



## FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING

held on  
Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022  
in the Harlington

#### PRESENT

**Councillors:** B. Schofield (Chairman), G. Chenery, P. Einchcomb, R. Fang, L. Holt, A. Hope, K. Kuntikanamata, K. Jasper, A. Oliver, R. Richmond, S. Tilley, G. Woods, J. Wright.

#### Also Present:

Janet Stanton – Town Clerk  
Susanna Walker – Committee Clerk  
Councillor Stephen Parker – HCC  
Councillor Katie Davies – HCC  
Councillor Mark Butcher – HDC  
Tracey Shrimpton – Fleet BID

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

Members received and accepted apologies for absence from Councillor Hope due to a prior commitment, Councillor Robinson due to ill health, Councillor Wildsmith due to childcare issues and Councillor Willcocks due to work commitments.

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

Councillor Richmond declared an interest in Item 5 – FLEET BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) RENEWAL REFERENDUM.

#### FC March 2022 ITEM 3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Councillor Schofield read out the following question submitted by Mr Russell Hunt:

*“After losing £20,000 per month on the Harlington FTC has agreed to break open the piggy bank, the guaranteed sacrosanct Harlington reserve, and lend funds to the General Reserve. Taxpayers, especially those with young families and pensioners, are struggling with double digit inflation with more to come, yet FTC continues to build the Harlington reserve. It is time to face reality. FTC and Fleet Town residents do not have the resources to maintain and continue to subsidise the Harlington let alone fund any new development. Having breached the integrity of the fund, will FTC now scrap the Harlington precept for 2022/23 and release the £2 million plus Harlington Fund into General Reserves using approximately £600,000 to fund the whole FTC precept for 2022/23?”*

Councillor Schofield answered this question by addressing the following points:

- The question was in response to the Finance paper written by the Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee in February 2022.
- Using money from the Harlington Reserve Fund was not a commitment, it was only proposed as an option, should there be another pandemic in quick succession before FTC had the opportunity to rebuild reserves.
- Even after inflation, residents living in a Band D property in Fleet pay £2 a week for the services that FTC provides.

- In response to the Harlington losing £20,000.00 a month, this shortfall in budgeted income was due to the consequences of the pandemic, an extraordinary operational issue.
- The subsidy of the Harlington from FTC is considerably lower than comparable local theatre venues and community centres in the area and the most significant element of operating cost of the Harlington is the routine building maintenance, heating lighting business rates etc.
- The Harlington supports a significant number of community groups and events.

#### **FC March 2022 ITEM 4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Members received and approved as a correct record the minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022. The Chairman signed the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

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

Policy & Finance 16th February 2022

It was pointed out that in Item 6 – INVESTMENT REPORT, the final bullet point read *Town Clerk to bring a proposal for a best return rate account back to March 2022 Council*. Members agreed that this should read that the *Town Clerk to bring a proposal for the best return rate account at an appropriate time*”.

Development Control 14th February 2022

#### **FC March 2022 ITEM 5 FLEET BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) RENEWAL REFERENDUM**

Members received and reviewed the Fleet BID Business Plan 2022-2027. A discussion took place, considering if FTC would support the BID renewal for a further five-year term from April 2022 - March 2027. The following points were raised:

- The Harlington falls within the BID area and the cost is approximately £400.00 a year.
- The retail and service sector are important and significant sectors of the local community
- Hart Shopping Centre is included in the BID area.
- Post pandemic, neither FTC nor HDC will have significant funds to support local businesses.
- Important to have the BID in Fleet so businesses can collectively support themselves and encourage footfall into the town.
- Challenge for the BID to encourage voters to vote for the renewal referendum.
- Previous concerns regarding lack of transparency of finances have been addressed and the presentation of the statement of finances is more accessible.

Members **RESOLVED** to

- a. Approve FTC’s support for the Fleet Business Improvement District Renewal for a further five years from April 2022 – 2027
- b. Authorise the Clerk to return the completed postal ballot paper with the Council’s decision.

## **FC March 2022 ITEM 6      POLICIES**

Members received the recommendation of the January Establishment Committee to approve the following policies:

- a. Adoption / Surrogacy Policy.
- b. Time off in Lieu Policy.

Members **RESOLVED** to

- a. Approve the Adoption / Surrogacy Policy.
- b. Approve the Time off in Lieu Policy.

