



## **MINUTES OF THE NINTH ANNUAL FLEET TOWN COUNCIL**

### **RESIDENTS' MEETING**

**Tuesday 26 March 2019**

**at 7.30pm**

**at**

**The Harlington, Fleet**

#### **1) WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chairman of the Council, Cllr Bob Schofield, welcomed almost 200 residents to the ninth Annual Residents' meeting. He explained the fire exit procedure and the location of the facilities and requested the use of no flash photography

He explained that the agenda was more varied than usual with contributions from the local police and Hart Voluntary Action

The format of the meeting and the requirement for the meeting to be held was explained.

#### **2) MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the eighth Annual Residents' Meeting held on Sunday 25 March 2018, and the Fleet Parish meeting held on 21 August 2018, were adopted as a correct record.

The Chairman announced that a vacancy existed in Central Ward for a town councillor. The requirements and the availability of an application form on line or in the office, were explained

#### **3) PRESENTATION BY THE LOCAL POLICE**

Police Community Support Officer Roxanne Barber explained that she was one of the PCSOs covering Fleet. The local team was based in the HDC Council offices but there was no front desk and reports in person had to be made at Aldershot police station. The Fleet team comprised 2 police constables, 4 PCSOs, and 1 Sergeant

The residents were invited to complete community priority leaflets to indicate the issues of most concern

Various statistics/volumes were explained :

- Anti-social behaviour
- Crime rates
- Violent offences
- Reporting of historic incidents

- Residential burglary
- CBOs and drug related search warrants

Residents were asked to provide as much information as possible when reporting incidents including day/date/time/vehicle type/registration numbers

### **Question**

Paddy Powell GU51 3 asked for confirmation that the Blue Lamp Trust was an organisation recognised by the Police?

### **The confirmation was given**

#### **4) PRESENTATION BY HART VOLUNTARY ACTION**

Sue Vincent explained the work of HVA in relation to attracting volunteers.

The occupant organisations of the Volunteer Centre in Harlington Shopping Centre were explained. Eleven Volunteers had provided 121 IT sessions to mostly over 85s teaching them to surf the net and therapeutic coffee mornings for people with anxiety

The presentation covered:

- Community ambassador role
- Signposting to services
- NCVO survey regarding the measures to attract volunteers
- The serious down turn in volunteer recruitment
- Local sense of entitlement
- HVA Governor vacancies for the first time
- Working with Basingstoke and Rushmoor Volunteer Centre
- Time Banking and how it worked

The Chairman added that volunteers were also required for the FTC Action Day to be held on 18 May 2019 and the Friends of the Cemetery Group needed to be strengthened

#### **5) FTC OVERVIEW OF PROJECTS 2018/2019**

CLlr Einchcomb, Chairman of the RLA Committee reported on the year's achievements:

- Garden of Remembrance in the cemetery
- Basingbourne Park over 8s play area
- Calthorpe Park proposed play area with any memories of the land as a waste site welcomed
- Gurkha Square-lighting of the war memorial
- The Neighbourhood Plan-consultation completed on 11 March 2019
- Abandonment of a new Harlington sited in Gurkha Square
- Launch of a process to undertake a detailed survey of the Harlington
- Examination of Victoria Road car park as a site for a new Harlington being explored
- Growing popularity of tennis in Calthorpe Park
- South and South East Bloom winners

## Question

1. Mr Parker GU51 3

How much has been spent on the redevelopment of the Harlington so far?

**Total expenditure to date was £347,526**

2. Mr Kit Mitchell GU51 4

If the existing Harlington is renovated what will happen to community groups during closure?

**That was one of the reasons why a new facility was proposed. The issue will have to be considered**

3 Mr T Smart GU51 4

FTC has previously referred to the cost of renovation. If you already know that why is a detailed survey proposed?

**Earlier cost estimates were based on a unit area basis. The survey will provide a room by room inventory. FTC needs to know the liabilities being taken on if HDC require a long lease of the building**

Cllr Holt , Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee , reported on the years achievements :

- The unique method of local authority accounting requirements
- Build-up of reserves of £150,000
- Borrowing would only be used to fund a large capital project
- Earmarked reserves
- Cash book accounting
- Precept levels (Band D £99.81 per household)
- 0% increase for 2019/2020
- £412,000 ring fenced for the Harlington
- S106 developer's contribution
- Harlington running costs and subsidy
- Achieving a balanced budget

## 6) THE BIG CONVERSATION

### i) DEVOLUTION

The Chairman explained the growing tendency for services to be devolved down as the government funding of HCC and HDC diminishes. FTC wished to open a debate with local residents about what type of services they would be prepared to see undertaken by FTC in the knowledge that this could lead to an increase in the precept. Both HCC and HDC could

only raise Council tax by 3% pa whereas there was no cap on councils such as FTC at the lowest tier

HCC and HDC were increasingly moving toward providing only statutory services

HCC required to find savings of a further £140m over the next 2 years.

Residents were invited to indicate on post-it notes around the room which services they would support being provided by FTC

Various comments were made by residents:

- Cuts in Government funding
- Leads to unfair burden on lower tier councils
- The value of contribution to FTC (£20,000 for Fleet Link)
- Objections to FTC services being used by residents from other parishes who do not contribute

## ii) TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

The Chairman announced the availability of securing funding from the recently announced government fund of £675m

The general crisis facing town centres was discussed together with the changes to shopping behaviour. A bid could potentially secure up to £25m, but there were strict guidelines which had to be satisfied. The emphasis is on community space rather than **just** shopping

FTC would like to hear residents' ideas

## 7) QUESTION TIME

Mr T Burt GU51 3

Q1 Wasn't Fleet Future set up to establish what local residents wanted?

**All the outcomes of previous exercises have been put in a melting pot to identify a planned scheme. This is the first time government funding could be available to support development.**

Ms Ruth McCale GU 51 3

Q2 Could traffic problems at Pondtails crossroads and parking at Velmead School be included?

**We are working with HCC/HDC on transport issues and traffic is included, but it has to be focused on the town centre.**

Ms Karen Holmes GU 51

Q3 Could this event (Annual Residents' Meeting ) be recorded and placed on the FTC website?

**We will investigate this possibility though having this meeting on a Sunday did not change the demographic of residents who attended**

Ms Sue Fisher GU51

Commented that uneven distribution of services can lead to inequalities

The Chairman thanked fellow councillors, staff and all the residents who had attended and contributed to the event

The meeting closed at 9.30pm