



Farnham Infrastructure Programme

Farnham Board
14 June 2024



Minutes

Date & Time:	14 June 2024, 10:00-11:30
Venue:	Hybrid Meeting – Farnham Town Council Office
Chair:	Cllr Tim Oliver (TO)
In attendance:	Cllr Catherine Powell (CP) Cllr Andy MacLeod (AM) Cllr David Beaman (DB) Cllr Tony Fairclough (TF) Cllr Alan Earwaker (AE) Elaine Martin (EM) – Surrey County Council Hannah Simpson (HS) – Surrey County Council Ben Funning (BF) – Surrey County Council Neil McClure (NM) – Surrey County Council Iain Lynch (IL) – Farnham Town Council Jenny de Q (JD) – Farnham Town Council Dawn Hudd (DH) – Waverley Borough Council Rich Franklin (RF) – AtkinsRéalís
Observers:	David Stempfer – Surrey County Council Gemma Joyner – Surrey County Council Aurelie Pot – Surrey County Council
Apologies:	Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, Cllr Michaela Martin

Ref	Item
1	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>The Chair reminded the Board that we are in the pre-election period ahead of the General Election in July, and although it was right for this meeting to go ahead, there are various restrictions on what people can say or discuss. The Chair asked the Board to be mindful of this throughout the meeting.</p>
2	<p>Actions and minutes from the last meeting</p> <p>The minutes from the last meeting were agreed. EM went through the actions with updates. EM presented the key successes of the programme so far.</p>
3	<p>Short and Medium-Term Interventions: 20mph Limits and Speed restrictions update</p> <p>Weydon Lane and Town Centre 20mph schemes now complete and Traffic Regulation Order now active. New additional vehicle activated signs will be installed at the same time as the Upper Hale Road scheme across the town.</p> <p>Upper Hale Road 20mph consultation for the physical measures (tables and speed limit) has been completed and the Traffic Regulation Order has been reviewed and accepted by the Surrey Member and is now with the TRO Team to make the Order. Readying for construction which we hope to start end of July and expected to last approx. 5 weeks and will be undertaken as night works to avoid clashes with other works in the area.</p> <p>Cllr Powell noted that Sandy Hill Road is also closed at the moment and that closing, even to do night works, on the Upper Hale Road whilst Sandy Hill Road is closed will create too high an impact on North Farnham and will also impact the town centre. EM advised they have been discussing this with the Streetworks Team and will feed back Cllr Powell's comments.</p>

Ref	Item
4	<p>Town Centre Construction Phasing</p> <p>The Chair added that it would be good to talk about the scheduling of the works, bearing in mind that the works are due to start in September, and that local retailers have expressed concerns, particularly around the potential closure of the car park.</p> <p>The Chair added that the team are committed to try to minimise any disruption to retailers and residents across the town as much as possible but that there will be disruption due to it being a significant programme of works and there will be times when roads will have to be closed.</p> <p>The Chair advised that there has to be full engagement with retailers and residents and suggested that the three County Councillors act as the co-ordinators between EM and her team and the residents and the retailers. The Chair also asked that the three County Councillors are also the liaison point for Waverley Borough Council (WBC) and Farnham Town Council (FTC). There will be a need to take decisions fairly quickly, with probably some last-minute changes.</p> <p>The Chair also asked the Comms team to produce regular newsletters which all parties can feed into to ensure there is accurate information going out to residents and retailers about what is going on across the town and when works are scheduled etc.</p> <p>The Chair added that Victoria Road works will not start before January 2025.</p> <p>Cllr Powell added they would like to use the same model used for East Street, sitting down with the relevant retailers, residents, FTC so they have a clear idea of the areas and can try to minimise disruption. Having a more holistic view will provide a better solution for the town and minimise the impact. Important to have a list of the decisions that are needed to be made.</p> <p>Cllr MacLeod noted that residents are supportive of the 20mph limits but that there needs to be more enforcement as some drivers are ignoring the limits. EM added that there are going to be some measures put in place (raised tables) in Castle Street and other areas.</p> <p>The Chair added that we are reaching the delivery phase and it is the SCC Highways Team responsibility to deliver the scheme in a compliant way, and we need to ensure we have the ability to make quick decisions, which is why the suggestion of it being funnelled through the three County Councillors would be effective and ensure no crossed-wires or complications, and that the WBC and FTC will need to be kept fully engaged too.</p> <p>ACTION: EM/HS to provide a list of decisions needed to be made and when they need to be made to be provided to Board.</p>
5	<p>Short and Medium-Term Interventions: Borelli Cycle Improvement Scheme update</p> <p>This is a riverside shared cycle and pedestrian path which goes from South Street to Riverside car parks. This forms part of the medium-term interventions and it is a priority East/West link in the LCWIP which we are delivering early. The red route showing on the plan (see slides) will be delivered by SCC and discussions have been taking place with Crest Nicholson to deliver the section shown in blue (see slides) as part of their bridge construction and making good the entrance on South Street.</p> <p>The preliminary design show in red (see slides) is almost complete and the environmental mitigations and urban designs which includes lighting are being finalised. Some ecological tree surveys have been completed to support this. The construction of the red section (see slides) is provisionally scheduled for December 2024 to align with when the works will be reduced over the Christmas period in the town centre.</p>

