



FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Wednesday 18th October 2023 at 7pm
At The Harlington**

PRESENT

Councillors: P. Einchcomb, L. Holt (Chairman), R. Richmond, R. Robinson, B. Schofield, S. Tilley and G. Woods.

Also Present: Rochelle Halliday – Executive Officer
Alex Robins – Harlington General Manager
Sarah Moore – Finance and Administration Manager
Louise Rogers – Administration Support Officer

PF OCTOBER 2023 ITEM 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Members received and accepted apologies of absence from Cllrs Engström (away), Fang (work commitments) and Taylor (work commitments).

PF OCTOBER 2023 ITEM 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

PF OCTOBER 2023 ITEM 3 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

PF OCTOBER 2023 ITEM 4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on 19th July 2023 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

PF OCTOBER 2023 ITEM 5 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

Members considered the reports with an overview of the financial performance for the period ending 30th September 2023.

The Committee reviewed the following reports, as at 30th September 2023:

- a) Quarterly Report
- b) Harlington Monthly Performance Totals
- c) 2023/24 Year to Date and Budget Projections report

- d) Balance sheets as at 30th September 2023.
- e) Statutory Income & Expenditure
- f) Bank & Investments Reconciliation
- g) List of Purchase Ledger Payments
- h) List of Debtors

The quarterly report and Harlington monthly totals were reviewed.
The following items were discussed:

Quarterly report- Members discussed the Hart District Association of Parish and Town Council's (HDAPTC) woodland management, members agreed to discuss in more depth at the next RLA meeting.

Harlington monthly totals- Harlington events are all going well, and budgeting for this continuing in the future. Tickets sales are higher than previous years although costs have also increased, the customer base is continuing to grow with new customers but there is also a good level of returning customers.

Members discussed the marketing of the hall hire. The Harlington General Manager will provide a more detailed report on the hall hire income and marketing of the hall hire at the next RLA meeting.

The Harlington has had some general repairs such as plumbing and lighting.

Year to date and Budget Projections- Budget predictions are positive for the year end at this point. Members discussed that ticket sales are showing as zero for the Harlington and should be reflected in the actual Year to Date report.

Members discussed to check if the underspend at the Cemetery is for the Cemetery extension and to also check where the badger activity works is accounted for.

Balance sheets- Members discussed the high level of funds in the current account as second payment of precept was received in the month.

Statutory Income and Expenditure- Members agreed to remove the Statutory Income and Expenditure report as the Year to Date actuals are shown on the budget report.

List of Debtors- the report is showing the following month's ledger balance, it was discussed to check with the software company if the debtors account should not pull through the following month's ledger balance.

RESOLVED

1. To accept the Quarterly Financial Monitoring reports for the period ending 30th September 2023.
2. To accept from Cllr Robinson that the bank reconciliation and list of payments for September 2023 have been verified and signed.

PF OCTOBER 2023 ITEM 6

INVESTMENT REPORT

Members considered the quarterly investment report and discussed the level of funds in the Council's current account with a higher rate of interest. It was discussed moving £500,000 into a short term access account with a higher rate of interest. This can be transferred over by the Executive Officer as long as it is countersigned by two bank signatories.

RESOLVED

1. To note the balances held in the Fleet Town Council accounts.
2. To approve that the Executive Officer transfers £500,000 to a short term access account with the countersigning of two bank signatories.

PF OCTOBER 2023 ITEM 7

BUDGET 2024/25 - FIRST DRAFT

Members received a summary of the first draft of the Council's budget for 2024/25 financial year. And commented on the following:

The ongoing effects of inflation and underbudgeting for playground works, tree works and utility bills in the current year has meant there is additional expenditure drafted in next year's budget to catch up.

It is advised that it is not usual or good practice to fund operational expenditure from general reserves.

Although the Council's general reserves are within acceptable limits, due to the nature of our operations and assets they are vulnerable to major unforeseen events.

Utility bills have a good estimate in budget, risks to income should also be evaluated as part of the budget setting process.

There has been an assumption that inflation will continue to fall from the current level.

It was discussed that the management of income generation should also be a focus for this budget.

To start a risk modelling process for the Harlington development early 2024.

The first Budget Working Group meeting is to be arranged for November. Councillors are to feedback comments regarding the draft budget to the Executive Officer to prepare for the meeting.

The Harlington General Manager left the meeting at 9pm.

PF OCTOBER 2023 ITEM 8

GRANT APPLICATION

Members received and discussed the following grant application:

- a) Citizens Advice Hart - requesting £1,000 to run a project for Citizens Advice First Aid.

RESOLVED

1. To approve issuing a grant of £1,000 to Citizens Advice Hart to run the project for one Advice First Aid course, materials, and to support 12 volunteers plus contribution to supervision and training of volunteers to support the increasing numbers of local clients dropping not Hart offices.
2. To note the record of the grants awarded for 2023/24.

PF OCTOBER 2023 ITEM 9 POLICIES

Members reviewed the proposed changes to the polices required to bring it in line with legislation.

Uniform Policy- The heading in section 2 still reads ‘Steel Toed Safety Boots’ to correct to ‘Steel Toed Safety Footwear’.

Eye Test Policy- In section 4.1 to remove ‘on’ before ‘securely’.

RESOLVED

1. To approve the Uniform policy with the subject to change the heading for section 2 to ‘Steel Toed Safety Footwear’.
2. To approve the Eye Test policy with the subject to removing ‘on’ before ‘securely’ in section 4.1.

PF OCTOBER 2023 ITEM 10 EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT

Members noted the report of the Executive Officer.

PF OCTOBER 2023 ITEM 11 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held on Wednesday 21st February 2024 at 7pm in the Harlington.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Part 3- CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

There are no confidential items.

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

Chairman