



FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Monday 18th May 2020 at 7pm

The Harlington

PRESENT

Councillors: Glyn Carpenter, Paul Einchcomb, Leslie Holt (Chairman), Richard Robinson, Bob Schofield, Sue Tilley, George Woods.

Also Present: Janet Stanton - Town Clerk
Susanna Walker - Committee Clerk
Wendy Allen - Finance and Administration Officer
Charlotte Benham - Project and Committee Officer
Alex Robins - Harlington General Manager

PF May 2020 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 2020/2021.

PF May 2020 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 2020/2021.

PF May 2020 ITEM 3 APOLOGIES

There was an apology of absence from Councillor Wildsmith.

PF May 2020 ITEM 4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations on interest.

PF May 2020 ITEM 5 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public.

PF May 2020 ITEM 6

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on Monday 17th February 2020 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Members discussed the following:

- Fleet is a burial authority.
- The paperwork for closing the Co-operative Bank account was submitted, but requires a second signature to close it, which Councillor Robinson will do.
- The Climate Change Policy will be available at the next Policy and Finance Meeting.

PF May 2020 ITEM 7

QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The members considered the commentary of the Town Clerk with an overview of the financial performance for year end 2019-2020 and April 2020, together with all the income and expenditure, cash book, bank reconciliation, list of payments, balance sheet and quarterly monitoring.

The members considered:

YEAR END 2019-2020

- a. Year End 2019-2020 Report
 - aa. Harlington Monthly Performance totals
- b. 2019-20 Actual & 2020-21 projections
- c. Balance sheet as at 31st March 2020
- d. Budget detail as at 31st March 2020
- e. Income and expenditure detail – 31st March 2020
- f. Bank Reconciliation – February & March 2020
- g. Cash Book – 31st March 2020
- h. List of Payments – February & March 2020
- i. Q4 VAT return on FTC

2020-2021

- j. Balance sheet as at 30th April 2020
- k. Budget detail as at 30th April 2020
- l. Income and expenditure detail – 30th April 2020
- m. Bank Reconciliation – 30th April 2020
- n. Cash Book – 30th April 2020
- o. List of Payments – April 2020

The following matters were raised:

- There is a slight surplus at the year-end for 2019/2020.
- Any costs incurred by the COVID 19 pandemic will be shown in the 2020/2021 finances.
- The Harlington would have achieved its projected income target, had it not been affected by the COVID 19 pandemic.
- 2019/2020 was the best year financially.
- The Year End 2019-2020 report was found to be very clear and extremely useful.
- The insurance company Zurich has been contacted, with regards to potential business interruption insurance.
- Ancells Farm Community Centre.
- Can the general fund figure be controlled at £150,000 to keep it consistent across all reports?
- The staff furlough scheme will be included in next month's reports.
- The Harlington Monthly totals report was deemed an excellent report.

RESOLVED

1. To receive and accept into the minutes:
YEAR END 2019-2020
 - a. Year End 2019-2020 Report
 - aa. Harlington Monthly Performance totals
 - b. 2019-20 Actual & 2020-21 projections
 - c. Balance sheet as at 31st March 2020
 - d. Budget detail as at 31st March 2020
 - e. Income and expenditure detail – 31st March 2020
 - f. Bank Reconciliation – February & March 2020
 - g. Cash Book – 31st March 2020
 - h. List of Payments – February & March 2020
 - i. Q4 VAT return on FTC
2. Councillor Robinson confirmed that the bank reconciliation for February and March 2020 equals zero, and the bank statements match the reconciliation and has signed the bank statements and payment schedules.
3. To receive and accept into the minutes:
2020-2021
 - j. Balance sheet as at 30th April 2020
 - k. Budget detail as at 30th April 2020
 - l. Income and expenditure detail – 30th April 2020
 - m. Bank Reconciliation – 30th April 2020
 - n. Cash Book – 30th April 2020
 - o. List of Payments – April 2020
4. Councillor Robinson confirmed that the bank reconciliation for April 2020 equals zero, and the bank statements match the reconciliation and has signed the bank statements and payment schedules.

PF May 2020 ITEM 8

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS OF THE COVID19 PANDEMIC

Members were advised that the COVID 19 Pandemic started to take effect on the Council's operations in March 2020 but that the true effect would only be felt during the current financial year 2020/2021 and beyond.

Members were made aware that in order to be kept aware of a worst case scenario and to allow for forward planning, the finances of the Council have now been reviewed **and projected based on** only receiving the precept, with no income from The Harlington and Council's activities during the current financial year. In addition to this, the Council's expenditure has also been reviewed and initial savings have been achieved. The revised **projections** also accounted for not receiving money back to cover the cost of any furloughed staff but that the furlough scheme would be reviewed on a regular basis.

Members also discussed the concern that people may default on Council Tax, due to redundancy and lack of income, which would potentially reduce FTC's income.

However, members were advised that there had been a small income already in May 2020, due to the number of tennis memberships activated.

Members were also advised that the Council had applied to HDC for the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grant funding for the loss of business to The Harlington and to HMRC for funds to cover the cost of furloughed staff. At this current time, the HDC grant had been rejected, to which the Town Clerk would be appealing against.

