

Farnham Board Minutes

Date & Time:	20 Nov 2020, 10:00-11:30
Venue:	Video Conferencing - Zoom
Chair:	Cllr Tim Oliver
In attendance:	Cllr Wyatt Ramsdale, Cllr Stephen Spence, Cllr Andy MacLeod, Cllr John Ward, Cllr Paul Follows, Cllr John Neale, Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, Cllr Matt Furniss, Tom Horwood, Zac Ellwood, Chris Tunstall, Paula Gough, Iain Lynch, Ben Funning, Jonathan Foster-Clark, Lee Parker, Flora Holmes (Sec)
Observers	Fiona Cameron, Peter Burch, Richard Nelson, Sachio Baig, Veronika Moore, Steve Howard
Apologies	Cllr Colin Kemp

Item	
1	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Matt Furniss was ratified as a temporary board member in lieu of Cllr Colin Kemp. Cllr Furniss is Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Transport.</p> <p>Lee Parker was welcomed by the board. Lee is SCC's new director for Infrastructure, Planning and Major Projects.</p> <p>The Chair reflected that the agenda was packed full of positive items.</p>
2	<p>Minutes of the Meeting and Matters Arising from Last Board</p> <p>The Chair noted that the minutes of the previous meeting have been circulated and no issues had been raised so as such they were ratified as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>All matter arising from the last meeting had been actioned.</p>
3	<p>Questions and Queries</p> <p>One question had been raised by a member of the public, which read:</p> <p>I would like to ask the committee whether as well as the FIP plans sent out in a recent survey, there are any plans to: promote planting and rewilding projects to increase biodiversity and wellbeing in the area; to ensure that building developments have the community's wellbeing in mind by ensuring they are sustainable and of excellent quality; and whether rates could be rebated on a disused building in the town in order for the community to create a hub for increasing wellbeing and resilience and support the council in its aims to move Farnham/Waverley/Surrey rapidly towards carbon zero emissions.</p> <p>A response was noted by the board as follows:</p>

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'All our schemes will have to meet strict requirements to ensure the communities wellbeing and as such will include for the provision where appropriate of planting and rewilding projects amongst other things. In addition, reduced/ zero carbon emissions will be a key requirement of the overall Farnham Infrastructure Programme to enable the Programme to meet all the Farnham Partners, Farnham/ Waverley/ Surrey, climate emergency declarations. In terms of building developments being of an excellent quality and sustainable this is not a matter for this Board but would be an issue for Waverley Borough Council to consider as planning authority has accordingly been passed to them for a further response. Waverley will also be able to answer your question on business rates and any opportunities there may be within the national framework of regulations.'

4 Vision Statement Consultation

Ben Funning gave feedback on the vision statement consultation. The consultation was live between 1 October and 8 November and was promoted through media relations, digital and social media, local print advertising and leaflet delivered to all households. The consultation received 885 replies which was very good.

34% of respondents were over 65, compared to the overall Farnham demographics which is 22%. 6% of respondents were aged under 35, compared to the overall Farnham demographics of around 38%. This was disappointing, and addressing this imbalance is going to be a priority going forward to ensure fair representation of all who live in the town.

Responses were broadly similar across all age groups although younger people tended to view environmental concerns and maintaining the historic nature of the town as a slightly higher priority than older age groups.

A majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the statement was the right ambition for the programme. A majority supported the need to reduce congestion through town centre, although there was disagreement over pavement widening. Rerouting HGVs was said to be essential by a majority of respondents, but problems as a result of redirecting HGVs and other traffic are of concern.

Most supported pedestrianisation provided traffic impacts were mitigated. Many highlighted the health and environmental benefits. A smaller number believed it would extend the amount of time traffic spends in the town and that people's behaviours are unlikely to change.

There was lots of support for encouraging walking and cycling, although some disagreement about prioritising cycling, which it was noted will not work for everyone going into and out of town, for example older people, and if you have a lot of shopping. Several people were open to the idea of out of town 'park and stride' car parks to reroute traffic.