Ref	Item
	<p>There is a meeting with the contractor later in the day to discuss the construction programme and timings in more detail.</p> <p>IL added they would like to meet with the contractors and SCC team to align anything they are doing. This was agreed.</p> <p>HS added that conversations are ongoing with Crest Nicholson as to when they are likely to complete their sections.</p>
6	<p>Short and Medium-Term Interventions: LCWIP update</p> <p>Progressing with moving forward of the feasibility of the priority routes which were agreed from the Surrey Councillor led engagement sessions. Proposal for work and scope to take forward is ready and due for discussion with Surrey County Council, WBC and FTC councillors. Meeting to be held after the General Election.</p> <p>The delays in moving into Stage 2 of the LCWIP is the agreement of a series of updates/revisions.</p>
7	<p>Short and Medium-Term Interventions: Water Lane Roundabout update</p> <p>Construction complete. Request has been made for some additional Keep Clear markings and work is being done with Streetworks to find road space to complete this work as there is a night-time diversion route in place until the end of June. There will be a post-construction safety audit, scheduled for the beginning of July.</p> <p>Cllr Powell noted that the nighttime closure is not happening every night and the Keep Clear signs are becoming an issue and need to be reinstated at the earliest opportunity. Added that the Keep Clear markings were on the drawings which were distributed and therefore were not an additional request. Other safety issues have been raised by a resident and Cllr Powell asked that these would also be looked at as part of the post-construction safety audit. EM advised they would be considered and that clarified that the drawings shared were part of the pre-road safety audit and that if there are too many markings on the road, they can create a slip hazard. EM added that Streetworks were concerned that different diversions might be confusing for people. EM advised she would take these concerns back.</p>
8	<p>Farnham Town Centre Improvement Scheme update</p> <p>EM thanked WBC for their formal award of the £3.25m CIL bid.</p> <p>Discussions have taken place with material suppliers, heritage team, maintenance, assets, lab teams for material styles and suitability for aspects such as the paving and how it will fit into the urban design. Engagement with Brightwells to ensure they are matching the styles/colours. Discussions about urban street furniture with Members, maintenance teams and heritage teams. Deployed some pre-construction traffic monitoring surveys across the town which will record traffic counts and the type of vehicles and speeds. Parking review consultation report has been published. Good engagement with Members and Businesses. Comments from all meetings will be collated and considered.</p> <p>BF noted that a comprehensive comms plan is being developed alongside the contractor and will be shared with partners and key stakeholders. Three main elements include pre-construction communication to start over Summer, communication for each phase of sequencing works, and a wider campaign to encourage people to continue coming into the town during the works.</p>

