

FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

held on

Wednesday 7th February 2024 at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Councillors: R. Schofield (Chairman), K. Cottrell, P. Einchcomb, S. Engström, R. Fang, L. Holt, A. Hope, E. May, A. Oliver, R. Robinson, R. Richmond (arrived during item 5), D. Taylor, P. Wildsmith, B. Willcocks and G. Woods.

In Attendance: Rochelle Halliday – Executive Officer
Louise Rogers – Administration Support Officer
Councillor Steve Forster – HCC
Councillor Stephen Parker – HCC
Councillor Adrian Collett – HCC
Friends of Oakley Park Representative
Representative from RH Faulkner & Daughter

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Chenery (family bereavement), Cllr Krishnamurthy (medical) and Cllr Tilley (away).

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Taylor and Willcocks declared an interest for item 18 Gurkha Square Lease and Licence for Fleet Market as they are directors of Fleet Market CIC.

Councillor Woods declared an interest for item 13 Hampshire County Council Future Services Consultation, due to being a trustee of Hart Voluntary Action.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 3 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A representative from the funeral director RH Faulkner and Daughter provided the Council with background information relating to the confidential item on the agenda.

Members asked some questions relating to the matter.

The undertaker's client had questioned the refusal to allow a metal casket for their funeral when the site had been purchased prior to Fleet Town Council having changed the policy to be an ecofriendly Cemetery and the client's spouse having been buried in a metal casket. The client wishes to keep the agreement that was made originally when purchasing the grave. If the Town Council is unable to grant the original agreement the client will then require exhumation of the spouse's coffin which is causing untold stress to the client.

A member questioned what the client's connection with Fleet is. The Funeral Director advised there is a Military connection, the client lives in Fleet having moved from Winchester.

The casket is an American casket which will have an American Flag draped over it during the graveside burial service.

No debate took place as the item was under a confidential item on the agenda. The funeral director's representative would be advised of the Council's decision post meeting.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 4 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Schofield conveyed his condolences to Cllr Chenery, on behalf of the Council, following the recent passing of his wife.

Cllr Schofield reported his attendance during the period as follows:

- 4th January - together with the Executive Officer attended a meeting with Fleet Phoenix and other interested parties to explore repeating the Youth Achievement Awards this year. It was a very positive meeting, and the event will run again. For information Fleet BID have agreed to be a lead sponsor which will greatly assist in bringing the event forward.
- 8th January - attended the Fleet BID Board Meeting on behalf of The Harlington.
- 10th January - along with Councillor May attended the Rye Logistics Appeal Hearing. The Inspector has subsequently allowed the appeal.
- 1st February - along with the Executive Officer attended the regular scheduled meeting with Hart District Council. The Harlington Lease and the Market Lease were high on the agenda. More details are provided in the Executive Officer's report.
- 6th February - participated in the Greening Campaign's Warmer Homes Pillar online meeting, to firm up plans for screening Fleet residences for heat loss and planning the presentation at the Launch Meeting on the 9th March.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 5 HCC/HDC ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following reports were received from Hampshire County Council and Hart District Council.

Cllr Forster (HCC)

- The installation of telegraph poles by TOOB poles have been temporarily paused. A meeting with the company's Chief Executive will take place to discuss the installation issues for the broadband roll out.
- Rye Logistics Resident Group raised funds for potential judicial review of the case.
- Trees are being planted in the local area, along roadside verges. Cllr Forster asked for any suggestions for further tree planting locations within Fleet.
- Hampshire County Council are funding £800,000 to set up food pantries across the County.
- Funds are available from the County Councillor Grant scheme until the end of February.
- There is a huge amount of roadworks at present in the area, further projects are planned.
- The new crossing design on Hitches Lane by Calthorpe Park School is in the final stages of redesign. HCC welcome any feedback on the works.

Councillor Richmond arrived at 7:15pm.

Cllr Stephen Parker (HCC)

- Attended a meeting regarding the proposed Reading Road South pedestrian crossing scheme.

Cllr Adrian Collett (HCC)

- Cllr Collett has some County Councillor grant funding available to support local initiatives.
- The plan for a new Recycling Waste Recovery Centre on Blackbushes Road is no longer going ahead.
- The Hampshire County Council budget is to be set in the coming month. Council Tax is likely to increase by 4.99%. There will be a one-off Government grant for Adult Social Care.
- Hampshire County Council would support 20MPH limits on its road network, however, the schemes would need to be funded by Parish and Town Councils.
- Works on the 4th arm of the roundabout at Blackbushes Road / London Road A30 are likely to be completed at the end of May.

Cllr Alan Oliver (HDC)

- Met with the TOOB Chief Executive last week and agreed to the suspension of telegraph pole installations. Poles are now only likely to be installed where there are no major objections along the affected street. Hart District Council has complained to Ofcom regarding what appears to be the lack of sharing of existing fibre optic networking. There is a roll out map on the TOOB website showing where the service is being currently worked on and any prospective installation of poles.

Councillor Peter Wildsmith (HDC)

- The UK Shared Prosperity Fund levelling up the grant fund has been allocated based on deprivation data, in areas of high need in the parish.

Cllrs Forster, Parker and Collett left the meeting at 7:45pm.
1 member of the public left the meeting at 7:45pm.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 3rd January 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

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

- Development Control 8th and 29th January 2024

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 7 INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT

Members received the internal audit report from the Internal Auditor for January 2024.

The Council noted the Executive Officer's actions report, prepared in response to the internal audit.

It was noted that Members accepted the movement of bank balances from the Council's current account, as detailed in the actions report.

