



## **FAVERSHAM TOWN COUNCIL: BUSINESS PLAN 2015/16**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to Faversham Town Council's Business Plan for 2015/16. This document gives an overview of 2014/15, and sets out how, over the next twelve months, the Town Council will continue to work for the whole of Faversham on those issues that have been identified through the Town Action Plan and discussions with residents. The Town Council will work on behalf of the town to develop Faversham's unique selling point as an historic Kentish market town and a great place to live, work and visit. The Plan outlines Town Council priorities over the next year, and sets out how we will use our resources to best effect.

2015 is an election year which brings its own challenges. Some Councillors are standing down, and the Town Council thanks those who are retiring for their service to the town over many years.

### **Review of 2014/15**

As ever, the year has been a busy one for the Town Council. Among the day to day responsibilities of the Council, there have been some key events and actions:

- The Sir Philip Neame VC ceremony, which took place on a wonderful sunny day on 19 December. We were delighted to welcome the Lord Lieutenant, the Chief Royal Engineer, the band and soldiers of the Royal Engineers and many other distinguished guests, especially members of Sir Philip Neame's family, to commemorate the life of Sir Philip Neame and to remember all those who died in the service of their country
- The Neighbourhood Plan consultation, which took place in May/June 2014. The Plan will be sent for independent examination. If it passes the examination, it will be presented to the electorate for referendum in the autumn
- The creation of the Faversham Business Partnership, which has taken on much of the work of the Faversham Enterprise Partnership
- The agreement with Swale Borough Council for the freehold transfer of the allotments to Faversham Town Council

We are sorry that two members of the Town Council staff have left for pastures new. Laurence Young, Assistant Town Clerk, and Doug Camp, Town Sergeant,

contributed hugely to the smooth running of the Town Council and we will miss their knowledge and expertise.

### **Priorities in 2015/16**

Although the smooth day to day running of the Town Council is necessary and important, there are some key priorities for the new financial year. The Town Council has agreed the following three priorities to be taken forward:

#### Priority 1: Magna Carta 2015

2015 is the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta in 1215 by King John. This 'Great Charter' was the foundation stone of democracy and paved the way for English common law, limiting the power of authoritarian rule and bringing about trial by jury.

Widely regarded as England's greatest export, it has brought freedom to people all over the world and was influential in America's Declaration of Independence in 1776.

Celebrations marking the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be taking place throughout the UK and across the world with national events including a commemoration at Runnymede, where Magna Carta was first sealed, a royal pageant on the River Thames in June and six tourist trails including Kent and East Sussex.

Faversham can boast a special right to be part of this year's 800<sup>th</sup> commemorations as proud owners of an edition of Magna Carta dated 1300, the last reissue of the document, and featuring King Edward I's seal. There will be a number of events including the touring exhibition: Magna Carta Rediscovered, which features the Faversham Magna Carta as its centrepiece. A community choir concert, medieval fair weekend, guest lectures and town trails have all been planned to enable Faversham to play its part in Magna Carta 2015.

#### Priority 2: Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan: to deliver the Neighbourhood Plan to a successful referendum by the end of 2015/16

The draft Neighbourhood Plan is with Swale Borough Council and, following the second consultation, it will now progress to the independent examination stage. If successful at examination, the Plan will proceed to referendum, some time in the autumn. The Town Council hopes that all those eligible to vote will turn out to make their views known.

#### Priority 3: Guildhall and public access

The Town Council has agreed to allocate some funding towards the introduction of a lift in the Guildhall. This will enable wider public access and will support the continuation of Town Council meetings, including committees, in this iconic building. Further funding will need to be found, and, during the year, ongoing maintenance and minor repairs will be undertaken.

The Town Council officers will continually look for opportunities to work more efficiently and effectively on behalf of Faversham. A staffing review identified additional requirements for tourism support, as well as acknowledging the extra support given by all staff to ensure the work of the Town Council maintains its high quality. Day to day work includes:

- Ensuring Town Council assets are properly managed and maintained. This will now include the allotments;
- Prioritising and, where appropriate, delivering work identified in the Town Action Plan;
- Maintaining high visibility on tourism;
- Supporting the voluntary and community sector; and
- Delivering continuous improvement to the way we communicate with, and engage, residents.

