



FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Monday 20th July 2020 at 7pm

PRESENT

Councillors: Glyn Carpenter, Paul Einchcomb, Leslie Holt (Chairman), Richard Robinson, Bob Schofield, Sue Tilley, George Woods.

Also Present: Janet Stanton - Town Clerk
Susanna Walker - Committee Clerk
Wendy Allen - Office Manager
Alex Robins - Harlington General Manager
Charlotte Benham - Project and Committee Officer

PF July 2020 ITEM 1 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

PF July 2020 ITEM 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations on interest.

PF July 2020 ITEM 3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

PF July 2020 ITEM 4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on Monday 18th May 2020 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Members discussed the following:

- Grants.
 - With reference to Item 8, Budget Implications of the Covid19 Pandemic, FTC has not been successful in obtaining any grants so far.
- Ear Marked Reserves
 - With reference to Item 9, Ear Marked Reserves, Resolution B, the Ear Marked Reserves 2020/2021 will be reviewed at the October 2020 Policy and Finance meeting.

The members considered the commentary of the Town Clerk with an overview of the financial performance May 2020 – June 2020, together with all the income and expenditure, cash book, bank reconciliation, list of payments, balance sheet and quarterly monitoring.

The members considered:

- a. Quarterly Report
- aa. Harlington Monthly Performance totals 2020/2021
- b. 2020-21 projections spreadsheet at 30th June 2020
- c. Balance sheet as at 30th June 2020
- d. Budget detail as at 30th June 2020
- e. Income and expenditure detail as at 30th June 2020
- f. Reserves as at 30th June 2020
- g. Bank Reconciliation - 31st May 2020
- gg. Bank Reconciliation - 30th June 2020
- h. Cash Book - 31st May 2020
- hh. Cash Book - 30th June 2020
- l. List of Payments + BACS - 31st May 2020
- ii. List of Payments + BACS - 30th June 2020
- j. FTC Charge Card statements for Jan, Feb, Mar Apr 2020
- k. Q1 VAT return

The following matters were raised:

- The last quarterly report shows a budget shortfall of £227,000.00. This figure has now been reduced to £217,000.00.
- FTC is continuing to look at any suitable grants available.
- Insurance claims.
- SIDs (Speed Indicator Device).
 - HCC has now confirmed that FTC can proceed with these. However, because of the delay in obtaining approval, Members were made aware that there is no allocation for this in the 2020/2021 budget.
 - The approximate cost per SID unit per month is £200.00.
 - Members discussed that due to the current situation, there has been a reduction in traffic.
 - Ancells Road was highlighted as a potential road for SIDs.
 - Speedwatch team. Members discussed whether approaching the Speedwatch team would be an alternative solution to SIDs.
 - Members agreed to contact Speedwatch and ask to go on the list, with emphasis on Ancells Road.
 - Members agreed that the Town Clerk should add a new line into the budget 2021/2022 for SIDs.
 - SIDs will be reviewed at the October 2020 Policy and Finance meeting.
- Christmas lights.
 - FTC is committed to the Fleet Town Christmas Lights 2020.
 - Fleet BID – Christmas Lights
- The Harlington.
 - Blood donor sessions.
 - User groups including Weight Watchers are meeting again.
 - Other user groups are aiming to start back in September 2020, subject to updated risk assessments.
 - Members discussed the option of a small scale music acoustic set at The Views on a Sunday afternoon. This would be a free event, with the Harlington providing drinks and snacks at the portable bar.

- Emphasis would be on the public to socially distance.
- The aim is to assess if there is a public appetite for outdoor events.
- Socially distanced pods for indoor events at the Harlington.
- Perspex screens costings.
- All shows up to the end of September 2020 have now been rescheduled.
- Harlington outstanding financial liabilities. These are monies from shows that have not been invoiced for.
- Car boot sale.
 - Members discussed whether the car boot sale to be held on a Sunday morning could have a later start, to coincide the end of it with the beginning of the acoustic session at The Views.
- FTC general reserves are now set apart in the finances.
- Ear Marked reserves.
- Harlington auditorium ceiling.
 - The inspection of the auditorium ceiling has established that there are cracks in the laminated beams.
 - There is a limited availability and time to repair these, due to only a small number of suppliers.
 - As yet, HDC has not formally agreed to pay for these specific repairs.
 - FTC needs to take a financial risk in payment for the beams, as this critical work needs to take place immediately, using the current scaffolding in situ.
 - The approximate cost is £7,000.00. This process did not need to go out to tender.

RESOLVED

1. To receive and accept into the minutes
 - a. Quarterly Report
 - aa. Harlington Monthly Performance totals 2020/2021
 - b. 2020-21 projections spreadsheet at 30th June 2020
 - c. Balance sheet as at 30th June 2020
 - d. Budget detail as at 30th June 2020
 - e. Income and expenditure detail as at 30th June 2020
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 - g. Bank Reconciliation - 31st May 2020
 - gg. Bank Reconciliation - 30th June 2020
 - h. Cash Book - 31st May 2020
 - hh. Cash Book - 30th June 2020
 - i. List of Payments + BACS - 31st May 2020
 - ii. List of Payments + BACS - 30th June 2020
 - j. FTC Charge Card statements for Jan, Feb, Mar Apr 2020
 - k. Q1 VAT return
2. Councillor Robinson confirmed that the bank reconciliation for May and June 2020 equals zero, and the bank statements match the reconciliation and has signed the bank statements and payment schedules.

