



FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday 21st July 2021 at 7pm

The Harlington

PRESENT

Councillors: L. Holt (Chairman), P. Einchcomb, B. Schofield, G. Woods.

Also Present: Janet Stanton - Town Clerk

Susanna Walker - Committee Clerk

Wendy Allen - Office Manager

Alex Robins - Harlington General Manager

PF July 2021 ITEM 1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The outgoing Chairman, Councillor Holt, called for nominations for Chairman. One nomination was received for Councillor Leslie Holt.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Holt be re-elected to the office of Chairman of Policy and Finance for the local government year 2021/2022.

PF July 2021 ITEM 2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman called for nominations for the office of Vice-Chairman. One nomination was received for Councillor Woods.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Woods be re-elected to the office of Vice-Chairman of Policy and Finance for the local government year 2021/2022.

PF July 2021 ITEM 3 APOLOGIES

Members received and accepted apologies for absence from Councillor Wildsmith due to ill health, Councillor Robinson due to ill health and Councillor Tilley due to ill health.

PF July 2021 ITEM 4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations on interest.

PF July 2021 ITEM 5 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

PF July 2021 ITEM 6**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on Monday 15th February 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

With reference to Councillors present, it was noted that Councillor Einchcomb attended the meeting and Councillor Wildsmith presented his apologies.

With reference to Item 5 – Quarterly Financial Monitoring Report, members noted that FTC has now received a start-up grant of £1500.00.

PF July 2021 ITEM 7**QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

The members considered the commentary of the Town Clerk with an overview of the financial performance up to the year end March 2021, together with both the Year End 2021 and the income and expenditure, cash book, bank reconciliation, list of payments, balance sheet and quarterly monitoring up until the end of June 2021. Special thanks were given to the Town Clerk and all the officers for the reports and for all their hard work in reducing the projected deficit from £217,500.00 to £54,718.00.

The members considered:

- a. a. Year End 2020-2021 Report
 - aa. Harlington Monthly Performance totals
- b. Final Year End Accounts
- c. Balance sheet as at 31st March 2021
- d. Budget detail as at 31st March 2021
- e. Income & expenditure detail – 31st March 2021
- f. Bank Reconciliation – February & March 2021
- g. Cash Book – 28th February & 31st March 2021
- h. List of Payments – February & March 2021
- i. List of receipts – February & March 2021
- j. Q4 2020-2021 VAT return

2021-2022

- k. Balance sheet as at 30th June 2021
- l. Budget detail as at 30th June 2021
- m. Income & expenditure detail – 30th June 2021
- n. 2021/2022 Budget Actual and Projections
- o. Bank Reconciliation – April, May & June 2021
- p. Cash Book – 30th April, 31st May, 30th June 2021
- q. List of Receipts – April, May & June 2021
- r. List of Payments – April, May & June 2021
- s. List of Debtors
- t. Q1 VAT return April – June 2021

The following matters were raised and discussed:

- The last quarterly report showed a budget shortfall of £140,331.00 but has now been reduced to £54,718.00. This is due to income received from the Job Retention Scheme (JRS) and the cemetery.
- Reduction in number of grant applications received, leaving £9,150.00 unallocated.
- Income from Cemetery should be retained as maintenance for the Cemetery and existing plots.
- Cemetery plots have a 99 year maintenance lease.
- FTC to look at the Cemetery and future options, including a new piece of land or an extension to the existing plot.
- Full programme of events in the Harlington from September 2021.

- Shows from September will be as standard, and without social distancing.
- FTC has a corporate responsibility to its staff.
- End date of vaccination centre is Wednesday 25th August 2021, with a possibility to use the Harlington for additional dates from 6th September – 16th December.
- Vaccination centre has had community value.
- Live streaming at the Harlington.
- Work with the Arts Council to use live streaming equipment to enable local bands to film videos.
- Cost of livestreaming equipment to be provided
- Live streaming to be advertised as part of the show at the Harlington.
- Live streaming can be used for conference events.
- Income & expenditure detail paperwork to be accessed via portal and website only,
- Harlington stock count.
- Bar Sales and Purchases
- £700 credit from brewery back to the Harlington, due to refund for unopened kegs and refund of duty on opened kegs.
- Furlough (JRS) scheme finishes end of September 2021.
- CCTV in Calthorpe Park.
- Cost of shutting the Harlington due to another COVID outbreak or lockdown.

Members noted that Councillor Robinson confirmed that the bank reconciliation for February, March, April and May 2021 equals zero, and the bank statements match the reconciliation and has signed the bank statements and payment schedules.

RESOLVED

1. To receive and accept into the minutes

- a. Year End 2020-2021 Report
- aa. Harlington Monthly Performance totals
- b. Final Year End Accounts
- c. Balance sheet as at 31st March 2021
- d. Budget detail as at 31st March 2021
- e. Income & expenditure detail – 31st March 2021
- f. Bank Reconciliation – February & March 2021
- g. Cash Book – 28th February & 31st March 2021
- h. List of Payments – February & March 2021
- i. List of receipts – February & March 2021
- j. Q4 2020-2021 VAT return

2021-2022

- k. Balance sheet as at 30th June 2021
- l. Budget detail as at 30th June 2021
- m. Income & expenditure detail – 30th June 2021
- n. 2021/2022 Budget Actual and Projections
- o. Bank Reconciliation – April, May & June 2021
- p. Cash Book – 30th April, 31st May, 30th June 2021
- q. List of Receipts – April, May & June 2021
- r. List of Payments – April, May & June 2021
- s. List of Debtors
- t. Q1 VAT return April – June 2021

2. To accept Councillor Robinson's confirmation that the bank reconciliation for February, March, April and May 2021 equals zero, and the bank statements match the reconciliation.

