



FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday 19th February 2025 at 7pm
at The Harlington

* Councillor Holt (Chairman)

* Councillor Woods (Vice Chairman)

* Councillor Einchcomb

Councillor Fang

* Councillor Neves

0 Councillor Richmond

0 Councillor Robinson

* Councillor Schofield

* Councillor Stanton

* Councillor Taylor

* Councillor Tilley

* Present # Absent & No Apology Received 0 Apology for Absence L Late

Also in attendance:

Rita Tong – Executive Officer

Representative from Fleet & District Carnival

Representative from Calls & Visits

Representatives from Fleet Spurs Football Club

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 1

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Members received and accepted the apologies as noted above.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 2

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Stanton declared an Other Registerable Interest in Agenda Item 5 on the grounds she is a volunteer at the Repair Café.

Councillor Einchcomb declared an Other Registerable Interest in Agenda Item 5 on the grounds his grandson plays at Fleet Spurs Football Club.

Councillor Taylor declared an Other Registerable Interest in Agenda Item 12 on the grounds he is a member of a group that hires Ancells Farm Community Centre.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 3

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 4

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on Wednesday 16th October 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 5**GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Members considered the four grant applications for grant funding from the Community Grants budget.

RESOLVED

Members resolved to award the following grants:

1. Fleet Carnival - £1,000 to go towards the cost of the providing first aiders for the event. Grant to come out of the 2025/26 grants budget.
2. Calls & Visits - £500 to provide support to housebound individuals through home visits and phone calls.
3. Fleet Spurs Football Club –£1,000 to contribute towards the installation of a fence around playing fields to prevent vandalism.
4. Fleet Repair Café - £720 grant aid in kind for room hire at The Harlington in 2025/26. Grant to come out of the Greening Fleet budget.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 6**QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

Members considered the quarterly report for the period ending 31 December 2024.

RESOLVED

Members received and accepted the Quarterly Reports and accounts for the period ending 31 December 2024.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 7**INVESTMENT REPORT**

To consider the quarterly investment report for the period ending 31 January 2025.

Account	Funds
HSBC Current Bank Account	£212,531.53
HSBC Savings Account	£807,980.19
Nationwide Business Instant Saver	£406,569.48
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	£3,024,735.00
TOTAL	£4,451,816.20

RESOLVED

Members reviewed and noted the balances held in the Fleet Town Council Accounts.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 8**CHRISTMAS LIGHT CONTRACT EXTENSION**

Fleet Town Council entered into a three-year contract with Festive Lighting Limited for the supply and installation of the town's Christmas light decorations. The contract included an option to extend for a further two years.

The December 2024 display will mark the conclusion of the initial three-year term, and Officers seek approval to extend the contract for 2025.

Officers propose an adjustment to the existing scheme. Specifically, the cross-street motif at the Oatsheaf intersection would be removed due to concerns regarding the structural integrity of the buildings supporting the lights. Additionally, Officers will request inspections of the mounting points for other cross-street motifs to ensure they can safely bear the weight of the decorations. Any necessary adjustments to the scheme will be made based on the outcome of these inspections.

Members remarked that it would be good if the Fleet BID could extend the lighting scheme down to the train station.

RESOLVED

- a) To approve the extension of the Christmas Light contract for two years.
- b) Councillor Stanton to liaise with the Projects & Committee Officer to review the elements of the scheme.
- c) Members would like to view the lighting options for 2025 prior to a decision being made as to which option to proceed with.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 9

ANCELLS FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE REMOTE DOOR LOCK

Members received a report from the Finance Manager on installing a remote door lock system at Ancells Farm Community Centre which will require the installation of broadband.

RESOLVED

Members authorised the installation of broadband at Ancells Farm Community Centre to enable remote door locking facilities.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 10

REVIEW COMPUTER USE & COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Members reviewed the Computer Use & Communications Policy and made the following proposals:

- Remove the word 'best' in the first sentence of the Introduction.
- Change 'will' to 'may' in the first sentence of section 8 Violations.
- Reorder first sentence of section 8 Violations to have disciplinary action first and other actions following.

RESOLVED

Subject to the amendments above, the Computer Use & Communications Policy was approved.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 11

NEW POLICY - STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Members noted that the Council has a legal duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to protect the health, safety, and welfare of employees, including their mental wellbeing. Work-related stress is recognised by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as a significant risk to both individuals and organisations, contributing to absenteeism, reduced productivity, and potential legal claims. Implementing a clear and practical policy ensures compliance with health and safety regulations, reduces organisational risk, and supports a positive working environment.

The Stress in the Workplace policy provides a pragmatic framework to help managers and staff identify and mitigate workplace stress effectively. It sets out clear responsibilities while aligning with existing health and safety procedures, avoiding duplication. The focus is on prevention and early intervention, ensuring the Council takes reasonable steps to reduce stress-related issues before they escalate.

RESOLVED

Members approved the Stress in the Workplace Policy.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 12

ANCELLS FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE PRICING STRUCTURE

Members received a report from Officers on proposed changes to the pricing structure for Ancells Farm Community Centre.

RESOLVED

Members considered the report from Officers on changes to the pricing structure for Ancells Farm Community Centre and resolved:

- a) To approve the proposed room name changes.
- b) Councillor Woods, Councillor Einchcomb, the Executive Officer and General Manager to review the pricing structure for Ancells Farm Community Centre to determine whether it can be simplified without negatively impacting existing users and whether the pricing structure could be modified to attract bookings in times where the centre is currently underutilised.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 13

DEVOLUTION / LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution has issued a statutory invitation to all councils in two-tier areas and small neighbouring unitary authorities to develop proposals for unitary governance. This would involve combining lower- and upper-tier local government services into new unitary councils.

A letter from the Minister has been issued to Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, and Southampton.

[Letter: Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/letter-to-councils-in-two-tier-areas)

Councils have been asked to submit interim plans on or before 21 March 2025. At this stage, the details of these interim plans and their potential impact on town and parish councils remain unclear.

RESOLVED

Members resolved to keep a watching brief on this matter.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 14

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were made:

- The consultant engaged to work on The Harlington business plan died unexpectedly on 17 February 2025. How to progress the project has not been established as yet.
- Ancell's Bus – all but one parent has fully paid their pledge for the Autumn term. The remaining parent has made arrangements to pay the balance in March 2025.

- Basingstoke Canal – Cllrs Woods, Einchcomb and Schofield, along with the Executive Officer, attended the Annual Meeting. The following clarifications / information was gained:
 - Concerns over the sustainability of the Basingstoke Canal Authority were discussed. As Landowners, HCC and SCC have a statutory duty to maintain the canal under the Wildlife & Countryside Act and due to 80% of its length having SSSI status. Both Councils must therefore always provide the necessary funds to achieve the minimum statutory standard required.
 - The Basingstoke Canal Authority have an SLA for their riparian partners. This SLA is not tailored for each partner but instead a generic agreement of what partners contributions help support.
 - The Basingstoke Canal Authority do not set the contribution levels. Contribution levels are set by the partners. The Basingstoke Canal Authority did request partners increase their contribution by inflation each year.
- The Establishment Committee meeting scheduled for 26 February 2025 and been rescheduled to 12 March 2025 to allow Member to attend the HDAPTC meeting on Local Government Organisation.

PF FEBRUARY 2025 ITEM 15

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held on Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 7pm in the Harlington.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:32pm.

Signed: **Date:**
Chairman