

## **FAVERSHAM 2020: TOWN ACTION PLAN**

### **FAVERSHAM TOWN COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Faversham 2020: the Town Action Plan (to be referred to as the Town Action Plan) is a report of a consultation undertaken with the people of Faversham about the changes they wanted to see in their local community, what they considered to be the priorities, and how they could be delivered. Faversham Town Council (FTC) is grateful for the work done to pull this report together, and values the views and comments given in consultation, enabling the Council to understand and identify key workstreams over the next year and beyond. This document forms the Town Council's formal response to the recommendations.

The Town Action Plan identified recommendations over nineteen topic areas. It would not be practicable to address them all individually, nor would it be possible at this stage to identify clear time lines for the delivery of each recommendation. And it is important to highlight that many of the recommendations do not fall with FTC's gift. Where that is the case, this document identifies where the key responsibility lies, and suggests ways in which the Council, if it feels appropriate, can work with those delivery organisations.

This document first of all sets out what the Town Council will focus on in 2013/14. It also identifies medium term and long term goals across the nineteen topic areas. Therefore, it should be read in conjunction with the Town Action Plan and the Town Council's Business Plan 2013/14.

The Business Plan has highlighted three key priorities for the Town Council in 2013/14. They are:

- Priority 1: Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan: to deliver the Neighbourhood Plan to a successful referendum by 2014
- Priority 2: Governance Review
- Priority 3: Localism

Many of the recommendations in the Town Action Plan fall within these priorities, and the response, where appropriate, indicates this.

A full list of the recommendations is attached at Annex A to this document.

TOPIC AREA	2013/14	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM	IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
<b>Recommended vision statement</b>	FTC, as part of its governance review, will consider the recommended vision statement and agree a final version by the end of 2013/14.			
<b>Allotments and green spaces</b>	<p>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> <p>FTC is working with SBC to transfer ownership of the allotments to the Town Council. There has been some delay to the transfer due to SBC revisiting its Asset Transfer Policy, but the Town Council aims to complete the transfer by the end of the financial year</p>	<p>In the medium to long term, FTC will discuss with SBC the latter's ownership of town open spaces, with a view to considering whether they can and should be transferred to FTC or another local body.</p>		<p>SBC, Faversham in Bloom, Abel's Acre, Allotment Associations</p>

	<p>2013/14.</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><b>Business Support</b></p>	<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 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</p>	<p>Business rates are set by central government and collected locally. The next revaluation is scheduled for 2015. The introduction of the 'business rates retention scheme' will allow local authorities to retain a large proportion of locally collected business rates to help fund services they provide. FTC will work with SBC to ensure the best deal for Faversham businesses.</p>		<p>FEP, FATA, SBC, KCC South East LEP</p>

	<p>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><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>FTC will consider whether the spring clean days could be extended.</p>		<p>SBC, KCC, FEP</p>
<p><b>Education, employment</b></p>				<p>KCC and Job Centre Plus</p>

<p><b>and skills</b></p>				<p>have responsibility for education, employment and skills. FTC will work with the statutory agencies on these issues, and will use information and feedback from the Youth Working Party and the Faversham Youth Forum to champion improvements to education and job creation for young people.</p> <p>FTC welcomes initiatives such as the IT suite at the Alexander Centre.</p>
<p><b>Faversham as a service centre</b></p>	<p>FTC has identified the localism agenda as one of three key priorities for 2013/14. 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</p>			<p>SBC, KCC</p>

	be identified as potentials for a Community Right to 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.			SBC, Faversham Creek Consortium, KCC, Medway Ports Authority, Environment Agency
<b>Governance</b>	A review of governance is one of the three key priorities of FTC's business plan for 2013/14. As part of that work, it will review the vision statement set out in the Town Action Plan.	Following the governance review in 2013/14, FTC will consider whether an annual Town Action Plan process of engagement is the best way to engage with local residents.		
<b>Green, environmental,</b>	FTC, through the GDP and Joint		To consider, with SBC and	SBC, KCC

