



FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7pm
at The Harlington**

PRESENT

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

Also Present: Rochelle Halliday – Executive Officer
Alex Robins – Harlington General Manager (left after item 8)
Sarah Moore – Finance and Administration Manager
Louise Rogers – Administration Support Officer
Katie McCaffrey – Communications Officer
The Vine Church representative

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 1

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Holt was nominated and seconded for the position of Chairman of the Committee. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED

That Cllr Holt be elected as Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee for the local government year 2024/2025.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 2

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr George Woods was nominated and seconded for the position of Vice Chairman of the Committee. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED

That Cllr George Woods be elected as Vice Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee for the local government year 2024/2025.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 3

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Members received and accepted apologies of absence from Cllr Taylor (work commitments).

Cllrs Fang and Richmond were absent.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 4

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 5

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 6

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on Wednesday 21st February 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman stated that the financial modelling in preparation for the Harlington development should be progressed by the Harlington Working Group as soon as possible.

Members agreed to consider item 12 next.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 7

DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) AND REVIEW OF INTERNAL CONTROLS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2024

a) Draft AGAR for the year ending 31st March 2024

Members received the draft Annual Governance and Accountability Return figures. These are the final draft figures.

Members also reviewed the report summarising the significant variances for the financial year, compared to the previous year.

b) Review of Internal Controls 31st March 2024

Members considered the document reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's internal controls.

No further comments were made.

RESOLVED

1. To note the draft AGAR the year ending 31st March 2024.
2. To note the summary of significant variances report.
3. To recommend to Council approval of the report reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 8

QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered the financial reports for the period ending 31st March 2024, as listed below:

- a) Quarterly Report
- b) Harlington Monthly Performance Totals
- c) 2023/24 Year to Date Budget Report
- d) Balance sheet as at 31st March 2024
- e) Bank & Investments Reconciliation
- f) List of Purchase Ledger Payments
- g) List of Debtors

The following matters were discussed:

Quarterly Report and Year to Date Budget Report

- The Earmarked reserves and the general fund balance were discussed. The closing general fund balance is £60k higher than the previous financial year.

- The interest from Harlington Development savings accounts should be posted to the Harlington Development in future.
- Members discussed that where there is a surplus balance at the year end, this should ideally be allocated to project work, rather than to fund operational expenditure.
- It was advised that the RLA Committee should look at costings for the Skate Park refurbishment and The Views playground refurbishment in more detail.
- To recommend to Council that £60k is allocated from the general fund to the Play Equipment earmarked reserve, to contributed towards major capital works in this area.

Harlington Monthly Performance Totals

- The Harlington ticket sales have continued to be buoyant.

Bank Reconciliation

- Councillor Robinson confirmed that the bank reconciliation and payments for March 2024 have been checked and that there are no qualifications.

RESOLVED

1. To receive and accept the financial reports for the period to 31st March 2024:

- a) Quarterly Report
- b) Harlington Monthly Performance Totals
- c) 2023/24 Year to Date Budget Report
- d) Balance sheet as at 31st March 2024
- e) Bank & Investments Reconciliation
- f) List of Purchase Ledger Payments
- g) List of Debtors

2. To accept the statement from Councillor Robinson that the bank reconciliation and list of payments for March 2024 have been verified and signed.

3. To recommend to Council that £60,000 is transferred from the general fund to the Play Equipment earmarked reserve.

The Harlington General Manager left the meeting at 8:05pm.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 9

DRAFT ASSET REGISTER AT 31ST MARCH 2024

Members received the updated Asset Register for the year ending March 2024.

A full audit of the assets in The Harlington has taken place. The asset value has increased, mainly due to technical and IT equipment that was previously not included. The new paths at Fleet Cemetery and new open spaces equipment were also added.

RESOLVED

That the Asset Register, valued at £848,544 on 31st March 2024, is recommended to the Council for approval.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 10

LIST OF REGULAR DIRECT DEBITS FOR 2024/25 FINANCIAL YEAR

Members reviewed the list of regularly scheduled direct debits for Council expenditure.

It was discussed that average amount per month for gas at The Harlington is based on more than 12 months expenditure, and so the average going forward will be much lower because of the timings of the bills being received.

RESOLVED

To approve the listed direct debits for the current financial year.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 11

INVESTMENT REPORT

Members considered the quarterly investment report.

RESOLVED

To note the balances held in the Fleet Town Council Accounts.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 12

GRANT APPLICATION

The representative from The Vine Church provided Members with background information on the youth service they operate, for the grant application:

- The youth group would like to replace some of the recreational equipment.
- 40 teenagers attend to the club each Friday night, 15 of the teenagers are from Fleet and 25 of the teenagers are from Church Crookham.
- The grant funding will enable the items to be purchased as soon as possible, ready for the next intake of children.

The Vine Church representative has advised that the Youth Officer at The Vine Church to connect with Fleet Town Council to promote their youth service.

RESOLVED

- 1) To approve grant funding of £500 to The Vine Church, Odiham, for recreational equipment for a weekly youth club operating from Church Crookham Community Centre.
- 2) To note the record of grants for 2024/25.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 13

POLICY REVIEWS

Members considered the following policies, with the comments recorded below:

Absence Policy

- 1.2 – The first sentence is too specific considering that the policy focuses on other absences.
- To remove the line ‘such as short term illnesses and acute medical conditions.’
- 1.4 - To remove ‘sickness’ on the first line.
- 4.5 – To remove ‘... to keep the employee updated on matters at work’. To add a new final sentence, ‘It may be necessary to update the member of staff on work matters to keep them up to date’.
- 7 – To change the heading to read ‘Sickness Whilst on Annual Leave’.
- 9.1 – To change ‘work in person’ to ‘work in the office.’
- 11.1 – To add in a definition of the trigger points for persistence short term absence.
- 12.2 – To remove the paragraph from the policy.
- 13 and 13.1 – To remove the heading and paragraph from the policy.
- 14.1 – To change the second sentence ‘if an employee was’ to ‘if an employee is.’
- Officers to check if the trigger points outlined contain standard timeframes and amend as required.

- To change '(as detailed in 11.)' to '(as detailed in 11.1)'.

Menopause Policy

- Members discussed that the policy can be used as a workplace guide.
- No changes were made to the policy.

Rules and Regulations- Fleet Cemetery Policy

- 5.3 – to read '3 feet 3 inches' rather than '3 feet'.
- 7.2 and 8.8 – to swap around the imperial and metric measurements order, subject to confirming with the Cemetery Clerk if a specific order is required.

RESOLVED

1. Absence Policy – To approve the policy subject to the above amendments.
2. Menopause Policy – To approve the Policy.
3. Rules and Regulations - Fleet Cemetery – To approve the policy subject to the above amendments, and to check the order of the measurements.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 14

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Members noted the Executive Officer's report.

PF MAY 2024 ITEM 15

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman and Vice Chairman are both unavailable for the next meeting on Wednesday 17th July 2024.

Members agreed to change the date to Wednesday 24th July 2024.

The next meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held on Wednesday 24th July 2024 at 7pm in the Harlington.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:10pm.

Signed: **Date:**

Chairman