

MINUTES OF THE FLEET TOWN COUNCIL POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

16th January 2012 7.30pm
The Harlington

Councillors

Cllr Woods, Cllr Einchcomb, Cllr Holt, Cllr Axam.

Also Present

Shar Roselman – Clerk

Janet Stanton – The Deputy Clerk for part of the meeting.

P & F JAN 2012 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN TO TAKE NOMINATIONS FOR CHAIR

Resolved in the absence of Cllr Schofield, to appoint Cllr Woods to take nominations for the chair.

Prop: PE

P & F JAN 2012 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Resolved to nominate Cllr Woods to chair the meeting in the absence of Cllr Schofield.

Prop: CA

P & F JAN 2012 ITEM 1: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Cllrs Schofield, Robinson, and Oliver. Cllr Perthen did not attend the meeting.

P & F JAN 2012 ITEM 2: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

P & F JAN 2012 ITEM 3: QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the member of the public.

P & F JAN 2012 ITEM 4 : MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 November 2011.

Prop: CA Sec: LH

P & F JAN 2012 ITEM 5: REPORT FROM THE WORKING GROUP ACCOUNTS.

Although Cllr Robinson was not at the meeting, he had sent in a note to state that he had reviewed the bank statement reconciliations and the payment schedules for October, November and December 2012 and had found no material discrepancies.

P & F JAN 2011 ITEM 6: INCOME AND REVENUE STATEMENT, PAYMENT SCHEDULE, BANK RECONCILIATION.

The committee received into the minutes and signed off the payment schedule and the bank reconciliation for October 2011, November 2011 and December 2011.

The committee received into the minutes and signed off the months eight and nine income and expenditure statement. A year end budget projection was also received projecting from Quarter 3 to year end, which showed that revenue and expenditure were on target, with lowered income at the community centres being compensated for by lowered expenditure in these areas. There is an anticipated general reserve at year end of approximately £50000, although issues with drainage at Basingbourne and the purchase of a new colour printer, networked scanner and computer cabling will reduce this slightly.

Two issues were raised to be answered by the clerk:

The pension figure for the Harlington was over budget and showed a large increase in December. The clerk advised that this was because of an incorrect allocation to the Policy and Finance budget, which had been corrected by journal entry to the Harlington Budget, and because two additional staff members had joined the pension fund, which had not, at the time of creating the budget in September 2010, been anticipated.

The figure for salaries for the Open Spaces cost centre was up for the month of December. This was because there had been a hand over period for the Sport's and Recreation Officer when two salaries were being paid, and because the agreed salary of the new Sport's Officer is slightly over budget.

A query was raised regarding the payment of invoices for hire of pitches.

Action: The clerk will investigate why the second invoice did not appear to have been issued for Ancells Farm.

Resolved to approve the October, November and December 2011 bank reconciliation and payment schedule, and the November and December 2011 income and revenue statement as an accurate reflection of the accounts of the council.

Prop: GW Sec: CA

P & F JAN 2012 ITEM 7 : INTERNAL AUDITOR

The Council had received information from the internal auditor to the effect that the audit service was no longer being provided through HALC. The internal auditor would still be available to provide an internal audit service working from her own business. There would be no increase in costs.

The clerk advised that the last financial year's internal audit had been very thorough and had probed into areas of corporate governance as well as financial regulations and accounts. It was agreed that the interim reports provided by the auditor had been both comprehensive and useful.

Resolved to approve continuing to use Eleanor Greene as the internal auditor.

Prop: PE Sec: CA

An audit checklist was received by the committee.

Resolved to delegate the completion of the checklist to the clerk, to review this with the chairman, and for the checklist to be ratified at the next Policy and Finance meeting.

Prop: GW Sec: PE

P & F JAN 2012 ITEM 8 : RISK ASSESSMENT

The working group dealing with risk assessment has not met for six months. The working group has completed the risk assessment scores, but still needs to work on the action plans for high risk areas.

