



FLEET TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

held on

Wednesday 2 December 2015

at The Harlington at 7pm

PRESENT

Councillors Bob Schofield (Chairman), Steve Cattle, Paul Einchcomb, Steve Forster, Denis Gotel, Leslie Holt, Kathy Jasper, Alan Oliver, Dai Pierce, Jeff Smith, Neil Walton, Jonathan Wright

Also Present

Janet Stanton-Town Clerk
Sheila Rayner-Committee Clerk

Cllr Bennison-HCC
Mike Bye- Friends of Oakley Park

ITEM 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There was an apology for absence from Cllrs Chenery, Hope, Robinson and Woods

ITEM 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

ITEM 3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public

ITEM 4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

With the request that Crookham Village PC be thanked and HDC be asked if views expressed at the JMC were personal to their rep or the views of HDC (item 6), the minutes of the Council held on 4 November 2015, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

(Post meeting note:-Cllr Schofield had written to HDC, but as yet has not received a response)

The Council received the minutes of the following meetings:

Development Control Committee 9 and 23 November 2015

ITEM 5 BUDGET 2016-2017

The Chairman of Policy and Finance Committee, Cllr Holt, presented a report regarding the preparation of the Budget 2016/2017 which had been prepared by Cllr Schofield.

There was a thorough and lengthy debate about a whole range of issues related to balancing income and expenditure covering matters such as increasing the cost of hall hires, reducing the Harlington opening hours, possible sharing of staff between The Town Council and Harlington function, possible service level reductions, possibly seeking funding support from Elvetham Heath and Church Crookham Parish Councils to assist with Harlington costs, reviewing the operation of the Coffee Shop and securing an operational budget increase that does not exceed 3 %.

Responses confirmed that most of these issues had been investigated and in general did not address the significant shortfall in operational budget that had been identified. A 10% increase in hall hire rates would add about £9,000 to income and potentially drive away some existing users as new facilities were now available in the immediate vicinity of Fleet.

A 3% increase in Council Tax would attract only an additional £16,500, insufficient to meet the shortfall.

Some additional savings could be made by closing the Harlington except in the case of major bookings and evening performances, but this required a significant change in policy to no longer be a community facility. The Council needed to decide if they wanted to maintain the current level of services or accept significant cut backs in operational costs and if they supported raising funds to initiate development of preliminary works to define a New Harlington.

It was further recognised that an RLA Committee review of bar charges would lead only to a small impact on the overall shortfall.

Members were concerned that the great improvement in the parks would suffer as the result of a budget that reflected a 'maintenance only' organisation.

Members noted that salaries generally had increased and continuing issues concerning the impact of the National Living Wage and a Pension for All would need to continue to be kept under review by the Establishment Committee.

There were concerns about the impact of increases on local residents though members were reminded that a neighbouring local council had been supported in their decision to build a new local facility through an increase to their precept.

The members stated a preference for the principle of raising the precept only to cover the fees associated with The Harlington allowing a year to seek grant funding to support a costed project.

There were concerns that any grant funding application for the Harlington would be time consuming with no guarantee of the outcome and a possible further delay of four to five months awaiting the result. It was generally agreed that a grant application should be treated as essential later on in the process. Designs should be kept flexible so that grants could be used to enhance any outline scheme

There was a suggestion that any increase should not exceed 3%. It was pointed out that this represented only £16,500 when the precept had already reduced through the loss of government grant by £25,000 . The sense of the meeting was that local residents would support a reasonable increase in precept to support the development or refurbishment of the Harlington particularly that since 2010 the precept had risen by only £2 from £53.60

Following this debate Members considered four budget models for 2016/2017 and voted on Budget models 3 and 4

RESOLVED

- a) That Budget Model 4 be adopted with £99.81 being set as the 2016/2017 Council Tax level and HDC being informed accordingly
- b) Further savings be found to bring the deficit support to £50,000
- c) That a statement be circulated to local residents explaining the reasons for the level of increase in 2016/2017
- d) That the resolution be accepted with collective responsibility

Cllr Forster requested a recorded vote

Budget Model 3

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>
Cllr Cantle	Cllr Forster
Cllr Gotel	Cllr Oliver
Cllr Wright	
<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>

Budget Model 4

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>
Cllr Holt	Cllr Forster
Cllr Einchcomb	Cllr Oliver
Cllr Jasper	
Cllr Pierce	
Cllr Schofield	
Cllr Smith	
Cllr Walton	
<u>7</u>	<u>2</u>

ITEM 6 THE NEW HARLINGTON DEVELOPMENT

The members were reminded that having set the budget parameters for 2016/2017, the work of the Harlington Development Group could now proceed. It was noted that arrangements were also in place for a meeting to be held with senior representatives of the Hampshire Library service

RESOLVED

That the Harlington Development Group assembles a proposal to appoint consultants to prepare a detailed report on the development of a new building or renovating the Harlington

ITEM 7 PLANNING FOR A SAFER HAMPSHIRE- HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE CONSULTATION

Members considered a paper prepared by Cllr Smith on a consultation from Hampshire Fire and Rescue which dealt with plans for their future service operations.

