



Notice is hereby given of

**A MEETING OF FLEET TOWN COUNCIL**

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 7pm at The Harlington**

All members are summoned to attend

**To Councillors:**

R. Schofield (Chairman), G. Chenery, K. Cottrell, P. Einchcomb, R. Fang, L. Holt, A. Hope, D. James, E. May, S. Neves, A. Oliver, R. Richmond, R. Robinson, D. Taylor, S. Tilley, P. Wildsmith, B. Willcocks, G. Woods.

Rita Tong, Executive Officer  
28<sup>th</sup> August 2024

**AGENDA**

<b>1.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b> Schedule 12 of the LGA 1972 requires a record to be kept of members present, and that this record forms part of the minutes of the meeting. A resolution must be passed on whether the reason(s) for a member's absence are acceptable.
<b>2.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> Under the Local Authorities Localism Act 2011, members must declare any interest and the nature of that interest, which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.  Members are reminded that they must disclose both the existence and the nature of a personal interest that they have in any matter to be considered at this meeting. A personal interest will be considered a prejudicial interest if this is one in which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the members' judgement of the public interest.
<b>3.</b>	<b>QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC</b> (3 min per person maximum 15 minutes) To receive questions and statements from members of the public.
<b>4.</b>	<b>CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> To receive any updates from the Chairman of Fleet Town Council.
<b>5.</b>	<b>HCC/HDC</b> (3 mins per person – max 15 mins) To receive any update on HDC/HCC matters concerning FTC which are not included within the agenda.
<b>6.</b>	<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS</b> To receive and approve as a correct record the main minutes and confidential minutes of the Council meeting held on 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2024 ( <i>copies attached</i> ).  To receive resolutions and consider approval of recommendations from the following committees and to return to committees any issues for reconsideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development Control                      8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024, 12<sup>th</sup> August 2024</li><li>• Establishment                                      10<sup>th</sup> July 2024</li><li>• Policy &amp; Finance                                      24<sup>th</sup> July 2024</li></ul>

<b>Part 1 – ITEMS FOR DECISION</b>	
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>REPORT FROM EXTERNAL AUDITOR FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24</b></p> <p>BDO have issued their audit report for 2023/24. Whilst the accounts are not qualified, they have made the following recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be in line with best practice we recommend that when minuting the appointment of the internal auditor, the council record they have considered the independence of the appointed auditor.</li> </ul> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <p>Members to note the unqualified audit report for the financial year 2023/24 and agree to include a statement regarding the internal auditor’s independence in future minutes on the matter.</p>
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24</b></p> <p>In accordance with Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, Fleet Town Council must publish its Notice of Conclusion of Audit on its website by 30 September 2024 and make the External Auditor’s report and Annual Governance and Accountability Return available to its residents both on its website and from its offices.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <p>Members to agree that the inclusion of the External Auditors Report and AGAR in the above agenda item and the Notice of Conclusion of Audit in this agenda item met the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.</p>
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERNAL AUDITOR</b></p> <p>To consider a report evaluating the results of an invitation to provide internal auditing services.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <p>To appoint an internal auditor for the 2024/25 financial year.</p>
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>THE LION’S REMEMBRANCE DAY INSURANCE FOR ROAD CLOSURES</b></p> <p>Due to changes in the insurance provision for Fleet Lions and other volunteers undertaking the road closures for the Remembrance Sunday commemorations, Fleet Town Council was asked to cover the road closure activity under the Council’s public liability insurance in 2023 (refer minutes from Nov 23 Item 9).</p> <p>Members were concerned about the financial liability of covering the road closures and requested that Hart District Council be approached to see if they would cover the activity. As Hart District Council were not able to insure the activity, the Town Council insured it on a one-off basis.</p> <p>The Executive Officer understands that the insurance situation has not changed for Fleet Lions and seeks Members views on the arrangements for the 2024 Remembrance Day road closure.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <p>To provide approval for the activities covered by the Town Council to take place on Remembrance Sunday on 10th November 2024.</p>
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT</b></p> <p>a) To receive the bank reconciliation and list of payments for June &amp; July 2024 (<i>copies attached</i>).</p> <p>b) To receive a statement from Councillor Robinson that the bank reconciliation and list of payments for June &amp; July 2024 have been verified and signed off against the original bank statement.</p>