## **FC March 2022 ITEM 7      FINANCIAL MONITORING**

Members received and noted the following:

- a. The bank reconciliation for January 2022.
- b. Councillor Robinson's confirmation that the bank statements match the reconciliation, and he has signed the bank statements and payment schedules.

### **RESOLVED**

Members accepted and approved into the minutes:

- a. The bank reconciliation for January 2022.
- b. Councillor Robinson's confirmation that the bank reconciliation for January 2022 equals zero, and the bank statements match the reconciliation.

## **FC March 2022 ITEM 8      CIVIC QUARTER DEVELOPMENT**

Members received an update on the Civic Quarter Regeneration and discussed the following:

- The latest meeting of the Civic Quarter Working Group was 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022.
- The main purpose of the meeting was to review the public engagement posters and the associated questionnaire.
- Branding for the presentation was questioned as the HDC logo will be present, but support from FTC and HCC, as involved landowners, was raised.
- Having FTC's logo on the presentation shows solidarity from all councils.
- The revised start date of the public engagement is now 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 for a period of 6 weeks.
- There will be 3 days for face-to-face discussions with members of the public.
- The provision of 3 days for face-to-face discussions provoked some disappointment, but this is due to a staffing resource issue.
- A digital presentation will also be available online.

Members **RESOLVED** to

Approve the FTC logo to be included in the HDC communication for the Civic Quarter Development.

## **FC March 2022 ITEM 9      CEMETERY EXTENSION TENDER**

Members noted that the cemetery extension tender has been awarded to Scandor Landscape Contractors Limited, with the contract value confirmed at £49,869.47 ex VAT. The work is due to commence the first week in May. Members also noted that Scandor Landscapes had previously worked on the Garden of Remembrance.

## **FC March 2022 ITEM 10 ANNUAL RESIDENTS' MEETING - TUESDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> MARCH 2022**

Members noted and were reminded that the Annual Residents' meeting will be held on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 in the Harlington. Members noted the following:

- It is proposed that refreshments will be served from 7pm (tea and coffee) giving councillors an opportunity to chat to residents before the meeting begins at 7.30pm.
- In the main Auditorium, a "post-it ideas wall" will be created where residents will be able to write down any ideas about the town that they would like the new Fleet Town Council to consider over its coming 4 years term of office.
- The Community Video, produced in lieu of 2021 ARM, will be playing in the Auditorium as people take their seats for the meeting.
- A new video will also be produced by the same company, celebrating FTC's successes and challenges over the past year.

Members noted the confirmed programme of the evening, as detailed below:

1. Welcome to the last ARM by the present Council.
2. Presentation of a Civic Award.
3. Presentation by local GP on success of Vaccination Centre and post Covid services.
4. Meet our local Police and Hart Community Safety Officer.  
*Members noted that the Police are happy to take a few questions at the meeting, but should the public be interested, they would organise a separate Police presentation.*
5. Promotion of the Jubilee Celebrations
6. Round up of last 4 years of the Town Council's successes and frustrations - supported by a brief video.
7. Forthcoming elections and the value of being a Town Councillor comment by two of FTC's newer Councillors.
8. Public Q&A session (*supported by a post-it ideas wall*).

It was emphasised that all Fleet Town Councillors should attend this meeting.

## **FC March 2022 ITEM 11 SID BOARDS**

Members received the second report on the installation of SID Boards within Fleet. Members noted the following:

- Aldershot Road 85%ile is 31mph
- Church Crookham Road 85%ile is 32mph
- A suggestion was made that the SIDS boards be used in one location without the speed display for a week and then displayed with the speed, to see if there was any influence on the speed of traffic with or without the speed display.
- Speed along Ancells Lanes and Hitches Lane is influenced by school traffic.

## **FC March 2022 ITEM 12 COUNCILLOR TRAINING (Diary Note)**

Members noted that Councillor training has now been arranged for that all new FTC Councillors and re-elected Councillors, to ensure that they are aware and up to date with all aspects of taking on the role of town councillor.

Members also noted that the training is in two parts and will take place on the evenings of 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022 in The Harlington. It is expected that all FTC Councillors of the new Council will attend this training. A tour of all parks in Fleet and the Harlington will also be organised.

## **FC March 2022 ITEM 13 COMPLAINTS**

Members noted that no complaints had been recorded since the last meeting.