### Resources

The Town Council's resources fall into three groups: financial, staffing, and Council Committees. We have a budget, set each year, the bulk of which comes from the annual precept. We have a number of hard-working part-time employees, supplemented by consultancy support on planning. And we have Councillors and others who generously give their time and expertise for the benefit of Faversham.

The Town Council offices are based at the Alexander Centre, consisting of offices for the Town Clerk, the Deputy Town Clerk and the Tourism Officer, the Mayor's Parlour, and a records room. Office accommodation is kept under review to ensure that it continues to be the most cost effective and efficient use of the space.

### Budget

Faversham Town Council has set its budget for 2015/16 at £276,055 (full details are available on the website). This incorporates estimated income at £17,710 and the precept of £258,345. Total budget allocations are as follows:

<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>Estimate: 2015/2016 (£)</b>
Civic	6500
General Administration (including staffing costs at £81041)	85741
Office Expenses	27160
The Guildhall	38374
Front Brents Jetty	5980
Grants	26500
Growth and Development Panel	24000
Public Realm Group	11000
Special Provision	50800
	<b>276055</b>

## Staffing

Current staffing for the Town Council offices is as follows:

Jackie Westlake OBE: Town Clerk (p/t: 30hrs per week: Monday to Thursday)

Adrienne Begent: Deputy Town Clerk (p/t: 20hrs per week: Monday to Friday)

Sally Wookey: Tourism Officer (p/t 3 days per week)

Assistant Town Clerk: to be confirmed (p/t)

Town Sergeant: to be confirmed (p/t)

Barry Brockman: Deputy Town Sergeant (stand-in when the Town Sergeant is absent)

Louise Muddiman: Guildhall Caretaker

The Council also has a planning consultant, John Sell CBE.

## Committees of the Council

The Town Council currently delegates work to the following Committees. They report progress to the Town Council, propose actions, and, if agreed by the full Town Council, deliver specific pieces of work on its behalf:

### *(i) The Front Brents Jetty Committee*

The Committee is chaired by Councillor Cindy Davis. On behalf of the Town Council its aim is to oversee the management of the Front Brents Jetty and to ensure it remains in a state of good repair. Councillors Andy Culham, Trevor Abram and Trevor Payne sit on the Committee, and we are supported by boat owners, who have created their own association and manage the Front Brents Jetty for the Town Council.

### *(ii) Guildhall Working Party*

- a) Chaired by Cllr Trevor Abram, the Working Party's aims are to:
- b) Consider the Guildhall Survey and draw up a work plan for the building to cover short-, medium- and long-term works to be undertaken on the Guildhall
- c) To consider a budget for works in time for the Town Council's budget preparation and to make representations accordingly
- d) To review any quotes for work tendered and to prepare proposals for the Town Council's consideration
- e) To consider public access (particularly in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act) in the long term

Councillors Tom Gates, Cindy Davis, Mick Gates, David Simmons, Trevor Abram and Andy Culham sit on the Working Party.

### *(iii) Localism Committee*

Chaired by the Mayor, Nigel Kay, the Committee's aims are to:

- a) Explore how the Town Council can rise to the challenge of localism for the benefit of Faversham
- b) Work with external partners and interested groups to explore the opportunities that localism gives us – e.g. community rights to bid for assets and to deliver services
- c) By the end of 2014/15, identify a set of assets and services which the Town Council could manage and/or deliver, using the Town Action Plan as a guide

Councillors Cindy Davis, Ted Wilcox and Shiel Campbell sit on the Committee, with representatives from the Faversham Traders Group, Faversham Gym Club and the Faversham Society.

