Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council
Email: office@hurstpierpoint-pc.gov.uk
Website: www.hurstpierpoint-pc.gov.uk
Telephone: 01273 833264

Village Centre
Trinity Road
Hurstpierpoint
West Sussex BN6 9UY

MINUTES of the Meeting of the FINANCE, GOVERNANCE & ESTATES COMMITTEE held at 7.30pm on Thursday 17 September 2026 at the Hurstpierpoint Village Centre.

Members Present:
Cllr Duncan Ranger (Chair)
Cllr Shaun Hole
Cllr Rodney Jackson
Cllr Malcolm Llewellyn
Cllr Claire Majsai
Cllr Annette Street (Vice-Chair)

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

F26/27.034: Apologies for absence: Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Julia Shorrocks, and it was:

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

F26/27.035: Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest.

F26/27.036: Previous Minutes: The Committee considered the minutes of the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee meeting on 13 August 2026, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the minutes of the Finance, Governance & Estates Committee meeting held on 13 August 2026.

F26/27.037: Adjournment for questions from the public: There were no members of the public present.

F26/27.038: Parish Council Financial Monitoring for Month 5 (August 2026): The Committee noted:

(i) Payments of £36,290.55 Ex VAT). Payments included July 2026 salaries of £15,374.56 (see note (ix) below) and £6,500 for the 50% deposit payment for the Village Centre Velux Windows.
(ii) Receipts of £41,000.70 (VAT N/A). Receipts included £32,151.35 from Section 106 for the Reeds Lane Play Equipment project.
(iii) Bank Reconciliations. These were signed by Cllr Street.
(iv) Balance Sheet.
(v) Nominal Ledger.
(vi) Income and Expenditure.
(vii) The funds held in CCLA shares (AAA Rating) on 31 August 2026 were £117,938.60.
(viii) Deposits and investment accounts held on 31 August 2026 were as follows:

Financial Institution/(Credit Rating)	Account Type	Interest AER %	Maturity Date
Unity Trust (BBB)	Current Account	0	N/A
Unity Trust (BBB)	Savings Account	1.95	N/A
Nationwide (A/A1)	95 Day Savings Account	3.25	95 Days notice
Cambridge & Counties (Not Published)	1 Year Fixed Term	4.45	24/06/2027
Cambridge & Counties (Not Published)	1 Year Fixed Term	4.40	30/11/2026
United Trust Bank (Not Published)	1 Year Fixed Term	4.11	19/12/2026
Hampshire Trust Bank (Not Published)	1 Year Fixed Term	4.00	01/03/2027

(ix) **Employee Pay Award 2026/7:** The Committee noted that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services had agreed the 2026/7 pay award for employees on 24th August 2026, which is a one-off 3.3% pay increase on salaries, backdated to 1 April 2026.
(x) **Employer Pension Contributions:** The Committee noted that the planned reduction in Employer Pension Contributions from 1 April 2026 from (18.5% to 15%) has only just been applied to the July 2026 payroll invoice by WSCC, and backdated to April 2026, and it was:

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RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the Parish Council financial monitoring for Month 5 (August 2026) and noted the Employee Pay Award for 2026/7 and the Employer Pension Contributions for 2026/27.

F26/27.039: Village Centre Financial Monitoring for Month 5 (August 2026): The Committee noted:

(i) Payments of £8,187.98 (VAT N/A). This included £2,380.14 for the drainage works.
(ii) Receipts of 5,233.20 (VAT N/A). This included a £5,000 transfer from the savings account to top up the current account balance.
(iii) Bank Reconciliations. These were signed by Cllr Street.
(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 1.75% interest. Maturity dates do not apply, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the Village Centre financial monitoring for Month 5 (August 2026).

F26/27.040: Parish Action Plan: The Committee reviewed the:

(i) The Finance & Governance Action Plan: The Committee noted the two actions for 2026/27 concerning training courses on the new National Planning Policy Framework and Pension risks. Training is now available on the newly published National Planning Policy Framework and Members are signing up. Identifying a trainer on Pension risks was still proving a challenge, and the promised FAQ sheet is awaited.
(ii) The Estates & Facilities Action Plan: The Committee noted all of the actions for 2026/27. Cllr Ranger was concerned about the vandalism suffered at the Pitt Lane toilets. The office is reporting all of the incidents to the Police but nothing is done. A resident's crime prevention meeting is being held by the Police at Court Bushes Recreation Ground on 8 October 2026 at 6pm. The Christmas Lights had now finally been handed over from the old contractor to the new contractor, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee AGREED the Action Plan updates for 2026/27.

F26/27.041: Hurst Meadows Working Group: The Committee noted the minutes of the Hurst Meadows Working Group on 3 September 2026. A visit will be arranged with the owner of the Marchants Close pond for the November meeting, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the minutes of the Hurst Meadows Working Group on 3 September 2026.

F26/27.042: South Avenue Cemetery Drainage improvements: The Committee considered a briefing note setting out proposals to install a French drain on the southern boundary of the South Avenue Cemetery. Cllr Llewellyn suggested a number of access points were included for inspections in future if required, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee agreed to recommend to Council that Barcombe Landscapes be appointed to install the French drain at a cost of £5,885+VAT, and to use funds from the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve (320) currently holding £25,017.

F26/27.043: Parish Council Signage: The Committee considered a briefing note proposing draft signage for all the Parish Council owned sites. The Committee discussed all of the options proposed and agreed there was more work to be done before the final draft versions could be agreed. Section 106 funding will also be explored, and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee agreed that more will be done on the preferred colour options, wording and layout for Parish Council signage, including funding sources, in order that quotations could be sought.

F26/27.044: There were no further information Items, correspondence received or requests.

There being no other business, the Chair closed the meeting at 8.52pm.

Chair