RESOLVED

- 1) To note the January 2024 interim internal audit report.
- 2) To approve the interim audit actions report January 2024.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 8**ANNUAL RESIDENTS' MEETING**

Members received the draft agenda for the Annual Residents' Meeting and discussed the following points:

- A live poll on the topic of Fleet Market is proposed. The questions on the poll should be carefully considered.
- To have guest speakers, the Police and Crime Commissioner, HVA's Volunteer Manager, and a representative of Fleet Phoenix.
- If any Councillors need a name badge, to inform the Executive Officer so they can be ordered in time for the meeting.
- To have an informal engagement session with residents and Councillors at the end to address any questions and not to have a final formal question and answer session. This will enable closer engagement with residents in a more social environment.

RESOLVED

- 1) To approve 18th March 2024 as the date to hold the Annual Residents' meeting.
- 2) To approve the format and content for the Annual Residents' Meeting.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 9**MUSIC ON THE VIEWS EVENT**

Members received the report for the Music on The Views Event.

A Member asked what would happen to any profit made from the event. It was confirmed that any event surplus will be reserved for future events.

It was noted that the proposal was a departure from the Council's Open Air Civic Events policy, due to the level of involvement required from the Council to organise the event.

RESOLVED

To approve the organisation of the event as a one-off event outside the 'Open Air Civic Events' Policy, subject to:

- Adequate external funding being received to support the event and lower the risk to the Council.
- The approval of the Council taking a lead being valid for year one of the event only.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 10**FLEET CRICKET CLUB CAR PARKING PROPOSAL**

Members received the proposals from the Fleet Cricket Club to add additional parking spaces.

Members discussed the following points:

- Soft landscaping required to mitigate the visual impact of the scheme needs to be done to maintain the overall green appearance.
- The parking spaces are on private land therefore are not covered by Hart District Council parking enforcement.
- The initial proposal was reviewed by Parks and Open Spaces Working Group and modifications made as a result.

- A Member questioned that originally the County Council prevented the creation of extensive number of parking spaces so what has changed? It was noted that the original objections related to the impact of the parking area on the tree root zone on the other side of the road to the Cricket Club.
- Double yellow lines have been placed on Baker Way, so less parking is now available on that road.
- The proposal may have an impact on the character of the area therefore parking broken up by planting schemes is desirable.
- The double-parking spots may not work in practice, as vehicles may get blocked in.

RESOLVED

To provide permission for Fleet Cricket Club to add an additional six parking bays within the boundary of their lease along Baker Way (bays numbered 8 to 13 on the proposal), subject to Council Officers approving:

- The materials to be used for the parking bays to ensure that it is consistent with the natural, permeable woodland parking already in place.
- The planting scheme and plant species to be used, and the size of the shrubbed area.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 11 ACTION DAY

Members received the proposed date to hold the Action Day on Saturday 18th May 2024, 9:30am-12:00pm.

RESOLVED

To approve Action Day taking place on Saturday, 18th May 2024 on and around Fleet Road

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 12 CEMETERY MEMORIAL HEADSTONES

Members received the Cemetery Clerk's report regarding standardising the headstone measurements at Fleet Cemetery for full interments.

Members agreed to set a maximum headstone height at 1200mm for full interments.

The Cemetery Rules and Regulations will be updated at the next Policy and Finance Committee meeting.

RESOLVED

To approve headstones to be installed up to a maximum height of 1200mm for full interment. Kerb sets and headstone memorials are permitted in all areas of Fleet Cemetery, except in the lawn Cemetery.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 13 HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL FUTURE SERVICES CONSULTATION

Members received the HCC Future Services Consultation report prepared by the Executive Officer.

Comments should focus on the impact of the budget cuts on Fleet residents and to cross reference to any set/agreed HCC policies.

RESOLVED

- 1) That Members should submit any comments to the Executive Officer in response to the Hampshire County Council Future Services consultation.
- 2) That a meeting will be held virtually to review the response comments.
- 3) That the final comments will be considered and agreed at the next Council meeting.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 14 COMPLAINTS

No new complaints have been received since the last meeting.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 15 EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Members noted the Executive Officers report.

Members agreed the dates for the FTC Stall at Fleet Market.

It was agreed to arrange a Parks and Open Spaces Working Group meeting to discuss the Hampshire Forest Partnership grant opportunity.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 16 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted the time and date of the next Council Meeting to be held on Wednesday 6th March 2024 at 7pm in The Harlington.

Friends of Oakley Park Representative and the Administration Support Officer left the meeting at 8:55pm.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS – CLOSED SESSION

The Chairman stated that the following items for discussion relate to proposals and counterproposals in negotiations for contracts and the early stages of a dispute.

RESOLVED

That subject to 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 will be excluded from the meeting.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 17 FLEET TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB LEASE

Members received recommendations from the Lease Working Group.

RESOLVED

- 1) To accept the recommendations of the Lease Working Group, as proposed, with the exception of one proposal.
- 2) To approve the final draft of the Fleet Town Football Club lease agreement.

Councillor Wildsmith left the meeting at 9:30pm

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 18

GURKHA SQUARE LEASE AND LICENCE FOR FLEET MARKET

Members reviewed the background information and draft lease document for the Fleet Market.

RESOLVED

- 1) To approve the lease renewal with Hart District Council for the use of Gurkha Square for Fleet Market.
- 2) To approve the proposed amendments to the licence with Fleet Market CIC for the use of Gurkha Square.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 19

HARLINGTON LEASE

Members received an update on the lease agreement for The Harlington.

RESOLVED

To note the update.

FC FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 20

FLEET CEMETERY INTERMENT REQUEST

Members received the report outlining the circumstances relating to a prospective interment at Fleet Cemetery.

RESOLVED

To approve the request. But additionally inform all undertakers there will be no departure from the Council's Policy on the use of degradable materials for coffins.

The meeting closed at 9:58pm.

Signed.....
Chairman

Date:.....