



MINUTES OF THE SIXTH ANNUAL FLEET TOWN COUNCIL

RESIDENTS' MEETING

Tuesday 5 April 2016

7.30pm The Harlington, Fleet

1) WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Cllr Schofield (Chairman of the Council) welcomed approximately 160 people to the sixth Fleet Town Annual Residents' Meeting. He explained that the meeting belonged to the residents. It was an opportunity for residents to hear what FTC has been doing over the last year and to ask questions.

2) MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the fifth Annual Residents' Meeting held on Tuesday 31 March 2015 were adopted as a correct record.

3) FLEET TOWN COUNCIL PRESENTATION

Cllr Schofield, the Chairman of the Council, explained that there would be an overview of the year and two further presentations on The Harlington options and The Neighbourhood Plan. This would be followed by a question and answer session led by local resident Mr George Woods

a) Overview of the last year (Cllr Schofield, Chairman of the Council)

Cllr Schofield began with reminding the meeting who did what

Hampshire County Council :

- Social Services
- Education
- Highways
- Libraries
- Environment
- Street lighting
- Cycle Ways

Hart District Council :

- Housing
- Planning

- Building Control
- Licensing
- Parking
- Refuse Collection
- Licensing
- Leisure centre
- Street cleansing

- **Fleet Town Council**
- Parks
- Cemetery
- Harlington
- Ancells Community Centre
- Floral displays
- Xmas lights
- War memorial
- Annual Residents' Meeting
- Consultee on planning issues

The Chairman explained that there were monthly Council meetings, 2 main committees (Policy and Finance and Recreation Leisure and Amenities)

The Development Control /Planning Committee met fortnightly.

Cllr Schofield touched on the functions/issues over which FTC had no control:

- The number of charity shops
- The number of retirement properties
- Issues relating top Fleet Railway station
- Those elements of the Council Tax bill raised by HDC and HCC
- Traffic congestion
- Housing provision

Cllr Schofield commented on the efforts being made by local businesses to keep the town centre vibrant through events such as “paint Fleet pink”, the Fashion Show and the Business Forum’s work to secure a BID to improve the presentation and visibility of the town centre.

It was explained how the business of the Council was managed through Council and committee meetings to which the public were invited:

- **Full Council-held monthly**

- **Establishment Committee** which dealt with staffing matters. For example the implementation of the new minimum wage and work place pensions.
- **Recreation Leisure and Amenities Committee** with the Harlington Working Group below- having the largest expenditure budget

Support of the following events was given but these were run by local groups

- Christmas Festival
- Food Festival
- The Marathon
- Fireworks

Cllr Schofield acknowledged and thanked the body of volunteers mentioning the dedication of people like Clare Brown (Fleet Carnival) and Sue Tilley (Fleet Festival and the Food Festival)

There had been no major projects completed over the last year but the following smaller schemes had been completed:

- On-line booking for tennis courts
- New permeable paths throughout Basingbourne
- New basketball hoop
- Improvements to Fleet cemetery

Some recent good news was the approach by the Lawn Tennis Association to develop tennis in Fleet through improvements to court facilities like a remote key access and resurfacing of the courts with a contribution and maintenance commitment from FTC

The year of 2015 had been very wet with flooding experienced in some parks and residential areas. It was explained that Susannah Hope of HDC was trying to establish 'flood communities' so that local residents were aware of the precautions they could take.

The work of the "Friends" Groups was given special mention:

- Oakley Park (Mike and Irene Bye)
- Basingbourne(Dave Harris)
- Ancells (Simon Taylor and Isy Paton)
- Calthorpe (Julian Ford)
- The imminent establishment of a Views Group
- The emergence of a Fleet Cemetery Group

The proposed Action Day on 23 April 2016 was announced with a request for volunteers to help clean up the town

There was confirmation that there would be various categories taking part in South and South East in Bloom 2016

Bigger projects were underway or in the planning stage at:

- The Views-sensory garden experience

- Fleet Cemetery-Garden of Remembrance
- Calthorpe Park-recreational facilities
- The feasibility of a new Harlington

A new front door, flue, boiler and floor had been installed at Ancells Community centre and the Harlington was providing a wider range of event with some shows selling out

The Film Club had become well established and this evenings presentation was being displayed on their superior equipment thanks to Mike Mellor

The panto provider had been selected for 2016 which was Starurst, an amateur group who would provide a shorter panto season to allow time for a range of Christmas events and bookings including the now established Jazz Club thanks to Sue and Chris Tilley

Policy and Finance Committee

This committee monitored the financial performance of the Council and set the budget for approval by Council. It dealt with policy formulation, monitored risk and awarded grants of £49,000 with £15,000 of this being awarded to local voluntary groups

Two substantial grants were:

- Basingstoke Canal (£18,000 pa)- FTC successfully secured membership of the Basingstoke Canal JMC at the end of 2015
- Fleet Link (£14,000) with contributions match funded by HCC. There were over 100 local users . The HCC intention to change their Dial a Ride service could impact on the Fleet Link service

The 2015/2016 financial results were explained through presentation slides

Of the 2016/2017 budget of £599,000 a sum of £390,000 had been ring fenced for the Harlington development.

Planning/Development Control Committee

This Committee meets every two weeks to comment on the planning applications submitted to HDC, for the Fleet area. This generally amounts to 20 every two weeks.

