

**AT A MEETING OF FAVERSHAM TOWN COUNCIL** held at the Guildhall, Market Place, Faversham on Tuesday, 1 September 2009

**Present:** The Mayor, Cllr E J Wilcox, the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Mrs A J Walker and Councillors T Gates, Mrs C Davis, M S Gates, J N Coulter, D H S Simmons, D G Wade, L G R Hobbard-Mitchell, N A Kay and Mrs J E Hawkins.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Mulhern and M R Baldock.

**2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of Faversham Town Council held on 3 August 2009 were approved by Members and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In addition to the declarations of interest already identified in the Planning Schedule dated 01.09.09 the following Member made a declaration of interest:

Cllr J N Coulter – Item 5 of the Town Clerk’s Report – West Faversham Community Association.

**4. MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor informed Members that since his return to Faversham from his annual holiday on 7 August he has attended the final commemoration of the sinking of HMS Picotee at Chatham, a mayoral visit to Deal Pier for a fish and chip supper, a day out in Sandwich and the Hythe Venetian Fete.

The Mayor reported that he had been very pleased to officially start the Faversham Raft Race on 9 August and had also been delighted to receive and host the Cinque Port Bowls Competition over the weekend of 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> August, when Margate retained the Cinque Port trophy. In addition, the Mayor had opened the Mill House Fete, which is a facility looking after an increased number of elderly residents suffering from dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.

The Mayor further commented that he had hosted a Faversham Enterprise Partnership meeting in the Mayor’s Parlour and had also met with Sir Roger Moat to discuss the footpaths in the Abbey Farm area and the Graveney Boat project. Cllr Wilcox informed Members that during his retirement he hopes to be able to tidy up the Town Council’s cellar and has arranged for the Corporation weights and measure to go to the Fleur de Lis Heritage Centre to form a new display at the museum early in the Spring 2010.

**5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

It was:

***RESOLVED that recommendations be sent Swale Borough Council as set out in Planning Schedule 01.09.09.***

**6. TOWN CLERK’S REPORT**

**1. Local Sports Facility (to include Free Tennis for All)**

The Town Clerk commented that she was disappointed that, despite an earlier agreement, Mr Deny Wilson, the Sports Development Manager at the Abbey Sports Centre, had failed to attend the meeting and discuss the facilities at the Abbey School with Members. She agreed to contact Mr Wilson again to secure his attendance at a future Town Council meeting.

**2. Guildhall Pillars**

Following several concerns expressed by Members with regard to the present condition of the Guildhall pillars, the Planning Consultant, Mr John Sell, confirmed that he had looked at the pillars again but that, in his professional opinion, they are in the same condition as the last time he had inspected them. Mr Sell reported, however, that when the pillars join the concrete bases bulges are forming and there are several fissures at this point, but this is the only area that gives him concern as it is the only point where water could penetrate. Mr Sell confirmed that he sees no areas or evidence of rot at the present time and although there is potential at this point for water to infiltrate commented that timber preservative does not penetrate the wood, which is now rock hard as it is over 450 years old. Mr Sell further commented that he sees no evidence of structure rot in the pillars but possible water penetration could, in the future, lead to surface problems.

Mr Sell reported that filling such fissures would be difficult as the oak naturally ‘moves’ with the weather and reminded Members that the last time that lime mortar was applied to the holes and cracks, this was worn away and probably suffered some form of vandalism. He suggested that the cracks could be filled with mastic but aesthetically the result would not be traditional or in keeping with the building. He recommended that no action be taken in respect of the oak pillars at the present time but agreed that he would continue to monitor their condition.

Cllr T Gates proposed and Cllr Mrs C Davis seconded, and on being put to the Meeting, it was:

***RESOLVED to accept Mr Sell’s advice at the present time and his recommendation that no further action should be taken with regard to the condition of the pillars at the present time.***

**3. Open Space Assessment Consultation (PPG17)**

After discussion it was suggested by the Mayor that Members should join with him in attending the public meeting that is to be held in Teynham on 18 September under the chairmanship of Cllr Mrs Cindy Davis to discuss this consultation documentation and process. Members of the Town Council confirmed that they are happy to work with Swale Borough Council in this matter and agreed that Members would give their own representations in respect of the consultation as individuals as they consider that there may be many areas that ward members need to address in their own particular Town Wards. It was however suggested that Swale Borough Council should be asked to establish a standard for all open spaces, which may need to be appropriate for all areas.

