelling Team and they feed into TDP team updates in traffic flows, so any developer would have to go to that team to get flows and input into the traffic impacts.</p> <p>ACTION: EM to pass on comment that projects in appeal are not considering the latest data.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Questions</p> <p>20mph and HGV ban enforcement: The Chair advised 20mph has been raised with the Police Chief Constable. Police do not have the capacity to enforce so it is a self-enforcing speed limit. The Chair added that where there is an average speed camera or standard speed camera, this cannot be used to capture data on HGV for enforcement, so a police camera has to be used separately to enforce 20mph. It is still the plan to put in a permanent HGV camera. Cllr Powell raised that a fixed camera would have to go on Folly Hill junction; one on Castle Street would just displace traffic.</p> <p>Penalty charge notice for 20mph and HGVs: No data for 20mph. Data shown related to video clips for HGVs shown on slides. There will be data in relation to the penalty charge data in a monthly summary of report which will be provided going forward.</p> <p>Signage to encourage cars to switch off engines when waiting at crossings: EM noted that there is already one sign in place, but SCC will run a countywide study to consider different design/message and making it look a bit bolder. There are no set DfT signs. SCC looked at flashing signs at level crossings, but due to electrics it would be too dangerous.</p> <p>Belisha beacons: Two Belisha beacons included at the new zebra crossing on South Street. The town centre scheme includes six new raised tables and six new pedestrian controlled signalised crossings which provide dedicated time for pedestrians to cross the road, and traffic will be stopped by traffic lights. The design has gone through a public consultation and a road safety audit and is now fixed.</p> <p>East Street flooding: EM and Cllr Powell went and looked at East Street development snagging issues. Forwarded lessons learned onto designers and contractor. SCC have looked extensively at levels with the drainage team to ensure no ponding, clearing existing drains, slight gradient on footways and additional drainage has been added where needed. Cllr Powell raised downpipes which discharge directly onto pavement and that slotted slabs</p>

	Item
	<p>are a feature of the town. AP confirmed scheme will be extending slotted slabs or will go into a rain garden or put into drain if not possible to extend due to levels.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>Cllr Beaman raised the reliability of Surrey Connect service. EM confirmed it has been passed onto the appropriate team.</p> <p>Cllr MacLeod raised that discussions are starting on how we should consult local residents/parents of the school pupils for Potters Gate School Street that Surrey will be funding. This is not part of the Farnham works that this Board oversees.</p> <p>Cllr MacLeod raised the County elections next year and how that might impact the Farnham scheme. The Chair advised that the pre-election period will commence around the 20 March. Anything of a significant nature will be needed to be done before the pre-election period starts which could influence voters.</p> <p>The Chair raised that Farnham Board was formed due to the Pollution Summit that Jeremy Hunt MP called to get an agreed plan for the town. We have now reached this point with works starting in the new year. The January Farnham Board will need to think about the best way forward – do we need the Board constituted in this format or do we form a working group to deal with issues that arise from implementation. EM suggested a ‘look back’ review in January to celebrate what has been achieved.</p> <p>Cllr Powell flagged that we need a forum to discuss A31 and North and South Studies. Cllr Powell asked for an interim meeting between the January Farnham Board and pre-election period discuss any issues that need to be addressed.</p> <p>The next meeting will be on 17 January 2025.</p>

This page is intentionally left blank