*(iv) Magna Carta Committee*

Chaired by the immediate past Mayor, David Simmons, the Committee's aims are to:

- a) Work with other appropriate organisations, to deliver Faversham's contribution, local, regional and national, to the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta
- b) Work towards the long term public display of the Magna Carta and other charters
- c) Manage other ad hoc work relating to the display and promotion of the Magna Carta and other charters

Councillors Trevor Payne, Mick Gates and John Coulter sit on the Committee, with Sally Wookey and representatives from Visit Kent, the Faversham Society, and the Alexander Centre Trust.

*(v) The Public Realm Working Group*

The Group is chaired by Cllr Cindy Davis. On behalf of the Town Council its key aim is to facilitate and help direct aesthetic and practical upgrades of town centre streets in the Faversham Conservation Area, using the 2006 Faversham Streetscape Strategy and the 2012 Creek Streetscape Strategy as its guide. Councillors Cindy Davis, Ted Wilcox, Anita Walker, John Coulter and Trevor Abram sit on the Group, along with representatives from SBC and KCC.

**Reporting on progress**

Each Committee reports back to the Town Council at Town Council meetings. All Committees will meet on a quarterly basis from April 2015 onwards.

Members will receive quarterly updates on expenditure, with an accompanying report if not within Committee minutes, on progress against the three priorities set out in the Business Plan.

The Town Council would welcome your views and comments on the Business Plan, which is intended to be a clear statement of the Town Council's work in 2015/16. Any comments should be directed, in the first instance, to the Town Clerk, Jackie Westlake (e-mail: [jackie.westlake@favershamtc.co.uk](mailto:jackie.westlake@favershamtc.co.uk)).

N A Kay  
Mayor, Faversham Town Council  
Xx April 2015

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## TOWN ACTION PLAN

TOPIC AREA	2014/15	Update on progress
<b>Recommended vision statement</b>	FTC, as part of its governance review, will consider the recommended vision statement and agree a final version.	Faversham Town Council's revised organisational structure is attached at Annex B
<b>Allotments and green spaces</b>	FTC supports the statement that green spaces are an important amenity which should be maintained to a high standard. Through the Joint Public Realm Working Group, it will work with SBC and others to address residents' concerns.	<p>The Town Council has agreed the freehold transfer of the allotments from SBC. The Town Council is also looking to take on the management of the Town Quay.</p> <p>As part of that transfer, FTC will discuss waiting lists with the allotment associations to ascertain whether greater provision is needed in the future.</p> <p>Separately, the Town Council is aware of the importance of the Town Green and other green spaces around Faversham Creek, and will ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan takes account of, and respects, those areas.</p>
<b>Business Support</b>	<p>The Town Council, with the FEP, will consider options for closer working to bolster functions that support business, enterprise and tourism for the benefit of Faversham and the surrounding area, and of strengthening the council's position at the heart of local life.</p> <p>The Growth and Development Panel (GDP) will consider the idea of an</p>	<p>The Faversham Business Partnership has now taken on the work of the Faversham Enterprise Partnership. Town Council support for the Loyalty Card scheme and Faversham.org. The FBP will also be working with the Town Council on PR and marketing issues throughout the year.</p> <p>The Growth and Development Panel will cease to operate in 2015/16 and the tourism function will report direct to the</p>