	<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b></p> <p>a) To receive and accept the bank reconciliation and list of payments for June &amp; July 2024.  b) To accept the statement from Councillor Robinson that the bank reconciliation and list of payments for June &amp; July 2024 have been verified and signed.</p>
12.	<p><b>NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK</b></p> <p>To receive a high-level report on the Government's proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and consider a request to participate in a consultation survey by the National Association of Local Councils.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b></p> <p>a) Determine whether the council wishes to actively participate in the NALC survey concerning the proposed changes to the NPPF.  b) If members choose to engage with the survey, they should provide their collective responses to the questions in Appendix 1.</p>
13.	<p><b>FINANCE AND RISK REGISTER 2024/25</b></p> <p>a) To receive an update from the Risk Management Working Group  b) To consider and agree the Council's Finance and Risk Register for 2024/25 (<i>copy attached</i>).</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b></p> <p>a) To note the update from the Risk Management Working Group.  b) To approve the Finance and Risk Register for 2024/25.</p>
14.	<p><b>REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS</b></p> <p>The Internal Auditor recommended that Fleet Town Council adapt and adopt the <a href="#">latest model</a> Financial Regulations from NALC. The Executive Officer has compared the Council's current Financial Regulation's against the model, <a href="#">noted differences and made recommendations</a> regarding how to treat the differences identified. These recommendations have then been incorporated into an updated <a href="#">Financial Regulations document</a>, with new or changed regulations highlighted in red.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <p>To review and approve the amended Financial Regulations.</p>
15.	<p><b>RETENTION &amp; DISPOSAL OF DOCUMENTS POLICY</b></p> <p>The Finance and Administration Manager, along with the Administration Support Officer, have drafted a Retention &amp; Disposal of Documents Policy. In developing this policy, they carefully considered the Internal Auditor's recommendation for the Council to adopt a risk-based approach, while also aligning with best practices in the sector.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <p>To approve the Retention &amp; Disposal of Documents Policy.</p>
16.	<p><b>TREASURY &amp; INVESTMENT POLICY</b></p> <p>The Executive Officer has drafted a Treasury &amp; Investment Policy. In developing this policy, she carefully considered the Internal Auditor's best practice example, while also considering the principles outlined in the <a href="#">Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments</a> and guidance within Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance <a href="#">Practitioners Guide 2024</a></p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <p>To approve the Treasury &amp; Investment Policy.</p>
17.	<p><b>PUBLICATION SCHEME</b></p> <p>The Internal Auditor has recommended that the Council adopt the <a href="#">model Information Commissioner's Office scheme</a>. In response, Officers have reviewed the model scheme and made appropriate amendments to the Council's policy.</p>

	<p>Officers have identified that the agenda and minutes of the Residents' Annual Meeting are not currently available on the Council's website. There are no impediments to making this information publicly accessible, and it is recommended that the Council begin posting these documents online as part of our revised policy.</p> <p>Officers also have identified that the Scheme recommends that the delegated authority in respect of Officers be published. The Executive Officer will draft a Scheme of Delegation that reflects current practices for the Council's review and approval at a future meeting.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b> To approve the amended Publication Scheme.</p>
<b>Part 2 – ITEMS TO NOTE</b>	
18.	<p><b>ANNOUNCEMENTS</b></p> <p>To receive and note announcements from the Executive Officer or any Member by permission of the Chair.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking Permits – please return no later than the Friday of week issued</li> </ul>
19.	<p><b>INTRODUCTION FROM THE NEWLY DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE OFFICER</b></p> <p>The new Chief Constable for Hampshire, Terence Read, will briefly introduce himself and his role as Fleet's Neighbourhood Police Officer.</p>
20.	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION</b></p> <p>Members were informed of Cllr Kate Cottrell's resignation as Town Councillor on 23 August 2024.</p> <p>The vacancy notice was published on 27 August 2024 and will run for 14 days (excluding bank holidays). Once this period has passed, Hart District Council will confirm if an election is to be held to fill the vacancy. Otherwise, the vacancy can be filled by co-option.</p>
21.	<p><b>SAFE DISPOSAL OF LITHIUM BATTERIES CAMPAIGN</b></p> <p>Ron Bailey, the researcher for Lord Don Foster, has requested that Fleet Town Council support their campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries (used in e-bike and e-scooters) and their disposal. Lithium battery fires are on the increase, in part because they have been incorrectly maintained and / or disposed of.</p> <p>In support of this request, Fleet Town Council will run a social media campaign on the risks of lithium batteries and where they can be safely disposed on within Fleet.</p>
22.	<p><b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>The next meeting of the Council is scheduled to be held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024 at 7pm in the Harlington.</p>
<b>Part 3 – CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS</b>	
	<p>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.</p> <p>The following types of business will be treated as confidential:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Engagement, terms of service, conduct and dismissal of employees.</li> <li>b. Terms of tenders, and proposals and counter-proposals in negotiations for contracts.</li> <li>c. Receipt of professional legal advice and preparation of cases in legal proceedings.</li> <li>d. The early stages of any dispute.</li> <li>e. Matters of a commercial nature.</li> </ol>

<p><b>23.</b></p>	<p><b>PENSION</b></p> <p>To consider a request regarding the Council's pension scheme.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <p>To approve the request regarding the Council's pension scheme.</p>
<p><b>24.</b></p>	<p><b>HARLINGTON LEASE</b></p> <p>To receive a verbal update from the Chairman on the progress of the Harlington Lease.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <p>To note the report on the progress of the Harlington Lease.</p>
<p><b>25.</b></p>	<p><b>THE HARLINGTON TENDER</b></p> <p>To receive an update on appointing architectural services for The Harlington development (<i>copy attached</i>).</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <p>Members to note the progress in appointing an architect to design the refurbishment of The Harlington and agree next steps.</p>