

Farnham Board Minutes

Date & Time:	24 September 2021, 9:30-11:30
Venue:	Farnham Town Council/Hybrid - Zoom
Chair:	Cllr Tim Oliver
In attendance:	Cllr Michaela Martin, Cllr Catherine Powell, Cllr Andy MacLeod, Cllr Paul Follows, Cllr Peter Clark, Cllr John Neale, Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP.
Observers:	Chris Greenwood, Alex Pye, Tom Horwood, Zac Ellwood, Iain Lynch, Peter Burch, Yasmin Ahmed, Paula Gough, Jonathan Foster-Clark, Elaine Martin
Apologies:	

	Item
1	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone and went through general housekeeping for the meeting. He also took the opportunity to thank Paul Gough who is leaving the Farnham Project Team for her contribution so far.</p>
2	<p>Minutes of the Meeting and Matters Arising from Last Board</p> <p>No amendments were suggested, minutes approved.</p>
3	<p>Questions and Queries</p> <p>There were no questions or queries for this Board.</p> <p>Simon Duke asked that any questions members have are sent to the Board before each meeting as agreed in June.</p>
4	<p>Optimised Infrastructure Plan – Final Report</p> <p>Alex Pye presented the feedback from extensive consultation and communications that have taken place on the Optimised Infrastructure Plan (OIP). The revised OIP final draft has incorporated comments from partners, stakeholders, resident groups and individuals. These changes include policy additions, changes to the schemes (removal, alteration or addition), clarification of text and additional information on potential carbon impacts.</p> <p>The Board was recommended to note the progress made in developing the final draft of the revised OIP and approve the publication of this document subject to any final amendments from the Board.</p> <p>Cllr Andy MacLeod expressed how important this report is, how this work is needed in Farnham, and spoke about the need to communicate the plan visually through diagrams and ensure that the plan is implemented.</p> <p>Cllr Peter Clarke commended the team in getting the OIP to this stage. He mentioned that this report has been consulted on extensively and emphasised that now is the time to focus on the delivery of the plan. Cllr Catherine Powell seconded this.</p>



Item	
	<p>The Board confirmed that they approve the publication of this report.</p>
5	<p>Farnham A31 Corridor update</p> <p>Chris Greenwood presented on the objectives of this project to ease congestion, improve road safety and transport network, reducing impacts of the level crossing and facilitate developments, improve sub regional movement and address air quality.</p> <p>He summarised the work that has been done so far; the main workstreams have been developing the business case leading to submission in November, looking at the forecasting and developing the traffic model and engineering feasibility.</p> <p>There are 19 different interventions that have been proposed since 2004. Looking at the feasibility from an engineering point of view, these have been sifted down into shortlisted interventions.</p> <p>Chris summarised the next steps as the submission of the business case in November, using the traffic model to understand how these interventions would workday today and refining the suite of business cases that will need to be submitted.</p> <p>In response to a question asked around forecasting, Chris confirmed that the traffic modelling takes account of local schemes and developments in and around Farnham from development lists from Waverly Borough Council.</p> <p>The Board is recommended to note the progress update and approve in principle the submission of the Strategic Outline Business Case in November subject to consultation and review.</p> <p>Cllr Paul Follows asked if development lists from other borough councils have been considered asked to be provided with a brief outline of what happens after submission in November. Chris Greenwood confirmed that sites have been captured in adjacent boroughs in Surrey as well as Hampshire.</p> <p>Jonathan Foster-Clarke responded that SCC will need to follow the Treasury business case process which is also known as “five cases”. First a strategic case needs to be made on why the investment is needed, what problem we are trying to solve and demonstrating how this is consistent with Government and local policies. Then a second case will need to demonstrate we are delivering good value for money on the investments and map out benefits to the economy. The other three cases relate to the financial case, a procurement strategy or commercial case and finally the delivery case, ensuring we have the right governance for the schemes in the programme. Based on the current timeline drafted with the Department of Transport (DfT), the scheme is estimated to be in use by 2028.</p> <p>Cllr Catherine Powell asked if the list of developments can be shared with the Board to better answer resident queries and also asked if manging impacts has been considered in the construction phase. Elaine Martin agreed to share the pro forma updates and Simon Duke confirmed that work is done with contractors to ensure impacts are minimised as much as possible.</p> <p>The Board approved the submission of the business case.</p>
6	<p>Short- and Medium-Term Interventions update</p>

Item

Elaine Martin gave an update on the short-term interventions first:

- Rerouting HGVs - Since the last Board, the team has consulted on the TROs regarding sign locations. Kier have been installing the signs and due are to complete by the end of September.
- Wayfinding Strategy - Report on this was prepared in July identifying existing fingerpost signs and a new town centre pedestrian wayfinding strategy which incorporated the design. The strategy has developed after working closely with stakeholders and further discussions will be had around finding locations for new signage, design of totem poles and finger signs and the team are currently looking at a March 22 installation.
- 20mph Speed limit - This went to the Waverley Local committee and was approved on the 3rd September. Although heritage considerations were raised on the physical measures required in Castle Street for the Speed Restrictions. This is being looked at. TRO consultation is planned for October.

The Chair asked if Waverley’s concerns are going to be included in the TRO. Elaine confirmed that they will be included in the TRO consultation.

