



## FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

held on

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022

#### PRESENT

**Councillors:** R. Schofield (Chairman), G. Chenery, P. Einchcomb, S. Engström, R. Fang, L. Holt, A. Hope, A. Oliver, R. Richmond, R. Robinson, S. Sharma Krishnmurthy, P. Wildsmith, G. Woods.

#### Also Present

Janet Stanton – Town Clerk  
Susanna Walker – Committee Clerk  
Councillor Steve Forster – HCC  
2 members of the public

#### FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Members received and accepted apologies from Councillor Johnson who was on holiday, Cllr May for a medical procedure and Councillor Willcocks who was stuck in traffic.

#### FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 3 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

#### FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 4 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Schofield took the opportunity to update members on the following:

- **Community Transport**
  - Councillor Schofield and Councillor Woods both attended the Community Transport meeting with HCC.
  - Proposed savings of £800,00.00 to be made
  - . No more subsidised commercial bus routes
  - Consultation to run from 30.05 – 24.07.2022.
  - Results to be announced in August 2022.
- **Fleet Link**
  - Serves a vulnerable group of people in the community.
  - Proposed reduction of 10% in cost.
  - Consultation regarding savings to be held, with results in August 2022.
  - Proposed standardise rate for community transport.
  - Use of bus passes to be removed for Fleet Link.
  - .
- **NALC Climate Change Webinar**
  - Focused on case studies
  - Impacts on zero carbon, internally or in community.

- Environment WG to be set up.
- **Social Media**
  - Councillors are to refer to Officers by their formal title and not by their personal names.
  - Officers should not become the focus of debate on social media.
- **Costs**
  - Councillors can reclaim parking costs and child / adult care for attending meetings.
- **NALC Report of Bingham Parish Council**
  - A worthwhile read of what can go wrong with a Council
  - Very brave of Bingham Council to put this in the public domain

Members noted that Councillor Fang joined the meeting at this point.

## **FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 5      MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The minutes of the Annual Council held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022 were approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman subject to the following amendments.

- Page 3, under the External Body: The Aging Well Network, Councillor Sharma Krishnamurthy's name had been excluded.
- Page 7, 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet point - HDC Planning Training was now an earlier start time of 1830 prompt.

The Council also received and noted the minutes of the following Committees:

RLA	16 <sup>th</sup> March 2022
Development Control	9 <sup>th</sup> & 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2022

Members noted that Councillor Sharma Krishnamurthy joined the meeting at this point.

## **FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 6      ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW (AGAR)**

Due to an administrative error, the AGAR Review will be taken to an extraordinary Council meeting for consideration and approval.

## **FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 7      INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT MAY 2022**

Members received and discussed the internal audit report 2021/2022 after the year end visit on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022. Members noted the proposed actions and discussed the following:

- The March RLA minutes will be approved and signed at the next RLA meeting in June.
- FTC are not using the model Standing Orders but will review and compare.
- FTC has only written off one overdue debt in the past 7 years.

### **RESOLVED**

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

## **FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 8      CO-OPTION**

Members were made aware that further to the Annual Council Meeting where Ben Willcocks was co-opted onto the Council, there are still 2 vacancies on Fleet Town Council, one in each of Courtmoor and Calthorpe Wards.

Members noted that current legislation states that following an ordinary election where insufficient candidates come forward for election, the Council may co-opt councillors onto the Council within 35 days of the election (Section 21 of the Representation of People's Act 1985). Members were asked to nominate any candidates they thought suitable for co-option. Two nominations were received for co-option. One for Mrs Sue Tilley, who had previously stood as Councillor at FTC since 2014 and one for Mrs Kate Cottrell, who is the owner/ Director of Fleet Scoop.

### **RESOLVED**

Members agreed that Mrs Sue Tilley and Mrs Kate Cottrell both be appointed to the role of Councillor at Fleet Town Councillor.

Members noted that Mrs Sue Tilley and Mrs Kate Cottrell could join the Council's meetings from July 2022, once all the relevant documents had been signed.

### **FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 9      GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE**

Members were made aware that The General Power of Competence (GPC) allows eligible local Councils "the power to do anything that individuals generally may do" as long as they do not break other laws. This is the power of "first resort".

Members noted that Fleet Town Council meets the eligibility criteria i.e.

- Two thirds of the Council must be elected (even if the election was not contested). Fleet Town Council has 15 elected members out of a total of 18 members.
- The Clerk must hold one of the sector-specific qualifications including the passing of Section 7 of CiLCA 2012 (GPC). - The current Clerk is CiLCA qualified - including the GPC qualification.

