



## FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 7pm

\* Councillor Einchcomb (Chairman)

\* Councillor Woods (Vice Chairman)

\* Councillor Chenery  
0 Councillor Fang  
\* Councillor Holt  
\* Councillor May  
\* Councillor Oliver  
\* Councillor Schofield

\* Councillor Stanton  
\* Councillor Taylor  
0 Councillor Tilley  
# Councillor Wildsmith  
# Councillor Willcocks

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

#### Also in attendance:

Rita Tong – Executive Officer  
Facilities and Open Spaces Manager  
Friends of Basingbourne Park representative  
Friends of Oakley Park representative

#### RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 1

#### APOLOGIES

Members received and accepted the apologies as noted above.

#### RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 2

#### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Taylor declared an other registerable interest in Agenda Item 9 on the grounds that he is a director of the Fleet Market CiC.

#### RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 3

#### QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Friends of Oakley Park representative informed Members of a number of incidences of erosion along the stream bank at Oakley Park. Of particular concern was the concrete footing of the footbridge which appears to have dropped.

The Facilities and Open Spaces Manager and Chairmen of the Council to investigate the matter.

#### RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 4

#### MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Members received and approved as a correct record the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 5****THE CEMETERY CLERK'S REPORT**

Members received an update from the Cemetery Clerk.

Members noted the current availability of plots and observed that, based on existing sales trends, all plots would be sold within five years. Cllr Schofield informed Members that land had been identified within the Cemetery that could accommodate additional plots, and a proposal for this extension would be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.

**RESOLVED**

Members noted the report from the Cemetery Clerk and the update regarding the possibility of a Cemetery extension.

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 6  
CENTRE REPORT****THE HARLINGTON AND ANCELLS FARM COMMUNITY**

Members received the report from The General Manager of the Harlington and Ancells Farm Community Centre.

Members acknowledged that the 2025/26 budget for The Harlington could present challenges and requested a report from the General Manager outlining strategies for achieving the budget.

Members also noted that Cllr Schofield and the Executive Officer had started consultations with a specialist recommended by the Design Architects for The Harlington project, who has expertise in developing business plans within the entertainment industry.

**RESOLVED**

Members resolved to note the report which included updated performance figures provided at the meeting.

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 7  
PAPER****BURIAL AND CREMATION CONSULTATION**

The Law Commission published a consultation paper on burial and cremation which was informed by discussions with stakeholders in a number of forums. It contained provisional proposals in a number of areas:

- The regulation of different types of burial grounds, including standards of maintenance, burial specifications, burial rights and record keeping
- The reuse and reclamation of old graves
- Closure and reopening of burial grounds
- Exhumation and building on disused burial grounds
- Cremation law

The Executive Officer and Cemeteries Manager drafted responses to the questions raised in the consultation that applied to Fleet Town Council.

**RESOLVED**

Members resolved that the Council would participate in the Law Commission consultation on proposed changes to burial and cremation law. They approved the Officer's recommended responses and authorised the Executive Officer to submit these responses on behalf of the Council.

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 8****FEES AND CHARGES**

Members received and reviewed the report on proposed Fees & Charges for 2025/26.

**RESOLVED**

Members agreed the schedule of Fees and Charges for 2025/26.

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 9****HARLINGTON OUTSIDE LOCK UP STORE**

In April 2024, the previous Executive Officer granted permission for the Market to use the lock-up (formerly known as the "Market Traders Store") to store items such as marquees, tables, and chairs. At the time, this was considered a temporary measure, as it was understood that the Market would cease trading.

However, the Market has since developed a sustainable operating model and continues to require storage space.

The lock-up is also used by the Council to store outdoor equipment and items from the parks, including those awaiting repair or installation. During December, the space is heavily utilised to house stage equipment for the Pantomime.

Members are aware that storage remains a significant challenge for the Council, both internally and within this outdoor lock-up. Accommodating a third party's equipment has further strained this limited resource, leading to instances where Council-owned items have been displaced. In some cases, these items have had to be stored off-site, including in domestic residences, due to insufficient space.

