

FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

held on

Wednesday 3rd June 2020

PRESENT

Councillors: R. Schofield (Chairman), G. Carpenter, G. Chenery, P. Einchcomb, R. Harrison, L. Holt, A. Hope, K. Jasper, A. Oliver, R. Robinson, S. Tilley, G. Woods, P. Wildsmith, J. Wright, S Wheale (part time).

Also Present

Janet Stanton - Town Clerk
Susanna Walker - Committee Clerk
Wendy Allen - Office Manager
Charlotte Benham - Project and Committee Officer
Councillor John Bennison - HCC

FC June 2020 ITEM 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

FC June 2020 ITEM 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Wildsmith declared an interest in Item 9 - Fleet Phoenix and Item 12 - Fleet Phoenix Covid19. Councillor Chenery declared an interest in Item 13 - Fleet Lion's Community Store.

FC June 2020 ITEM 3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

Members were reminded of a question from the public, Mrs June White, read out at the Annual Council Meeting on the 13th May 2020, regarding the weekend rate for hirer's at Ancells Community Centre. Councillor Schofield confirmed that FTC had sent a response to Mrs White, detailing the charges at Ancells Community Centre. Members were made aware that a response had been received from Mrs White, which did not question the reply and her classes are continuing at Ancells. A copy of the email to Mrs White is attached to the minutes.

Councillor Schofield had attended a virtual meeting with Fleet BID and HDC, to discuss temporary works in Fleet Town Centre to allow the town to reopen over the coming weeks, but with appropriate social distancing. Councillor Schofield outlined the following potential works:

- The work would happen in several phases.
- The 1st phase would begin on 15th June 2020, with parking bays being taken out of service to increase the width of the pedestrian area.
- Phase 2 to be implemented around the end of June to pedestrianise part of Fleet Road, from Victoria Road down to Church Road. It would be pedestrianised for approximately 2-3 months until the government reviewed its policies on social distancing. HDC are submitting plans to LEP and DFT on Friday 5th June to secure funding.

FC June 2020 ITEM 4

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes and confidential minutes of Council held on Wednesday 13th May 2020 were approved and signed by the Chairman, subject to Ruth Ashworth's name being removed from the RLA Committee in Item 8 – Nominations to Committees and Working Groups 2020/2021.

The Council also received the minutes of the following Committees and Working Groups:

Development Control	11 th May 2020
Policy & Finance	18 th May 2020

Members queried the Development Control minutes from 11th May 2020, as it appeared members had a copy of the minutes from 11th May 2020 with the front page from 27th April 2020. It was agreed to bring the minutes of 11th May 2020 back to Council in July with the correct front page.

Members were also made aware that the application to HDC for the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grant funding for the loss of business to The Harlington had been approved and the funds are awaited.

FC June 2020 ITEM 5

HCC / HDC UPDATE

HCC

Councillor Bennison reported on the following:

- HCC had their first full meeting on 29th April 2020, in which they voted in the new Chair, Councillor Melville Kendal and Vice Chair, Councillor Marge Harvey.
- Across the county, HCC has looked at 166 pelican, puffin and toucan crossings and times for waiting have now been favoured for pedestrians. However, timings on the crossings are temporary.
- HCC had received approximately £800,000 from Central Government, for Town Centre works to prepare for the reopening of non essential shops and businesses. Fleet Town Centre was a potential beneficiary of the grant.
- Flooding.
- Hampshire Waste Sites have been open for 4 weeks. There have been issues with the number of visitors, queuing, and anti-social behaviour at the sites.
- HCC is introducing an online booking system for all Waste Sites by mid-June, allowing public to book a slot at a site up to 2 days in advance.
- There will be approximately 30,000 slots per week over HCC.
- Sites are only running at 25% of their usual activity.
- Opening times are currently 1000-1600. From 15th June, opening times will revert to 0900-1800.
- HCC finances are £10s of millions in the red, due to Covid19, which means huge savings will need to be made in the short term.

