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MINUTES of the Meeting of the FINANCE, GOVERNANCE & ESTATES COMMITTEE held at 7.30pm on Thursday 15 January 2026 at the Hurstpierpoint Village Centre.

Members Present: Cllr Duncan Ranger (Chair) Cllr Rodney Jackson Cllr Annette Street

Also present: Sarah Groom, Clerk to the Council & Responsible Finance Officer.

F25/26.094: Apologies for absence: Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Malcolm Llewellyn, Cllr Claire Majsai and Cllr Julia Shorrocks, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee **ACCEPTS** the apologies for absence from Cllrs Llewellyn, Majsai and Shorrocks.

F25/26.095: Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest.

F25/26.096: Previous Minutes: The Committee considered the minutes of the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee meeting on 11 December 2025, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee **AGREED** the minutes of the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee meeting held on 11 December 2025.

F25/26.097: Adjournment for questions from the public: There were no members of the public present.

F25/26.098: Parish Council Financial Monitoring for Month 9 (December 2025): The Committee noted:

- (i) Payments of £8,483.48 (Ex VAT). Payments did not include the December 2025 salaries.
- (ii) Receipts of £25,083.56 (VAT N/A). Receipts included £10,500 Section 106 funds for the Court Bushes Community Hub toilet refurbishment. The Tennis Club will be issued their invoice in January.
- (iii) Bank Reconciliations. These were signed by Cllr Street.
- (iv) Balance Sheet.
- (v) Nominal Ledger.
- (vi) Income and Expenditure. Cllr Street asked when the Christmas Lights Budget line would move from the Community Engagement Committee to Estates & Facility Management Committee. This will happen in 2026/27.
- (vii) The funds held in CCLA shares on 31 December 2025 were £114,994.40.
- (viii) The deposits and investments accounts on 31 December 2025 were noted. Cllr Street had researched further information on how to obtain bank ratings. Some banks are not required to have a rating and some do not publish their ratings. All have to be registered with the Financial Conduct Authority. The Unity Trust Bank (BBB) and Nationwide (A/A1) ratings are available. Further work will be completed on this when the Savings and Investment Policy is reviewed at the February Committee meeting, and it was:

Financial Institution	Account Type	Interest AER %	Maturity Date
Unity Trust	Current Account	0	N/A
Unity Trust	Savings Account	2.1	N/A
Nationwide	95 Day Savings Account	3.25	95 Days notice
Cambridge & Counties	1 Year Fixed Term	4.4	24/06/2026
Cambridge & Counties	1 Year Fixed Term	4.35	27/11/2025
United Trust Bank	1 Year Fixed Term	4.61	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 9 (December 2025).

F25/26.099: Village Centre Financial Monitoring for Month 9 (December 2025): The Committee noted:

- (i) Payments of £6,773.23 (VAT N/A).
- (ii) Receipts of £4,593.42 (VAT N/A).
- (iii) Bank Reconciliations. These were signed by Cllr Street.
- (iv) Balance Sheet.
- (v) Income and Expenditure. The current position was scrutinised and all figures looked positive.
- (vi) Bank accounts held were i) CAF Cash Current Account with 0.2% interest and ii) CAF Gold Savings Account with 1.75% interest. Maturity dates do not apply, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the Village Centre financial monitoring for Month 9 (December 2025).

F25/26.100: Parish Action Plan: The Committee reviewed the:

- (i) The Finance & Governance Action Plan: The Committee noted progress against the actions. The Neighbourhood Plan matter was debated in respect of the new timings for the Mid Sussex District Plan Review. Local Government Reorganisation will be announced at the end of March 2026 which will clarify the timetable for producing a Parish Council Strategy. Good progress was noted on the roll-out of the councillor training programme.
- (ii) The Estates & Facilities Action Plan: The Committee noted all of the progress against the actions. A date had been agreed for the ground penetrating radar survey of the Cemetery. The Section 106 funds for the additional equipment for the Reeds Lane Rec play area phase two project had finally been approved by MSDC (£27,600). The orders for these items were underway. A briefing note was being produced for the January Council meeting outlining a tender timetable for the South Avenue drainage and resurfacing works, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the Action Plans updates for 2025/26.

F25/26.101: Estates & Facilities Update: The Committee noted the comprehensive update report and the actions completed since the last meeting. A number of upcoming projects are being prepared for including 2026/27 projects. Cllr Street had read the WSCC Riparian ownership information recently circulated, and it was:

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

F25/26.102: Review of Utility Costs: The Committee considered up to date offers for the electricity and gas contracts, provided on 14 January 2026 by CUB UK. The energy broker CUB UK had advised the Parish Council to look at new gas and electricity deals, as rates were currently very favourable. At the last meeting the Committee had agreed to enquire whether current contracts can be renegotiated or even broken, before the end date, but as these are business contracts they cannot be broken without penalty, this is usually the full amount for whatever amount of duration is left to run. The conclusion was that it was not financially viable to do so and certainly wouldn't be in this case. The latest offers were considered and the Committee agreed to renew the gas and electricity contracts for 12 months at the new rates from 1 June 2026, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED to renew the gas and electricity contracts for 12 months at the new rates, from 1 June 2026.

F25/26.103: To note any further information items, correspondence received or requests: There were no further items.

There being no other business, the Chair closed the meeting at 8.22pm.

Chair