Residents overwhelmingly see Hickley's Corner as a priority for reducing congestion, queuing and vehicles using the town centre as an alternative through route. The level crossing was raised by many, with some suggesting the need to reduce the number of vehicles through public transport and active travel, and others suggesting necessary changes could only be achieved with an underpass.

In Wrecclesham, a majority agreed that tackling traffic and speed issues is a high priority.

Ben summarised the recommendations from the Vision Statement consultation: that the Board note the outcome of the Vision Statement Consultation; the Project Team consider the feedback provided, and that the Vision Statement is taken forward as part of the Farnham

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He also noted that for HGVs coming through Farnham, those that are travelling between Basingstoke and Guildford, Folly Hill or Upper Hale is a preferable route on sat navs instead of the A331. Smaller hauliers tend to use standard sat navs which don't take into account whether the route is appropriate for HGVs.

Other issues picked up were the bridge strikes to the low bridge at Wrecclesham on the A325, the right turn on Upper Hale road to Alma Road which causes delays when a vehicle is waiting to turn right. Another issue are the random kerbside deliveries which occur within the town centre and the resulting congestion that can occur..

Chris recommended that the Board note the outcome and recommendations of the HGV Study; and:

Agree the following short-term improvements for further consultation and implementation:

- **Restrict HGV through trips via Castle Street/Folly Hill and Upper Hale via weight restriction on A287 (e.g. no vehicles beyond 7.5T)**
- **Provision of temporary loading bays (whilst Covid-19 restrictions are present)**
- **Provide alternative mailboxes for local residents e.g. Amazon lockers**
- **Produce guide/protocol for loading and unloading in the Town Centre**
- **Undertake speed survey study of Upper Hale and the town centre**
- **VMS height warning for Wrecclesham Railway Bridge**
- **Liase with local business to understand willingness to consolidate deliveries in partnership with neighbours; and**

Agree those interventions to be considered as part of the wider Optimised Infrastructure Programme OIP considerations detailed in paragraph 22:

- **Introduce loading pads (with timed restrictions) on widened footways.**
- **Refresh speed signage in Upper Hale/School 20mph Zone (Upper Hale).**
- **Parking capacity variable message signing in the town centre.**
- **Introduce micro-consolidation centres at local locations.**
- **Upper Hale – on-street parking restrictions.**
- **Introduce consolidation centre at strategic location.**
- **Upper Hale – all traffic right turn ban (onto Alma Lane).**

Cllr Spence noted the report and welcomed it.

Cllr Follows asked about the journey analysis used in the report. He also commented that consultees believe the rerouting of HGVs to be essential but would be concerned over where they will go and what this means for deliveries.

Cllr MacLeod welcomed the report and noted that restructuring the town centre roads would address a big problem in the town centre which is that every vehicle has to go through narrow roads with narrow pavements.

Cllr Ward said he was delighted with the study and urged the recommendations were adopted rapidly, to give the public a firm date on which this is going to happen. On height restrictions, he asked that we use decent quality signs as they often do not work when poor quality.

The Chair asked whether of any of the proposed improvements, the county has the power to do on a temporary basis without a traffic regulation order.

Cllr Ramsdale welcomed the report and asked about the possibility of recategorizing roads to allow sat navs to avoid rerouting HGVs down them.

Chris Tunstall noted that we need to consult again on the specific proposals as the first consultation in respect of the Vision was very general and people need to be able to fully appreciate any implications.

