



**FLEET TOWN  
COUNCIL**

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

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 7pm**

- \* Councillor Einchcomb (Chairman)
- \* Councillor Stanton (Vice Chairman)

* Councillor Chenery	0 Councillor Powell
0 Councillor Davidson	* Councillor Schofield
* Councillor Engstrom	* Councillor Taylor
# Councillor Forster	* Councillor Tilley
* Councillor Holt	* Councillor Woods
0 Councillor May	

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

**Also in attendance:**

Rita Tong – Executive Officer  
Facilities and Open Spaces Manager (FOSM)  
Cemetery Clerk  
Friends of Basingbourne Park representatives  
Friends of Oakley Park representative

**RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 1    ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Einchcomb was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Engstrom for the position of Chairman.

**RESOLVED**

That Councillor Einchcomb be re-elected as Chairman of the Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee for the local government year 2026/2027.

**RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 2    ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Stanton was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Tilley for the position of Vice Chairman.

**RESOLVED**

That Councillor Stanton be elected as Vice Chairman of the Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee for the local government year 2026/2027.

### **RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 3      APOLOGIES**

Members received and accepted the apologies as noted above.

### **RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 4      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 5      QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Members of the Friends of Basingbourne asked the following questions:

1. What is the current status of the purchase and installation of the gondolier swing?
2. Will Fleet Town Council give permission to the Friends of Basingbourne to continue talking to Hart District Council and the South East River Trust regarding works required to maintain SINC status?
3. What progress has been made on repairing the noticeboard and re-gritting the bridges?

The Executive Officer advised that officer resources had been focused on several major Council projects and, as a result, no progress had been made on the gondolier swing. Members of the Friends of Basingbourne were informed that it was unlikely this project would progress during 2026.

In response to the second question, the Executive Officer advised that a response could not be provided until Agenda Item 10 had been considered.

The Facilities & Open Spaces Manager reported that initial enquiries had been made into replacing part of the noticeboard rather than the entire structure. However, sufficient information had not yet been received to determine the most appropriate course of action. In relation to the bridges, he advised that the matter had not yet been considered in detail but indicated that re-gritting was likely to be achievable, subject to the availability of an appropriate budget.

### **RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 6      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> March 2026.

### **RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 7      THE CEMETERY CLERK'S REPORT**

Members received the Cemetery Clerk's report.

The Cemetery Clerk reported on practices relating to the scattering of ashes at other cemeteries and options for improving the condition of the lawn cemetery.

In relation to the scattering of ashes, Members were advised that most cemeteries do not permit the practice. However, Farnham Town Council Cemetery allows ashes to be scattered within designated flower beds, where they are subsequently raked into the soil so that no visible signs remain. Members agreed that the same approach should be adopted at Fleet Town Council Cemetery.

The Cemetery Clerk also reported that the lawn cemetery was not functioning as originally intended. Members noted that the undulating ground made mowing difficult and that several areas had failed to establish grass despite repeated reseeding. Members therefore considered removing the lawn cemetery designation and incorporating the area into the wider cemetery. It was noted that this would provide a single, consistent set of cemetery

regulations, making the cemetery easier to manage. Members agreed that this was the most appropriate course of action.

The Cemetery Clerk further advised that there had been further badger activity within the cemetery and that an ecologist had been engaged. Members noted that, on the previous occasion, the ecologist had only infilled the affected area and had not installed protective netting. As the activity had reoccurred in the same location, Members requested that the Cemetery Clerk challenge the cost of the works and seek a more robust, long-term solution.

#### **RESOLVED**

- a) To note the Cemetery Clerks report.
- b) To remove the lawn cemetery designation and incorporate the area into the wider cemetery.
- c) To permit the scattering of ashes within designated flower beds in addition to the existing approved locations.
- d) To authorize the engagement of the ecologist, whilst requesting that a more robust long-term solution to recurring badger activity around the affected graves, such as the installation of protective netting, be implemented.

The Cemetery Clerk left the meeting at approximately 19:38pm.

#### **RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 8      TEMPORARY USE OF CALTHORPE PARK FOR PARKING**

Members considered a request from Fleet Cricket Club for temporary vehicular access to Calthorpe Park to provide additional parking for parents attending junior cricket coaching sessions.

In considering the request, Members acknowledged the positive relationship the Council has with Fleet Cricket Club and noted that the Club had recently made several requests to the Council that had not been approved. Members were mindful of maintaining a constructive working relationship with the Club.

However, Members also considered the wider implications of granting the request. It was noted that approval could set a precedent for similar requests from other organisations using Council parks and open spaces.

Members further expressed concern that, even if access gates were supervised by marshals, there remained a risk of unauthorised vehicles entering the park. It was recognised that marshals could not guarantee that access would be controlled at all times.

In addition, Members noted that the proposed parking area did not provide sufficient turning space for vehicles, creating a risk of damage to both vehicles and the park surface.

Finally, Members were satisfied that suitable alternative parking arrangements were available within a short walking distance, including Victoria Road Car Park. Members also noted that Fleet Cricket Club had previously been advised that it could seek permission from Fleet Town Football Club to use its car park for this purpose.

#### **RESOLVED**

To decline the request for temporary vehicular access to Calthorpe Park for parking associated with junior cricket coaching sessions.

