



## **FLEET TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 7pm**

\* Councillor Einchcomb (Chairman)

0 Councillor Taylor (Vice Chairman)

\* Councillor Chenery

0 Councillor Fang

0 Councillor Holt

0 Councillor May

0 Councillor Oliver

\* Councillor Schofield

\* Councillor Stanton

\* Councillor Tilley

# Councillor Wildsmith

0 Councillor Willcocks

\* Councillor Woods

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

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

Rita Tong – Executive Officer

Facilities and Open Spaces Manager (FOSM)

General Manager of The Harlington

Cemetery Clerk

Friends of Basingbourne Park representative

Friends of Oakley Park representative

Paul Woodman - Resident

#### **RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 1**

#### **APOLOGIES**

Members received and accepted the apologies as noted above.

#### **RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 2**

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 3**

#### **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

The representative from the Friends of Basingbourne Park raised the following questions:

1. Given the recent traveller incursion, would FTC consider replacing the wooden bollards with something more substantial?
2. Could FTC either get directly, or support HDC in obtaining, a legal injunction as other local district councils have done?

The Executive Officer provided the following responses:

1. Members agreed at the September Full Council meeting to look at what measures could be put in place to prevent unauthorised trespass at all FTC parks and green spaces. This work has not yet been completed.

2. Hart District Council has already been approached to see if they would seek an injunction. After undertaking a cost-benefit exercise, they determined there was no value in pursuing this, as they did not believe it would succeed. FTC do not have the legal authority to apply for an injunction.

#### **RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 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 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

#### **RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 5**

#### **THE CEMETERY CLERK'S REPORT**

Members received a report from the Cemetery Clerk.

#### **RESOLVED**

- a) To note the report.
- b) To proceed with making 19 memorials permanently safe by laying them down.
- c) To adopt Version 2 of the price list and resend to all local funeral directors.
- d) To authorise the Cemetery Clerk to engage an ecologist to apply for a licence to remove the badgers damaging graves.

The Cemetery Clerk left the meeting at the conclusion of this item (approx.. 7.31pm).

#### **RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 6**

#### **THE HARLINGTON AND ANCELLS FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE REPORT**

Members received an update from the General Manager on events, hall hires, and operational activities at The Harlington and Ancells Farm Community Centre.

It was noted that a report on the *Music on the Views* event held in August would be presented to Full Council in October.

Members also received an update on the recruitment process to fill two vacancies.

#### **RESOLVED**

Members resolved to note the report.

The General Manager left the meeting at the conclusion of this item (approx.. 7.46pm).

#### **RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 7**

#### **PADEL TENNIS AT CALTHORPE PARK**

Members noted that Fleet Town Council had been approached by Padel People Ltd with a proposal to bring padel tennis courts to Calthorpe Park.

Members further noted that the Chairman of the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee and the Executive Officer had met with a representative from Padel People to discuss their concept. Following the meeting, a set of "Heads of Terms" was provided. The document sets out indicative lease terms rather than a detailed proposal or business plan.

#### **Summary of Proposal**

- Lease of land at Calthorpe Park for 20 years (with break option at year 5).
- Construction and operation of three padel courts by Padel People at their cost.
- Annual rent to FTC calculated as 10% of gross turnover (estimated £6k–£15k per court per year).
- Padel People to fund, install, and operate the facility, covering utilities, maintenance, and insurance.

Members considered the advantages and disadvantages of the proposal and of having padel at Calthorpe Park.

#### **RESOLVED**

Members considered the proposal and determined to take no further action. Should Padel Ltd make further enquiries, additional information and a detailed business case would be required.

#### **RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 8**

#### **EVENT APPLICATIONS**

Members considered the application to hold Park Yoga at Calthorpe Park.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the application be declined, as Calthorpe Park does not meet the venue requirements for *Park Yoga*, based on information provided on the organisation's website.

#### **RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 9**

#### **THE VIEWS SKATEPARK**

##### ***Ramp Removal***

Members noted that, following health and safety concerns and reports of unauthorised access raised by members of the public, FTC Officers and the Police, it had been decided to remove the physical ramps from the Skate Park prior to completion of the tender process. The removal was undertaken to discourage continued use of the closed ramps. A local steelworks company agreed to carry out the removal at no cost.

It was further noted that insulation had previously been installed within the ramps to mitigate sound issues, although the extent and method were unknown. On removal, approximately 7.5 tonnes of fibre insulation were found, comprising largely loose material together with around 70 rolls still wrapped in plastic. A removal company was promptly engaged to dispose of the material.

The cost for removal is not yet finalised but is expected to be in the region of £2,000.

##### ***Questions Raised by Skate Park Designers***

Members noted that several bidders had enquired whether the Skate Park footprint could be extended, specifically whether one or more fences could be relocated to increase the available space. However, all tenders received are based on the existing footprint.

The tender deadline has now passed, with three completed bids received. These will be assessed by a panel which includes representation from Fleet Phoenix to ensure that the views of young people are taken into account. The final evaluation meeting is scheduled for 4.00pm on Monday, 22 September 2025.

#### **RESOLVED**

- a) That the steps taken to remove the existing skateboard park ramps be noted.
- b) That the questions raised by bidders regarding footprint extension be noted.