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	<p>On sat navs, Chris noted they will talk to individual companies to see if there is anything that can be done on re the routing of HGVs. On road categorisation, this is being investigated but it is a national categorisation so we will need to work with the DfT and Government, so it is not a quick win.</p> <p>Jonathan Foster-Clark noted that different journey options are available depending on the time of day and traffic conditions, mapping analysis illustrated this. He added that they looked at traffic data using surveys previously undertaken before Covid, which made it clear that there was an element of through traffic passing through the town. Movements of larger HGVs was less than smaller ones, however the larger vehicles had a greater impact on the character and nature of the town.. In looking to introduce restrictions in Farnham, there is a need to recognise the issue of the county boundary, and colleagues in Hampshire are being engaged.</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for their comments and asked that Chris reaches a speedy conclusion as to what can be done on a quicker, temporary basis. ACTION: Chris Tunstall to circulate a timetable to the Board ASAP before the next Board meeting.</p>
6	<p>Progress Update</p> <p>Progress since last meeting – Paula Gough noted in addition to reports, a Programme Execution Plan and Risk Register have been developed. SCC were unsuccessful in their bid for government funds to introduce electric buses in Farnham, but a report coming to Cabinet in Surrey next week on ULEV schemes recommends we move forward generally. On the 20mph study update, the work is moving forward. Locations have been identified by stakeholders, requests and data. The draft report is scheduled for completion at Christmas and will be ready in time for the next Board Meeting.</p> <p>Jeremy Hunt noted caution against rolling out a 20mph zone in a piecemeal way as this will make things difficult for drivers. Chris Tunstall agreed and said they will be looking at a blanket approach within the town centre, with some peripheral locations. ACTION: Chris Tunstall to circulate these locations.</p> <p>Paula Gough noted we have been extensively engaging with Surrey’s neighbours: East Hampshire District Council, Guildford Borough Council, Hampshire County Council, Hart District Council, Rushmoor Borough Council. Positive responses have been received from other councils.</p> <p>Optimised Infrastructure Plan – Jonathan Foster Clark noted we are now in the phase of developing objectives and thinking about what we need to achieve for Farnham, taking into account data and consultation outputs. He said a list of options to respond to issues that have been identified is being developed, which will feed into the draft OIP being brought to the next Board in January. Initial results and observations were the sheer amount of car travel in the Farnham area. People travel more than the national average, driven by high levels of car ownership, and fewer people walking, cycling and using public transport. The town is particularly sensitive to this due to its historic and narrow streets. The town centre is dominated by its road layout. This impacts on the heritage of town and the quality of place. A big challenge is the forecast scale of growth in the area which is expected to increase future traffic volumes. The climate change strategy also means we must achieve a 60% reduction of traffic volumes by 2035. If this is going to be an exemplar plan, we need to changing people’s traffic behaviours. We need a transport system that is attractive and enables people to switch to walking, cycling and public transport. The next steps will be to present the draft OIP at the next Board meeting.</p>



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	<p>Review against timeline – Paula Gough informed the board that we are on the programme for delivery of the OIP as requested by board. We are well on the way for joining up local plans within this process.</p> <p>Active travel update – Chris Tunstall informed the board the orcas are being installed and look good. Lane reorganisation at the junction of Downing Street and The Borough should help the traffic coming out of car parks at Downing Street. SCC have been successful with their second Active Travel 2 bid and received the third largest settlement in the country. The schemes are currently being worked up and are being consulted on, then Surrey will take a decision on what to take forward.</p> <p>Cllr Spence noted the good news that the orcas have gone in and noted the need to be careful as we move things forward to avoid miscommunication with residents.</p> <p>Brightwell Development – Chris Tunstall noted the proposals just to do the widening works on the south side of East Street adjacent to Brightwell's would work in respect of traffic flows. Colleagues within Surrey and Waverley are now working on the preferred option to minimise the S278 works.</p>
7	<p>Local Liaison Forum (LLF) Update.</p> <p>Cllr Neale gave an overview of the LLF meetings that have taken place. A residents' association meeting has taken place with broad agreement with the vision statement, and people were impressed with the breadth of the programme. The meeting stimulated the creation of a residents' association in North Farnham which met recently. The business event was attended by about 12 businesses but clashed with the lockdown announcements. There was a constructive discussion about the pedestrianisation and the arrangements for deliveries, revitalising independent retailers and how the sector will look. They plan to follow up the meeting in the new year. The next meeting is planned next week and will be a community meeting. They plan to pick up the age group problem and how to target younger people. A town centre meeting is planned in December, and three meetings are planning for January to cover major road issues. Finally, a meeting is planned aimed at talking to young people with their leaders and helpers which will happen in due course. All meetings are scheduled before the next board meeting. Cllr Follows asked for these to be circulated as widely as possible.</p>
8	<p>AOB</p> <p>No additional items had been raised.</p> <p>Next meeting date:</p> <p>Friday 22 January 10.00am-11.00am.</p>