<b>sustainable</b>	Public Realm Working Group, will consider how the recommendations can be best achieved.		KCC, how best to deliver an integrated approach to transport that incorporates walking and cycling facilities.	
<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 of Community Value.	FTC will work with SBC on its emerging Core Strategy/Local Plan to ensure it incorporates a planning vision for Faversham.		SBC
<b>IT – broadband, wifi, cable</b>		The GDP will work with external partners, including the Traders Group, to explore innovative uses of IT to promote Faversham (see tourism for further details).		KCC is working with BT to deliver broadband in Kent. Make Kent Quicker was set up to bring broadband to every property in Kent and Medway and make sure that most will be able to access superfast broadband services by the end of 2015.  FTC will work with KCC to ensure Faversham

				benefits from this project as soon as possible.
<b>Leisure</b>	The Youth Working Party will explore how best to advertise sports facilities for young people.			SBC is currently reviewing its sports provision. FTC is providing feedback on the consultation.
<b>Local health services</b>	FTC will continue to support the work of the Friends of Faversham Cottage Hospital	FTC will consider how best to liaise with local health professionals as part of an engagement strategy for the benefit of residents.		Canterbury and Coastal Clinical Commissioning Group (C4G) has responsibility for health services in Faversham.  FTC will continue to work, where appropriate, with the relevant statutory and other agencies to ensure healthcare in Faversham meets the needs of residents.
<b>Older people</b>	The Joint Public Realm Working Group will take account of the needs of older people when working on town centre management and improvement.			KCC is the statutory authority responsible for adult social services. SBC is the principal planning authority. FTC will work with both to ensure

				the needs of older people in Faversham are properly addressed.
<b>Parking strategy</b>	The GDP has taken on parking as a key workstream for 2013. It will work with SBC on issues around improvements to the car parks and car parking provision.	FTC, as part of its work on localism, will, in discussion with SBC, consider its role in the delivery and management of car parking in Faversham.		SBC, KCC
<b>Safety, anti-social behaviour</b>	<p>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 2013.</p> <p>There is a police representative at each Local Engagement Forum to answer questions from the public.</p>	FTC will discuss the Park Mark for Faversham car parks with SBC	FTC will consider, with Swale Safe and others (e.g. The National Neighbourhood Watch Association), the potential for a virtual neighbourhood watch system for residents.	Kent Police, SBC, Swale Safe
<b>Tourism, arts, culture</b>	FTC is in the process of recruiting a Tourism Officer, co-located in the Town Council offices, who will deliver support for tourism for Faversham. The	Over the next two years, FTC, with partners, will work on a vision for the display of the Magna Carta and charters, for the 800 <sup>th</sup>		FATA, Kent Visit

	<p>officer will work with the GDP, FATA and FEP 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>anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta, as well as in the long term.</p>		
<b>Town centre regeneration</b>	<p>FTC supports town centre regeneration through its Committees: the GDP and the Joint Public Realm Working 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 2013/14.</p>	<p>GDP and the Joint Public Realm Working Group continue to implement work plans that deliver town centre regeneration.</p> <p>FTC, through the GDP, will consider BID status for Faversham Town Centre.</p>		<p>FEP, Traders Group, FATA</p>
<b>Transport</b>				<p>An integrated and improved transport system for Faversham covering buses, trains, cars,</p>

				<p>cyclists and pedestrians falls within the remit of various statutory agencies and private companies. FTC will work closely with the Swale Joint Transportation Board to deliver improvements for Faversham, and will press for a comprehensive local cycle path network as part of those improvements.</p> <p>FTC will continue to lobby Stagecoach, Network Rail and Southeastern separately for improvements to the bus and rail network in so far as they directly affect Faversham.</p>
<p><b>Young people (up to 18 years old)</b></p>	<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</p>	<p>Depending on the feedback from the Youth Forum, FTC will consider how best to communicate activities to</p>		<p>West Faversham Community Centre is now leading on the delivery of youth services for Faversham. FTC will work</p>

	governance review.	young people		with the WFCC and other agencies, such as Amicus Horizon, SBC, etc, to explore opportunities for greater provision of facilities and volunteering opportunities.
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**FAVERSHAM 2020: TOWN ACTION PLAN: RECOMMENDATIONS**  
**Town Action Plan Recommendations**

**Allotments Recommendations**

- 1) The importance of Faversham's green spaces should be recognised throughout FTC and SBC strategy, with specific statements included in relevant policies that they will not be built on, but retained for public use
- 2) In the shorter-term FTC should engage with SBC to press for a re-balancing of expenditure in favour of improved maintenance of open spaces
- 3) In the longer-term FTC should engage with SBC on passing to it ownership of town open spaces, with commensurate funding for their maintenance
- 4) The transfer of town allotments sites from SBC to FTC is concluded for the 2013/14 year
- 5) Unsatisfied local demand for allotments should be quantified to assess whether provision of a greater numbers of plots should be investigated

**Business Support Recommendations**

- 6) Support a dedicated programme to promote business development in the town, including scoping an Annual Expo, business networking community and training and development programmes
- 7) Lobby for a better deal for smaller traders on business rates
- 8) Increase collaboration between FTC, FTG, FATA, FEP, street market
- 9) Engage actively in national initiatives such as National Markets Day to encourage future entrepreneurs to 'have a go' at trading.