Members considered and discussed its eligibility to use the General Power of Competence and noted the following:

- Not all Councils have GPC.
- If the new Town Clerk is not CiLCA qualified, then the qualification must be achieved as quickly as possible.
- If GPC is agreed, then FTC will be covered for the next 4 years.

### **RESOLVED**

That Fleet Town Council meets the eligibility requirement to use the General Power of Competence.

### **FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 10      HART DISTRICT COUNCIL UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND WORKSHOP**

Members noted that Fleet Town Council has been invited by Hart District Council to send 2 representatives to attend a UK Shared Prosperity Fund Workshop Session on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June at 11.00 – 13.00. The workshop will be held at the Council Chambers, Hart District Council Civic Offices in Harlington Way.

Members were made aware that:

- The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK Government's ambitious Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK.
- The fund has allocated Hart District Council £1 million over three years to build pride in place and increase life chances across the district through three investment priorities:
  - 1) communities and place;
  - 2) supporting local business; and
  - 3) people and skills.

- The Workshop Session is to help develop the right investment priority(ies) for Hart District. The workshop will help to understand what levelling-up should look like in Hart. Data will be provided on Hart and a range of potential schemes to assist/inform discussion prior to the workshop.
- Councillor Woods and Councillor Fang both agreed to represent FTC at the meeting. A full report will then be brought back to the next Council meeting in July.

## **RESOLVED**

That Councillor Woods and Councillor Fang represent FTC and attend the Hart District Council UK Shared Prosperity Fund Workshop Session on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

## **FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 11 CLIMATE CHANGE**

Members discussed how FTC can help reach the target set by the government of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and looked at ways forward to help achieve this target locally. The following points were raised:

- FTC to work in partnership with Hampshire County Council and Hart District Council.
- A Climate Change Working Group (CCWG) to be set up.
- The Working Group need a starting point for proposals.

At this point in the meeting, a proposal was put forward that Standing Orders be put aside, and to bring a motion to allow FTC to declare a climate emergency and to align themselves with HDC to be net zero carbon by 2040.

Members noted that many Town and Parish councils to date have not declared a climate emergency.

The following points were raised addressing the new proposal:

- The CCWG need direction to allow them to discuss and agree a course of action,
- It was logical for FTC to work in line with HDC.
- Targets should be set in line with HDC.
- Targets for both internal operations and the FTC area.

The following motion was put forward:

- FTC to align their climate change targets with HDC's climate policies and for FTC to set the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2040.

With this motion in place, the CCWG can meet to discuss what it means to declare a climate emergency and bring back recommendations to the next Council meeting.

The following discussion then took place:

- The CCWG last met 3 years ago, therefore a discussion about climate change should take place before agreeing to the new motion.
- The Harlington is an issue totally out of FTC's control.
- The CCWG should have a 2-line approach:
  1. FTC to reduce internal carbon emissions to net zero by 2040 (excluding the Harlington).
  2. FTC to look at how they can help the public achieve net zero carbon emissions.
- The government targets of 2050 are too late, and FTC should be aiming for 2030 or earlier.
- CCWG to look at evidence from HDC and come back to Council with challenges faced.

Members voted on the proposed motion that FTC to align their climate change targets with HDC's climate policies and for FTC to set the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2040.

Members **RESOLVED** that

- FTC to align their climate change targets with HDC's climate policies and to confirm FTC's policy to set the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2040.

- A date for a meeting of the Climate Change Working Group to be decided.
- The Climate Change Working Group defines its terms of reference for approval at the next Council meeting.
- To bring proposals for actions to Council for approval.

## **FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 12      JUNE WHITE ACADEMY OF DANCE AND DRAMA**

Members received the following recommendation that was discussed and resolved at the May Policy & Finance meeting:

### **PF May 2022 ITEM 14      JUNE WHITE SCHOOL OF DANCE**

Members received and considered a request for a reduction in fees from June White, Academy of Dance and Drama. Members noted the following:

- The rate charged to Mrs June White is the regular user weekend rate, which is reduced compared to the normal weekend rate.
- Up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, the regular user weekend charge per hour is £20.45 + VAT = £24.54.
- In March 2015, the regular user weekend charge per hour was £17.50 + VAT = £21.00.
- Therefore, there has only been a minimal increase over the past 7 years, with rates already being subsidised.
- Rising costs include energy bills and cost of maintenance.
- Weekend rates are higher than weekday rates.
- The block booking made by June White is during the peak demand for hall hire and the higher weekend rates reflect this increased demand.

#### **Members RESOLVED**

To recommend to Full Council that the Policy and Finance Committee do not recommend a further concessionary rate to Mrs June White, as there are no reasonable grounds and there is already a regular user rate in place.