PF July 2020 ITEM 6 INVESTMENT REPORT

Members received and considered the quarterly investment report. Members noted that the Co-operative bank account has closed down, and the money has transferred into the HSBC current account.

RESOLVED

To note the balances held in the Fleet Town Council Accounts.

PF July 2020 ITEM 7

NALC CODE OF CONDUCT CONSULTATION

Members received, considered and reviewed the NALC new model Code of Conduct, in order to enable a response from FTC to the LGA consultation before the deadline of 17th August 2020. The following matters were discussed:

- There is no mention of social media in the Code of Conduct, aside from a small section under Specific Obligations, page 3 and Bullying and Harassment, page 4.
- Engagement with social media shouldn't be any different to the engagement in the 'real' world.
- A policy on social media should be incorporated into the communications policy.
- Following a paper written in March 2020, the primary recommendation was that subsidiary councils should follow the same Code of Conduct as principle councils, to ensure clarity amongst all councils.
- FTC adopts HDC's Code of Conduct.
- Even though NALC are proposing a new Code of Conduct, FTC should maintain HDC's Code of Conduct, unless HDC proposes any amendments.

Members were asked to provide the Town Clerk with any further comments to the NALC new model Code of Conduct within the next week.

RESOLVED

1. To respond to the LGA consultation with any Members' comments before the deadline of 17th August 2020.
2. FTC to continue to maintain HDC's Code of Conduct, unless otherwise directed.

PF July 2020 ITEM 8

GRANTS

Members received and considered an application from Victim Support Grant for £200.00 for security items for the home. Members were reminded that FTC has given Victim Support grants over the past few years, and that this is a service that anyone can access and use.

Members commented on the following:

- Contributions by other town and parish councils
- The annual report shows the donors.
- Victim Support has reserves in excess of £6,000,000.00.
- The awarding of grants year on year.

RESOLVED

Members agreed to support the grant application from Victim Support Grant.

PF July 2020 ITEM 9

POLICIES

Further to the February Council Meeting, members received and reviewed the revised Climate Change Policy. The following points were raised:

- Further to the action point 4, the Planning and Development Control Committee cannot comment on the carbon footprint of all applications they receive, as this is not a requirement from HDC.
- FTC to query what HDC will do about carbon footprint on their planning application forms.
- Under Introduction, the word 'for' to be removed from the final sentence.
"*... Hart District Council with its own target to become a net zero carbon emitter by 2020*".

- The policy needs to make the introduction clear that the targets are HCC's targets.
- Action point 1, reducing single use plastic within the Council's operations – a climate change issue.
- Under Introduction, the word 'communication' to replace 'education' in the final sentence. *"...making Fleet Town carbon neutral by 2040 providing community leadership and communication"*.

RESOLVED

Subject to the changes outlined above to the Climate Change Policy, to approve the adoption of the Climate Change Policy.

PF July 2020 ITEM 10 COVID19

Members received and considered any new updates and guidelines from the government which will affect the FTC operation and funding. Members noted that the COVID19 guidance changes daily. Members were made aware that as of 1st August 2020, venues are allowed to provide indoor events, FTC are expecting a list of provisos and guidance from the government regarding this imminently. However, it is likely that the Harlington will not be fit for purpose until the end of August 2020, due to the current auditorium ceiling work.

PF July 2020 ITEM 11 FLEET LINK – COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Further to the Council meeting held on 1st July 2020, members received a financial update regarding Fleet Link. Members discussed the following:

- Members were originally notified that Fleet Link could make exceptional financial claims due to the impacts of COVID19.
- The recent claim is pre-COVID and is due to vandalism of the Fleet Link buses.
- The claim is for £6,985.00 and covers window breakages, the storage of the buses at a new compound, additional staffing and fuel costs and loss of fare and income.
- Further to a negotiated discount, the claim is now £6,105.00.
- The percentage cost breakdown is:
 - HCC 50%
 - FTC 37.5%
 - Church Crookham 12.5%
- HCC has proposed that the FTC total of £2,308.00 is taken from the money in the vehicle replacement fund.
- Members queried why the full cost of vandalism had not been covered by the insurance claim.
- There is a potential shortfall of £2,000.00 a month due to reduced passenger traffic, which in the current contract totals a shortfall of £24,000.00 for the year.
- Fleet Link does not appear to be a financially viable service, particularly during the current crisis.
- Members considered whether FTC should terminate their part of the contract, however, all parties need to be given enough notice. If this should be the case, notice to be given before the 2021/2022 budget is drawn up.
- The Fleet Link operation and suitable alternatives

Members agreed that they were not happy with the proposed charge from HCC and would question why there had not been a claim on the insurance policy. Members also discussed how to support existing users should FTC terminate its contract with HCC. It was agreed that this would be brought to the Full Council meeting in September 2020.

PF July 2020 ITEM 12 CLERKS REPORT

Members noted the following proposal from the Town Clerk:

- That a budget working group convene in September 2020, once FTC has received the second half of its precept.
- Members agreed that the working group will be a virtual daytime meeting.

PF July 2020 ITEM 13 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next virtual meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held Monday 19th October 2020 at 7pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

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

Chairman

