



## **FLEET TOWN COUNCIL**

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

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 at 7pm  
At The Harlington**

#### **PRESENT**

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

**Also Present:** Rochelle Halliday – Executive Officer  
Alex Robins – Harlington General Manager (left after item 5)  
Sarah Moore – Finance and Administration Manager  
Fleet and District Carnival Chairman (left after item 6.a.)

#### **PF FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 1            APOLOGIES**

Members received and accepted apologies of absence from Cllrs S. Engström and R. Fang.

#### **PF FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 2            DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Taylor declared an interest for item 6.a.b. for the Fleet Market CIC grant application, due to being a director of Fleet Market CIC.

Councillor Tilley declared an interest for item 6.b.b. for the transfer of funds to the prospective Music on The Views event, due to being on the organising committee for the event.

The Executive Officer declared a personal interest for item 6.a.a. for the Fleet and District Carnival grant application, due to being a member of the Fleet and District Carnival Committee.

#### **PF FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 3            QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from the public.

#### **PF FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 4            MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

It was noted to add page numbers to the minutes from the previous meeting.

It was agreed to take the Fleet and District Carnival grant application (item 6.a.) next.

The Chairman of Fleet and District Carnival left the meeting at 7.10pm, after the decision on the grant application was made.

The Committee considered the financial reports for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023, as listed below:

- a) Quarterly Report
- b) Harlington Monthly Performance Totals
- c) Review of Pantomime Financials
- d) 2023/24 Year to Date and Budget Projections Report
- e) Balance sheet as at 31st December 2023
- f) Bank & Investments Reconciliation
- g) List of Purchase Ledger Payments
- h) List of Debtors

The matters were discussed:

#### Quarterly Report and Year to Date / Projections Report

- Projections - following the Fire Risk Assessment in February 2024, it is likely that remedial works will be required to internal hardware at The Harlington, which may impact the year end position.
- Pitch Hire – discussed whether pitch availability is sufficiently marketed, as hire income is falling. It was suggested that perhaps there are not enough pitches available for hire to meet demand.
- Bank Interest – the majority of the bank interest is from the Harlington development investments. If the year end accounts show an actual surplus, the Executive Officer will propose to the Council the movement of this surplus to the appropriate earmarked reserves.
- Tree Surgery – A Member queried if the Council has enough funds to undertake tree works next year. It was confirmed that more funding has been budgeted next year for tree surgery.
- Cemetery surplus – similarly to bank interest, the decision to transfer any surplus from the cemetery cost centre to an earmarked reserve can be considered by the Council as part of the year end accounts.

#### Harlington Monthly Performance Totals

- Ticket sales at The Harlington - Members asked for further information regarding the impact of price increases on the increase of ticket sales.

#### Review of Pantomime Financials

- The number of tickets sold versus the number of shows per year was reviewed. The pantomime provides reliable hall hire income during the period and is a good event for the community.

#### Bank Reconciliation

- Councillor Robinson confirmed that the bank reconciliation and payments for December 2023 have been checked and that there are no qualifications.

### **RESOLVED**

1) To receive and accept the financial reports for the period to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023:

- a) Quarterly Report
- b) Harlington Monthly Performance Totals
- c) Review of Panto financials
- d) 2023/24 Year to Date and Budget Projections report
- e) Balance sheet as at 31st December 2023
- f) Bank & Investments Reconciliation

- g) List of Purchase Ledger Payments
- h) List of Debtors

2) To accept the statement from Councillor Robinson that the bank reconciliation and list of payments for December 2023 have been verified and signed.

The Harlington General Manager left the meeting at 7:40pm.

## **PF FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 6 GRANT APPLICATIONS**

### Item 6.a.

Members considered the following grant applications:

Fleet and District Carnival - The Chairman of the Fleet and District Carnival outlined that the application is for toilets at the event, of which more are now required. The Carnival will take place in July 2024.

Fleet Market – It was proposed to defer the grant application and to gather a small group of Members to discuss options for sustaining the market. Any proposals can be considered at the next Council meeting.

### Item 6.b.

The Committee discussed the financial risk of providing grant funding for the Music on The Views event before the outcome of the National Lottery funding is known.

The Committee were informed that the outcome of the Lottery decision won't now be known until April, which is too late to book the stage acts and advertise the events. The very latest timeframe for confirming the event is the end of March, if the event is to go ahead this year.

Event cashflow was discussed and it was noted that once the acts are booked, tickets can start to be sold.

It was agreed that it would be clearer to combine the surplus Council funding from the Coronation event and the proposed surplus balances from the grant cost centre into a total amount of £4,118 for consideration.

