



FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

held on

Wednesday 1st July 2026 at 7pm

* Councillor Schofield (Chairman)

* Councillor Einchcomb (Vice Chairman)

* Councillor Chenery

* Councillor Davidson

* Councillor Engstrom

* Councillor Forster

* Councillor Holt

Councillor Hope

* Councillor Kuntikanamata

* Councillor May

* Councillor Oliver

* Councillor Parker

* Councillor Powell

* Councillor Stanton

* Councillor Taylor

* Councillor Tilley

0 Councillor Wildsmith

0 Councillor Woods

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

Also in attendance:

Rita Tong – Executive Officer

Mike Bye – Chair of Friends of Oakley Park

Stephanie Archer and one other member of the public – representing Velmead School staff and parents

Jerry Ward – Fleet Film Society

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 1

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Members received and accepted the apologies as recorded above.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 2

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Forster declared an Other Registerable Interest regarding Agenda Item 3 on the grounds he is an Executive Member for HCC Highways & Passenger Transport.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 3

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Ms Stephanie Archer addressed the Council to request that Fleet Town Council support staff and parents of Velmead School in seeking the installation of a zebra crossing outside the school. She explained that unsafe parking and driving in the vicinity of the school make it difficult and potentially dangerous for children and parents to cross the road safely. She noted that, despite efforts over the past 18 months, the County Council had been unable to recruit a School Crossing Patrol (lollipop person) for the site. Ms Archer also highlighted that approximately 1,200 school children are injured within 500 metres of their school each year across the UK.

Councillor Forster, in his capacity as the Executive Member for Highways and Passenger Transport at Hampshire County Council, responded that the location does not currently meet the national criteria for the installation of a zebra crossing, based on the number of pedestrians crossing the road during peak periods. He advised that Hampshire County Council has been working with Velmead School and the Police on a proposed Traffic Regulation Order to extend the existing school entrance zig-zag markings and double yellow lines to the maximum permitted length. He further advised that the statutory consultation on the proposal is expected to commence shortly, with the intention of completing the works before the start of the new academic year.

Jerry Ward, representing Fleet Film Society, asked when the technical details of the proposed alternative venue would be made available. He explained that the Society plans its programme several months in advance and that the lack of information was making forward planning difficult. In particular, he requested details of whether there would be a stage and, if so, its dimensions; whether there were plans to remove ceiling tiles; the venue capacity taking account of sightlines; the size of the screen; and the proposed position of the projector.

Councillor Schofield acknowledged the frustration caused by the lack of available information, noting that The Harlington was experiencing similar challenges in forward-booking artists and events. He advised that consultants were currently developing the design for the temporary venue and that, as soon as confirmed details were available, they would be shared with user groups. It was hoped that this information would be available imminently.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 4

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5th June attended together with Cllr Stanton our Executive Officer and Meetings Officer a presentation by Cloudy IT of their new meetings package and meeting room set for sound and transmission. Package looks very useful and there could be a budget request coming soon.

10th June together with representatives from BFF and Council Officers met with a Hart planning Officer for a review of the pre- application submission for the temporary venue. Generally, a very positive meeting.

10th June later attended a Harlington Working Group Meeting to appraise member of the latest developments

14th June attended the Friends of Oakley Park Brass Band Concert it was good to see other Councillors in attendance and a pleasant afternoon was enjoyed by all.

15th June together with the Executive Officer briefed our solicitors on progressing the lease on the temporary accommodation.

20th June along with a good representation of fellow councillors attended the Coffee Morning here at the Harlington. It proved to be a different event than usual as we had a number of residents attend with personal and particular issues and the meeting broke up into small groups rather than a communal session, but it appeared to work well and could establish a format for future meetings.

21st June had a formal invite to attend the Vintage Car show at the Elvetham Hotel, but having queued for 25 minutes on Fleet Road soon after the Elvetham Heath roundabout and

then unable to find a parking space in the hotel grounds I abandoned the mission and sent my apologies to the organisers. From the level of traffic and on-site parking it looked to be a very successful event.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 5

HCC/HDC ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following reports were received from Hampshire County Councillors:

Cllr Oliver

- A number of highway works are scheduled to take place in Church Crookham over the summer, including resurfacing works on Beacon Hill Road and the installation of a zebra crossing in Sandy Lane. These works may have an impact on Fleet residents.

Cllr Forster

- A number of highway works are also planned within Fleet. Whilst works are sequenced where possible to minimise congestion, programmes can be affected by emergency works.
- SGN continues to undertake its gas main replacement programme, and forthcoming works are likely to have an impact on traffic flow.
- The Judicial Review relating to the Government's proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Hampshire is progressing. However, the councils involved continue to prepare for reorganisation, as there are concerns that any further delays could jeopardise the current implementation timetable.
- Hampshire County Council has launched a Crisis and Resilience Fund to provide support to low-income households experiencing a financial shock or who are at risk of falling into financial crisis.

Councillor Stanton asked about the cause of the water flowing down Fleet High Street. Councillor Forster advised that it was due to a water main leak, which had been reported.

Councillor Parker asked whether more official communications could be issued regarding planned roadworks and their anticipated impacts. Councillor Forster advised that communications are the responsibility of Hampshire County Council but recommended that residents sign up to Causeway one.network, the platform used by highway authorities, utility companies and contractors to provide information on planned roadworks.

