



Minutes of the meeting of Finance & Governance Committee held on Monday 23rd June at 5.45pm in Committee Room at Town Hall

Present: Christine Wheeler (Chair), Chris Greenhill, Barry Darch, Richard Stubbings, Peter Shannon and Joe Athorn.

In Attendance: Paul Cunningham, Town Clerk; Gary Jones, RFO.

Apologies: Gillian Birrell

Absent: None

Members of public: No members of the public.

Additional Item: Election of Chair for this meeting

Cllr Darch noted that the election of the chair had not been included on the published agenda and he therefore proposed that Cllr Wheeler be elected to chair this meeting.

Seconded by: Cllr Stubbings.

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore

RESOLVED To elect Cllr Wheeler as Chair for this meeting.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

1 - Apologies for absence

Received from Cllr Gillian Birrell.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

2 - Declarations of interests in and requests for dispensations for items on the agenda

There were none.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

3 - To approve the minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 19th May 2025

Motion to approve minutes: Cllr Stubbings.

Seconded by: Cllr Greenhill.

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore

RESOLVED To accept for accuracy and adoption the minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting held on Monday 19th May 2025.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

4 - Review of policies

i. To review Investment Strategy

Councillors agreed to defer this item to the next meeting to give the RFO time to consider the document.

ii. To review Reserves Policy

Councillors agreed to defer this item to the next meeting to give the RFO time to consider the document.

iii. To note that a review of the policies that the council holds will be on the agenda of the July meeting.

This was noted.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

5 - To agree amended Standing Orders

Proposed by Cllr Stubbings.

Seconded by: Cllr Athorn.

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore
RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To agree amended Standing Orders.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

6 - To agree amended Financial Regulations

Proposed by Cllr Darch.

Seconded by: Cllr Shannon.

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore
RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To agree amended Financial Regulations.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

7 - To agree revised Committee Terms of Reference

Councillors considered the revised committee Terms of Reference, including that for Assets & Estates Committee which had not been included in the pack.

Personnel Committee:

Proposed by Cllr Greenhill.

Seconded by: Cllr Athorn.

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To agree revised Terms of Reference for Personnel Committee.

Development & Commerce Committee:

Proposed by Cllr Stubbings.

Seconded by: Cllr Athorn.

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To agree revised Terms of Reference for Development & Commerce Committee.

Finance & Governance Committee:

Cllr Darch noted that a bullet point needed to be added: 'To be responsible for reviewing and updating the council's Strategic Development Plan'.

Chair noted that Legal Fees and Consultancy should be added to the list of town council budgets for the committee to monitor.

Cllr Stubbings proposed that the revised Terms of Reference be agreed, subject to the town amendments above.

Seconded by: Cllr Greenhill.

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To agree revised Terms of Reference for Finance & Governance Committee, subject to the inclusion of the two amendments above.

Planning & Highways Committee:

Councillors noted that no changes were needed to this committee's Terms of Reference.

Assets & Estates Committee:

Proposed by Cllr Darch.

Seconded by: Cllr Shannon.

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To agree revised Terms of Reference for Assets & Estates Committee.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

8 - To consider if the Town Council should take part in a 'Peer Review' process

Town Clerk explained the background to this item, including the recent meeting that he had attended with two other town councils and the CEOs of both East Suffolk Council and SALC.

Cllr Darch proposed that the committee recommend to full council to take part in a 'Peer Review' process.

Seconded by: Cllr Wheeler.

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To agree to take part in a 'Peer Review' process.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

9 - 'Plug in Suffolk' Lease agreement update

Councillors considered the advice from the council's solicitor.

Cllr Stubbings proposed that there was no need to seek further advice regarding

the detail of the lease.

Seconded by: Cllr Athorn.

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To proceed with the lease for the electric car charging points and not to seek further advice from Trust's solicitor.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

10 - To receive an update on the council's Neighbourhood CIL balance

Councillors noted the report from Town Clerk.

They asked the RFO and Town Clerk to bring a report to the next meeting to show the amounts accrued per year.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
Produce list of CIL income year-by-year for next meeting of F&G committee	Gary Jones	17/07/2025

11 - To consider criteria for prompt payment of supplier invoices

Councillors considered the report from Town Clerk. They asked Town Clerk and RFO to draw up draft terms of business for the council, to include standard payment terms, and reserving a percentage of any payment until work is completed. Councillors agreed to defer the Town Clerk's report to next meeting, so that it can be considered alongside the draft terms of business.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
Draft Terms of Business for consideration at next meeting of Committee	Paul Cunningham Gary Jones	21/07/2025

12 - To discuss the budget setting process for 2026-27

RFO suggested that the quarterly reporting should show variances as well as spend against budget.

He also raised the possibility of changing finance systems for both the council and trust to Sage. Councillors asked him to investigate costs and report back to a future meeting.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
Produce report and figures on potential change to using Sage accounting package for	Gary Jones	11/08/2025

both council and trust		
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13 - To consider what changes may be needed to the council's Chart of Accounts

Councillors noted the need for a complete rewrite of the codes as part of the budget process for 2026-27 and they asked Town Clerk and RFO to begin to look at this.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
Revise Chart of accounts for both council and Trust	Paul Cunningham Gary Jones	11/08/2025

14 - To consider what information about potential grants is needed by councillors

Councillors received the two grant information emails that Town Clerk had included in the meeting pack.

They asked Town Clerk to forward future emails to members of the committee.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

15 - To agree the date for the next meeting of the committee as Monday 28th July at 5.45pm

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Monday 28th July at 5.45pm.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		