Cllrs Forster and Smith had also attended a meeting at which Firefighters, managers and Union representatives had been present.

There had been expressions of concern about the smaller appliance being allocated to Fleet but managers were confident that a satisfactory level of service could be provided.

Union representatives however had remaining concerns regarding the impact on training.

HCC Cllr Bennison displayed an illustration of the first response vehicle and explained that this model had been used successfully in the Isle of Wight and Sweden. He reported that the proposed vehicles to be stationed at Fleet were a Land Rover, a tanker and a first response vehicle.

Members were assured that Fleet does not stand alone and that cover is provided from many surrounding areas, depending on operational requirements.

It was also noted that the incidence of fires has reduced markedly due to improved safety in the design and construction of buildings.

The proposals will take four years to roll out and firefighters were being trained to deal with medical emergencies to a much higher degree.

RESOLVED

To respond formally to the consultation by 4 December 2015 expressing concern about any proposal that did not include retention of a Land Rover at Fleet

ITEM 8 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2016/2017

The members considered a draft schedule of meetings for 2016-2017 which with the amendment to Establishment Committee meeting on 28 September 2016 (not 21 September) was approved

RESOLVED

To approve the schedule of meetings for 2016/2017 for presentation to the Annual Meeting of Council in May 2016

ITEM 9 FINANCIAL MONITORING

RESOLVED

The meeting received into the minutes

- a) The Income Receipts statement up to 31 October 2015
- b) The Expenditure statement up to 31 October 2015
- c) Confirmation that the bank reconciliations for October 2015 equals zero

ITEM 10 HCC WINTER PROGRAMME AND SALT BINS

The meeting was informed that HCC had invited reports on condition and possible new sites on the highway for the location of salt/grit bins in advance of winter weather setting in.

RESOLVED

Cllr Gotel be appointed to carry out a survey of the condition of existing salt/grit bins and to suggest any additional locations for bins to be placed on the highway

ITEM 11 HCC ELECTORAL REVIEW

Members reaffirmed their support for retaining Pondtail Ward within the Fleet HCC Ward Boundary and splitting Elvetham Heath between County Boundaries. The previous recommendation would be transmitted directly to the Boundaries Commission

Members considered the request for comments on the draft proposals of the Boundaries Commission for amendments to the Fleet Town Council Ward boundaries.

Members dismissed the proposal for one person representation on newly formed wards at Court Manor and Wickham Road.

RESOLVED

That the FTC Governance Group discuss the FTC proposal at their imminent meeting with HDC's Electoral Officer.:

- Ancells 2
- Calthorpe 3 (inc Stockton)
- Central 5 (inc Wickham)
- Courtmoor 3 (inc Dinorben)
- Pondtail 4

This provided for 17 seats with a population range of 940-1170 resident

ITEM 12 HDC HOUSING OPTIONS CONSULTATION

It was reported that there was an opportunity to respond to the HDC consultation “Refined Options for delivering new homes” by 15th January 2016

RESOLVED

- a) That Darryl Phillips offer to provide a briefing to FTC members be accepted
- b) That the FTC Planning Committee and Neighbourhood Plan Working Group be invited to meet as soon as possible to formulate comments on behalf of FTC and for submission by 15th January 2016
- c) That FTC members be encouraged to respond individually to the proposals
- d) That Cllr Smith report back on the discussion regarding the development of the Brook House SHLAA site to Blackwater and Hawley Town Council.

ITEM 13 HCC LIBRARY SERVICES CONSULTATION

Members were invited to submit views on the HCC Library Services consultation by 16 January 2016 although it was noted that Fleet library was not under threat.

ITEM 14 REMEMBRANCE DAY-LETTER OF THANKS RBL

Members noted the letter of thanks for the arrangements for Remembrance Sunday and the request for the event to be held at the Harlington again in 2016

ITEM 15 UPDATES FROM WORKING GROUPS

- Meeting with HCC Library service to be held on 10 December 2015 when results of Open Day will be discussed
- Neighbourhood Plan Working Group-Meeting on 14 December 2015-Grant application made
- The Views and Calthorpe Park Working Groups-Meeting being set up
- Cemetery Working Group-proposals received 100% support on Open Day
- Community Governance-meeting on 3 December 2015

ITEM 16 FLEET FUTURE

A meeting had been held with HDC to discuss projects to be completed.

ITEM 17 HCC/HDC

The members received an oral update report on the following matters that concerned FTC:

HCC matters

- Impact of Autumn Statement not yet known
- Implications for Social Care and the Fire and Police Service
- Deficit expected
- Resilience planning being encouraged for parishes- inform Cllr Bennison of any interest in a presentation to FTC

HDC matters

- New reception has opened
- LED lighting now in use

ITEM 18 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The members received and noted the Town Clerk's report. Particular attention was drawn to:

- Draft lease at Pondtail Scouts site- notified that there was an issue regarding FTC not accepting a conditional freehold.
- Tickets were available for members to the Panto Gala night.
- Two new PCSOs for Fleet
- Action Day 23 April 2016
- Consider possible initiatives for the Queen's 90th birthday in June 2016

ITEM 19 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday 13 January 2016 at the Harlington at 7pm.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 10 pm

Chairman.....Date.....