#### **RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 10**

#### **THE VIEWS PLAY AREA**

Members noted that draft tender documents for the replacement of The Views Play Area are being prepared and will be shared with members of the Parks and Open Spaces Working Group.

Members agreed that the preferred option is to consult with the public after initial designs have been received. This would involve scoring the tenders, presenting the highest-scoring designs (e.g. three) to the public, and incorporating the public feedback into the final scoring and design decision.

Members set the project budget at **£150,000**. It was agreed that this figure should remain fixed regardless of any potential Fleet BID contribution, as to vary the budget would create uncertainty and possible delay whilst awaiting a decision from the BID. Should Fleet BID provide funding, the

Council's borrowing requirement would be reduced accordingly, but the overall project budget would remain £150,000.

**RESOLVED**

- a) To shortlist designs received from the tender process and seek residents' views on the shortlist.
- b) For the FOSM to canvas Members for a suitable date to hold a Parks and Open Spaces Working Group to review the draft tender documents.

**RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 11**

**HARLINGTON CARBON AUDIT**

Fleet Town Council has undertaken a carbon audit of The Harlington. This provides a baseline measurement of the building's current carbon footprint and will allow the Council to demonstrate improvements in energy efficiency and carbon reduction following the planned renovation works

The audit established the following baseline for The Harlington:

- **Electricity Consumption:** 180,126 kWh, equating to 46.2 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e.
- **Gas Consumption:** 428,347 kWh, equating to 78.8 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e.
- **Total Annual Carbon Footprint:** 125.0 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e.

Members agreed that progress should be monitored and reported following the completion of renovation works, to demonstrate reductions in carbon emissions against this baseline.

**RESOLVED**

To note the results of the baseline carbon audit for The Harlington.

**RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 12**

**INSURANCE – USER EQUIPMENT STORED IN COUNCIL PAVILION**

The Council noted that its insurance policy covers pavilion buildings and contents only insofar as they are Council-owned assets. A user group hiring the pavilion had asked whether its own equipment, stored in the pavilion, could be insured under the Council's policy.

Members noted that the Council can only insure property it owns or in which it has a financial interest. User-owned equipment is therefore excluded. It was further noted that extending cover to one user group's property would create expectations among others, with associated cost and complexity, and that the Council has no means of verifying or managing risks linked to third-party equipment.

**RESOLVED**

- a) To update hirers' terms and conditions to state clearly that hirers must insure their own equipment.
- b) To authorise the Executive Officer to write to the user group confirming that the Council cannot insure their equipment.

**RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 13**

**BASINGBOURNE SCOUT HUT – REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

Members received an update from the Scout Group regarding their project to replace the existing scout hut within the leased compound at Basingbourne Woods.

The project, initiated in 2017, secured planning permission for a bespoke design in February 2020, but progress was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, fundraising challenges, and rising build costs. The planning permission lapsed in 2023.

The Scouts have now opted for a simplified design using a pre-fabricated steel building and

intend to reapply for planning permission. Members requested further information on insulation proposals, noting the need to ensure that minimum EPC rating requirements are met as part of the Council's landlord responsibilities.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) To support the revised approach in principle.
- b) To request a more detailed presentation of the revised proposals.

**RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 14                      TREE PLANTINGS**

Members noted the proposal from the Friends of Oakley Park to plant a Chilean Wine Palm in the shrubbery around the children's play area, replacing two dead, ivy-covered shrubs.

Members further noted recent vandalism of newly planted trees at The Views. Maintenance works may be able to save some of the affected trees, although the newly planted Ginkgo Biloba has sustained damage.

**RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 15                      BASINGBOURNE PAVILION CEILING**

Members noted that the Council is still awaiting receipt of insurance funds and that a new contractor is being sourced as the previous contractor has ceased trading. An update will be provided once a replacement contractor has been confirmed.

Members further noted that the Council's insurers have offered a settlement of £2,069.05 (net of the £250 excess and inclusive of VAT) in respect of the ceiling damage at Basingbourne Pavilion. This settlement will enable the repair works to be carried out within the existing budget allocation.

**RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 16                      ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

**RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 17                      FUTURE EVENTS**

Members noted future events taking place on Council property, as detailed on the table below.

Fireworks Fiesta	1st November 2025	Calthorpe Park
Remembrance Sunday	9th November 2025	Gurkha Square and High Street
Christmas Festival	26th November 2025	Gurkha Square and High Street

**RLA SEPTEMBER 2025 ITEM 24                      DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee will be held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025, 7pm at The Harlington.

**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.

Members of the public left the meeting at approx. 8.55pm.

Members considered the report on legal advice obtained regarding the cemetery extension project.

Members also reviewed a draft Statement of Truth on the absence of legal deeds for the Cemetery, as requested by the Council's solicitors to enable first registration of the land (copy attached to the record minutes).

**RESOLVED**

- a) To note the report and authorise officers to make enquiries with HDC regarding historic rights of way and the planning position relating to change of use.
- b) To authorise the Executive Officer to sign the Statement of Truth and submit it to the Council's solicitors.

The meeting closed at 9:12pm.

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

**Chairman**