HDC

Members were updated on the following:

- Flooding Workshop. There is approximately £150,000 available to develop a business case for control of Fleet Flooding. EA will engage and discuss all options with stakeholders.
- All waste services have restarted, except green waste.
 - Letters will be sent out to all current green waste bin holders, to confirm a start date for them, based on their original collection day.
 - New customers for green waste will not be accepted during this time.
- Fleet Town High Street recovery plan.
 - Pedestrianising Fleet Road is temporary but will be reviewed in 3 months' time.
- Approximately 3,000 bus shelters around Hampshire will have social distancing signs and floor markings.

- Business grants are still available.
- A Discretionary Business Grant fund is available for small businesses who may have fixed assets or rental agreements. This grant scheme is open for 3 weeks and £700,000 is available.
 - Criteria are based on need and scale, and grants will be distributed during the last week of June.

FC June 2020 ITEM 6 APPROVAL OF 2019-2020 INTERNAL AUDIT

Members received the Internal Auditor’s Report for the 13th May 2020 visit, together with the list of recommended actions. Under the action Contracts and Procurements, members were made aware that FTC should have clearly stated the name of the winning contractor for the Calthorpe Playground bid, who in this instance are Caloo Ltd. Members also noted that the Earmarked Reserves recommendation had been actioned, and that the action for Precept Value had been taken.

RESOLVED

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

FC June 2020 ITEM 7 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW (AGAR)

- a. Members noted the recommendation of the Policy and Finance Committee (Item 10, 18th May 2020) on the effectiveness of the system of internal financial control and preparation of the Annual Governance Statement (Part 3 Sections 1 and 2).

Members reviewed again each of the statements and agreed that there was a sound system of control for the preparation of the Council’s Accounting Statements and agreed that all points on the Annual Governance Statement had been adhered to, as read out by Councillor Schofield.

- b. Members discussed, questioned, reviewed and agreed with the accounting statements set out in Section 2 of the AGAR.

RESOLVED

- a. To approve the Review of Effectiveness of the system of internal control - Section 1, and agree that the Chairman signs the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Part 3 for 2019-2020 on behalf of the Council.
- b. To approve the Accounting Statement - Section 2.

FC June 2020 ITEM 8 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2020/2021

Members were made aware that the current internal auditor, Eleanor Green from Do The Numbers, has successfully worked with FTC for a number of years and keeps abreast of all good accounting practises.

RESOLVED

To confirm the re-appointment of Eleanor Green, Do The Numbers, as the internal auditor for Fleet Town Council for 2020/2021.

FC June 2020 ITEM 9 FLEET PHOENIX

Councillor Schofield suggested to members that they discussed Item 9 – Fleet Phoenix at the same time as Item 12 – Fleet Phoenix Covid19, as both items related to Fleet Phoenix and the premises they were using.

In relation to Item 9, Members noted that further to the meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee on 18th May 2020, rent for the Fleet Phoenix office in the Point for 2020/2021 would be waived and that due to the current situation, this expense to be allocated to the COVID19 support and not from the Grant allocation. Members discussed that this expense only be allocated to the COVID19 support, until business returned to normal.

RESOLVED

With regards to Item 9, to approve that the rent be waived for Fleet Phoenix for 2020-2021 and is included in the COVID19 support expenses and not taken from the Grant Allocation.

FC June 2020 ITEM 10 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Members considered Councillor Wheale's membership of the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities and Policy & Finance Committees for the government year 2020/2021.

RESOLVED

To acknowledge and approve Councillor Wheale's membership of the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities and Policy & Finance Committees for the government year 2020/2021.

FC June 2020 ITEM 11 FLEET TOWN COUNCIL COVID19 RECOVERY

Members considered that due to the gradual easing of the COVID19 lock-down, recovery plans for FTC need to be put in place. Members discussed that the recovery plan be managed through a working group consisting of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Council, Policy & Finance and Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committees, the Clerk and the General Manager of The Harlington. Any key issues would then be brought from this group to Council.

It was agreed that the current RLA Chair and Vice Chair would sit on this working group. It was also suggested that Councillor Tilley join this group, as she is the representative from the Hart Parish and Town Councils for HDC's Sounding Board group for the District wide Recovery Project.

RESOLVED

To approve the formation of COVID 19 Recovery Working Group consisting of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Council, Policy & Finance and Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committees, The Clerk and General Manager of The Harlington, with the addition of Councillor Tilley as part of this group.