Members discussed the following:

- Hire rates on a Saturday are significantly higher than weekday.
- Weekend rates are due to booking demands.
- Mrs June White already receives a regular user rate.
- There has been a nominal increase in rates over the past 7 years.
- As noted, there are significant rises in energy costs.
- FTC heavily subsidise Ancells Farm Community Centre.
- Escalation of energy costs may result in hire costs being reviewed.
- FTC do not have a balanced budget going forward.

#### **RESOLVED**

FTC to respond to the June White Academy of Dance and Drama, with the resolution that FTC will not agree to a further concessionary rate to Mrs June White, as there are no reasonable grounds and there is already a regular user rate in place.

## **FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 13      UKRAINIAN REFUGEES SUPPORT**

Members considered and looked at ways to support the Ukrainian Refugees in the Fleet area. Members were made aware that an HCC grant of up to £5,000 is available to Parish and Town Councils for any projects that will help Ukrainian arrivals access the support they need. The following was discussed:

- On Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June, HDC are meeting with local charity groups and refugees.
- FTC to offer the RVS as a meeting place but cannot be a permanent meeting place, due to the room being used as a green room for shows.

#### **RESOLVED**

- That FTC offer the RVS as a meeting place for Ukrainian refugees at Hart's charity event.

#### **FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 14      HCC/HDC**

*Members noted that this item had been included into the agenda twice.*

Councillor Forster updated members on the following:

- Apologies from Councillor Parker.
- **Redfields Lane**
  - Works have been delayed as waiting for SE Water to fix a pipeline.
- **Martin Grant Homes**
  - Has sold the Watery Lane development to Vistry Group.
  - The condition of only allowing occupation once the Redfield's lane roundabout has been completed cannot be novated
- **Hitches Lane**
  - Resurfacing of footpath to be scheduled to avoid school term.
  - Removal of 2 small and 2 large hedges, which will be replaced in other locations.
- **Pondtail Drains**
  - These were to be completed on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022. (post meeting note – not completed until the following week)
- **Carbon Emissions**
- **HCC Passenger Transport**
  - Upcoming consultation.
- **Adult Social Care and Children's Support Services**
- **Community Transport in Fleet**
  - Vital service in Fleet.
- **Fleet Library**
  - Language support meetings held on a Wednesday for Ukrainian visitors .
  - Posters are displayed in Ukrainian and Russian.
- **Hartland Village School**
  - School has been delayed in conjunction with the site developments.

#### **HDC update:**

- No change to the Work from Home policy.
- Flexible working.
- Issue raised that residents are finding it difficult to contact officers at HDC.
  - Refuted by HDC representative
- FTC to keep a record of any complaints made.

#### **FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 15      CHAIRMAN'S COFFEE MORNING**

Members noted that the next Chairman's Coffee Morning will take place on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2022. The residents from the Courtmoor Ward, who have been selected randomly, will meet the Chairman and their Ward Councillors, and will have the opportunity to discuss what they like and don't like about living and working in Fleet and ask questions about any topic relating to Fleet.

Members also noted that a schedule of future Chairman's Coffee Mornings will be made available shortly once the dates have been finalised.

#### **FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 16      ANNUAL RESIDENTS' MEETING**

Members noted the minutes of the Annual Residents' Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022. Members also noted that the livestream attracted approximately 15 viewers.

**FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 17      HAMPSHIRE PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL EVENT**

Members received and noted a report from Councillor George Woods on the Town and Parish event on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022. Councillor Woods reported that the topic of devolved services was discussed.

**FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 18      COMPLAINTS**

Members noted that there had been no complaints.

**FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 19      TOWN CLERK’S REPORT**

Members received the Town Clerk’s report and noted the following:

- Caleb’s Coffee in Calthorpe Park will open the weekend of 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> June 2022.
- Fleet Action Day on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2022 was successful, though not as many people attended as expected.
- Councillor’s Manual has been updated. Members to bring their old copies into the office.
- Electronic copies will be sent out w/c 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022.
- Jubilee celebration weekend starts Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2022.

**FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 20      HCC/HDC**

*Members noted that this item had already been discussed in Item 14 as it had been included into the agenda twice.*

**FC JUNE 2022 ITEM 21      DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting of the Council is on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 7pm in The Function Room of The Harlington.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.41pm.

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

**Chairman**

**Part 3 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

**Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Exclusion of the public in accordance with Section 1(2) and by reason of the confidential nature of the business of the Town Council, the Public and Press will be excluded from the Meeting**

**The following types of business will be treated as confidential:**

- a. Engagement, terms of service, conduct and dismissal of employees
- b. Terms of tenders, and proposals and counter-proposals in negotiations for contracts
- c. Receipt of professional legal advice and preparation of cases in legal proceedings
- d. The early stages of any dispute

**e. Matters of a Commercial nature**

There were no confidential items.