



## **FLEET TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING**

held on  
Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 at 7pm

\* Councillor Schofield (Chairman)

L Councillor Einchcomb (Vice Chairman)

* Councillor Chenery	* Councillor Powell
* Councillor Fang	* Councillor Richmond
0 Councillor Holt	* Councillor Stanton
* Councillor Hope	* Councillor Taylor
* Councillor Kuntikanamata	* Councillor Tilley
0 Councillor May	# Councillor Wildsmith
* Councillor Neves	0 Councillor Willcocks
0 Councillor Oliver	* Councillor Woods

\* Present    # Absent & No Apology Received    0 Apology for Absence    L Late

#### **Also in attendance:**

Rita Tong – Executive Officer  
Councillor Stuart Bailey – HCC  
Councillor Steve Forster – HCC  
Mike Bye – Chair of Friends of Oakley Park

#### **FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 1                      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members received and accepted the apologies as recorded above.

Members further resolved that the previously granted special dispensation for Cllr Willcocks was revoked. In accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, should Cllr Willcocks fail to attend the November 2025 meeting of Full Council, he will cease to be a Member of the Council and a casual vacancy will arise.

#### **FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 2                      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 3                      QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from members of the public.

#### **FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 4                      CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

As ever, the majority of the time has been absorbed by the Harlington, but we can now confirm that we have a meeting scheduled for 8 October to meet HCC's library representatives including their M&E Engineer.

15<sup>th</sup> September – met with Mark Bramah, Chairman of Fleet Town Cricket Club, for a tour of the pavilion on Calthorpe Park and hear representatives on the state of the building.

22<sup>nd</sup> September – The Executive Officer and I had a meeting with a representative of our solicitors to discuss the sub-lease for the library area at the front of the Harlington. It was concluded that the only matter that needed attention was a matter of insurance.

Our solicitor reported that there had been no progress on the transfer of land (part of the Harlington Way) and they had been waiting several weeks for a response to the last exchange.

22<sup>nd</sup> September – attended the evaluation of the Skate Park replacement contract along with Cllrs Tilley and Stanton, the Executive Officer, the Facilities and Open Spaces Manager, two representatives from Fleet Phoenix and two 'Jakes' (seasoned users of the skate park). It was an enlightening experience and a great pleasure to deal with two young and knowledgeable enthusiasts. The outcome of the meeting is reported later in the agenda.

## **FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 5**

## **HCC/HDC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The following reports were received from Hampshire County Council.

### Cllr Steve Forster (HCC)

- Buses
  - There have been issues throughout the area including overcrowding on buses and issues with diversions (particularly the Galley Hill Road diversions). Most of these issues have been addressed.
  - A meeting has been scheduled with the Director of Stagecoach to discuss recent issues and to discuss the possibility of changing some bus routes to reflect housing changes.
- South Western Railway – met to discuss potential to make improvements to the Fleet Station but only minimal funds available. Please get in touch if any ideas for improvement.
- Road Works
  - Tavistock Road – should re-open tomorrow.
  - Church Road – will close soon for permanent road resurfacing works.
  - Elvetham Road – will be reduced to one lane while utility and maintenance works proceed.
  - Reading Road South – gas line replacement works delayed – probably to next summer holidays.
  - CCTV being used to catch those using footpaths to avoid road closures. This is illegal and drivers will be prosecuted. Was used for Tavistock Road closure and will be used for other areas where issues are identified.
- County Council Councillor grant scheme reopened with new rules:
  - Parishes cannot apply for funding for anything that could be covered by their precept.
  - £1k maximum limit per grant application.
  - Cannot apply for a grant if a similar grant has been received in the last two years.
- Local Government Reorganisation – proposals from HCC and HDC have been submitted to Government. Outcome not due until March 2026.
- Valmead School
  - New special needs unit has gone live.

- Some issues with parking. Looking to see if parking within school grounds can be increased.
- Looking to put in a traffic order to only allow parking on one side of the road.
- Intend to use mobile traffic enforcement to address inconsiderate / dangerous parking by parents. Also considering extending the parking restrictions (zig zag lines).

#### Cllr Stuart Bailey (HCC)

- Local Elections – only Central Government have the authority to postpone elections, and they may only do so for one year. Consequently, all elections are expected to be held as usual in May 2026 with the addition of the new Mayoral elections.
- Roadworks – criticisms received at lack of synchronisation of roadworks. The fact that different agencies are involved makes co-ordination very difficult.

Councillors Bailey and Forster left at the conclusion of this agenda item (approx. 7.18pm).

### **FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 6                      MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

The Council received and noted the minutes of the following Committees:

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| • Development Control | 26 <sup>th</sup> August 2025, 8 <sup>th</sup> and 22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2025 |
| • RLA                 | 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2025   |

### **FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 7                      FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

Members noted receipt of the bank reconciliation and the list of payments for August 2025.

Councillor Stanton confirmed that the bank reconciliation for July and August 2025 and list of payments for August 2025 had been verified and signed off against the original bank statement.

