

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

15th September 2025 7:30pm
The Guildhall

Cllr Coniam (Chair)	Present	Cllr Perkin	Present
Cllr Rowlands	Present	Cllr Crayford	Apology
Cllr C Martin	Apology	Cllr Golding	Present
Cllr Newman	Present	Cllr Saunders	Substitution

In Attendance:

Louise Bareham (Town Clerk)
Cllr Crayford (via Teams for Item 209(b))

Public Questions:

A member of the public advised they were attending in relation to Minute Item 206 and that they would like the Town Council to make a positive statement on diversity in the town following recent developments.

202. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr C Martin and Cllr Crayford who was substituted by Cllr Saunders.

203. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Rowlands DNPI as a member of Faversham Against Racism (Minute Item 206).

204. Minutes and Matters Arising

It was proposed by Cllr Rowlands, seconded by Cllr Perkin, and on being put to the meeting, it was **RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of the Community Committee dated 21st July 2025.**

205. Community Lottery

The Operator Report for September 2025 was received and noted.

206. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

a) Discussion on recent community tensions and plan to work with partners to promote inclusion

It was proposed by Cllr Coniam, seconded by Cllr Golding, and on being put to the meeting it was **RESOLVED to publish the following statement:**

Faversham is a warm and welcoming town which, throughout its long history, has always proudly opened its arms to those who seek refuge. We as a town are rightly proud of our embodiment of fundamental principles of British values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and tolerance for the beliefs of others. However, over recent weeks it has been noted that tensions within our community have arisen linked to unauthorised placement of flags on public lampposts and abusive behaviour when questioned. This has led to many residents

reporting feeling afraid and intimidated, and shamefully others have reported they have experienced racist abuse within the past few weeks. Faversham Town Council strongly condemns any acts of racism, intimidation, and bullying for any reason.

We recognise that many residents display the St George cross and other national symbols as a positive expression of pride, and this is entirely welcome on private property or where permission has been sought.

Faversham Town Council's own flag policy dictates that the flags of our nation are flown regularly from our public buildings. However, we also recognise that these same symbols of national pride can also be used to intimidate and cause division, and we call upon KCC, Kent Police and Swale Borough Council to work with us and the wider community to restore community harmony and a sense of street safety, mutual respect, and the shared pride we all have in our town and wider nation.

It was proposed by Cllr Perkin, seconded by Cllr Golding, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to progress the following items:***

- ***Communicate positively regarding the Town Council's application to become a Town of Sanctuary***
- ***Communicate where misinformation is identified***
- ***Write to the Community Safety Partnership Chairs around what schools are doing to protect children from radicalisation and to put forward a question to the Police Crime Commissioner***
- ***Positively communicate about what refugees bring to the community***
- ***Engage with the Police including a public meeting and a closed-door meeting with the Council***
- ***Write to the Secretary of State regarding rising tension in the community***
- ***Send the Town Council's Statement to local community organisations***

b) Age Friendly Faversham Update

The Town Clerk reported a Working Group had been set up and were due to meet shortly with a view to making recommendations to this Committee for the next meeting.

207. White Ribbon Working Group

The Town Clerk reported on work in progress. It was agreed to defer the updated Action Plan to the next full Town Council meeting.

208. Events

Councillors expressed their thanks to the Events Officer for her hard work in organising recent events.

The draft budget for 2026 events and the Events Officer's latest report were both received and noted.

It was proposed by Cllr Perkin, seconded by Cllr Golding, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to organise a photographic exhibition for the 110th anniversary of the Great Explosion and Remembrance Day 2026.***

209. Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

a) Update on the CCTV Camera

It was proposed by Cllr Rowlands, seconded by Cllr Newman, and on being put to the meeting it was ***RESOLVED to proceed with the order for a CCTV Camera.***

b) Report on Illegal Off-Road Bikes

Cllr Crayford provided a summary of work he had been carrying out regarding off-road bikes. An informal Survey had been set up. 399 Responses were received across the four wards. Most respondents had indicated they experienced issues with illegal off-road bikes at least once a day, or once a week. The majority either didn't know they could report instances to the Police, or they did not bother to. This indicated it was a more prolific problem than the Police indicated in their monthly reports. Respondents were looking for an increased Police presence and response.

Following recent meetings, Cllr Crayford will be arranging a further meeting to which he would invite KCC.

c) Other Matters of Concern

In response to a query from Cllr Golding, Cllr Rowlands advised he had spoken to PC Tancock about attending Full Town Council meetings. PC Tancock felt time on patrol should take priority and contact could be made via email and telephone.

The Town Clerk reported she had set up monthly meetings with PC Jones.

210. Budget

It was agreed to defer this item until the next Youth Working Group meeting where the budget requested for youth funding would be decided.

211. Matters for Report

a) Research data/statistics on employment, and skills gaps in Faversham and produce a report to enable policy to be developed

This was noted for inclusion on a future Agenda.

The meeting closed at 9:27pm.