**4. Faversham Creek Inspection**

Cllr N A Kay reported to Members that Medway Ports make regular inspection trips along the Creek using the ‘Medway Surveyor’ and that Mr Guy Peto of that Authority is responsible for the navigation of the creek and Members are welcome to join these. Cllr Kay confirmed that the trip down the Swale and the creek recently undertaken by Members, showed what an attractive waterway the Creek is and reported that it is one of the limited places for passing vessels to stop. He feels that this is an opportunity for Faversham as there may be some inexpensive ways of attracting visitors and

which in turn will attract Lottery Funding. Cllr Kay confirmed that Faversham needs an increase in motorboats which would help the loosening of the mud more than the sailing vessels do, although he confirmed that Mr Guy Peto thinks that the silting is stable although the Town Council's jetty clearly has a build up of mud around it.

Members agreed in discussion that new copies of the 2001 Navigation Guide are required to be printed and it was agreed that this could be considered during the budget cycle for the Financial Year 2010/11.

The Mayor thanked Cllr Kay for his report and it was agreed that this should be passed for further consideration by the Creek Consortium.

#### **5. West Faversham Community Association**

Cllr N A Kay reported to Members that 79 organisations throughout England are to bid for and receive up to £2 million Lottery Funding and the West Faversham Community Association needs to achieve Planning Permission for its proposed refurbishments and extensions in order to be able to submit a bid for this money. Mr Graham Thomas, the Planning Officer of Swale Borough Council has suggested to Cllr Kay that Faversham Town Council could submit the Planning Application on behalf of the Association in order to achieve a 50% discount in the Planning Application fee, which in turn will be met by the Bensted's Charity.

After discussion, the Mayor, Cllr E J Wilcox, proposed from the Chair and on being put to the meeting, it was:

***RESOLVED that Faversham Town Council take no action in this matter as it has concerns with regard to the legality and the administration of this proposal and it could also set a precedent.***

#### **6. Faversham Localism Project**

Cllr D G Wade confirmed to Members that a very successful informal meeting had been held recently with representatives from Kent County Council and Swale Borough Council and Members of the Town Council and submitted his report, which forms part of these Minutes.

It was proposed by Cllr D H S Simmons, seconded by Cllr L G R Hubbard-Mitchell, and on being put to the Meeting:

***RESOLVED:***

- 1. To explore the opportunities to be gained by working more closely with Swale Borough Council and Kent County Council.***
- 2. To agree that negotiations be coordinated through the Quality Parish Working Group.***
- 3. That the Town Marketing Group, including the Faversham Enterprise Partnership, Youth Working Party, Creek Consortium and Public Realm Working Groups identify the themed actions critical to their programmes that can be delivered in a joint action plan to be resourced and delivered with the Faversham Enterprise Partnership and the principle authorities from April 2010.***

**7. Faversham Pools Trust**

Cllr D G Wade informed Members that he has recently been appointed Chairman of the above Trust and will in future be giving Members information in respect thereof. He suggested that the Town Council’s cannons situated outside the Faversham Pools need painting and the carriages some repairs. Cllr T Gates agreed that he would look at and carry out the necessary works to refurbish these Town Council assets.

**8. Abbey Street – Historical Plaque**

Members received and considered the application made by Mrs Helen Simmons, the granddaughter of Mr Herbert Richards, who had requested that an individual plaque be set in Abbey Street to specially commemorate Mr Richards who was largely responsible for the saving of this street in the 1960’s.

It was proposed by the Mayor, Cllr E J Wilcox, and on being put to the Meeting:

***RESOLVED to inform Mrs Simmons that the Town Council do not agree to the provision of an additional plaque as it is considered that there are sufficient plaques within the town and Mr Richards is already identified on a plaque placed at the Abbey Street/Court Street junction.***

**9. Commuter Train and Bus Services**

Members noted the information now received from Arriva and Kent County Council with regard to meeting the possible reduction in train services to local villages and in particular, Teynham and Newington. Cllr J N Coulter also informed Members that a representative of these companies had been invited to attend the next meeting of the Swale Committee of the Kent Association of Local Councils, but to his knowledge this invitation had not yet been accepted.

**10. Guildhall Caretaker**

Members noted and confirmed the appointment of Mr Robert Michael Cole as the Guildhall Caretaker to commence as from 1 September 2009.

**7. PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS**

It was:

***RESOLVED that the Payments and Receipts, in Annex 01.09.09 circulated with the Agenda, be approved and confirmed.***