



FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 7pm
at The Harlington**

* Councillor Holt (Chairman)

* Councillor Woods (Vice Chairman)

* Councillor Einchcomb	0 Councillor Schofield
* Councillor Fang	* Councillor Stanton
* Councillor Neves	# Councillor Taylor
* Councillor Richmond	* Councillor Tilley
0 Councillor Robinson	

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

Also in attendance:

Rita Tong – Executive Officer

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Holt was nominated and seconded for the position of Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee for the 2025/26 local government year. There were no other nominations.

PF MAY2025 ITEM 2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Councillor Neves was nominated and seconded for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee for the 2025/26 local government year. There were no other nominations.

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Members received and accepted the apologies as noted above.

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 5 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on Wednesday 19th February 2025 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 7 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

To consider and agree the quarterly report for the period ending 31 March 2025. Reports for 2024/25 as at 31 March 2025:

- a. Q4 Income & Expenditure Account
- b. Q4 Budget Monitoring Report 2
- c. Balance sheet as at 31 March 2025
- d. List of Purchase Ledger Payments
- e. List of Debtors
- f. Harlington Performance Totals

RESOLVED

- a. To receive and accept the Quarterly Report and accounts for the period ending 31 March 2025.
- b. To allocate £85,000 of the 2024/25 surplus to EMR Harlington Development Fund.

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 8 INVESTMENT REPORT

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

Account	Funds
HSBC Current Bank Account	£89,855.88
HSBC Savings Account	£810,390.65
Nationwide Business Instant Saver	£408,576.39
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	£3,024,735.00
TOTAL	£4,333,557.92

RESOLVED

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

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 9 PAYMENT AUTHORISATION PROCESS

A critical issue has arisen regarding delayed payments to artists and suppliers, which is now significantly impacting service delivery and stakeholder relationships. A recent case involved a threat to cancel a scheduled performance due to payment not being received in time. The officer involved is experiencing escalating pressure from unpaid suppliers, with some now refusing future bookings and others offering dates to alternative venues due to our reputation for late payment.

Key Issues:

- Repeated delays in supplier payments are damaging the Council's reputation and relationships with trusted providers.
- Operational staff are unable to deliver services effectively without a reliable and responsive payment process.
- The current system relies heavily on timely action from Members acting as payment authorisers.
- Lack of a consistent payment schedule is contributing to unpredictability and risk.

RESOLVED

- a. To move to weekly payment runs.
- b. To fix the payment processing day as Tuesday to ensure payments are made within the same week.
- c. That Members commencing the authorisation process shall notify all other authorising Members by email at the outset, to avoid duplication of effort and unnecessary time investment.
- d. That invoices included in the payment run shall be re-ordered to match the order of the payment documentation, to facilitate the review and authorisation process.

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 10 COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Members have previously expressed concern that many of the Council's existing policies are overly lengthy and conflate policy with operational procedure. Several current policies duplicate legislative content unnecessarily. The Executive Officer therefore proposes removing such legislative summaries from policy documents and replacing them with references or links to the relevant legislation or guidance. Additionally, Members have indicated a preference for focusing on high-level direction and principles, rather than reviewing operational procedures—except where procedures directly involve Member input (e.g. Disciplinary Procedures). In such cases, Members wish to retain oversight.

RESOLVED

- a. Members confirmed which policies and procedures they wished to retain oversight of (see attached).
- b. To endorse the approach of streamlining policies by removing legislative duplication.
- c. As a general principle, Members do not need to see procedures based on legislative requirements, except where the Council has chosen to enhance statutory minimum benefits.

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 11 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcement was made:

- Those Members who have not yet had their photo taken by the Communications Officer were requested to contact her to arrange a mutually suitable time.

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 12 MARTYN'S LAW

Members noted that on Thursday 3 April 2025, the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, commonly known as Martyn's Law, received Royal Assent. This landmark legislation aims to enhance public safety across the UK, by mandating improved security measures at public venues and events, thereby reducing the risk of terrorist attacks. The government have stated that there will be an implementation period of at least 24 months before the Act comes into force.

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 13 GRANTS

Members noted that Grants authorised in 2024/25 relating to the 2025/26 financial year have now been paid or allocated.

Members considered a request by Councillor Tilley for the Police to have use of The Harlington Function room free of charge for a community Coffee Morning.

RESOLVED

- a. To grant the Police grant aid in kind for room hire and tea and coffee facilities from the Community Support budget.
- b. To request that Councillors from the Council and directors from Fleet BID be allowed to come in their official capacity.
- c. That should this be intended to become a regular event, a formal grant application be submitted.

PF MAY 2025 ITEM 14 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held on Wednesday 23rd July 2025 at 7pm in the Harlington.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:42pm.

Signed: **Date:**
Chairman