Ref	Item
	<p>Cllr Powell asked that early discussions happen with partners to ensure they input into what is in the regular comms.</p> <p>ACTION: DH to look into additional signage for Waverley Riverside carparks</p>
9	<p>Farnham Summary Programme</p> <p>Programmed to start from September this year, unable to start earlier due to conflicting road space, however the first activity will be to set up the site compound. EM noted they are concerned with the run-up to Christmas and will be re-looking at that with the contractor.</p> <p>Cllr Powell asked for a version of the programme which includes all major schemes outside of the FIP that are influencing works. The Chair added that we may not be able to get all utilities works due to them often doing last minute works, but that a chart showing anything we are aware of would be helpful.</p> <p>ACTION: EM to share a document of the programme including all major schemes (that we are aware of) outside of FIP that are influencing works.</p>
10	<p>Farnham A31 Corridor update</p> <p>Reviewing the cost, programme and design to ensure it is cost effective scheme. Will identify key steps to enable us to move to an Outline Business Case. Have been in communication with the Department of Transport (DfT) and have submitted an outline programme. Consultants are also reviewing the potential for a low-cost option. Value engineering exercise at this critical stage just before we move to the Outline Business Case.</p> <p>The Chair noted that the challenge will be around what schemes are going to continue post-election with a new government, and asked why we are doing a value engineering exercise at this stage. EM clarified that costs have risen a lot so that is why we are re-looking at it.</p> <p>Cllr Powell asked if there can be value engineering with integrated discussions because if we can use space for more than one thing then it adds value to that space. There needs to be some flood resilience along the A31 that FTC will also need to look at as part of its update to the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Powell is interested in early engagement as impacted by displaced traffic. Concerns raised about lack of lines on roads on Station Hill and safety of crossings. It has been an area of concern over last few months.</p>
11	<p>Key Milestones and Risks</p> <p>EM went through the key milestones in the programme (see slides). The Chair added that the works in the town centre will be subject to discussion and consultation so people should not take away from this meeting that those are going ahead and that it is currently planned.</p> <p>EM went through the main risks of the programme (see slides).</p>
12	<p>AOB</p> <p>Stagecoach</p> <p>Cllr Beaman asked about buses and Stagecoach. The Chair noted that he has a meeting with Stagecoach Managing Director to resolve the issue.</p>

Cllr Hyman enquiry

Cllr Hyman emailed asking if the Board could give residents and businesses their collective and personal assurances that their commitment to good practice, the law, and transparency will ensure that by convening further meetings if necessary to the above stages (mentioned earlier in the letter) will be respected and duly carries out prior to proceeding to the TRO stage and commencement of the works? If not, to then please explain which of the stages will be omitted and why?

EM explained there are two parts to this. Not usual practice for us to publish technical drawings and assessments for Surrey schemes in the public domain as it could lead to misinterpretation and cause confusion and take up significant officer time in responding. However, for the A31 scheme, any documentation will be scrutinised by the DfT (the funder), and follow the Transport Assessment Guidance process, along with public consultation prior to any decisions made. For the Town Centre, as it is not a DfT scheme (it is a Highways Scheme), it would follow a different approval process and would have a separate Business Case which would go through internal-chaired scrutiny boards which are the Infrastructure Board, Capital Programme Board, and Cabinet for final approval. Post-scheme installation, there will be a road safety audit and mitigation will be reviewed.

North and South Studies

CP noted the North and South Farnham studies – will need to look at the data in context to the modelling which has been done to make sure it does not change anything.

Doctors Surgery

DH raised an issue around the works close to the Doctors surgery. The surgery would like to have a zebra crossing if they are unable to have a controlled crossing there. EM said they have looked at accident patterns in that area and predominantly accidents were occurring at Borelli Walk crossroads so that would be the safer route. Also, any changes made to the South Street/Union Road junction would have a significant impact on traffic across the town. The guard railing will be coming out which will make it wider for people to cross.

Woolmead – Homes England

Cllr Beaman would like to see early discussions with Homes England about Woolmead site, possibility pedestrianising part of East Street and a possible cycle path. DH confirmed she has been engaged with Homes England and they are not publishing any current activity due to pre-election period but that they have confirmed in a statement that they have purchased the Woolmead site.

Ironstone

The FIP team has been out to look at the layouts and have come to a consensus on the use of the ironstone and are making good progress. Cllr Powell asked at what point Councillors will see a new plan showing the proposed places they will be put.

ACTION: EM to share updated plan showing the proposed places of where the ironstone will be.

Rain Gardens, The Borough

Cllr Powell raised that discussion about it has not happened yet. Cllr Powell asked if a meeting can be set up to discuss. EM said as part of the detailed design it is important we avoid any utilities areas, so it is important the team review that through trial trenches. EM added it would be good to have a community garden so it might be worth FTC discussing.

Ref	Item
13	<p data-bbox="231 219 454 253">Chair Summary</p> <p data-bbox="231 286 1453 421">The Chair noted that we are moving into the delivery phase which is good news but that there needs to be engagement and consultation and flexibility in terms of how the scheme is delivered. Wants to reassure the retailers that nothing will happen on the scheme before Christmas to cause disruption.</p> <p data-bbox="231 454 1090 488">This will be DH last meeting before moving to new role at Sussex.</p> <p data-bbox="231 521 1350 555">The next meeting is on 18th October 2024 and will be held at Farnham Town Council.</p>

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