Approx 200 new bedrooms had been added to the housing stock through extension applications which was equivalent to 60-70 new homes

Office conversions had resulted in some 250 1 and 2 bedroom apartments

The Planning Committee was responsible for commenting on planning issues including the HDC housing allocations

Transparency

Reference was made to;

- Town Talk

- The FTC web site
- Fleet Guide
- Social Media sites

FTC made every effort to be wholly transparent

Vacancies for Councillors and co-option

It was reported that there were four vacancies on the Council and anyone who lived in GU51 or GU 52 was welcome to make an application to be co-opted onto the Council

4 The Harlington progress report

Cllr Oliver introduced himself as a Fleet Town and Hart District Councillor.

Cllr Oliver reminded the meeting that the possibility of a new Harlington had been discussed at the last two Annual Residents' meetings, had appeared in Town Talk and had made the front page of the Fleet News

The Harlington survey showed that the areas of disappointment were

- Lack of tiered seating
- Poor state of loos etc.
- Lack of facilities-sound and projection equipment
- Inadequate changing rooms

FTC is aware that the building is

- Out of date and highly inefficient
- Has inadequate and obsolete equipment

Three options were explained

- to renovate the existing building
- to modify the building
- to replace the building

Renovation (new roof /heating etc would cost £1.5m (impact on precept £55-£64

Modification(rebuild to allow tiered seating etc) £3.5m(impact £55-£75

Replacement new 320 seater facility £7.5m (impact £55-97)

All these projections were shown in detail on the presentation slides

Plans will be published for consultation giving

- a 300-350 seater theatre with a balcony in a building which would continue to cater for all the local user groups plus additional 'artistic' groups because of the improved acoustics.

- Foyer/reception/café/bar/ second entertainment area
- Library
- Meeting rooms
- Office space
- Public toilets
- Storage and plant rooms

The next steps would include

- Investigation of funding options inc PWLB, Crowd funding and grants
- Developing the plan for consultation

Cllr Oliver explained that the FTC element of Council tax had been raised to finance preliminary works. Following consultation with residents the ring fenced precept increase will be set aside for the chosen option

The important next steps were;

- Completion of a feasibility study by mid 2016
- Development of a funding and operating model
- Consultation on options and precept implications

HDC had indicated a willingness to provide the necessary land in Gurkha Square for a new facility and HCC were keen to retain the library and be involved in a new development. Neither of these, nor adjoining Parish Councils would be in a position to make a financial contribution.

5) Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Walton explained the concept of a Neighbourhood Plan :

- control over housing development
- Public engagement
- Clarity of scope
- Designated area
- identifies strategic housing land
- helps control character of the local area
- needs to be focussed

It was pointed out that a Neighbourhood Plan gave:

- A document of legal standing to be considered during the planning decision making process
- help to meet need and support growth
- access to 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy

The option of a referendum was explained “ Do you want HDC to use the NP for the parish of Fleet to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area”

Cllr Walton presented a slide dealing with the recent development in relation to the site at Pyestock which now proposed a 1500 residential housing development

6 OPEN FORUM

A local resident, Mr George Woods, led the open forum session .

- **David Green Dinorben Avenue- Will FTC confirm that it will not be repeating increases in future years?**

The scale of increase had been set to accommodate the 3 options for the Harlington

- **Russel Hunt Leawood Road- Harlington is over ambitious. When the consultation is published the public will need to know the budget, the loan repayment implications**

An assurance was given that the costs/benefits/demerits/business plans etc will be available to every resident through an appropriate consultation process

- **James Bittles Peatmoor Close-Have you asked local businesses for a contribution?**

No but FTC will take this on board

- **Kit Mitchell Tavistock Road-will you make sure that Gurkha Square is retained**

Parking space numbers will be retained

- **Val Clinch Leawood Road- Suggest we issue ID cards to local residents so that other uses of the Harlington pay more**

Agreed to keep this kind of provision in mind

- **Local resident Bulrushes -have you tried to get commercial involvement for the Harlington?**

FTC working with specialist theatre designers who have experience in this area. We will be discussing commercial involvement and charitable trust status

- **Local resident-Is it a coincidence that the housing numbers that SHBC and Rushmoor cannot provide are similar to the number of units now proposed for Pyestock?**

Cllr Parker. Leader of HDC commented that the number of units mentioned for Pyestock were the number that could fit on the site. He explained that the Housing Needs survey was underway which would help deal with the Rushmoor/SHBC issue

- **Simon Taylor-What is FTC doing to encourage new businesses and what future plans are you making for local businesses**

FTC does not have a business development remit but helps businesses to help themselves

- **Kate Mellor Avondale Road -In the option to develop Gurkha Square the land occupied by the existing building would be handed back to HDC.What will happen to that land. Residents need to be aware that it could be used by HDC for high density housing**

Until a developer comes forward it is not within the FTC mandate but HDC have agreed that parking numbers should not be reduced

- **Sue Fisher -Were recent roadworks at M3 junction 4A paid for by owners of Pyesytock? We need doctor surgeries and schools especially a secondary school?**

Confirmed that FTC had submitted views on infrastructure requirements to HDC. Cllr Oliver confirmed that a major development like Winchfield was still required to give any opportunity for a new secondary school for Hart

- **Local resident- What is effect of SPA and SANGS on the Pyestock site?**

Confirmed that the bottom end of the site is within the 400m exclusion zone and could not therefore be developed for housing. The gap between Cove and Fleet should be protected

Mr George Woods thanked Councillors, the Town Clerk and her team and the General Manager and his team for continued hard work and local residents for attending the meeting and asking their questions

The meeting ended at 9.25pm

NB All the presentations can be viewed on the FTC website

www.fleet-tc.gov.uk/Article/Detail.aspx?ArticleUid=3ce5f502-49c3-462f-8000-7d33d4d3e4df