



FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Monday 17th February 2020 at 7pm

The Harlington

PRESENT

Councillors: Paul Einchcomb, Leslie Holt (Chairman), Bob Schofield, Sue Tilley, George Woods.

Also Present

Janet Stanton - Town Clerk
Susanna Walker - Committee Clerk
Wendy Allen - Finance and Administration Officer

PF February 2020 ITEM 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Councillors Robinson, Oliver and Carpenter, and Alex Robins.

PF February 2020 ITEM 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations on interest.

PF February 2020 ITEM 3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

PF February 2020 ITEM 4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A query was raised regarding the signing of the LASER Energy Contract (PF October 2019 Item 9). HDC have recommended that FTC do not purchase any green certificates and that the current contract will continue, with an option to change when a suitable green energy contract is available.

That being discussed, the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on Monday 18th October 2019 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

PF February 2020 ITEM 5 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The members considered the commentary of the Town Clerk with an overview of the financial performance October 2019 – January 2020, together with all the income and expenditure, cash book, bank reconciliation, list of payments, balance sheet and quarterly monitoring.

The members considered:

2019/2020

- a. Quarterly Report
- b. Harlington Monthly Performance totals 2019/2020
- c. 2019-20 projections spreadsheet at 31st Jan 2020
- d. Balance sheet as at 31st Jan 2020
- e. Budget detail as at 31st Jan 2020
- f. Income and expenditure detail – 31st Jan 2020
- g. Bank Reconciliation – 31st Jan 2020
- h. Cash Book – 31st Jan 2020
- i. List of Payments – 31st Jan 2020
- j. FTC Charge Card statements for August-December 2019
- k. Q3 VAT return

The following matters were raised:

- The use of the Cemetery surplus budget to balance the budget. Members discussed having a reserve for the Cemetery instead.
- Is FTC a burial authority? As a burial authority, FTC would have a duty to provide burial plots and cemetery. Members discussed the shortage of burial plots in the current cemetery and possible additional space and cemetery for the future.
- FTC to find out if it is a burial authority.
- The phasing out of Windows 7 and replacement of office computers to support new software. Only offline laptops continue to use Windows 7.
- The increase in hall hire at the Harlington.
- The Harlington coffee shop.
- Ancells Community Centre.
- Congratulations were passed to the Harlington General Manager for the Harlington's performance over the year.
- The discrepancy in the Harlington total ticket sales compared to the total displayed on the Annual budget. Further discussions are to be held with the General Manager to confirm this.
- The increase in Harlington ticket sales impacts the cost of using a ticket sales system.
- All account documents to continue to be uploaded onto the portal.

RESOLVED

1. To receive and accept into the minutes:

2019/2020

- a. Quarterly Report
- b. Harlington Monthly Performance totals 2019/2020
- c. 2019-20 projections spreadsheet at 31st Jan 2020
- d. Balance sheet as at 31st Jan 2020
- e. Budget detail as at 31st Jan 2020
- f. Income and expenditure detail – 31st Jan 2020
- g. Bank Reconciliation – 31st Jan 2020
- h. Cash Book – 31st Jan 2020
- i. List of Payments – 31st Jan 2020
- j. FTC Charge Card statements for August-December 2019
- k. Q3 VAT return

2. It was reported Councillor Robinson had confirmed that the bank reconciliation for January 2020 equals zero, and the bank statements match the reconciliation and has signed the bank statements and payment schedules.

PF February 2020 ITEM 6 INVESTMENT REPORT

The members received the quarterly investment report and discussed the following:

- The Harlington reserve fund and the interest return.
- The discrepancy between the total money on the investment sheet versus the total money on the balance sheet. Members discussed month end and the timing of printing of financial reports.
- FTC has a number of bank accounts, as a protection against a bank collapse.
- FTC should close the Co-Operative Bank Account.

RESOLVED

- a. To note the balances held in the Fleet Town Council Accounts.
- b. To close the Co-Operative Bank Account.

PF February 2020 ITEM 7 CREDIT CARD – CHANGE OF USER AND AMOUNTS

Members received a request to add another credit card for the Venue Technician, to the value of £1000.00. The overall credit limit amount would still remain at £6,000.00.

RESOLVED

To approve the amendment requested; update the Credit Card Policy Appendix 1, if required, to reflect the decision.

Employee	Existing	Requested	Total
General Manager	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00
Venue Technician	£0.00	£1000.00	£1000.00
Bar and Cafe Supervisor	£2,000.00	£0.00	£2,000.00
Facilities and Open spaces Manager	£2,000.00	£0.00	£2,000.00
Project and Committee Officer	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00
	£5,000.00	£1,000.00	£6,000.00

PF February 2020 ITEM 8 PRICE INCREASE

Members received and reviewed the Harlington and FTC fees for implementation with effect from 1st April 2020. Members noted that that not all fees have been increased and that there were no increases to cemetery fees as agreed at the September 2019 RLA Committee Meeting.