**RESOLVED**

Members reaffirmed their support for the Market by approving the continued provision of storage space in the outside lock-up store.

Members also noted that storage requirements would be addressed as part of the Harlington refurbishment project and requested that Officers investigate temporary storage solutions as an interim measure.

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 10****SEMI-PROFESSIONAL GRAFFITI**

A resident contacted the Council suggesting that Fleet could enhance the appearance of drab or neglected areas through street art, following examples set by other towns and cities in the UK and abroad. The proposal included engaging local young artists, potentially through organisations such as Fleet Phoenix or school art departments, to create original street art in locations like underpasses or dull building facades in the town centre.

Members noted that the areas identified by the resident were not under the ownership of Fleet Town Council, and therefore the Council was unable to grant permission for such projects. Members also observed that previous efforts by Fleet Business Improvement District to install vinyls in empty shop windows had not been supported, suggesting limited likelihood of support for this initiative.

**RESOLVED**

Members concluded that they were unable to support this initiative due to the reasons noted above.

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 11**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Cllr Stanton reported that the Christmas Festival was a significant success, with attendance at least matching previous years. The new Kids Zone in The Harlington performed well for its first year, providing good visibility for the venue. While there were minor incidents, including egg-throwing and shoplifting, the event ran smoothly overall.

It was noted that the leases for Fleet Town Football Club and the Gurkha Square Car Park Market were both in the process of being signed.

Thames Water attended the site at Ancells Farm on 10 December 2024 to investigate the sinkhole. A camera was inserted into the pipe, but visibility was hindered by water. Thames Water advised that they would return with tankers to pump out the water and capture imaging once the pipes were clear.

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 12      HAMPSHIRE FOREST PARTNERSHIP-    COMMUNITY ORCHARD GRANT**

Members noted the dates set for tree planting between 24 - 28 February 2025.

Members requested that this information be circulated to all Councilor’s, the Friends of groups and Scouts groups in additional to the current social media promotion.

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 13**

**PLAY PARK REPAIRS**

Members noted that following the recent ROSPA inspection, quotes had been obtained for the necessary remedial works identified in their reports. The total cost of the works was estimated at £19,600. As of the end of November, the Play Equipment Maintenance budget had an unspent balance of £25,500. Therefore, it is anticipated that these works, including addressing low-risk items, would be accommodated within the Play Equipment Maintenance budget.

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 14**

**TREE SURVEY WORK**

Members noted that the annual tree survey had been completed, and quotes for the required works had been received. The survey categorised works into priority levels based on urgency with the total cost of all works estimated at £19,923.00. The annual tree maintenance budget for 2024/25 is £26,550, of which £16,634 had already been spent. This leaves £9,916 available, sufficient to complete the Priority 2 works. Priorities 3, 4, and 5 will be deferred to the 2025/26 financial year, which aligns with their required timeframes

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 15**

**CALEBS COFFEE BUILDING FRONTAGE SOAK AWAY AND DRAIN WORKS**

Members noted that Thames Water had refused permission to connect an overflow pipe to the main sewer and that the FOSM is looking at other options to alleviate the flooding issue.

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 16**

**FUTURE EVENTS**

Members noted the following future events:

Carols in the Park	13 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	Basingbourne Park
Fleet Half Marathon	16 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	Calthorpe Park

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 17**

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee will be held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025, 7pm at The Harlington.

**CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS – CLOSED SESSION**

The Chairman stated that the following items for discussion relate to the engagement and terms of service in relation to employees and terms of tenders, and proposals and counterproposals in negotiations for contracts.

**RLA DECEMBER 2024 ITEM 18**

**GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

Members received an update from Cllr Einchcomb on progress made on the Grounds Maintenance contract for retendering purposes.

**RESOLVED**

Members delegated the writing of the Grounds Maintenance contract to the Parks & Spaces Working Group and authorised the FOSM to proceed to tender once the document has been finalised.

The meeting closed at 8:48pm.

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

**Chairman**