



FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 20th December 2023 at 7pm

PRESENT

Councillors: P. Einchcomb, L. Holt, E. May, A. Oliver, R. Schofield, D. Taylor, G. Woods

Also Present: Rochelle Halliday – Executive Officer
Alex Robins – Harlington General Manager
Ben Crane – Facilities and Open Spaces Manager
Jenny Clarke – Communications Officer

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 1

APOLOGIES

Members received and accepted the apologies from Councillors Chenery, Fang and Tilley.

Councillors Wildsmith and Willcocks were absent.

An apology of absence was also received from the Cemetery Clerk.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 2

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made for any item on the agenda.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 3

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 4

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Members received and approved as a correct record the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting held on 20th September 2023. The Chairman signed the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

Members agreed to take item 7 next.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 5

THE HARLINGTON AND ANCELLS FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE REPORT

Members received an update on events, hirings and operational activities.

Members have requested for a breakdown of operating costs for the panto for the next meeting. To include the ticket sales pattern and customer locations, so that trends over the last few years can be reviewed.

RESOLVED

To note the report of the General Manager of The Harlington.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 6

THE CEMETERY CLERK'S REPORT

Members received the report of the Cemetery Clerk Officer.

Members discussed the badger update, one of the holes from badger activity is close to the main path.

Members agreed to write to Natural England to request consideration of a general licence to manage the effect of badgers (within the permitted time period for the works), due to the sensitive nature of the site and the distress caused to families. This is due be actioned in the new year.

RESOLVED

- a) That the Executive Officer will write to Natural England to request a general licence for managing the effects of the badgers at Fleet Cemetery.
- b) To note the report of the Cemetery Clerk.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 7

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2024

It was stated that since this item relates to strategy, it should be approved by Full Council, rather than this Committee and so the recommendation was amended accordingly.

Members received a summary from the Communications Officer to introduce the proposed communications strategy.

The following additional items were discussed:

- Dealing with negative communications with facts and clear information.
- Having a communications strategy will have a greater improvement and engagement with young people.
- To ensure the staffing team are aware of and support the communication strategy.
- How the editorial message will be determined.

A Member asked how success of the communications strategy will be measured. This will be measured by social media engagement statistics and resident surveys.

There are were several positive comments regarding the strategy.

RESOLVED

To review and agree at the next Council meeting.

The Communications Officer left the meeting at 7:36pm.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 8

FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACES MANAGER'S REPORT

Members received the report of the Facilities and Open Spaces Manager, the Park Report Summary and The Views Equipment and Skate Park report. An update was received regarding the following:

Green Gym at Ancells Farm Park

There will be an official opening of the Green Gym, which will hopefully take place in January.

Ancells Farm Pavilion

The boiler has been serviced therefore the pavilion has now reopened.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The location has been discussed by Members and has now been shared with Hart District Council. A review of the project in more detail may be required, should the grant be successful.

Basingbourne Streetlights

Members agreed to add the Basingbourne streetlights to the Hampshire County Council Private Finance Initiative. The cost will total around £550 per year.

CCTV

The CCTV cameras, provided under the Hart District Council agreement, are not picking up certain key parts of the parks. Members discussed whether the cameras are good value and agreed that they could be a crime deterrent.

The cameras are being replaced gradually, so the picture quality will be better.

The Calthorpe Park camera is in a good location.

The coverage of the Hart District Council controlled camera outside The Views was discussed. It needs to be determined whether that camera covers the skate park and highway areas. If not, the Council could potentially look at relocating the Oakley Park camera to The Views. Cllr Oliver offered to find out the coverage area for the camera outside The Views.

Members suggested asking Hart District Council if the cameras operated by Council at Calthorpe Park, Oakley Park and Basingbourne Park could be included in their camera review.

Summary of Annual Tree Survey Works

Members discussed if it would be useful to have the table updated to include Priority 1 tree works for the next meeting. Priority 1 works are generally only a small percentage of total works and tend to be rare, if the other priorities are managed earlier.

Skate Park

Members discussed the condition of the Skate Park at the Parks and Open Spaces Working Group meeting. The unit has recently undergone some repairs and is in a safe condition, though will need replacement in the medium term.

If the Council wish to replace sections, or the whole unit, funding from the Public Works Loan Board would facilitate a quicker replacement timeframe.

Park Works

The expenditure report for the playground repairs and other maintenance work required at the parks, which would take the individual cost codes over budget.

The Committee agreed that the proposed works could take place as long as the overall spend across the cost centres controlled by the Committee does not exceed the budget.

RESOLVED

- 1) To approve adding the five streetlights at Basingbourne Park to the existing Private Finance Initiative contract with Hampshire County Council.
- 2) To approve playground and parks spend, as detailed in the Park Report, providing the total spend for the Committee's cost centres does not exceed budget.
- 3) To note the report of the Facilities and Open Spaces Manager.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 9**COUNCIL FEES FOR 2024/25**

Members received a copy of the fees payable for Council services in the 2024/25 financial year.

