



TOWN AND PORT OF FAVERSHAM ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

HELD ON

TUESDAY 19 MARCH 2024

1. Apologies for absence were noted.
2. The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 14TH March 2023 were accepted.
3. Inspector Vanessa Foster, Neighbourhood Policing Team, together with local ward officers Gary Morris and James Tannock reported to the meeting. They are currently under-staffed and the officers are covering larger areas than they should. Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) walk and talks taking place monthly, everyone invited – need more people to come along. Main aims are ASB, recognition of precursors to youth crime; working with crime safety partnership in the summer; officers are around in the community; sign up to My Community Voice <https://www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk/>

Recent issues tackled include kicking of doors; ceasing of illegal e-scooters; littering and speeding.

4. **Public Question** Concerns raised regarding the proposed unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) unit at Kiln Court. Insp Foster advised that the unit would be well staffed and the UASC needed to get back into society. They would not be openly policing the area and would be reactive if required. Equally, they would not accept hate crime.

The Mayor reported that a meeting of stakeholders had taken place and the lack of information/leaflets had been raised.

It was noted that Faversham had a history of welcoming refugees and had a positive experience and people were keen to help with collections. Cllr Perkin reported that the Town Council was working towards City of Sanctuary status.

Public Question the £200,000 previously set aside by Swale Borough Council for the opening creek bridge, no longer appeared in the accounts. Cllr Perkin confirmed that the money will still earmarked.

Public Question proposed development by Gladman's at Ham Farm. The Mayor advised that the town council had formally objected to the application and it had not yet been determined by Swale. The ward councillor was working with the residents and case officer.

Public Question what's the status of the Whitstable Road care home. This is subject to a legal case and the town council is not aware of the current situation.

5. Cllr Perkin gave an update on the Faversham Neighbourhood Plan, which had been submitted to Swale Borough Council and was awaiting to hear back from the Inspector.
6. The Mayor gave an account of the previous year:

Since the last Annual Town Meeting, we have seen a significant increase in the number of residents to the town as various developments have been occupied. I welcome those of you who have moved into the Town and hope you are finding the community of Faversham one that you enjoy & wish to contribute to. There really is something for everyone in the town and its environs. Whatever your interests maybe the chances are there are others already encouraging you to join in with them.

As Mayor you get to see and hear about a lot of the activities that are going on, often relying on volunteers to provide activities and services or to oversee the governance of the organisations and groups. Without them our town would be a lot poorer.

I have undertaken 148 visits and events and attended 72 meetings since the last meeting so I will not list them all! At this point I will say that without the Support of my Mayoress Brenda I would not have been able to complete so many, and on a few occasions for undertaking events on her own, a job she certainly did not seek but for which I am truly grateful Thank you.

The highlights I think are in no particular order - attending The Coronation of his Majesty, an event that has reinvigorated the Confederation of Cinque Ports and one we as a Town are at the heart of encouraging as an aid to the tourism sector.

Visiting as a guest of the Mayor of Bromley Biggin hill Airport which runs apprenticeships in the Aviation industry a useful piece of information for our local Secondary Schools, Visiting our Twin Town of Hazebrouck helping to reestablish that now 62 year long association and of course the Open Faversham event which has highlighted so much of our Town's Heritage!

Over the year there have been some changes in the Town Council staff and a redistribution of responsibilities, as with any employer we rely on our staff to deliver the advice and services using their professional skills and experience. Our Town Clerk leads the team that looks for opportunities . Louise is a Fellow of the Society of Local Council Clerks and has in her spare time been advising not only other local clerks but also on the setting up of new Town councils. Louise you are a true asset to the town long may that continue. Adrienne Begent as Deputy Town Clerk has been the Council officer with responsibility for Planning and the Neighbourhood plan as well as being the Mayor's secretary (sorry Adrienne I know it is more than that but I could not think of a way to describe it!) IF anyone wishes the Mayor to attend an event Adrienne is the contact. At the last TC I was pleased to acknowledge her 10 years of service to the Town. Thank you.

The Town Council has a statutory responsibility for allotments and I am pleased to say that the Allotments at St Nicholas Road are now under the management of it's allotment society, and we are awaiting the completion of the legal documents transferring Land at Perry court to provide more. I thank our Town Ranger Joseph Hannah for his work on this and indeed the Community Garden projects across the Town.

7. The Mayor of Faversham, Cllr Trevor Martin, presented the following cheques from the Faversham & District Community Lottery:

Cheques of £250:

Faversham Community Radio
SATEDA
Swale Friends of the Earth
Faversham Rugby Club

Cheques of £1,000

Creed Outdoor Learning
Abbey Physic Community Garden
Faversham Pools
Painters Forstal Community Centre

8. Mayor Certificates of Recognition were presented to The Autism Apprentice and Friends of Faversham Rec. A certificate will be presented to Emma Brown at a later date.