



FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Wednesday 16th February 2022 at 7pm
At The Harlington**

PRESENT

Councillors: L. Holt (Chairman), P. Einchcomb, K. Kuntikanamata, R. Robinson B. Schofield.

Also Present: Janet Stanton - Town Clerk
Susanna Walker - Committee Clerk
Wendy Allen - Office Manager
Alex Robins - Harlington General Manager
2 members of the Hart Lions

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 1 APOLOGIES

Members received and accepted apologies for absence from Councillor Fang due to work commitments, Councillor Tilley due to ill health, Councillor Wildsmith due to ill health and Councillor Woods due to ill health.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations on interest.

The Chairman took the opportunity to express thanks to members of the committee for their support and cooperation in past years and over the past year, and gave thanks to the Town Clerk, Office Manager and their team for all their hard work.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on Wednesday 20th October 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

- Item 5, last bullet point – the word Officers to be replaced by Members.

The minutes of the Extraordinary Policy and Finance Committee held on Monday 15th November 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

- Councillor Einchcomb's name be spelt correctly.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 14 JUBILEE CELEBRATION'S SUPPORT

Members received and considered a report on the Jubilee Celebration's Support, proposing that any local organisations using the Harlington facilities for the Jubilee weekend have the room hire charges waived, but are still liable for any other costs including staffing. The following was discussed:

- Technical staff such as the Duty Manager would be charged.
- The hire charges waived would only be for the Jubilee Celebration events over the Jubilee weekend. This would not set a precedent.
- There will still be a cost of approximately £600.00 to the Hart Lions, for them to run their dinner and cabaret evening at the Harlington.
- There are no charges for using the stage in Gurkha Square, a £500 saving on the normal community rate as it benefits a greater number of people in Fleet.
- Hart Lions to approach Jubilee Committee to see if there are further funds to support their event.

RESOLVED

Members agreed that as a gesture of community support, for the four-day period of the Jubilee Celebrations, that local organisations using the Harlington facilities for jubilee events have the room hire charges waived but will remain liable for any incidental marginal equipment or staffing costs.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 5 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The members considered the commentary of the Town Clerk with an overview of the financial performance up to 31st January 2022, together with the income and expenditure, cash book, bank reconciliation, list of payments, balance sheet and quarterly monitoring up until 31st January 2022. Special thanks were given to the Town Clerk and all the officers for the reports and for all their hard work in reducing the projected deficit from £100,837.00 to just under £10,000.00.

The members considered:

1. 2021-2022
 - a. Quarterly Report
 - b. Harlington Monthly Performance totals
 - c. Balance sheet as at 31st January 2022
 - d. Budget detail as at 31st January 2022
- dd. 2021-2022 projections spreadsheet at 31st January 2022
- e. Income & expenditure detail – 31st January 2022
- f. Bank Reconciliation – December 2021
- g. Bank Reconciliation – January 2022
- h. Cash Book as at 31st January 2022
- j. List of Payments – December 2021
- k. List of Payments – January 2022
- l. List of Debtors
- m. Q3 VAT return - December 2021

The following matters were raised and discussed:

- The last quarterly report showed a budget shortfall of £100,837.00 which has now been reduced to just under £10,000.00. This is partly due to income received from the vaccination centre and the reduction in staff costs, due to Covid.
- Income from Cemetery is above budget but there have been limited sales for the sanctums.
- Staffing at FTC and the Harlington, due to key members of staff leaving.
- Pension provision of £30,000.00.
- Attendance at shows at the Harlington are improving, but booking is being left until the last minute.
- Increase in ticket prices.
- Coffee shop.
- Available S106 funding for new projects.
- Bank reconciliations for January 2022 have not been confirmed by Cllr Robinson.

Members noted that Councillor Robinson confirmed that the bank reconciliation for December 2021 equals zero, and the bank statements match the reconciliation and has signed the bank statements and payment schedules.

RESOLVED

1. To receive and accept into the minutes
 - a. Quarterly Report
 - b. Harlington Monthly Performance totals
 - c. Balance sheet as at 31st January 2022
 - d. Budget detail as at 31st January 2022
 - dd. 2021-2022 projections spreadsheet at 31st January 2022
 - e. Income & expenditure detail – 31st January 2022
 - f. Bank Reconciliation – December 2021
 - g. Bank Reconciliation – January 2022
 - h. Cash Book as at 31st January 2022
 - j. List of Payments – December 2021
 - k. List of Payments – January 2022
 - l. List of Debtors
 - m. Q3 VAT return - December 2021

2. To accept Councillor Robinson's confirmation that the bank reconciliation for December 2021 equals zero, and the bank statements match the reconciliation.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 6 INVESTMENT REPORT

Members received and considered the quarterly investment report and discussed the following:

- The benefits of moving £300,000.00 from the HSBC Current Account to the CCLA Investments Ltd account, due to the increase in the current interest rate.
- Only £100,000.00 can be authorised and withdrawn at a time from the HSBC Current Account.
- The option to put £1,000,000.00 into a longer-term savings account, to receive a better rate of interest.
- Town Clerk to bring a proposal for a best return rate account back to March 2022 Council.

