

MEETING OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE held at The Guildhall, Faversham, on Wednesday 16 January 2019

Present: The Mayor Cllr Abram, Cllrs Wade, Cosgrove, Campbell, Wilcox, Kay, Walker

In attendance

Louise Bareham, FTC Town Clerk – Secretary

102. Apologies for absence

Cllr Belsom

103. Declarations of Interest

None

104. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The previous minutes were agreed.

105. Annual Action Plan

The draft action plan was discussed with amendments as follows:

- Three specific actions to promote the rejuvenation of Faversham Creek
 1. Deliver a project to replace the existing Town Jetty
 2. Continue to support the replacement of the Creek Bridge
 3. Ensure the Creek Neighbourhood Plan is used as a guiding document
- Supporting Faversham Heritage, including the protection of assets, by developing the Heritage Hub and Magna Carta Legacy Projects.
- Lobby and influence those activities with specific impact on Faversham, within whose responsibility lies for the following:
 - Better connectivity between the A2 and M2 for the relief of traffic around Faversham
 - Improved infrastructure for where any new houses are built
 - The current and future Swale Local Plan
 - Air quality management
 - The National Health Service for continued improvements
- Continue to support 20's Plenty in Faversham campaign
- Deliver on agreed outcomes for improvements to the public realm and Faversham's 'shop window'.

- Continue to communicate with the public in a variety of formats.
- Engage and facilitate community activities, actively supporting community-led initiatives
- Achieve Local Council Quality Status

RECOMMENDATION Faversham Town Council adopts the Annual Action Plan 2019-2020 as amended

106. Medium Term Financial Plan

The draft MFT from 2016 was considered as a starting point and it was agreed that the aims were good; it was essential to have reasonable reserves commensurate with audit guidance. It was anticipated that the precept would rise with more specific demands in revenue funding. It was suggested that reporting could be done using pie charts.

RECOMMENDATION Faversham Town Council adopts the Medium Term Financial Plan and the Policy & Finance Committee reviews it every six months

107. Audit Report

The report was noted and changes in its format were requested. It was confirmed that the Town Council's Mail Chimp account was fully GDPR compliant.

108. The Guildhall

The Town Caretaker had carried out a number of jobs listed on the Quinquennial Report but there were a number listed as urgent or essential. It was difficult to determine the difference between these, so it was agreed that the Town Clerk and Town Caretaker should consider the top five to ten priorities.

109. Local Council Award Scheme

The cost to register on the LCA Scheme is £50 with a further £300 due once paperwork is in place. The scheme would acknowledge the Council was working legally.

RECOMMENDATION Faversham Town Council agrees to register for the Quality Award and makes the necessary resolutions

110. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed to hold an additional meeting on Wednesday 27th February at 4pm to consider the insurance valuations.



Faversham
TOWN · COUNCIL

Action Plan 2019 - 2020

The following Action Plan summarises the Town Council's activities and projects it will commence or complete over 2019/20

- Promote the rejuvenation of Faversham Creek through 3 specific actions:
 1. Deliver a project to replace the existing Town Jetty
 2. Continue to support the replacement of the Creek Bridge
 3. Ensure the Creek Neighbourhood Plan is used as a guiding document
- Supporting Faversham Heritage, including the protection of assets, by developing the Heritage Hub and Magna Carta Legacy Projects.
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Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-2022

Date Adopted	
Review Date	

INTRODUCTION

Faversham Town Council's Medium Term Financial Plan puts in place a strategy to guide the Council's financial planning over a three year period to address the national and local challenges faced, deliver the Council's strategic aims and meet community priorities.

AIMS OF THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

1. To ensure that a strategic approach is taken in the planning of the Council's future spending and finances;
2. To create stronger links between the Council's strategic aims and the priorities of local tax payers and future spending decisions;
3. To put in place a clear, understandable and forward looking financial planning framework;
4. To make it clear how the Council plans its spending and who is responsible for making spending decisions;
5. To help the Council to demonstrate and achieve value for money;
6. To help ensure that the views of the community are taken into account in deciding where and how the Councils spends public money.

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES

- A strong financial strategy that enables the Council to take a long term view of its finances;
- A level of spending that is affordable and sustainable;
- A prudent but realistic assessment of future revenue spending commitments, capital investment, levels of income, tax base and external grant funding;
- A strong culture of financial management;
- A prudent level of balances and reserves.

OBJECTIVES

- To review the Council's level of reserves
- To seek grants wherever possible
- To increase revenue opportunities
- To consider economies of scale

RISK MANAGEMENT

A vital part of this strategy is to maintain and develop sound financial management by staying on track and monitoring financial plans and the use of resources. This will be achieved through a system of:

- ✓ Regular budget monitoring and analysis of spending within Committees.
- ✓ Regular financial and performance reporting to the Town Council.

THE LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME EXISTS TO CELEBRATE THE SUCCESSES OF THE VERY BEST LOCAL COUNCILS, AND TO PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK TO SUPPORT ALL LOCAL COUNCILS TO MEET THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

All local councils want to serve their local communities and make a real difference to the lives of the people that live there. The scheme offers councils the opportunity to show that they meet the standards set by the sector, assessed by their peers, and to put in place the conditions for continued improvement.

The Award Scheme has been designed to both provide the tools and encouragement to those councils at the beginning of their improvement journeys, as well as promoting and recognising councils that are at the cutting edge of the sector. It is only through the sector working together to share best practice, drive up standards and supporting those who are committed to improving their offer to their communities that individual councils and the sector as a whole will reach its full potential.

The scheme was created in 2014 and is managed on behalf of local councils by the Improvement and Development Board (IDB).

Councils can apply for an award at one of three levels:

The Foundation Award demonstrates that a council meets the minimum requirements for operating lawfully and according to standard practice.

The Quality Award demonstrates that a council achieves good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement.

The Quality Gold Award demonstrates that a council is at the forefront of best practice and achieves excellence in governance, community leadership and council development.

The scheme sets out criteria to meet at each level covering selected aspects of the council's work. Councils can seek to progress through the tiers over time thereby raising standards. Councils of any size can aspire to an award appropriate for their budget and level of activity.

To support transparency, councils achieving an award at any level must use an online facility for publishing documents and information. In all instances the council confirms that the required documents, information and conditions are in place (whether published or not) by resolution in public at a full council meeting. For Quality Gold, councils also provide statements for submission to the panel demonstrating excellence in their activities. The panel may ask for additional information to check the accuracy of claims.