It was discussed that for the Fleet Cemetery discounted rate, proof of residency in the Parish of Fleet should be requested to receive the discount and that this should be clearly identified with a note and asterisk on the fees table.

Members discussed how the fees were represented in the draft budget. It was commented that income, for budgeting purposes, can be difficult to predict.

RESOLVED

To approve the Council fees for the 2024/25 financial year.

Cllr Oliver and the Harlington General Manager left the meeting at 9:10pm.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 10**COUNCIL PROJECTS**

Members received the list of potential Council projects and discussed the following:

- The projects should be deliverable within the remaining timeframe of the Council, i.e. 2.5 years, so as not to commit future Councils.
- The majority of the projects listed would be unsuitable for funding from section 106.
- Public opinion on the projects should be sought, to understand the needs and priorities of the community and build this into the planning of capital projects.
- Grant funding should be pursued to support projects, but can't be relied on. Sponsorship should also be investigated as a means of funding significant projects.
- The focus for the Annual Residents Meeting should be The Harlington development. Residents should also be kept informed of the need to invest in the Council's open spaces facilities over the medium term, due to their age and condition.
- A further review of the projects list will be required in due course.

RESOLVED

To approve the Council's initial projects list, subject to funding being available.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 11**BIODIVERSITY DUTY**

Members received the draft biodiversity statement and noted the information on the Biodiversity Duty that applies to parish and town Councils.

The draft Biodiversity Statement was considered, and the following points made:

- That reference to the Repair Café should be removed as it does not have any direct impact on biodiversity.
- Reword the third bullet point to remove the specific benefits listed, so that it is a more generalised statement.

RESOLVED

To approve the Biodiversity Statement, subject to the above amendments.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 12**GREENING CAMPAIGN**

Members received the Greening Campaign report from the Executive Officer.

The following Members were appointed to support four out of the five Greening Campaign Pillars:

- Cllr May - Space for nature
- Cllr Schofield - Energy Efficient Warmer Homes
- Cllr Oliver - Waste Prevention
- Cllr Taylor - Cycle of the Seed

A support Member was not allocated to the Climate Impacts on Health pillar, and so the Committee requested that this allocation should be agreed at the next Council meeting.

The Committee noted the date and the outline content of the Greening Campaign launch event in March 2024.

RESOLVED

- 1) To appoint the above Council Members to support the Greening Campaign Pillars.
- 2) To approve holding the Greening Campaign launch event on 9th March 2024.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 13

BASINGSTOKE CANAL AUTHORITY

The request from the Basingstoke Canal Authority to make a contribution to the provision for a period of three years from the 2024/25 financial year was considered by the Committee.

The proposed management model will see funding partners, such as Fleet Town Council, have reduced representation on the board.

Fleet Town Council's current contribution is now higher than some other Borough Councils, and committed funding from other Councils is uncertain.

The Committee agreed that it is not prepared to commit to funding the Basingstoke Canal for a three year period unless long term viability can be proven and the Council can have representation on the management board.

RESOLVED

To recommend to Council that the Basingstoke Canal should be supported for a further financial year, that information is obtained on the long term viability of the Canal and that the Council continues to be represented on the management board.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 14

RENOVATION OF BASKETBALL COURT AT OAKLEY PARK

Members received details of the proposal from the Friends of Oakley Park to renovate the basketball court. The current basketball provision is very minimal.

It was acknowledged that the proposal is in its infancy, and that outline approval was being sought at this stage. Further plans were requested. It may be that a whole new provision is being created, and as such, the project could be funded by section 106.

RESOLVED

To approve the renovation of the basketball court in principle, subject to a detailed design being provided.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 15

**ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMPLIANCE
AUDIT**

The Committee received and noted the summary update following the annual Health and Safety Compliance Audit.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 16

SECTION 106 BALANCES

Members reviewed and noted the section 106 balances held for Fleet Parish.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 17

MUSIC ON THE VIEWS - UPDATE

Members received and noted the update from Cllr Tilley on the proposed Music on The Views event in 2024.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 18

EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT

Members received an update from the Executive Officer.

Action - Executive Officer to find out what D Day commemorations the Royal British Legion is planning and to also find out what other Councils may be doing.

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 19

FUTURE EVENTS

Members noted the following future events:

25 th December 2023	The Harlington	Christmas Day Lunch
24 th March 2024	Calthorpe Park	Fleet Half Marathon

RLA DECEMBER 2023 ITEM 20

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee will be held on Wednesday 20th March 2024 at 7pm at The Harlington.

The meeting closed at 10.00pm.

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

Chairman