



# Farnham Board - Meeting Minutes

15 December 2023



# Minutes

<b>Date and Time:</b>	15 December 2023, 10:00-11:30
<b>Venue:</b>	Hybrid Meeting - Farnham Town Council Offices
<b>Chair:</b>	Cllr Tim Oliver
<b>In attendance:</b>	Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, Cllr Michaela Martin, Cllr Catherine Powell, Cllr Andy MacLeod, Cllr Peter Clark, Cllr David Beaman
<b>Observers:</b>	SCC - Lee Parker, David Stempfer, Elaine Martin, Mohammed Ali, Ben Funning, Neil McClure. WBC - Abi Lewis, Dawn Hudd. FTC - Iain Lynch Atkins - Chris Greenwood, Rich Franklin
<b>Apologies:</b>	Cllr Paul Follows, Katie Stewart, Tom Horwood

	Item
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Welcome and Introduction</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed the Board.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Actions and minutes from the last meeting</b></p> <p>Cllr Beaman asked if the meeting on the 11 Oct between SCC and local members took place. EM confirmed it did take place and SCC officers met with local members to run through concerns etc and to run through the phasing of the works. EM added that the baseline plan has been sent to the contractor for early engagement and they have come back with some comments as it will depend on their own programme and street availability.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Short and Medium-Term Interventions update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wayfinding Strategy</li> <li>- 20mph Limits/ Zones and Speed restrictions</li> <li>- Borelli Park and Stride</li> <li>- Water Lane Roundabout</li> </ul> <p><b>Wayfinding:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Farnham Station totems have now been installed. The final two totems will be installed as part of the town centre scheme as access, due to Brightwell's, is restricted.</li> </ul> <p><b>20mph Limits/Zones and Speed restrictions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weydon Lane and the town centre schemes have now been constructed.</li> <li>- Upper Hale Road has been reconsulted on as it now includes a crossing point, extension and change from cushions to tables and the team are reviewing the comments.</li> <li>- A re-advertising of the speed limits will take place from 4 January 2024 and will run for 4 weeks as the order could expire and we want to ensure we have engaged with everybody.</li> <li>- Programmed for August 2024 due to a lot of utility works in the North Farnham area taking place.</li> </ul>

## Item

### **Borelli Park and Stride:**

- This scheme is a riverside shared cycle and footpath from South Street to the riverside car parks.
- The preliminary design is almost complete, and it also forms a part of the LCWIP.
- Currently in discussion with Crest who are replacing the bridge. There are some ecological issues which include some tree reviews, lighting, and environmental constraints with the river, as well as the legal position of the actual land.
- The Chair advised he met with Waverley BC recently to talk about the 2.5/4m bridge. The planning permission is for a 2.5m bridge but now if that were to come forward SCC would be looking at a 4m bridge which could potentially mean cyclists could use it too. Waverley BC CEx advised they will not accept the additional costs of the 4m bridge. The conversation was from a planning perspective and from a funding perspective. Waverley BC CEx has advised that they would not approve the expenditure to create a 4m bridge. The Chair asked for confirmation that any further conversations with Waverley about a 4m bridge are now no longer current. Deputy Leader of Waverley confirmed that Waverley CEx did agree that on the predictions of costings it would not be affordable for a 4m bridge. The Chair discussed a letter received from the Chairman of the Farnham Society which suggested that we look at retaining the existing temporary bridge and making it more attractive; the Chair clarified that this would need planning permission from Waverley BC and would likely need agreement from the Environment Agency. The Chair asked Cllr Clark if this was something worth considering? Cllr Clark confirmed that anything allowing pedestrians and cyclists to travel over the bridge safely would be worth considering but was unsure if this had already been officially considered – Cllr Clark advised he would confirm in the New Year.
- The Chair summarised that we are now in a position where we will have to go for a 2.5m bridge, which is not ideal, but we will have to ensure there is appropriate signage and possibly a bollard to stop cyclists. But that we do need to look at every option before we settle on this so it would be worth putting the option of improving the existing bridge through the system. There were concerns raised about who owns the bridge, who holds responsibility to maintain it and who would make the planning application. The Chair noted that the existing arrangement is that it is Crest's responsibility to provide the bridge and then the ownership would transfer to Waverley BC.
- EM added that as part of the Farnham Infrastructure programme we have been encouraging Crest to come up with some more stylised designs rather than just a wooden bridge so it is more attractive.

### **ACTION:**

- **Letter from the Chairman of the Farnham Society to be shared with Board Members - TO**
- **Option to keep the existing temporary bridge and make improvements to be looked at further – Cllr Clark**

### **Water Lane Roundabout:**

- Detailed design now completed.
- Due to utility works construction will commence in March 2024.
- Cllr Powell raised concerns around the crossing (in red on the slide shown) as it came up in discussions with the LCWIP as one of the highest priority level crossings in Farnham as it is highly used and very unsafe being at 50mph. The cost came in at £1.2m and Cllr Powell wanted to understand how that cost is so high and emphasised that we do need to find a way to get that crossing funded. EM was unable to comment on the pricing due to not being involved in the costings but did say that the high cost could be because it is a vast stretch and is dualled so has bigger traffic management as it is a primary road.