Action: The chairman to provide the clerk with dates for a further meeting.

The clerk highlighted a number of concerns about the Harlington Fire and Safety procedures which required attention.

Cllr Woods and the clerk to devise an action plan to deal with the concerns, and to co-ordinate the library evacuation procedure with the Fleet Town Council procedure.

The committee discussed the need for a tree inspection and management policy. The clerk advised that an appropriate policy would include defining trees to be inspected into three categories: high, medium and low risk. These would determine the frequency of inspections, with low risk not inspected at all, and high risk trees inspected annually. High risk trees would typically be trees that overhang residential neighbours' properties, or a play ground. Medium risk would include trees close to well-frequented paths. The arboriculturalist would be able to use the policy to determine which trees to inspect during his inspection periods. A provision has been made in the Ground Maintenance Contract for inspection of trees.

Resolved to delegate the development of this policy to officers.

Action: The deputy clerk.

Prop: CA Sec: LH

P & F JAN 2012 ITEM 9: COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

The clerk advised that no information had been received from Cllr Forster on the recommendation for the committee with respect to the new website.

Action: Cllr Woods will follow this matter up with Cllr Forster. The clerk will advise Cllr Woods of the amount budgeted for in staff salary provision for the development of the website. Ideally this amount should be earmarked for this purpose for the forthcoming year.

Councillors commented that the changes to the existing Fleet Town Council website, which included sports and recreational details and new photographs, had been observed and appreciated.

The deputy clerk advised that the distributor of the Winter 2011 Newsletter had erroneously distributed the newsletters to Church Crookham and Elvetham Heath Parishes, and had only delivered to a small section of Fleet. The distributor is now redistributing, at his own cost, to areas not covered within Fleet. Councillors will be advised of delivery dates in their wards, and are asked to contact three or four people in their area to establish whether delivery has taken place.

Action: All Councillors.

It was agreed that another newsletter so soon after this distribution would not be acceptable to members of the public. To advertise the Annual Resident's Meeting an invitation will be sent to all households in Fleet, at a delivery and printing cost of around £600. To maximize the cost/benefits of this distribution, additional flyers about Action Day, sports and recreation activities and the Harlington will be included in the delivery. This cost will be offset by not producing a Spring Newsletter.

Resolved that the Spring Newsletter be delayed, to become the Summer Newsletter, and to include information on good neighbourliness, the Jubilee Celebration Weekend, and possibly the medical questionnaire. In addition an appropriate invitation the Town Meeting to be drafted.

Prop: GW Sec: CA

P & F JAN 2012 ITEM 10: CLERK'S REPORT

The committee received the clerk's report. The clerk advised that the issue of the missing cheque for the investment account had been resolved. The Co-Operative Bank had found the missing cheque, which they accidentally misfiled. They have agreed to pay Fleet Town Council the interest that would have accrued during the period the cheque was not banked.

P & F JAN 2012 ITEM 11: GIFT POLICY

Resolved to approve the amendments to the Gift Policy to add the bracketed words to the sentence:

As a mark of respect the Town Council purchases a wreath (or gives a donation) to the value of £50 for past and present Councillors and staff (spouses of Councillors and staff, and prominent members of the community for their funerals.)

Prop: CA Sec: PE

P & F JAN 2012 ITEM 12: CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

The committee resolved that, in terms of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Exclusion of the public Section 1(2), by reason of the item referring to an individual/s, the Public and Press would be excluded from the following items on the agenda.

Prop: PE Sec: LH

P & F JAN 2012 ITEM 13: ESTABLISHMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

The committee received and discussed the minutes of the Establishment Sub-Committee dated 15th December 2011.

Resolved to approve the minutes of the Establishment Sub-Committee of 15 December 2011

There being no further business the meeting ended at 9.50 pm. The date of the next meeting is 20th February 2012.

Signed.....

Date:.....