



## **FLEET TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 7pm  
At The Harlington**

#### **PRESENT**

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

**Also Present:** Rochelle Halliday – Executive Officer  
Sarah Moore – Finance and Administration Manager  
Alex Robins – Harlington General Manager  
No public were present

#### **PF October 2022 ITEM 1                      APOLOGIES**

Members received and accepted apologies for absence from Councillor Chenery due to standing down from the Policy and Finance Committee.

Councillor Fang was absent.

#### **PF October 2022 ITEM 2                      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **PF October ITEM 3                              QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from the public.

#### **PF October 2022 ITEM 4                      MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### **PF October 2022 ITEM 5                      QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

Members considered the commentary of the Town Clerk with an overview of the financial performance for the period ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022, together with the reports below:

- a. Quarterly Report
- b. Harlington Monthly Performance totals
- c. 2022/23 Projections at 30 September 2022
- d. Balance sheet as at 30 September 2022
- e. Budget detail as at 30 September 2022
- f. Earmarked Reserves
- g. Detailed Income & Expenditure – Sept 2022
- h. Bank Reconciliation – September 2022
- i. Cash Book Receipts – September 2022
- j. List of Payments – September 2022

- k. List of Purchase Ledger Payments
- l. List of Debtors
- m. Q 2 VAT return 2022/23

The following matters were raised and discussed:

- Two shows at The Harlington have sold out. The last quarter of the financial year is likely to be a difficult trading period. Sales in the last two months have been at a similar level to the pre-covid period.
- Hall hire for the vaccination service will end but there is potential for other health services to be delivered in the facility.
- It is difficult to get enough bar staff for higher capacity shows, the possibility of sharing staff with other venues in Fleet proposed.
- Lightning strips are required on The Harlington building and an entry door with a new security system was replaced at a cost of approximately £2,000.
- Utility bills were discussed, the contract status for the gas supply to be identified.
- It was noted that on the balance sheet a number of show balances in the control accounts date back to last year – the Executive Officer / Finance and Administration Manager to investigate.
- The Committee confirmed that the ongoing permission for the Executive Officer to automatically transfer the Harlington development share of the precept to the Council's CCLA account remains in place.
- Following the interim Internal Audit, the Committee were conducive to the streamlining of financial papers issued to the Council to make the review process more effective.

Members noted that Councillor Robinson confirmed that the bank reconciliation for September 2022 and equals zero, and the bank statements match the reconciliation and has signed the bank statements and payment schedules.

#### **RESOLVED**

- A. To receive and accept into the minutes:
  - a. Quarterly Report
  - b. Harlington Monthly Performance totals
  - c. 2022/23 Projections at 30 September 2022
  - d. Balance sheet as at 30 September 2022
  - e. Budget detail as at 30 September 2022
  - f. Earmarked Reserves
  - g. Detailed Income & Expenditure – Sept 2022
  - h. Bank Reconciliation – September 2022
  - i. Cash Book Receipts – September 2022
  - j. List of Payments – September 2022
  - k. List of Purchase Ledger Payments
  - l. List of Debtors
  - m. Q 2 VAT return 2022/23
  
- B. To accept Councillor Robinson's confirmation that the bank reconciliations for September 2022 equal zero and Councillor Robinson to confirm that the bank statements match the reconciliations and has signed the bank statements and payment schedules.

#### **PF October 2022 ITEM 6 FOR 2022 To 2026**

#### **BRIEFING PAPER – BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES**

Members received and considered the briefing paper and discussed the following:  
Item 1 – Background to local Government Finances

- The Community Infrastructure Levy is no longer to be rolled out.

#### Item 2 – FTC Financial History

- The Executive Officer to check if the High Court ruling on the business interruption insurance case was over-turned.

#### Item 3 – Financial Challenges for the New Council

- The impact of inflation on household income is prevalent.
- The expansion of new housing is now likely to be spread over a longer period, than previously estimated, which will slow down the tax base increase.
- Target for general reserve to be a minimum of £150,000.
- Build-up of earmarked reserves to create a sinking fund for the replacement of playground equipment, based on an annual percentage of total asset value. Options for how this could be funded were discussed.
- Impact of economic environment on employment to be reflected in budget.
- Consider further the use of the ringfenced Harlington development funds, e.g. for maintenance of the building.

Discussed the need for a strategy meeting for the Council to set its priorities.

#### **RESOLVED**

- A. To revise the briefing paper as discussed above.

#### **PF October 2022 ITEM 7**

#### **BUDGET 2023/2024**

Members received and considered the requested budget options for 2023/24, the timetable and discussed the following points:

- To put together a draft budget that balances income and expenditure, review discretionary projects such as earmarked reserves for playground equipment and identify where contingency is required.
- Agreed date of budget preparation meeting

#### **RESOLVED**

- A. To prepare a balanced draft budget.
- B. That a Budget Working Group meeting be held on 1<sup>st</sup> November at 6pm for Policy and Finance Committee members.

The Harlington General Manager left at 8.30pm.

#### **PF October 2022 ITEM 8**

#### **INVESTMENT REPORTS**

Members received and considered the quarterly investment report and discussed the following:

#### **RESOLVED**

- A. To note the balances held in the Fleet Town Council Accounts.
- B. To transfer £100,000 from the Cambridge Building Society and £400,000 from the Nationwide Instant Saver Account totalling £500,000 to the Nationwide Business 1 Year Saver Account.
- C. To establish how much is required in the HSBC account for operational funds for the financial year and for the remainder to be moved to the CCLA account.

#### **PF October 2022 ITEM 9**

#### **GRANTS**

Members received and considered the record of the 2022/2023 grants awarded to date and discussed the following points:

- Revising the spreadsheet to address double counting of community grants.

- Consider how the accounting of rent waiver/grants can be amended to reflect how it is funded as a whole.
- Concern about the lack of communication around the grants awarded by the Council in the wider community.
- The £10,656 for Fleet Phoenix should be recognised in the accounts as a grant.

**RESOLVED**

- A. Members received and noted the record of the 2022-2023 grants awarded to date.

**PF October 2022 ITEM 10**

**WRITING OFF OF BAD DEBTS**

Members received the record of bad debts totalling £501.90 for unpaid periodic hire of Ancells Farm Community Centre.

**RESOLVED**

- A. To write off both bad debts totalling £501.90.

**PF October 2022 ITEM 11**

**POLICIES**

Members received and reviewed the following policies:

- Health & Safety
- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Asbestos Management Plan
- Control and Management of Contractors Policy
- Contractor Management Checklist

**RESOLVED**

To approve the following policies:

- Health & Safety – To approve in the interim subject to further changes that may be required.
- Standing Orders – To approve at full Council.
- Financial Regulations – To remove reference to Deputy Town Clerk and then to approve at Full Council.
- Asbestos Management Plan – To check whether the items listed on page 11 contain asbestos and check validity of procedure for identifying at risk items with a yellow sticker and return to the next Policy and Finance meeting.
- Control and Management of Contractors Policy – Concerns were raised over the very generic policy, identify why it is needed. Officers to report back at the next meeting.
- Contractor Management Checklist – To return to the next Policy and Finance meeting, as associated with the Control and Management of Contractors Policy.

**PF October 2022 ITEM 12**

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

Members noted the report. Members suggested the climate change agenda and also the market gazebos and tables could be suitable for the Parish and Town Council Investment fund. The

qualification criteria will need to be examined to establish whether the fund can be split into two projects.

The office furniture arrangement with Hart District Council was agreed.

**PF October 2022 ITEM 13**

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at 7pm in the Harlington.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.40pm.

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

**Chairman**