PF July 2021 ITEM 8 INVESTMENT REPORT

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

- The benefits of moving money from the HSBC Current Account to the Nationwide Building Society.
- Move £400,000.00 from the HSBC Current Account.
- Only £100,000.00 can be authorised and withdrawn at a time from the HSBC Current Account.
- To amend the resolution 'to reinvest £200,000.00' to reflect the change 'to reinvest £400,000.00 into Nationwide Building Society'.

RESOLVED

1. To note the balances held in the Fleet Town Council Accounts.
2. To reinvest £400,000.00 into Nationwide Building Society.

PF July 2021 ITEM 9 GRANTS

- a. Members considered a grant application from Victim Support for £200.00 for security items for the home. Members requested that Victim Support provide detailed information on how the money is spent.

RESOLVED

To approve the grant application from Victim Support Grant.

- b. Members received and noted a record of the grants awarded by FTC for 2020-2021. Members agreed that it was useful for the grants in kind to be presented as part of the record, and that this information should be included in the next copy of TownTalk.
- c. Members noted that the quarterly report from Sacha's Project as agreed at the April 2021 Council meeting is still to be presented.

PF July 2021 ITEM 10 RESERVES

Members received a copy of the Earmarked Reserves and considered possible future General Reserves, discussing the following:

- Money received from the Cemetery to be used as a maintenance fund.
- The cost of another COVID related lockdown to FTC and the Harlington.
- The Earmarked Reserves to be amalgamated as one pot of money.
- The abandoning of ideals set up by FTC if Reserves are combined.
- FTC to have more ambition for achieving projects in and for the town.
- Projects that residents agree on and accept.
- Council tax increase.
- FTC website development.
- General reserves need to be increased.

RESOLVED

- a To approve the balance of the Earmarked Reserves being carried forward into the 2021/2022 budget.
- b To accept the General Reserves at the current level, and look at what it ought to be, with a report to be brought back to the Policy & Finance Committee Meeting in October 2021, with input from the Town Clerk and General Manager of the Harlington.

Members received and reviewed the following policies:

a. **Health and Safeguarding Policy**

Members reviewed and approved the Health & Safeguarding Policy.

b. **Risk Management Policy**

Members reviewed and approved the Risk Management Policy.

c. **Complaints and Procedures Policy**

Members reviewed the Complaints and Procedures Policy. Members agreed to review the policy to reflect the disciplinary policy, as there were several discrepancies, including:

- The Chairman's email needs to be added to the policy.
- The policy should include any Officer in item 4.3.
- Confusion over how different complaints would be dealt with and by whom.

d. **Memorials Policy**

Members reviewed and approved the Memorials Policy. Members noted the following amendments:

- Item 2.5 – scattering of ashes **with agreement of the Town Clerk**
- Item 2.10 – memorials placed with the public parks or **open spaces**.
- Item 3.3 – the **applicant** will have responsibility
- Item 5.1 – must be met to ensure that neither use of the park **nor** users

e. **Cemetery Rules and Regulations Policy**

Members reviewed and approved the Cemetery Rules and Regulations Policy.

Members noted the following amendments:

- Graves – **The owner of the exclusive rights of burial is responsible to remove any flowers from the grave once the flowers have died.**
- Ashes plots within the Cemetery - **The owner of the exclusive rights of burial is responsible to remove any flowers from the grave once the flowers have died.**

f. **Time Off In-Lieu Policy**

Members agreed to review and approve the Time Off In-Lieu Policy at the Establishment Committee meeting on Thursday 22nd July 2021.

g. **Connection to Electricity on The Views Policy.**

Members reviewed and approved the Connection to Electricity on The Views Policy.

Members noted the following amendments:

- Item 3 – These hirers must first have **obtained** formal approval
- Item 8 – to remove **after the event**
- Item 9 – the Town Council will **invoice** the hirer
- Item 10 – removed the charge of **£42**
- Item 15 – is a repeat of item 8 and 9, and to be removed from the policy
- Item 10 – to be removed from the policy as well

h. **Media Policy**

Members reviewed and approved the Media Policy. Members noted the following:

- Anyone can film in a public place without asking permission.
- In the Harlington, all Council meetings and people present are allowed to be filmed, as it is a public place.

RESOLVED

Members agreed approve the following policies:

- a. Health and Safety Policy
- b. Risk Management Policy
- d. Memorials Policy
- e. Cemetery Rules and Regulations Policy
- g. Connection to Electricity on The Views Policy
- h. Media Policy

PF July 2021 ITEM 12

BUDGET PREPARATION WORKING GROUP 2022/2023

Members received a copy of the proposed timetable for the preparation of the draft budget 2022/2023. Members discussed the following:

- Any budget requests to be brought forward to the Town Clerk between 21st July and 5th September 2021.
- Any requests put forward to have outlined costs associated with it.
- FTC to use the CPI for August 2021 when preparing the budget
- Grants policy.
- Councillor Schofield and Councillor Tilley to produce a joint paper regarding FTC and Grants by 6th September 2021.

RESOLVED

- a. To approve the draft timetable.
- b. To agree to be appointed to serve on the Budget Preparation Working Group.
- c. To agree to give any guidance to officers to aid the preparation of the 2022/2023 budget.

PF July 2021 ITEM 13

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Members received a copy of the internal Auditor's report for 2020/2021 after the year end visit on Thursday 13th May 2021. Members noted the following:

- Overdue debts have been outstanding since 2019 but there is a repayment plan in action.

RESOLVED

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

PF July 2021 ITEM 14

CLERK'S REPORT

Members noted that there was nothing to report.

PF July 2021 ITEM 15

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held on Wednesday 20th October at 7pm in the Harlington.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.35pm.

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

Chairman