Various options for providing the grant funding, and the timing of the funding were discussed.

An informal discussion is to take place outside of the meeting to review the financial risk to the Council of the event, and to report back to Council as required.

### Item 6.c.

Members received the record of grants awarded this financial year 2023/24.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1) To approve awarding £1,000 to Fleet and District Carnival towards the cost of providing toilets at the Carnival in July 2024.
- 2) To defer the Fleet Market grant application and arrange an informal meeting of Members to discuss options for the market, to be brought to Council for agreement if required.
- 3) To allocate £4,118 from the Grants cost centre to the Music on The Views event as an effective float to support the event, and once other external funding for the event has been received, for any unused Council funds to be returned to the Council's reserves.
- 4) To note the year to date record of grants awarded for the financial year.

**PF FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 7            INVESTMENT REPORT**

Members considered the quarterly investment report and noted that £800k is in the process of being transferred this week to two higher rate accounts.

**RESOLVED**

To note the balances held in the Fleet Town Council investment accounts at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

**PF FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 8            THE HARLINGTON DEVELOPMENT - EVALUATING THE IMPACT ON OPERATIONS**

The lease for The Harlington is in the latter stages of finalisation. The impact of the development on the Council's operations needs to be assessed and an action plan produced.

It was proposed that the detailed modelling of the impact of the Harlington development is undertaken by the Harlington Working Group, who will report back to the Council and Committees as needed.

**RESOLVED**

To approve that the Harlington Working Group will evaluate the impact of the development on the Council's operations and make any recommendations to the Council's Committees and the Council, as required.

**PF FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 9            FLEET REPAIR CAFÉ**

The launch date for the Repair Café is 6<sup>th</sup> April 2024, at The Harlington.

Members received an update from the Executive Officer that the first Repair Café session will come under the Council's umbrella, as previously agreed. Once the Repair Café has constituted as a small charity, it will then assume full responsibility and can come to the Committee to request financial support for hall hire.

Members discussed the principle of enabling the Repair Café to operate from The Harlington without charge but that the cost would need to be funded from the Climate Change budget.

**RESOLVED**

To note the Repair Café update and refer the matter to a future meeting for resolution.

**PF FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 10        POLICY REVIEWS**

A discussion took place regarding whether several of the documents presented were policies that also included procedures, and whether these documents are required by law or already included in legislative provisions.

Members also discussed the style and formatting of the documents, which require standardisation.

10a. Freedom of Information Policy/Publication Scheme

- To add the timeframe of 20 working days to respond to a Freedom of Information request.

- Class 1 section - to remove Members' addresses from the website and to use Fleet Town Council as the correspondence address. This is because most people would be able to email Members directly, or they can write to the Office address.
- Cost per printed sheet to revert back to 50p.
- To review which items are available on the website only and by hard copy.
- To cross check that the documents listed on the policy are all include on the Council's website.
- To add a statement that people without internet access can view a paper copy of certain documents in the Council office.

#### 10e. Credit Card Policy / Procedure

- Credit card limits – remove point 4, as the review frequency should be included in the review due date.
- Define 'RFO' and update 'Town Clerk'.
- Management of cards – withdrawal of cash to be a separate point.
- Revised card holders and credit card limits accepted.

Cllr Robinson left the meeting at 10:00pm.

#### 10h. Lone Worker Policy and Procedure

- Buddying process need further definition to confirm checking in with the buddy and what happens if a member of staff does not check in.
- Typographical errors to be corrected.

#### 10i. Risk Management Policy and Procedure

- No specific comments.

The following documents require a further review by Officers and will be considered at a future meeting:

- 10b. Fire Safety Policy – to update policy phrasing and cross-check with current procedures.
- 10c. Rules and Regulations – various amendments required and an item missing from the draft document.
- 10d. Stress in the Workplace - queried whether the provisions are already covered under the Health and Safety at Work Act. Need to align to current operating procedures.
- 10f. Grievance Policy and Procedure – updated to align with ACAS Code of Practice but now appears to be too simplistic.
- 10g. Disciplinary Policy and Procedure – several points require clarification and rewording to improve clarity.

### **RESOLVED**

To approve the amendments as drafted and the additional changes discussed at the meeting for the following policies:

- Freedom of Information Policy
- Credit Card Policy / Procedure
- Lone Working Policy and Procedure
- Risk Management Policy and Procedure.

Members noted the Executive Officer's report.

**PF FEBRUARY 2024 ITEM 12      DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 7pm in the Harlington.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.10pm.

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

**Chairman**