## FC March 2022 ITEM 14 COVID UPDATE AND TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

Members received and noted the following updates from the Town Clerk:

- Two new officers have been recruited to Fleet Town Council, the Technical Manager, and the Part time Finance Assistant.
- Wendy Allen, the Office Manager, is retiring in mid-April and recruitment is underway for her replacement.
- The next Chairman's Coffee Morning for the Courtmoor Ward, due to be held at the beginning of March has been cancelled.
- Volunteers needed for the Jubilee Celebration weekend.
- Officers have reviewed all Council procedures for the death of a senior Royal.

## FC March 2022 ITEM 15 HCC/HDC

Councillor Parker discussed the following points:

- **Storms Eunice and Franklin.**
  - Highway teams worked tirelessly to keep roads clear during the storms.
  - 1200 incidents reported.
- **Secondary School Admissions.**
  - 98% of applicants in Hampshire were offered a school place in the top 3 choices.
  - 92% of this was first choice.
- **Community Grants.**
  - Grants are available up to £30,000.00 for community buildings.
- **Crisis in Ukraine.**

Councillor Davies noted the following:

- **Crisis in Ukraine.**
  - Vigil to be held in Gurkha Square on Friday 4th March at 19.00.
- **Plastic Free.**
  - Kate Cottrell (owner of Scoop) keen for Hart as a community to be plastic free.
  - FTC to support.
  - Include litter picking initiative as part of the Jubilee Celebrations.

Councillor Butcher reported on the following:

- **Calthorpe Park Playground.**
  - Thanks was given to Councillor Richmond, the Town Clerk and the Open Space and Facilities Manager, for the swift response to vandalism and graffiti in the park.
- **Traffic Orders.**

Councillor Oliver updated members on the following:

- **Traffic Orders.**
  - New round of traffic orders to be released in April 2022.
- **Budget.**
  - Additional grant being given to the food bank.
- **Edenbrook Allotments.**
  - Opening in March 2022.
  - Community garden facility.

Councillor Schofield took the opportunity to suspend Standing Orders under clause 36. As a response to the crisis in the Ukraine, Members were made aware that FTC had been approached to be a collection point for aid and monetary donations. Councillor Schofield discussed this proposal with Sarah Horton, who gave the following response:

*Thank you so much for the kind offer. In terms of aid, all my contacts are saying not to collect - that the border areas are becoming swamped with aid and much that is being taken over by well-meaning people is having to be left out in the rain unused. That isn't to say that all aid is being wasted, but that organisations have to have a clear plan for transporting and delivering*

aid at source. Very many don't. At the moment, I cannot find one that isn't being swamped. Europe is a big area, and every nation seems to want to help and send aid in. As things settle down, we will continue to look for practical ways in which people can help.

In the meantime, I'm advising people to visit

<https://ukrainianinstitute.org.uk/russias-war-against-ukraine-what-can-you-do-to-support-ukraine-ukrainians/>

the HVA page <https://www.hartvolaction.org.uk/news/support-for-ukraine/>

or for those people who trust me as being able to recommend a safe place to donate money, I have worked with members from this organisation and trust them.

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/RefugeeSupportUkraine>

Members also noted that FTC is a public body regulated by audit rules, and therefore cannot accept any monetary donations. Members also noted that The British Red Cross as a suitable organisation to make donations: see <http://redcross.org.uk/survive> or text SURVIVE to 70141 to make a £10 donation.

It was requested that for the vigil in Gurkha Square on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022, the lights on the War Memorial be blue and yellow as a sign of support for Ukraine.

Members **RESOLVED** that

- a. FTC would direct residents to donate money in response to the crisis in Ukraine, using the following websites:
  - <https://ukrainianinstitute.org.uk/russias-war-against-ukraine-what-can-you-do-to-support-ukraine-ukrainians/>
  - <https://www.hartvolaction.org.uk/news/support-for-ukraine/>
  - <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/RefugeeSupportUkraine>
  - <https://redcross.org.uk/survive>
- b. The RVS building be available for aid donations if and when appropriate.

#### **FC March 2022 ITEM 16      DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The date and time of the next meeting of the Council is on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 19.00 in the Harlington.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21:35

**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 were excluded from the Meeting.**

#### **FC March 2022 ITEM 17 STAFF MATTERS**

Members received and considered a proposal regarding staff remuneration.

#### **FC March 2022 ITEM 18 CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

Members discussed a confidential item.