	Item
4	<p><b>Town Centre Improvements update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submitted Community Infrastructure Levy bid to Waverley BC and will get outcome in March 2024.</li> <li>- Recently advertised parking Traffic Regulation Order – closes on 5 Jan 2024.</li> <li>- Currently in discussion with Heritage Teams regarding suitability of materials and street furniture.</li> <li>- Cllr Powell said we need to look at areas where traffic is displaced as part of the town centre improvements (near the train station, Upper Hale Road and St Johns junction). Particularly the junction at St Johns where two planning applications have been submitted.</li> <li>- Cllr Powell also noted that all three Surrey County Cllrs remain concerned about the lack of cycling provision between Park Row and Long Garden Walk on Castle Street, because the road is still busy. Cllr Beaman reiterated support of Cllr Powell’s comments.</li> <li>- DS advised Cllr Powell’s comments have been passed to SCC technical specialists (Transport Studies Team and Development Control Team) to assess and consider the points and committed to a follow up meeting to work through the details in terms of the development.</li> <li>- Jeremy Hunt asked about the timescales for completing the town centre improvements to get a sense of when Farnham residents are going to see the big changes.</li> <li>- EM confirmed it is due to start October 2024 but there has been some push back because it would affect two Christmas periods, therefore works would start January 2025 and by the middle of 2026 the works would be complete. Jeremy Hunt asked if it could start in July 2024 and finish before Christmas 2026 and then it would only impact on one Christmas. EM would review however contract procurement could be lengthy.</li> <li>- Bus Layby: EM clarified that we have been waiting for the outcome of the Stage 1 Safety Audit and review by the Passenger Transport Team.</li> <li>- The Chair asked that the team push for an earlier start time. DS agreed to look at this and try to get an earlier start time and will come back to Farnham Board with clear timescales.</li> <li>- Cllr MacLeod asked the Chair when Waverley and the project team can start having a conversation about air quality in Farnham. The Chair advised that the reduction in air pollution and improvement in air quality is a key part of the work and part of the solution is a reduction in traffic. EM clarified that the project team are working with Waverley on this and have sent them the Air Quality Analysis and will have further discussions with regards to the mitigation measures.</li> </ul>
5	<p><b>Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NM discussed the final stakeholder engagement session which was to agree the prioritisation of the walking and cycling routes around, in and out of the town centre area. The final workshop was on 17 October, same stakeholders from previous sessions were invited. It was productive, a lot of positive input and a consensus was reached of a prioritised list of routes.</li> <li>- Next steps: there is a limited budget so we cannot afford to do all routes in one go so there will be a phased approach.</li> <li>- In discussion with Atkins and Arup, it is agreed that Arup will take forward the second stage of feasibility of cost of schemes.</li> <li>- The timeframes are expected to be January 2024 – March 2024 when the feasibility is intended to commence.</li> <li>- On receipt of the proposal, we then expect to be able to confirm the scope of the work that will then be the subject of the feasibility stage and effectively how many schemes we can take through the first stage of works.</li> <li>- Currently drafting an engagement plan and expecting to share with key board members.</li> <li>- Atkins are now producing a summary report which will be an addendum to the original LCWIP report. The purpose of it is to document the outcomes of the original stakeholder sessions, updated maps etc.</li> </ul>

	Item
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Chair thanked the County Councillors for getting to an agreed list which was not an easy task.</li> <li>- NM confirmed the list of priority schemes and shared them on screen. Cllr Powell noted that the top priority route is currently subject to an ongoing planning application where the developer is currently blocking that route, and it is the only alternative route to the Upper Hale Road for children to get to schools on Weydon Lane.</li> <li>- Arup will also look at where routes can be combined, which will provide more efficiency and enable us to take more through the initial phase of feasibility.</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Farnham A31 Corridor update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EM went through some possible interventions to reduce traffic issues and the five stages of the business case (see slides).</li> <li>- The Chair added that being invited to submit an Outline Business Case gives us confidence that we will remain near the top of the list for receiving the funding.</li> <li>- Cllr MacLeod asked when the public consultation would likely take place. EM advised that at the moment the team are re-profiling and looking at all the different timeframes and what is required.</li> </ul>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Wrecclesham and Western Bypasses update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Currently reviewing the viability of the scheme</li> </ul>
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Programme and Risk update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 20mph Weydon Lane town centre work is now complete.</li> <li>- Phase 2, 20mph Upper Hale Road due to start in August 2024</li> <li>- Borelli Park &amp; Stride – the preliminary design is almost completed but there has been a delay due to the bridge issues.</li> <li>- A31 corridor is being re-profiled.</li> <li>- Risk that any additional work will reduce funding for other work in the programme.</li> </ul>
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Questions and discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Chair read a briefing note regarding the consultation on using Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras to enforce 7.5 tonne weight restriction on the A3016 and A287 in Upper Hale.</li> <li>- It was questioned whether the proposed fine to HGVs of £75 can be increased? The Chair said we would check this.</li> <li>- DS/EM to provide an easy-read briefing note on timescales and the reasons behind them and whether any timelines can be moved. The Chair agreed that would be helpful.</li> <li>- Deputy Leader of Waverley advised this will be his last meeting as he will be stepping down at the end of December. The Chair thanked him for his support and highlighted what can be achieved when all tiers of local government come together. Jeremy Hunt also thanked the team and the Chair for all their efforts.</li> </ul>
<b>10</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>The next meeting is <b>22 March 2024</b> and will be held at Farnham Town Council.</p>

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