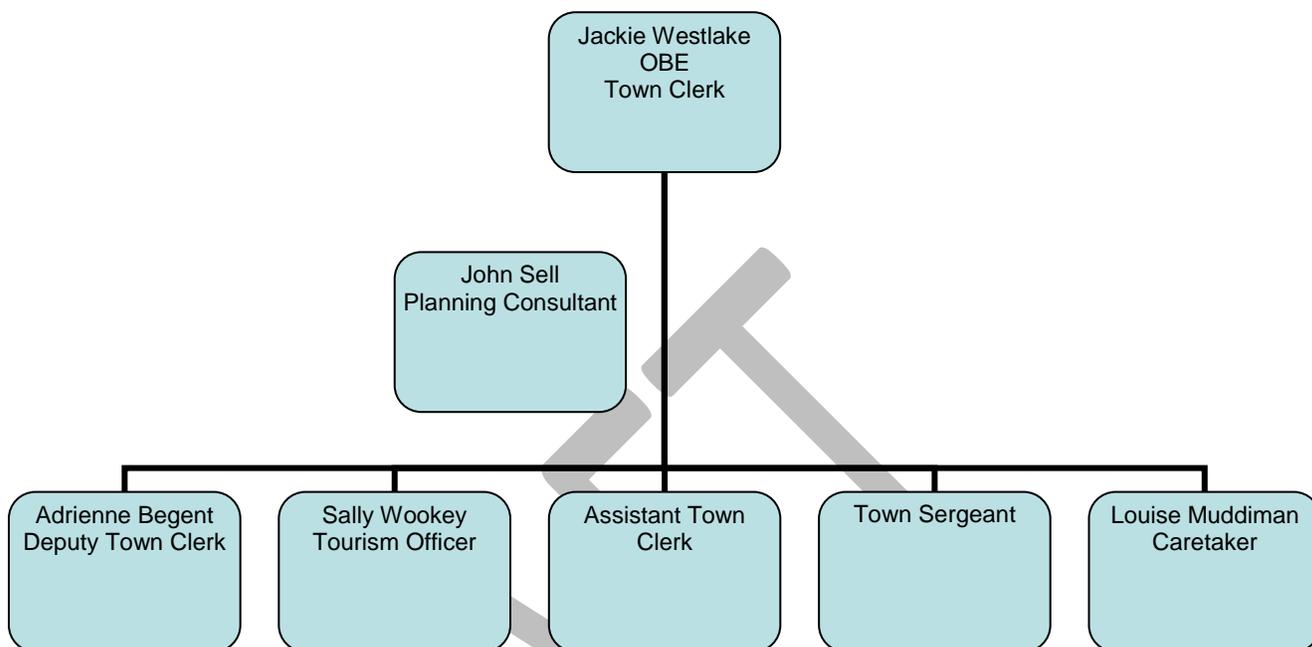
	<p>annual Expo and training and development programmes that are not currently being delivered as part of the High Street Innovation Fund.</p> <p>FTC will support closer collaboration between the various organisations, including the Traders; Group, and will, through the GDP's current work programme within the GDP, consider how best to engage in national initiatives such as National Markets Day.</p>	<p>Town Council. The FBP and the Town Council will continue to discuss ways in which they can work in partnership for the benefit of the town.</p>
<p><b>Cleanliness and maintenance</b></p>	<p>Councillors will, with their constituents and local groups, undertake an annual audit of their wards, seeking information on litter hot spots, issues with private properties that are used/viewed by the general public. Information will be provided via Faversham.org as to how the public can report litter etc.</p> <p>FTC will continue to publicise the twice-yearly spring clean, particularly to schools and businesses.</p>	<p>Cleanliness is an important issue for Faversham residents. Councillors have undertaken ward audits and the Town Council supports the twice-yearly spring clean.</p>
<p><b>Faversham as a service centre</b></p>	<p>FTC identified the localism agenda as one of three key priorities for 2014/15. It will consider all the localism issues raised in the Town Action Plan and will, through a separate committee, focus on how services, where appropriate, can be identified as potentials for a Community Right to</p>	<p>The Localism Committee is looking at the ownership and management of the allotments and the Town Quay. The Committee is working on a list of assets of community value, and is considering other services as a longer-term piece of work.</p>