RESOLVED

1. To note the balances held in the Fleet Town Council Accounts.
2. To transfer £300,000.00 into the CCLA Investments Ltd.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 7 GRANTS

Members considered a grant application for All Saints Church of £2,000.00 towards the installation of audio-visual equipment. Members discussed the following:

- The grant money is being requested as part of the renovation of the church.
- The potential issue of other churches and religious groups applying for similar grants.
- FTC sets a precedence in approving the grant.
- Benefits the wider community.
- Grant policy.
- Grants awarded to date include Basingstoke Canal, Fleet Link and Sasha's Project.

RESOLVED

- a. Members approved the grant application for £2,000.00 from All Saints Church.
- b. Members received and noted the record of the grants awarded to date.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 8 WRITE OFF DEBT

Members were made aware that there is an outstanding debt to FTC of £261.00 for 4 invoices from Fresh Fit, dating between 31.07.2019 – 31.03.2020. Members noted that although there have been many unsuccessful attempts to obtain payment from Fresh Fit, it appears that the company is no longer trading. Members discussed and agreed to writing off these invoices.

Members **RESOLVED**

That the unpaid debt of £261.00 from Fresh Fit be written off.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 9 PRICE LIST

Members received and reviewed the Harlington and FTC fees for implementation with effect from 1st April 2022. Members discussed the following:

- The Cemetery and Garden of Remembrance fees have not been included as the RLA Committee wished to review them at their meeting of 16th March 2022.
- The recommended Cemetery and Garden of Remembrance fees to be taken to Council in March 2022, with effect from 1st April 2022.
- Only the fees shown in red have been increased.
- Pricing structure for hiring the Harlington.
- Harlington staff charges have increased, due to the increase in minimum wage.
- Ancells Farm hire charges have been increased by 5%.
- Football pitches hire has been increased by 4% for block bookings and 4.5% for casual hire.

Members **RESOLVED**

- To approve the draft revised Fleet Town Council fees to take effect from 1st April 2022.
- That the Cemetery Price List be taken to March Council meeting for consideration and approval.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 10 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Members received and noted the Internal Auditor's report for the visit of 1st February 2022. Members discussed the following:

- The testing by the Internal Auditor relate to the AGAR.
- The 2 web documents in Word format have been changed to PDF.
- All actions have been completed or noted.

Members **RESOLVED**

To receive the Internal Auditor's Report and approve the action plan.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 11 BRIEFING PAPER FOR THE INCOMING COUNCIL

Members received and discussed the financial briefing report of the Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee for the incoming Council in May 2022. The following points were raised:

- The paper has been written for the incoming Council, detailing the history and financial background of the current finances of FTC.
- Information includes how the Harlington currently operates, with a subsidy from FTC which is lower than the subsidies provided to similar establishments in Hampshire
- the Harlington Development Fund.
- Paper to be put into the Councillor's Manual.

Members **RESOLVED**

To approve the financial briefing report of the Chairman of Policy & Finance for the incoming Council in May 2022.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 12 ASSET REGISTER

Members received and discussed the Asset Register as at 31st December 2021. Members noted that the register is constantly being updated, and the insurance policy covers new for old.

Members **RESOLVED**

To approve and receive into the minutes the Asset register as at 31st December 2021.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 13 POLICIES

Members received and reviewed the following policies:

a. Safeguarding Policy

Members reviewed and approved the Safeguarding Policy. Members noted the following amendments:

- Item 3 - **An** adult at risk is a person...
- Item 6 – FTC implements robust **safe** recruitment practices (*Town Clerk to check and amend where necessary*)

b. Credit Card Policy

Members reviewed and approved the Credit Card Policy. It was noted that one member did not approve of the use of credit cards. Members noted the following amendments:

- Recommendation to increase in credit card limit from £6,000.00 to £10,000.00.
- Reallocate spending limit to £2,000.00 per credit card holder.
- Limit to 5 people with credit cards.

c. Grant Policy

Members reviewed and approved the Grant Policy. Members noted the following amendments:

- Item 2.1 – Grants only awarded at the 4 main P&F meeting, **unless there is an urgent requirement, when it will be taken to Full Council.**

d. Grievance Procedure Policy

Members reviewed and approved the Grievance Procedure Policy. Members noted that following amendments:

- Delete Item 4.1
- Item 5.1 – **If so requested by the sub-committee, an officer** will instigate an investigation, which may include interviewing the complainant, the accused and witnesses and a report written, **as input to the Establishment Committee.**
- Item 6 – Within 10 working days of **a grievance being received**, the employee will be asked, in writing, to attend a grievance meeting. **The Council will give...**

RESOLVED

Members agreed to approve the following policies, subject to the above amendments:

- a. Safeguarding Policy
- b. That a recommendation from the Policy and Finance committee is taken to Council that the credit card limit be increased to £10,000 with a limit of 5 card holders.
- c. Grant Policy
- d. Grievance Procedure Policy

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 15 CLERK'S REPORT

Members noted that FTC has received a discretionary Omicron Hospitality and Leisure grant of £1,000.00, to help cover operational costs following the effects of Covid.

PF Feb 2022 ITEM 16 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held on Wednesday 25th May 2022 at 7pm in the Harlington.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Signed: **Date**.....

Chairman