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Village Centre
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MINUTES of the Meeting of the FINANCE, GOVERNANCE & ESTATES COMMITTEE held at 7.30pm on Thursday 16 October 2025 at the Hurstpierpoint Village Centre.

Members Present: Cllr Duncan Ranger (Chair) Cllr Claire Majsai
Cllr Malcolm Llewellyn Cllr Rodney Jackson

Also present: Sarah Groom, Clerk to the Council & Responsible Finance Officer and Stephen Witchell, Estates & Facilities Manager.

F25/26.053: Apologies for absence: Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Julia Shorrocks and Cllr Annette Street, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee **ACCEPTS** the apologies for absence from Cllr Shorrocks and Cllr Street.

F25/26.054: Declarations of Interest: Cllr Jackson declared an interest in the Estates & Facilities Update item (Minute F25/26.060) as previous tree work mentioned, was to his neighbour's property.

F25/26.055: Previous Minutes: The Committee considered the minutes of the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee meeting on 18 September 2025, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee **AGREED** the minutes of the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee meeting held on 18 September 2025.

F25/26.056: Adjournment for questions from the public: There were no members of the public present.

F25/26.057: Parish Council Financial Monitoring for Month 6 (September 2025): The Committee noted:

- (i) Payments of £180,553.05 (excl VAT). This includes the September 2025 Salaries. The Committee noted the fraudulent direct debit transaction which was swiftly rectified and agreed to redact all account numbers from the bank reconciliation paperwork in future.
- (ii) Receipts of £224,628.26 (VAT N/A). This includes the second half year precept payment of £165,930.
- (iii) Bank Reconciliations. These were signed by Cllr Jackson.
- (iv) Balance Sheet.
- (v) Nominal Ledger.
- (vi) Income and Expenditure.
- (vii) Q2 VAT Claim.
- (viii) The funds held in CCLA shares on 30 September 2025 were £113,854.21.
- (ix) The deposits and investments accounts on 30 September 2025 were noted. The second Cambridge & Counties investment will be re-considered at the next Committee meeting, and it was:

Financial Institution	Account Type	Interest AER %	Maturity Date
Unity Trust	Current Account	0	N/A
Unity Trust	Savings Account	2.12	N/A
Nationwide	95 Day Savings Account	3.60	95 Days notice
Cambridge & Counties	1 Year Fixed Term	4.4	24/06/2026
Cambridge & Counties	1 Year Fixed Term	5.1	27/11/2025
United Trust Bank	1 Year Fixed Term	5.0	19/12/2025
Hampshire Trust Bank	1 Year Fixed Term	4.36	01/03/2026

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the Parish Council financial monitoring for Month 6 (September 2025). The Committee also noted the fraudulent direct debit transaction which was swiftly rectified and AGREED to redact all account numbers from the bank reconciliation paperwork in future.

F25/26.058: Village Centre Financial Monitoring for Month 6 (September 2025): The Committee noted:

- (i) Payments of £1,779.31 (VAT N/A).
- (ii) Receipts of £7,599.11 (VAT N/A).
- (iii) Bank Reconciliations. These were signed by Cllr Jackson.
- (iv) Balance Sheet.
- (v) Income and Expenditure.
- (vi) Bank accounts held were i) CAF Cash Current Account with 0.2% interest and ii) CAF Gold Savings Account with 1.85% interest. Maturity dates do not apply, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the Village Centre financial monitoring for Month 6 (September 2025).

F25/26.059: Parish Action Plan: The Committee reviewed the:

- (i) The Finance & Governance Action Plan: The Committee noted that the MSDC Introduction to Health and Safety training course had been completed by all staff and councillors had now been invited to complete it.
- (ii) The Estates & Facilities Action Plan: The Committee noted that the Section 106 funds for the new Reeds Lane Recreation Ground play equipment and the replacement South Avenue Recreation Ground play area trampoline had been confirmed by MSDC, and the orders placed. The outcome of the Section 106 claim for additional equipment at Reeds Lane Recreation Ground including the new swings is awaited. The new wired in smoke detectors will be fitted in the Chantry Stables and costs shared with the Charity.
- (iii) The Estates & Facilities Action Plan for 2026/7: The Committee noted the emerging estates and facilities projects for 2026/7, subject to the budget setting exercise, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the Action Plans for 2025/26 and the emerging projects for 2026/7 subject to the budget setting exercise.