FC June 2020 ITEM 12 FLEET PHOENIX – COVID19

Members noted that during this unprecedented time, Fleet Phoenix has been operating a food bank and giving support to local families from The Point. However, due to Fleet Baptist Pre School returning to operate from The Point, and the operational challenges Fleet Phoenix would face because of this, members agreed that FTC will give Fleet Phoenix free use of the RVS building to enable them to continue their work of distributing food and supporting the local community.

Councillor Chenery voiced Managing Director of Fleet Phoenix, Charlotte Tickner's special thanks to Janet Stanton and Ben Crane for all their help and support to Fleet Phoenix at this time.

RESOLVED

To approve the free use of the RVS building by Fleet Phoenix to continue their work of supporting the local community with a food bank during this COVID 19 pandemic.

FC June 2020 ITEM 13 FLEET LIONS COMMUNITY STORE

Members considered the request from the Fleet Lions to install an additional container into the leased area of the Community Store to house equipment for their IT Refurbishment Project. Members noted that this is an ongoing project with Fleet Lions but during the lock down with the introduction of home schooling, this project and the equipment refurbished has been vital to families without access to computers and to help with distanced learning. Members also noted that since the beginning of lock down, until the end of March Fleet Lions had successfully refurbished over 200 computers.

RESOLVED

To approve the siting of an additional container within the Lions Community Store compound.

FC June 2020 ITEM 14 THE HARLINGTON UPDATE

Members noted that a copy of the lease for The Harlington has been sent back to HDC, along with a covering letter, outlining FTC's position. This has been received and acknowledged by HDC and a copy of the proposed lease has been sent to Basingstoke and Dean Legal Services.

Members were made aware that following on from the Harlington condition survey, further identified investigations are now underway. Valbro Scaffolding Company has been awarded the contract to erect all scaffolding in the auditorium. Investigations and any essential refurbishment work are being carried out while the Harlington is closed to ensure the auditorium will be fully refitted by the time the government lifts the ban on live performances and audiences can return.

FC June 2020 ITEM 15 CALTHORPE PARK PLAYGROUND UPDATE

Members were advised that the ground work has now started on Calthorpe Park playground.. Members noted that although large pieces of equipment will be installed, any moving parts will not be installed until nearer the date of the park being opened. Progress photos will be uploaded onto social media. CCTV equipment installation will be finalised before the park opens to the public

FC June 2020 ITEM 16 HART DISTRICT COUNCIL BEGINNING OF "RECOVERY"

Members noted that HDC has started the process of looking at its "recovery" to include the impact on the local community and what can be done to ameliorate those impacts and the impact on their organisation - what has been learnt and what may be done differently in the future. Councillor Tilley is the representative from the Hart Parish and Town Councils, to be part of a Sounding Board to help with this project.

FC June 2020 ITEM 17 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

Members received the Town Clerk's report and noted the following:

- The Councillor vacancy is now being advertised. FTC has to wait 14 working days to see if 10 or more people come forward and ask HDC for a bi-election.
 - If a bi-election is required, it will not take place until May 2021.
 - If less than 10 people come forward, then FTC can co-opt.
- Tennis courts have now all reopened.

- There have been 75 new tennis memberships in the last 4 weeks.

With regards to hard copies of the meeting agenda packs, members were asked to contact the Committee Clerk if they wanted an agenda pack or not.

FC June 2020 ITEM 18 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The provisional date of the next virtual meeting of the Council is scheduled for Wednesday 1st July 2020 at 7pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.24pm.

Signed.....

Date:.....

Chairman

Part 3 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Exclusion of the public in accordance with Section 1(2) and by reason of the confidential nature of the business of the Town Council, the Public and Press will be excluded from the Meeting

The following types of business will be treated as confidential:

- a. Engagement, terms of service, conduct and dismissal of employees
- b. Terms of tenders, and proposals and counter-proposals in negotiations for contracts
- c. Receipt of professional legal advice and preparation of cases in legal proceedings
- d. The early stages of any dispute
- e. Matters of a Commercial nature

There were no confidential items.