

MINUTES OF THE FLEET TOWN COUNCIL POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

17 October 2011 7.30pm
The Harlington

Councillors

Robert Schofield (Chair), Cllr Einchcomb, Cllr Hurley, Cllr Woods, Cllr Holt, Cllr Axam.

Also Present

Shar Roselman – Clerk

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 1: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Cllr Robinson and Cllr Perthen.

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 2: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 3: QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the member of the public.

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 4 : MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th September 2011.

Prop: BS Sec: GW

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 6: REPORT FROM THE WORKING GROUP ACCOUNTS.

Cllr Hurley advised that he had completed a check of the bank reconciliation and payment schedule for August. However the bank reconciliation for September still had to be completed. Cllr Hurley will be completing the reconciliation within the next few days.

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 7: 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 August 2011.

The committee received into the minutes and signed off the month six income and revenue statement. The graphs for the half yearly figures showed that revenue and expenditure were generally on target with respect to the bottom line, although both revenue and expenditure were down for the Community Centres.

It was noted that the income from events was different from that produced by the Operations Manager.

Action: The clerk will check the allocations of cost codes in this area.

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 5 : PRELIMINARY REVENUE BUDGET

The clerk presented a preliminary revenue budget with projections for year end expenditure, for consideration by the committee. It was noted that the budget this year for the Harlington was stretched, and that the year end figures were likely to be approximately £5000 less than target.

Concerns were raised regarding the economic climate, rising gas bills, the need to investigate issues of pitch hire charges, and the generation of income from open spaces.

Resolved to follow a policy of making a precept determination only after due consideration of the following:

- 1. The precept to be set against Council Needs.**
- 2. The precept to be set against Capital Plans**
- 3. To operate as efficiently and cheaply as possible to minimize increases to precept.**
- 4. To build up a reserve fund of between 3 months and 6 months of operating budget.**
- 5. To consider the Precept against CPI.**
- 6. To take the economic climate into account.**
- 7. To continue to provide subsidised services to residents.**

Prop: CA Sec: BS

Action: Councillors to study the preliminary budget and to present questions to the clerk prior to the next meeting for answers at the meeting, or to make proposals for increases or decreases in the preliminary revenue budget.

The capital projects list, which will be going to the Recreation, Leisure and Amenities committee for determination of which projects to put forwards for S106 funding, was received by the committee. A concern was raised that the capital projects list might raise expectations of the public and the various Friends of Groups. It was important to ensure that, at this stage, the document is viewed only as a wish list for projects, rather than a commitment. Equally it was pointed out that this document will eventually form part of the RLA Strategy and the major projects will be consulted upon with the residents of Fleet before finalisation.

Action: The clerk will make changes to the timescales changing dates to read short, medium or long term projects.

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 8: INVESTMENTS

The fixed Bond Investment held with HSBC has now expired. HSBC had offered a rate of 0.43% AER for 3 months investment. The Co-Operative Bank has offered 1.5% AER for 3 months investment in a guaranteed investment account. It was clarified that the stated figure was a daily rate which may change over short periods of time.

Resolved to invest £50,000 in a guaranteed investment account with the Co-Operative Bank for a period of three months, at their current rate, providing this exceeds the rate offered by HSBC.

Prop: BS Sec: AH

Action: The clerk to arrange for the transfer of funds.

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 9: ADOPTION OF PLAY AREAS LEAP-NEAP – HITCHES LANE

The committee received a proposal to adopt the new Local and Neighbourhood play areas provided by developers at Hitches Lane, including a commuted sum of £90,365.81 for playground maintenance. The committee debated how long the commuted sum would last, and decided that further investigation was needed to establish the ongoing costs of maintenance of the play areas.

Action: The clerk to investigate the costs for grass cutting, litter picking and routine play equipment inspections.

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 10: COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The committee received information from the clerk on website development. The approved contractor had advised that for the re-defined requirements of the website a further 3 templates would be necessary. Alternatively, a more flexible website with additional search, store and service facilities could be purchased at an additional cost.

The committee felt that Cllr Forster should investigate the contractor's new proposals, to establish whether there was some validity in their claims, and to determine a way forward.

Action: The clerk to request Cllr Forster to consider the latest proposals from the contractor and to come up with a recommendation for the committee.

Action: The clerk and the deputy clerk to write a Town Talk Newsletter, on the subject of the Core Strategy Survey. This issue will include a medical services questionnaire. Once complete, this will be sent to all councillors for comment.

Resolved to set down standing orders at 10h30 to allow the meeting to continue.

Prop: BS

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 11: GRANT APPROVAL

A request was submitted for grant funding from Squirrels Playschool for £1957.

Resolved not to approve the above grant application as it does not meet the criteria of the Fleet Town Council grant's policy.

Prop: CA Sec: BS

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 12: RISK MANAGEMENT

At this time the committee felt it was not in a position to arrange the next meeting date of the working group dealing with risk management due to the unavailability of some key members.

P & F OCT 2011 ITEM 13: CLERK'S REPORT

The committee received a clerk's report for noting which pointed out trends in the six month budget pattern. Projections showed that it was likely that this year the budget will be met with a sum available for transfer to General Reserves.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 10.45 pm.

Signed.....

Date:.....