Members discussed:

Fleet Cemetery Fees

- The wording for VAT exemption. It was agreed that the following sentence '*Please note VAT is charged on memorials only. No VAT is charged on interments or exclusive rights*' should be included on both sides of the Memorial Fee paper.
- Above the Main Cemetery Area table, the word 'elector' should be replaced by the word 'resident', to now read '*a Fleet Town Council resident*'.

Fleet Town Council Room / Service Charges

- Additional optional charges have been added to the Harlington Room / Hall hire, giving users the opportunity to utilise as much or as little of the Harlington's resources as possible.
- Should the hire rate be rounded up to an even number for calculating VAT?
- The RATE column on the table should read 'Excluding VAT' together with a note on the document that 'All prices are subject to VAT'.
- The hire of Pavilions is not included on the document and are POA only.
- The line under FOOTBALL PITCH HIRE: *Junior, Season 17 alternate weeks 2 hours* should be amended to read *1 hour*.
- The increase in football pitch hire reflects the money invested in improving facilities and the high standards maintained.

RESOLVED

To approve the draft Fleet Town Council fees, subject to the amendments above, to take effect from 1st April 2020.

PF February 2020 ITEM 9 SIGNATORY TO THE BANK ACCOUNT

Members received a request from FTC to update the signatories for the Bank Account as follows: Councillor Tilley to replace Councillor Wildsmith as signatory for the Bank Account.

RESOLVED

To approve Councillor Tilley to replace Councillor Wildsmith as a signatory for the Bank Account.

PF February 2020 ITEM 10 GRANTS

Members received a record of the grants awarded to date.

RESOLVED

Members acknowledged the record of grants awarded to date.

PF February 2020 ITEM 11 LEN TYLER MUSIC SCHOOL

The members received an update from the Town Clerk, who reported that Mr Len Tyler will now not be requesting any reduction in rent payments, due to the Music School undergoing a positive structural change.

RESOLVED

To acknowledge the update from the Town Clerk.

PF February 2020 ITEM 12 EARMARKED RESERVES

Members received a copy of the Earmarked Reserves balance to be carried forward to the 2020/2021 budget (subject to any further expenditure before the yearend).

Members discussed the following:

- The future need to build up a reserve for playground equipment repairs/ replacement.
- Pensions.
- General reserve will drop at the end of this financial year.
- Community Park Building.

RESOLVED

- a. To approve the balance of the Ear Marked Reserves being carried forward into the 2020/21 budget.
- b. To review the 2020/2021 Ear Marked Reserves at the May 2020 Policy and Finance Meeting.

PF February 2020 ITEM 13 POLICIES

a. DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

Members received and reviewed the Climate Change Policy. Members discussed the following:

- A definition of HCC and HDC's own policies to be included in the statement at the beginning of the policy.
- No targets or measures have been included in the policy.
- Targets to be set when FTC have a better understanding of the Harlington redevelopment and HCC & HDC's detailed plans.
- FTC to be a signpost to encourage residents to reduce their own carbon emissions.
- The only bullet point under section 2. Aims, should be *'To reduce the Council's own carbon emissions and achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2040'*.
- All other bullet points should be moved to a new section, Section 3. Actions.

RESOLVED

To approve the Climate Change Policy with the above changes.

b. DRAFT TREE POLICY

Members received and reviewed the Tree Policy. Members discussed the following:

- It was suggested that in the second paragraph, the word *'programme'* should be added after *'tree survey'*, to now read *'tree survey programme'*.
- It was also suggested that there should be an inclusion of Climate Change and green spaces into the policy.
- There should be a consistency in using either FTC or Fleet Town Council in the policy. It was proposed that Fleet Town Council (FTC) be written at the beginning and then the acronym FTC in the rest of the document.

RECOMMENDATION

To approve the Tree Policy with the above changes.

PF February 2020 ITEM 14 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Members received the Internal Auditor's report for the visit on 6th November 2019 visit.

Members looked at the following:

- AGAR approval.
- The recommendation to use the statutory I&E and balance sheet and the Annual return financial summary to provide the most information in the least pages. Members agreed that although the financial documents can be a bit confusing, this action did not provide a view of the total running costs, the budgetary position and forecast.
- It was agreed that the report on VAT was extremely helpful.

RECOMMENDATION

To receive the Internal Auditor’s Report and approve the action plan.

PF February 2020 ITEM 15 MAKING TAX DIGITAL

Members received an update from the Office Manager and noted that the FTC had upgraded the RBS / Rialtas accounting package in order to be compliant with the Government’s Making Tax Policy. It was reported that the Quarter 3 VAT return had been successfully submitted using the new software.

PF February 2020 ITEM 16 CLERKS REPORT

Members received the Clerk’s Report and noted the dates of the Annual Year End accounts check and close down.

PF February 2020 ITEM 17 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held Monday 18th May 2020 at 7pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.52pm.

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

Chairman