**Cleanliness Recommendations**

- 10) Undertake a regular audit of cleanliness to prioritise action
- 11) Further promote the twice-yearly spring clean of the town to widen out participation and target this to needy areas
- 12) Continue to lobby private owners whose buildings or land are used/viewed by the general public, to maintain and clean their property
- 13) Provide clear information to the public on how to report issues relating to cleanliness

### **Education Recommendations**

- 14) The case for greater provision of Faversham based FE and adult education needs to be assembled and articulated to service providers
- 15) The initiative to form an IT suite at the Alexander Centre should be supported as should similar schemes in other venues
- 16) Greater job and career communications between the town's two secondary schools and local businesses should be encouraged.
- 17) With partners explore the need for a locally based 'routes into work' function

### **Faversham as a Service Centre Recommendations**

- 18) Explore future options for the library with KCC and residents
- 19) Explore using venues to host new and expanded services
- 20) Undertake an audit of key services and put in place mechanisms for each to safeguard and improve them – this may involve exploring potential for local organisations to take over services run by public bodies such as SBC
- 21) Include relevant key community services on list of assets of community value.

### **Faversham Creek Recommendations**

- 22) As part of the wider communications strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan and delivery of the plan itself, the case for redevelopment of the creek area needs to be clearly articulated. This should include construction of a cost/benefit case for redevelopment of the creek area, assessing that against cost/benefit cases for other local investment priorities.
- 23) The Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan and other town development plans need to be integrated.
- 24) FTC is the official "sponsor" of the creek Neighbourhood Plan, and needs to regularly review its internal decision-making and communication in this area to ensure continued coherence and consistency in its development; that all residents and stakeholders are kept up to date with progress; and that the strategic aims of the Neighbourhood Plan project are addressed.

### **Governance Recommendations**

- 25) Agrees both for itself and the town the vision statement the Faversham 2020 review has constructed and adopts the vision statement as a guiding template for its activities in the period to 2020.

- 26) Reviews, renews and restates its committees and organisational structure and communications methods, particularly in relation to the new Localism framework.
- 27) As part of the process recommended in 26, FTC reviews its decision-making, engagement and structures for the Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan (see Faversham Creek).
- 28) Institutes a programme of learning from progressive English local councils whose profiles match its own. Lessons learnt should be incorporated and implemented within the overall process of renewal.
- 29) Using this process of review and renewal, the council should set specific aims and objectives, with the Town Action Plan as the basis for the formation of a medium to long term programme.
- 30) From 2014, a scaled-down annual Town Action Plan process of engagement with local residents and a review of aims and objectives should be built into FTC's planning.

**Governance: tactical and operational**

- 31) Researches and acts upon Localism 'quick wins' where functions and services can be readily undertaken locally, e.g. FTC to be responsible for naming new town streets and designating temporary 'play streets'.
- 32) Sets out its aspirations and plans for future use for community benefit of its historic charters, including Magna Carta (see Tourism, arts, culture).
- 33) Maintains local community and business support, including conclusion of the transfer of town allotment sites, pressing for improvements to town centre parking and engaging with town centre traders and others for economic benefit (see Allotments/Green Spaces/Business Support/Parking Strategy/Town Centre Regeneration). Improves and expands contact with area parish councils in order to increase collaboration for mutual benefit.
- 34) Embeds and develops support for local tourism (see Tourism, arts and culture).
- 35) Commences discussions with KCC Library Services to explore ways to safeguard local library provision and improved use of the Newton Road site (see Faversham as a service centre).
- 36) Subject to the timing of the national rail franchising process, vigorously engages with the Department for Transport and others as part of the

shaping of the South East Trains franchise, with the aim of having upgraded the frequency, speed and capacity of rail services to Victoria and Cannon Street (see Transport)

### **Green, Environmental, Sustainable Recommendations**

- 37) Explore ways to promote more sustainable living and working across the town, for example support local food and crafts producers, exploring options to reduce waste and implement more efficient use of resources
- 38) The town council's work to increase floral decorations in and around the town centre should be continued, but with greater heed given to the nature of these decorations
- 39) Improved walking and cycling facilities should be introduced as part of an overall upgrade of town transport infrastructure