	Challenge approach, and to add assets to a list of local assets of community value.	
<b>Faversham Creek</b>	FTC leads on the delivery of the Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan, via the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, which is one of three key priorities in the Council's Business Plan. It will continue to ensure its decision-making processes and its consultation and engagement programme are fit for purpose.	This is a key priority for the Town Council. The draft Plan has completed two rounds of statutory consultation. The next stage is submission to an independent examination.
<b>Governance</b>	A review of governance is one of the three key priorities of FTC's business plan for 2014/15. As part of that work, it will review the vision statement set out in the Town Action Plan.	The longer-term governance review has led to the Tourism Officer function being brought into the Town Council offices; the development of the Mayor's Secretary's post to incorporate the role of Deputy Town Clerk and the secretariat work for the Public Realm Group and the Growth and Development Panel being incorporated into the Town Council offices.
<b>Green, environmental, sustainable</b>	FTC, through the GDP and Joint Public Realm Working Group, will consider how the recommendations can be best achieved.	This is ongoing. The Public Realm Working Group is considering these issues as part of its work on the direct aesthetic and practical upgrades of town centre streets. Current work is focusing on upgrading the Station Road area.  The Town Council has been reaccredited as a Fair Trade Council.
<b>Housing, development, design and planning</b>	FTC will work to deliver the Neighbourhood Plan over the next twelve months and will, through its work on the localism agenda, consult residents on a list of Assets	Ongoing. See above recommendations. The Town Council is working with Swale to ensure its housing and development policies are properly recognised within the

	of Community Value.	draft Local Plan.
<b>Leisure</b>	The Youth Working Party will explore how best to advertise sports facilities for young people.	The Town Council's Youth Working Party has ceased to operate and responsibility for e.g. a Youth Forum is being discussed with youth service providers in the town.
<b>Local health services</b>	FTC will continue to support the work of the Friends of Faversham Cottage Hospital	The campaign to ensure C4G revisit the recommendation to close the Minor Injuries Unit has been successful. The Town Council, led by the Mayor is working to ensure the longevity of Faversham Cottage Hospital. Discussions are ongoing on the overall health service provision in Faversham.
<b>Older people</b>	The Public Realm Group will take account of the needs of older people when working on town centre management and improvement.	Ongoing. Works to remove the planter on East Street, reconfiguration of Station Road and various bus stops have all been undertaken with the needs of older people in mind.
<b>Parking strategy</b>	The GDP and the Public Realm Group have taken on parking as a key workstream over the last two years. The Town Council will continue to work with SBC on issues around improvements to the car parks and car parking provision.	The reversal of traffic flow through East Street has now been completed. Yellow lines are now in place to assist the public in understanding the parking restrictions. Work to reduce parking restrictions where appropriate (e.g. Preston Street) is continuing.
<b>Safety, anti-social behaviour</b>	FTC holds an annual meeting with the police to discuss crime and anti-social behaviour. It will discuss better publicity for reporting channels at the next meeting in November 2014. There is a police representative at each Local Engagement Forum to answer questions from the public.	The annual meeting with the police was held on 10 November and discussed: town centre support teams; enforcement of penalties for traffic offences; drugs; special constables; public drinking; aggressive cycling; anti-social behaviour and hate crime.

<b>Tourism, arts, culture</b>	<p>FTC has had the benefit of a Tourism Officer, co-located in the Town Council offices, who delivers support for tourism for Faversham. The officer will work with FATA and improving communications, information and support given to visitors and tourism businesses (including food and drink offers). The officer will also work on tourism element of the Neighbourhood Plan</p>	<p>The Area and Group Guides, having been revamped and published, have been well received.</p> <p>Closer working relationships have been developed with Visit Kent, and the tourism element of the Magna Carta is at the forefront of the Town Council's mind this year.</p>
<b>Town centre regeneration</b>	<p>FTC supports town centre regeneration through its Committees: the GDP and the Public Realm Group. Both Committees will consider the feedback from the Town Action Plan and will agree how best the aspirations as set out can be delivered as part of their agreed work plan for 2014/15.</p>	<p>Both the GDP and the Public Realm Group have worked to improve the town centre, both the built environment and the retail and business presence. The Market Traders and Best of Faversham are contributing to the revitalization of the town centre through the regular and Best of markets that take place during the week and at weekends.</p>
<b>Young people (up to 18 years old)</b>	<p>FTC's Youth Working Party is supporting the establishment of a Youth Forum and will review the YWP's terms of reference as part of the wider governance review.</p>	<p>Although the Youth Working Party has ceased to operate, the Youth Forum will be taken forward through a partnership with the youth service providers in Faversham. is now firmly established.</p>

FAVERSHAM TOWN COUNCIL: ORGANISATIONAL CHART



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