The following report was received from Hart District Councillor Alan Oliver:

- Hart District Council will launch a Community Grant Scheme on 13 July 2026, with £440,000 available to support community projects. Members were encouraged to review the eligibility criteria and promote the scheme to local community groups.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 6

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 3rd June 2026 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

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

- Development Control 8th and 22nd June 2026 (if available)
- RLA 17th June 2026

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 7**FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

Members noted receipt of the bank reconciliation and the list of payments for May 2026.

Councillor Stanton confirmed that the bank reconciliation and list of payments for May 2026 had been verified and signed off against the original bank statement.

RESOLVED

- a) That the bank reconciliation and list of payments for May 2026 be received and accepted.
- b) That the statement from Councillor Stanton confirming the verification and sign-off of the May 2026 bank reconciliations and list of payments be accepted.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 8**THE VIEWS PLAYGROUND – PWLB APPLICATION**

Members noted that the tender for a replacement playpark at The Views had been awarded and, as it is being procured on a fixed-price basis, the Council could now formally request a PWLB loan to cover the cost of delivery.

Members were reminded that the 2026/27 budget already includes provision for a six-month loan repayment based on a £350,000 borrowing envelope (to cover two capital projects, including this playpark). Consequently, no increase in precept is required to service this loan.

In forming their decision, Members considered the following documents:

- a) Business Case
- b) Annex A – Summary Budget and Forecast
- c) Annex B – Estimated Repayment Costs
- d) Annex C – Resident Feedback

RESOLVED

- a) To note the Business Case and supporting annexes demonstrating the need, financial sustainability, and community support for the project.
- b) To confirm that loan repayments for the skatepark project will be met from within the existing 2026/27 budget allocation for capital projects.
- c) To seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £150,000 over the borrowing term of 15 years for the replacement of the playpark at The Views. The annual loan repayments will come to around £14,800. It is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments.
- d) To delegate authority to the Executive Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Council, to finalise and submit the PWLB loan application and to take all necessary actions to progress the project to construction stage once approval is secured.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 9**2026 CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH**

Members received a report from the Christmas Lunch Working Group on current and future options.

RESOLVED

- a) To note the report of the Christmas Day Lunch Working Group.
- b) To approve the continuation of the Christmas Day event in 2026.
- c) To approve changing the catering provision from a hot Christmas meal to a high-quality cold festive buffet or afternoon tea.
- d) To note that the event remains subject to the recruitment of a suitably trained volunteer to undertake the role of Responsible Person.
- e) To authorise the Projects & Committee Officer to proceed with detailed planning on this basis and report back to the Christmas Lunch Working Group with a proposed menu, programme and final delivery arrangements.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 10

PLANT BASED TREATY – REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ENDORSEMENT

Members considered a request from a member of the public that Fleet Town Council endorse the Plant Based Treaty.

Members noted that it was a personal choice to have a plant-based diet.

RESOLVED

To decline to endorse the Plant Based Treaty on the grounds that endorsement of international policy campaigns falls outside the Town Council's statutory remit whilst reaffirming the Council's commitment to environmental sustainability within the delivery of its own services.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 11

BANK MANDATE

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.1, Full Council approval is required to amend the Council's bank mandate.

Following the appointment of Georgia Dunphy as Finance & Administration Manager, it is necessary to add her to the Council's bank mandate to enable her to set up payments within the Council's banking system as part of her duties. In line with the Council's financial controls, this authority will be limited to the preparation of payments and will not alter the existing authorisation requirements for payment approval.

RESOLVED

To approve the addition of Georgia Dunphy, Finance & Administration Manager, to the Council's bank mandate to enable her to set up payments in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 12

HARLINGTON UPDATE

Members received an update from the Chairman on progress with The Harlington renovation project.

BFF has now completed RIBA Stage 3 and issued a draft report. However, the appendix from Synergy remained outstanding. This appendix will include updated project costs and programme timescales, which are key components of the report. A review of the completed report was scheduled for Monday 6 July 2026.

The planning application for the project is due to be submitted during July.

Synergy has commenced market engagement by showing prospective principal contractors around The Harlington. Five contractors have expressed an interest in tendering for the works. As part of the procurement process, Synergy will undertake financial due diligence on each contractor to assess their financial standing and suitability.

Members noted that pre-application advice had been received from Hart District Council in respect of the proposed alternative venue and that no significant planning concerns had been identified.

An update was also provided on the ongoing lease negotiations for the alternative venue. In considering the landlord's current position, Members discussed the financial and operational risks to the Council and agreed the Council's proposed response.

In light of the forthcoming summer recess, Members requested that the Executive Officer continue to keep them informed of progress with the lease negotiations.

RESOLVED

To note the update from the Chairman.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 13 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were made:

- Fleet Carnival is on 4 July 2026 and the Council has a stall booked to engage with residents. Members are encouraged to attend if available.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 14 SOCIAL MEDIA PERFORMANCE

Members noted a report from the Communications Officer of social media activity in May 2026.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 15 CCTV

Members noted Hart District Council responses to queries raised relating to details of the CCTV contract, including provisions for equipment replacement, and clarification as to why previous instructions for cameras to operate on a panning setting have not been maintained.

FC JULY 2026 ITEM 16 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled to be held on Wednesday 2nd September 2026 at 7pm at the Harlington.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Signed.....
Chairman

Date:.....