### **IT Recommendations**

- 40) The Alexander Centre initiative to create an IT suite for further and adult education should be supported as should similar schemes in other venues
- 41) Early implementation of superfast broadband provision should be capitalised on by publicising it to employers, developers, venue owners and residents
- 42) Development, with others, of innovative uses of IT that promote Faversham should be explored
- 43) Investment in local IT development should be viewed as, and acted on, as an integral part of the wider Faversham investment/employment agenda

### **Housing, development, design and planning**

- 44) Work with representative groups of residents to establish a planning vision for the town to inform future development – this might be a design statement, wider neighbourhood plan or supplementary planning document.
- 45) Take action to increase the level of engagement with the emerging neighbourhood plan
- 46) Publicise local opportunities for taking the initiative on planning issues.
- 47) Consult with local people on a list of Assets of Community Value.

### **IT, broadband, wi-fi, cable**

- 48) The Alexander Centre project creating an IT suite for possible further and adult education use should be supported as should schemes in other

venues.

- 49) Early implementation of superfast broadband provision should be capitalised on by publicising it to employers, developers, venue owners and residents.
- 50) Development, with others, of innovative uses of IT that promote Faversham should be explored.
- 51) Investment in local IT development should be viewed as, and acted on, an integral part of the wider Faversham investment/employment agenda

#### **Leisure Recommendation**

- 52) Sports providers should be encouraged to promote and advertise their services and facilities more effectively

#### **Local Health Services Recommendations**

- 53) Opportunities to locate as many range of primary care services as possible in Faversham should be identified and pursued
- 54) Work of entities such as the Friends of Faversham Cottage Hospital should be supported
- 55) Liaison by FTC with local health professionals should be improved to enable councillors to better understand issues faced by the health services

#### **Older People Recommendations**

- 56) Provision of sheltered accommodation within easy reach of the town centre should be a planning guideline
- 57) Town centre design should always take the needs of the elderly into account.
- 58) Explore, with partners, options for providing a function that coordinates the known local youth resource for volunteering against day-to-day needs of the elderly, such as assistance with shopping in the town.

#### **Parking Strategy Recommendations**

- 59) FTC lobbies SBC to press for improvements to town car parks, particularly Central Car Park
- 60) Local knowledge is applied more extensively to parking through FTC taking a greater role in steering and operating town parking provision
- 61) Over the longer-term FTC seeks a formal role in running town car parking

### **Safety and Anti-social behaviour recommendations**

- 62) Regular feeding in to Kent Police by FTC of perceptions of Faversham residents and disseminate information on this topic to residents.
- 63) Explore opportunities, with others, to improve street lighting and other safety solutions in exposed areas of the town
- 64) Explore opportunity to extend Swale Safe to include a virtual neighbourhood watch system for residents
- 65) Publicise better the 'channels to action' that residents/visitors can take if witnessing crime or its aftermath

### **Tourism, Arts and Culture Recommendations**

- 66) Oversee and monitor delivery of the Tourism Development Framework
- 67) Improve communication of activities and opportunities to residents and visitors
- 68) Develop and implement plans for Magna Carta
- 69) Explore opportunities for supporting tourism development within the emerging neighbourhood plan as part of Faversham's wider tourism offer
- 70) Take an active stance to promotional activities and product development that showcases local talent and produce

### **Town Centre Regeneration Recommendations**

- 71) Develop with businesses, residents, freeholders and service providers a renewed, shared vision for the town centre and an accompanying action plan
- 72) Support the improved pedestrian environment provided by traffic-free streets on market days (Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays)
- 73) FTC to continue its support for town centre vitality, including public realm improvements

### **Transport Recommendations**

- 74) A more strategic, integrated approach to Faversham transport needs is taken based on data recording pedestrian and traffic movements around the town, peak pressure points and future needs
- 75) Greater emphasis in future transport planning is placed on the ease and safety of pedestrian and cyclist movement in and around the town, with recognition of a need to create a comprehensive local cycle path network

76) Maintenance, repair and cleaning of footpaths is enhanced and pedestrian signage further improved

77) FTC should engage vigorously with SBC, KCC and the Department of Transport to seek restoration of the capacity and speed of Faversham commuting services for Victoria and Cannon Street

**Young People (up to 18) Recommendations**

78) FTC to explore the potential to establish a youth council

79) FTC to revitalise the Youth Working Party

80) Look at ways to create a more formalised volunteer bureau (this could be extended to older people with leisure time available for community work)

81) Communicate activities for young people in a more co-ordinated way

82) Explore opportunities for greater provision of facilities and activities, where possible integrating venues and delivery agents