Members discussed the use of the Council's monetary reserves to fund any shortfall in budget due to the impact of COVID 19. Members agreed that the Council needed to be able to access cash to run its business and that the Town Clerk would have access to the reserves, using the bank accounts in a particular order:

1. Co-operative Bank
2. The Cambridge Building Society
3. Nationwide Building Society

RESOLVED

To approve that any short fall in budget due to the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic shall be made up from reserves, with the bank accounts being accessed in the following order:

1. Co-operative Bank
2. The Cambridge Building Society
3. Nationwide Building Society

PF May 2020 ITEM 9 EAR MARKED RESERVES

Further to the February Policy and Finance Meeting, members reviewed the 2020/2021 Ear Marked Reserves for recommendation to Council in June 2020.

Members discussed the following:

- Pension obligations.
- Website development money will be used to update the website.
- Signage for the Cemetery has been stopped, as it has been deemed unnecessary spending during the COVID 19 pandemic.
- Ancells Farm flooring repairs.
- Sustainable Ops Projects budget – some of the money has been committed to glass recycling at the Harlington.
- S106 money should be removed from Ear Marked Reserves and placed in a separate list, along with the Harlington Redevelopment Fund money.
- Sensory Garden.

Members agreed that the Ear Marked Reserves would be reviewed again at the Policy and Finance meeting in October 2020.

RESOLVED

- a. To approve the balance of the Ear Marked Reserves for recommendation to Council in June 2020.
- b. To review the 2020/2021 Ear Marked Reserves at the October 2020 Policy and Finance Meeting.

PF May 2020 ITEM 10 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW (AGAR)

Members conducted a Review of Effectiveness of the system of internal control and prepared, through discussion and agreement, the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the AGAR).

Members discussed 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.

Members agreed that although the Annual Governance Statement had been approved, it should be put forward at the next Full Council meeting in June 2020, for final consideration prior to approval by Members.

RESOLVED

That the Annual Governance Statement is agreed and approved, but will need to be put forward to the next Full Council meeting in June 2020 for final approval.

PF May 2020 ITEM 11 INVESTMENT REPORT

Members considered the quarterly investment report and noted that the Co-operative Bank Account was still present on the report, due to a delay in closing it down.

Members confirmed that as discussed in Item 8, Budget Implications of the COVID 19 pandemic, the Town Clerk would be allowed to access money from these accounts, in the following order, with the associated maximum amount:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Co-operative Bank | <i>This is due to be closed and therefore money held in here would be in the Current Account.</i> |
| 2. The Cambridge Building Society | <i>Up to £100,000.</i> |
| 3. Nationwide Building Society | <i>Up to £200,000.</i> |

It was also agreed that if there was a delay in accessing the first account and the matter was urgent, the Town Clerk would be able to access the next bank account.

RESOLVED

1. To note the balances held in Fleet Town Council accounts.
2. Due to budget implications of the COVID 19 pandemic, the Town Clerk would be allowed to access money from these accounts, in the following order, with the associated maximum amount:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Co-operative Bank | <i>This is due to be closed and therefore money held in here would be in the Current Account.</i> |
| 2. The Cambridge Building Society | <i>Up to £100,000.</i> |
| 3. Nationwide Building Society | <i>Up to £200,000.</i> |

PF May 2020 ITEM 12 FLEET PHOENIX – RENT WAIVER FOR 2020/2021

Members considered a request from Fleet Phoenix to waiver the rent on their office in The Point for 2020-2021.

Members discussed the following:

- Further supporting Fleet Phoenix with their work with families affected by COVID19
- Should this waiver of rent be given to Fleet Phoenix from the grant allocation or as part of the COVID 19 support

RESOLVED

That the rent be waived for Fleet Phoenix for 2020-2021

PF May 2020 ITEM 13 POLICIES

a. DRAFT DATA PROTECTION AND PRIVACY POLICY

Members reviewed the Data Protection and Privacy Policy. Members were advised that there as there were no major changes to the current legislation, no changes had been made to this policy. Members were also advised that the Record of Retention Policy, as noted in the Data Protection and Privacy Policy, is currently being finalised and will be presented at the next Finance and Policy meeting.

b. DRAFT SMOKING AND VAPING POLICY

Members reviewed the Draft Smoking and Vaping Policy. Members were advised that vaping has already been prohibited to all public and events in the building, and that this policy was aimed at staff as well.

Members discussed the wording regarding unpaid breaks in Section 4, paragraph 2 and Section 5, paragraph 2 and agreed that the two separate sentences needed to be brought together, to make the wording about unpaid breaks clearer.

Members also discussed Section 5 – Designated Smoking/Vaping Areas, and agreed that whilst it was clear where the Vaping Area was, the designated Smoking Area needed rewording, as currently the area seemed public.

RESOLVED

Subject to the changes outlined to the Smoking and Vaping Policy, to approve the adoption of:

- a. The Data Protection and Privacy Policy
- b. The Smoking and Vaping Policy

PF May 2020 ITEM 14 CLERKS REPORT

Members noted that there were no further updates from the Clerk.

PF May 2020 ITEM 15 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next virtual meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held Monday 20th July 2020 at 7pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.02pm.

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

Chairman