Members received an update on the invoice received for the second instalment of the Ancells Bus Service.

#### **RESOLVED**

- a) That the bank reconciliation and list of payments for August 2025 be received and accepted.
- b) That the statement from Councillor Stanton confirming the verification and sign-off of the July and August 2025 bank reconciliation and list of payments be accepted.
- c) That the Executive Officer be authorised to write to Hampshire County Council clarifying that agreeing to act as banker does not create a legally liability for the Council.
- d) That Councillor Taylor to liaise with Councillor Wildsmith to determine the progress made on contacting parents for payment.

### **FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 8                      FINANCE AND RISK REGISTER 2025/26**

Members received an update from the Risk Management Working Group and considered the Council's Finance and Risk Register for 2025/26.

Members noted the increasing incidence of cyber-attacks and the need to address this area of risk. The Executive Officer reminded Members that Council had previously agreed to undertake the Cyber Essentials accreditation, which specifically addresses cyber risks. The Finance & Administration Manager is progressing this work, which will result in a number of procedural changes to be reported to Council in due course.

**RESOLVED**

- a) That the update from the Risk Management Working Group be noted.
- b) That the Finance and Risk Register for 2025/26 be approved.

**FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 9**

**REPORT FROM EXTERNAL AUDITOR FOR  
FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25**

Members received the Annual Governance and Accountability Return from the External Auditor BDO LLP for the year ended 31 March 2025 and noted that there were no qualifications.

Members wished to formally thank the Finance & Administration Manager and Executive Officer for their work in achieving this result.

**RESOLVED**

That the Annual Governance and Accountability Return of the external auditor for 2024/25 be received and accepted.

**FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 10**

**NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT FOR  
FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25**

Members noted that, in accordance with Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, Fleet Town Council is required to publish its Notice of Conclusion of Audit on its website by 30 September 2025 and to make the External Auditor's Report and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) available to residents both on the website and from the Council offices.

**RESOLVED**

That the inclusion of the External Auditor's Report and the AGAR within this agenda, together with the publication of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit, be confirmed as meeting the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

**FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 11**

**THE VIEWS SKATEPARK – TENDER REPORT &  
AWARD OF CONTRACT**

Members considered the tender report and made an award of contract for The Views Skatepark contract.

Members noted that Design 1 - a highly durable running surface over a marine-grade Birch plywood under-surface option, is significantly below the budgeted figure of £250,000 but will require higher maintenance than a concrete design but estimated around £3,000 every five years.

## **RESOLVED**

- a) To award the contract to Bidder A (subsequently revealed to be Fearless Ramps Ltd) for Design 1 at a cost of £160,689.80, subject to satisfactory references and the granting of a PWLB loan.
- b) Members authorised that the annual difference between the budgeted PWLB repayment (£24,200) and the revised repayment (£15,700) be transferred to an Earmarked Reserve to fund future maintenance costs.

## **FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 12          ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The following announcements were made:

- 25 September 2025 – Interim Internal Audit conducted – report to come to next Full Council.
- 25 September 2025 – Fire Inspection 2025 by Hampshire & IOW Fire & Rescue Authority – report to come to next Full Council.

## **FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 13          LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION**

Members noted that both [Hampshire County Council](#) and [Hart District Council](#) have finalised their proposals to submit to Government by 26 September 2025.

The next stage will be public consultation in November 2025 before the Government decides its preferred way forward in March 2026.

## **FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 14          DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled to be held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 7pm at Ancells Farm Community Centre.

## **CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS – CLOSED SESSION**

The Chairman stated that the following items for discussion relate to the engagement and terms of service in relation to employees and terms of tenders, and proposals and counterproposals in negotiations for contracts.

## **RESOLVED**

That subject to 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.

## **FC OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 16          HARLINGTON UPDATE**

Members considered the following documents in relation to the Harlington renovation project:

- Business Plan
- Design drawings for all options including a revised façade

- Costings for all options
- Communications Strategy update (including social media feedback and a draft FAQ document to support councillor responses)

Members also considered a request from the Centre Manager of the Hart Shopping Mall for a Letter of Intent regarding MSU4. MSU4 is a vacant unit in the shopping mall, large enough to be used as a temporary venue for The Harlington during the renovation period.

Members reviewed the five design options provided by BFF for the renovation of The Harlington and expressed strong support for Options 1C and 2 – both of which would require a precept increase to fund the necessary borrowing. Accordingly, Members determined that it was necessary to pause the project and consult with Fleet residents to ascertain their preferred option for the way forward.

### **RESOLVED**

- Members approved the Frequently Asked Questions document.
- Members authorised the Executive Officer to write to the Centre Manager of the Hart Shopping Mall confirming the Council's intent to rent MSU4 during the renovation period.
- Members agreed to hold a public consultation to determine residents' preferred design option, including the associated precept implications.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

**Signed**.....  
**Chairman**

**Date:**.....