## **RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 9      REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO INSTALL A KERB SET**

Members considered a request from the registered owners/family representatives of Grave Plot 2157 for permission to install a kerb set around the grave.

Members noted that, following the earlier decision to remove the lawn cemetery designation, the plot would no longer be subject to the restrictions that had previously required specific approval for the installation of a kerb set. Consequently, there was no longer any policy reason to refuse the request.

### **RESOLVED**

To approve the request to install a kerb set around Grave Plot 2157.

## **RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 10      SITES OF IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (SINC) – MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR OAKLEY PARK AND BASINGBOURNE PARK**

Members considered a report regarding the management of the Council's two Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC): Oakley Park and Basingbourne Park.

Members noted the advice received from Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre that updated ecological surveys should be undertaken before revised management plans are prepared, ensuring that future management proposals are based on current ecological evidence. Members also noted that, whilst the existing management plans remain broadly relevant, they require updating to reflect current species information and revised action plans.

Members were advised that the Friends of Basingbourne Park had been working with Hart District Council to identify habitat restoration opportunities and that a Countryside Community Grant Scheme was currently available. Given the limited timescale for applications, Members agreed that both Fleet Town Council and the Friends of Basingbourne Park should explore grant funding opportunities, with the Council ensuring that Oakley Park was also considered as part of any wider funding bid.

Members agreed that the existing management plans should be updated as far as practicable and that a meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Working Group should be convened to consider the ecological survey requirements, future management priorities and the most appropriate approach to grant applications.

### **RESOLVED**

- a) To note the advice received from Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre and Hart District Council regarding the management of Oakley Park and Basingbourne Park Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.
- b) To note the concerns regarding the potential loss of heathland habitat at Basingbourne Park if restoration works are not undertaken in the near future.
- c) To support, in principle, the exploration of external funding opportunities for habitat restoration and enhancement works at Basingbourne Park and Oakley Park, subject to any proposed works being consistent with the approved management plans and receiving the necessary Council approvals.
- d) That the Executive Officer update the existing management plans, as far as practicable, and submit revised drafts to a future meeting of the Committee.
- e) That a meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Working Group be convened to consider the ecological survey requirements, future management works and the Council's approach to external funding applications.
- f) To receive a further report once costs, funding opportunities and delivery options have

been identified.

#### **RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 11 BENCH & CARVING REQUESTS**

Members considered a request from Fleet Carnival to donate and install an additional bench in Calthorpe Park. Members noted that, given the size of the park, there was a need for additional seating and welcomed the offer.

Members also considered a request to install a carving to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of Fleet Carnival. Whilst Members were supportive of the proposal, they noted that the design submitted did not include any reference to the 70th Anniversary. Members agreed that the carving should clearly commemorate the anniversary and requested that the design be amended accordingly. They also requested that it be explored as to whether the carving could be done on the tree stump in the area where the existing bench is situated.

#### **RESOLVED**

- a) To approve the request to donate and install an additional bench at Calthorpe Park.
- b) To approve the request to install the Fleet Carnival commemorative carving, subject to the final design including reference to the 70th Anniversary of Fleet Carnival.

#### **RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 12 HCC BENCH ADOPTION**

Members considered a request from Hampshire County Council for Fleet Town Council to assume responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of three additional benches proposed as part of the Upper Street Improvement Scheme.

In considering the request, Members noted that no commuted sum had been offered to cover the future maintenance costs associated with the benches. Members also expressed concern that accepting responsibility for the benches could create an expectation that Fleet Town Council would assume responsibility for maintaining the wider public realm associated with the improvement scheme.

#### **RESOLVED**

To decline Hampshire County Council's request for Fleet Town Council to adopt responsibility for the maintenance of the three additional benches proposed as part of the Upper Street Improvement Scheme.

#### **RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 13 THE HARLINGTON AND ANCELLS FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE REPORT**

Members received the General Manager's report providing an update on events, hirings and operational activities at The Harlington and Ancells Farm Community Centre.

Members welcomed the revised format of the report and considered it to be a helpful improvement. They requested that the term '*net income*' be amended to '*net contribution*' in future reports to more accurately reflect the financial information being presented.

Members noted that the spend per head varied significantly depending on the type of show or event.

Members requested that the Harlington General Manager report on the average percentage increase in ticket prices between 2025/26 and 2026/27.

The Harlington General Manager left the meeting at approximately 19:47pm.

**RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 14 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Members were reminded that the Councillor Coffee morning was being held at 10:00am on Saturday 20 June 2026.

**RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 15 FUTURE EVENTS**

To note future events taking place on Council property, as detailed below.

Councillors' Coffee Morning	20 <sup>th</sup> June 2026	The Harlington
Fleet Carnival	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2026	Calthorpe Park & High Street
The Views	11 <sup>th</sup> July 2026	Vine Church Summer Community Event
Oakley Park	12 <sup>th</sup> July 2026	Fleet Infant School Family Fun Day
Oakley Park Summer Fete	18 <sup>th</sup> July 2026	Oakley Park
Lions Beerfest	1 <sup>st</sup> August 2026	The Harlington
Music On The Views	22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2026	The Views

**RLA JUNE 2026 ITEM 16 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee will be held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2026, 7pm at The Harlington.

The meeting closed at 20:55pm.

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

**Chairman**