F25/26.060: Estates & Facilities Update: The Committee noted the comprehensive update report. The new gates at South Avenue Recreation Ground play area have been installed. A tree branch had fallen into the adjacent property near the tennis courts and a quote had been received to initially clear the fallen branch. The Trinity Road public toilets had once again been blocked and the estimate to undertake a complete solution will be added to the 2026/27 project list to be budgeted for, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee NOTED the update report on Estates & Facilities Management.

F25/26.061: Hurst Meadows Working Group: The Committee noted the 9 October 2025 minutes of the Hurst Meadows Working Group, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee NOTED the 9 October 2025 minutes of the Hurst Meadows Working Group.

F25/26.062: Chapel Decorating and Repairs: The Committee re-considered a briefing note setting out quotes to repair and redecorate the Chapel, and to confirm the funding arrangements as the Section 106 request was unsuccessful, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to:

- i. appoint Nick Bruce Carpentry to carry out the door repairs at a cost of £830 plus VAT;
- ii. appoint Silver Stained Glass to carry out the stained glass window repairs at a cost of £2,070 plus VAT;
- iii. appoint JDP Decorating to carry out the internal and external decorating of the Chapel at a cost of £5,130 plus VAT; and
- iv. recommend to Council that the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve (320) currently holding £21,708, be used to fund the works.

F25/26.063: Cemetery Capacity Increase Assessment: The Committee considered a briefing note setting out proposals to undertake a ground penetrating radar survey with the aim of creating additional burial plots, due to limited remaining capacity at South Avenue Cemetery. The Committee agreed to amend the £4,735 quote to remove the desk top utility surveys at a cost of £425, and apply for Section 106 funds to pay for the survey. If the Section 106 claim was unsuccessful, then the Committee recommends the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve (320) currently holding £21,708, be used to fund the works, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to apply for Section 106 funds in order to appoint Terrain Surveys to undertake a ground penetrating radar survey at a revised cost of £4,310 plus VAT; and if the Section 106 Claim was not successful, to recommend to Council that the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve (320) currently holding £21,708, be used to fund the works.

F25/26.064: Parish Council Half Year Financial Analysis: The Committee considered a briefing note in order to review and assess the Parish Council's financial position at the half year stage, and agree any actions or remedies required including any changes to earmarked reserves for recommending to Council. The Committee agreed to monitor the Recreation Grounds budgets closely due to both the planned, and the unplanned property maintenance and repairs cost so far this year, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee NOTED the Parish Council's financial position at the half year stage and AGREED to recommend to Council that £7,000 be transferred from the Court Bushes Cost Centre (211) to the Court Bushes Sinking Fund Earmarked Reserve (380), as there was sufficient funds in the General Reserve at this time.

F25/26.065: Village Centre Half Year Financial Analysis: The Committee considered a briefing note in order to review and assess the Village Centre's financial position at the half year stage and agree any actions or remedies required for recommending to the Trustees. The Committee agreed that the report would be presented to the Trustees at the November meeting, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee NOTED the Village Centre's financial position at the half year stage.

F25/26.066: Internal Audit: The Committee received a verbal briefing on the report of the interim internal audit of 2025/2026, which took place on 15 October 2025. The Committee noted the recommendations included in the report which were i) to contact the website provider to confirm the website complies with the latest regulations on accessibility requirements and to conduct a data audit, and ii) to apply for a Government Gateway account to monitor the payments the payroll provider supplies to the HMRC on the Parish Council's behalf for the national insurance contributions. The Committee congratulated the team of the outcome which described the Parish Council as a model of good practice, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to recommend the Interim Internal Audit Report to Council for adoption.

F25/26.067: Budget and Precept Setting Timetable: The Committee considered a briefing note to review the proposed timetable, principles and assumptions to commence the budget setting exercise for 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027 and recommend it to Council for adoption. The report will be amended to show, as in previous years, that the assumption is to use the September Consumer Price Index figure released in late October each year, for the increases on the fees and charges and on expenditure for budgeting purposes, unless other factors come to light, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to the proposed timetable, principles and assumptions (as amended) to commence the budget setting exercise for 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027, and to recommend them to Council for adoption.

F25/26.068: To note any further information items, correspondence received or requests. There were no further items, correspondence received or requests.

There being no other business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.22pm.

Chair