- A325 reclassification - A technical note has been finalised and reviewed by partners. This has been sent on to Kier to identify changes to roads signs and carriageway markings. They have been commissioned and are coordinating the installation alongside the HGV restriction to minimise the need for additional traffic management and disruptions.

Elaine then presented the medium-term interventions scheme stating that over 100 projects were compiled based on stakeholder feedback including issues related to maintenance, traffic management, HGV, traffic speeds, walking, cycling, parking buses and schools.

A sift was undertaken to prioritise this list. The methodology was shared with stakeholder and feedback has now been received and is currently being reviewed.

The Board is recommended to note the progress on the short- and medium-term interventions.

7 Overview of progress

Elaine Martin gave a general overview of progress to date:

- The final OIP is due to be published in October
- The installation for rerouting the HGVs is due to be completed in September
- The wayfinding strategy is due to be implemented by October 2022
- The A road classification is likely to complete in October
- The 20mph zone will be implemented by May 2022
- The medium-term interventions budget allocation limit will be reached in March 2023
- The town centre and (Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan) LCWIP construction phase is set to finish by January 2028

Elaine reported on the top five risks; modal shift not being achieved, the possibility of a referendum, historic street layouts, culturally and/or environmentally sensitive sites and fake news.

The Board is recommended to note the progress update, the forecast of key activities and the updated schedule, and the now in use project terminology.

	Item
	<p>The Chair asked for an update regarding the orcas on Downing Street. Elaine responded that the team have spoken with the contractor will be replacing the orcas with white lining and removable bollards from next week. The Chair then asked for a timescale on the widening of the footpath for a permanent solution. Simon Duke responded that sketches have been mocked up to present options. Consultation is being undertaken with shop owners on the street.</p> <p>Cllr Paul Follows asked whether the team will work with Waverley to ensure their plans for an LCWIP will be compatible with the plans for Farnham. Elaine confirmed that the team will be workshopping with partners and ensuring the LCWIP is looked at holistically across Farnham and beyond. Cllr Paul Follows asked the team to ensure that non-Farnham parts of Waverley are also consulted with.</p> <p>Cllr Michaela Martin is willing to host a meeting for the retailers on Downing Street to facilitate consultation.</p> <p>Cllr Catherine Powell asked that the Friends of Farnham Park and the Farnham Biodiversity group are included in discussions on the LCWIP for greenfield or park related routes as early stakeholders. On modal shift, she flagged the ongoing issue of the buses to the local colleges being too full for students travel. She has raised with officers and Stagecoach to find a solution.</p> <p>Cllr John Neale noted the plans to replace the orcas with white lining and bollards. He encouraged the team to work with officers from the local town council to ensure the design is appropriate.</p>
8	<p>Local Liaison Forum update</p> <p>Cllr John Neale spoke on the timing and content for the Local Liaison Forum (LLF) going forward. The meeting is being moved to quarterly and will take four weeks after the Farnham Board meeting. The programme team will provide an update at the LLF and the usual discussion forum with the public. The next meeting will take place on the 21st October 2021.</p> <p>Jeremy Hunt MP spoke on the progress to date and commented that extraordinary progress has been made so far including the short-term intervention such as the HGV restrictions which have already resulted in a 40% reduction of HGV traffic coming into the town.</p> <p>He noted that A31 programme has been brought forward by 3 years meaning it will open before HS2 but the Wrecclesham Relief Road is still to be delivered after HS2 opens. It would be good if both large projects could be open before HS2 happens.</p> <p>He expressed his view for the feasibility for the Western Bypass to be done quickly to assess as a group whether it is on or off the table as it is a project that has engendered strong feelings on both sides. It would be good to know before going to public consultation to avoid overshadowing the issue if it is deemed too late to be unfeasible.</p> <p>He identified that it is necessary to ensure that the Town Council can shape this project. To help with this, Jeremy asked if it would be possible to commission the local architect, Jim Duffy, to take pictures of the new scheme as he did for a previous successful public meeting to help win the support of the people of Farnham.</p> <p>Jeremy also proposed that the traffic modelers look at whether it was possible to have some pedestrianisation at weekends to include in the plans to lessen the carbon footprint.</p>



	Item
	<p>Cllr Paul Follows commented that any referendum on the issue would need to be led by the local authority. He raised the concern that pedestrianisation in Farnham at this time could have a negative reaction due to the negative experience they recently had. He recommended some caution and acknowledgement of the negative experience had by Farnham. Finally, he asked if supporting evidence for the 40% reduction of HGVs could be sent around.</p> <p>Cllr John Neale expressed his support for phased pedestrianisation.</p> <p>Cllr Andy MacLeod also expressed his support or pedestrianisation but also cautioned that it could overshadow the important improvements in the plan and vision at this time. Jeremy Hunt MP suggested that the decision on whether to go public or not could wait until the traffic study has been completed.</p> <p>Elaine Martin spoke about early engagement with partners taking place in October and the visuals that are being developed for this with the public consultation going live in spring next year.</p> <p>Cllr Catherine Powell raised the point that a recent PJA presentation showed that full pedestrianisation the town, it would displace 45 – 55% more traffic on to roads that can't cope today.</p>
9	<p>AOB</p> <p>The next meeting is 17 December 2021 and will be held at Farnham Town Council.</p>

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