



Chichester City Council

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

### Minutes

**Date** 2 April 2025

**Time** 5.30pm – 7.16pm

**Location** The Council Chamber - The Council House • North Street • CHICHESTER • West Sussex • PO19 1LQ

**PRESENT:** Councillors Miall (Chair), Corfield (MC), Loxton (SL) and Scicluna (AS)

**EX-OFFICIO:** The Mayor, Councillor Quail (SQ)

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors Apel (CA), Butler (AB), Chant (RC), McHale (SMc) and Vivian (JV), Town Clerk (TC), Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer (DTC), Council Services and Support Manager (CSSM), Project Manager (PM), West Sussex County Councillor Simon Oakley.

97. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were noted from Councillors Pramas and Squire.

98. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING**

None.

99. **MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 FEBRUARY 2025**

**APPROVED** and signed as a correct record the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 5 February 2025.

100. **UPDATES ON ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA**

- a) **Minute 86b refers - Pop-up staging – prepare a more detailed paper using the relevant resources in Council to specify the equipment required, propose charges and develop a hiring policy.**

Members noted that this would be discussed under agenda item 6.

- b) **Minute 92 refers - Invite expressions of interest from Councillors for joining the Standing Orders Working Group.**

Members noted that this would be discussed under agenda item 15

c) **Minute 93 refers - Add Annual Parish Meeting to the agenda for the Meeting of the City Council on 19 February 2025**

Members noted that this had been completed.

101. **PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Committee **NOTED** the minutes of the Property Sub-Committee meeting held on 25 March 2025.

102. **BUSINESS PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 MARCH 2025**

The Committee **NOTED** the minutes of the Business Plan Sub-Committee meeting held on 25 March 2025.

The Committee considered the discussions that had taken place at the meeting and **RESOLVED** to proceed with the Officer recommendation that had been made at that meeting. Namely to proceed with a trial of the Wayfinding project in the City at a cost of £13,499, to be paid from the City Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocation.

In response to a question from CA, the Chair advised that the current anticipated CIL receipts and expenditure commitments meant that the mini-golf project for Oaklands Park had been pushed back.

103. **PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING 20 MARCH 2025**

The Committee **NOTED** the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 20 March 2025.

The Committee considered the recommendation from the personnel sub-committee and **RESOLVED** to adopt the proposed staff benefits scheme.

104. **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO END DECEMBER 2024**

The Committee noted the report and the anticipated budget surplus at year end, which was largely due to better-than-expected investment performance.

DTC noted that the current earmarked reserves for the twinning organisations were over £3,000 and suggested that any surplus funds should be placed in general reserves rather than into the twinning associations.

The Committee **RESOLVED** as follows:

- That an additional line be added to the revenue budget to allocate an allowance to the Friends of Valletta.
- That an earmarked reserve be created for Friends of Valletta and that any surplus twinning funds be assigned to this reserve up to a total of £3,000.
- That twinning association earmarked reserves be limited to £3,000 each and that any underspend by the twinning associations be allocated to the general surplus/deficit and assigned by the Finance Committee as appropriate.

The Committee considered the recommendation to allocate additional funds to the allotment reserves and **RESOLVED** to transfer £10,000 to the allotment reserve.

The Chair noted the new format of the accounts that better reflected the spending by Committee and thanked the DTC for the effort that had gone in to the changes.

*Councillor Vivian left the meeting*

105. **EARMARKED RESERVES**

The Committee considered the Earmarked Reserve reports and noted the expenditure from the Council House reserve and the planned additional items still expected.

The Committee **REQUESTED** that the Property Sub-Committee conduct a review of Council House expenditure and identify the various cost categories (e.g. maintenance, renovations, new equipment, etc).

The Committee **REQUESTED** that officers investigate if there were any heritage grants that could be accessed for works at the Council House.

The Committee **REQUESTED** that Officers investigate listing the Council House with appropriate film location agencies.

The Committee **NOTED** the reserve balances for all the earmarked reserves.

106. **PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS**

The Committee **NOTED** the position with the Public Realm budget. It was further **NOTED** that there would be a carry forward of an estimated £11,000 into the next financial year.

107. **EXTERNAL AUDIT**

The Committee noted the letter of clarification received from the external auditors in response to City Council's concerns about comments made on the *External Auditor's report on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2024*.

108. **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) UPDATE**

The Committee **NOTED** the proposed income and expenditure profile for CIL projects, showing that most funds were allocated or committed to existing projects.

109. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEVOLUTION**

The Committee **NOTED** there were no further updates at this time.

The Committee **NOTED** that the response to the Devolution Consultation had been agreed at the earlier Extra Ordinary Meeting of the City Council.

110. **CITY COUNCIL INSURANCE CONTRACT**

DTC explained the report that had been circulated prior to the meeting and explained the challenges that had been experienced while obtaining quotes for the renewal of the City Council's insurance contract.

The Committee **NOTED** Zurich Insurance (supplier D) had been appointed as the City Council's insurer on a three year contract at a cost of £16,632.31 per annum.

111. **REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT STATEMENTS AND CONFIRMATION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR INSURANCE COVER IN RESPECT OF ALL INSURED RISKS.**

The Committee **REVIEWED** the risk assessment statements and **NOTED** the items identified on the action plan.

It was **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council on 30 April 2025 that the risk action plan it be approved by Council for signature by the Mayor, as Chair of the Council, and the Responsible Finance Officer.

Committee **REQUESTED** that processes be put in place to provide better control and oversight of suitable indemnities for contractors undertaking work on behalf of the City Council.

Further **REQUESTED** that in future the items on the risk report be delegated across the various committee to share the workload.

#### 112. **HYBRID MEETINGS**

In anticipation of changes to the laws governing Council meetings in England being made later in the year The Finance Committee **AGREED** a budget of up to £12,000 from the General Reserve for the purchase and set up of a live-stream capable hybrid meetings solution for the Council House.

The committee **REQUESTED** that the Councillor laptops be assessed to ensure that they are capable of running hybrid meetings and if necessary, a budget for upgrades be requested from a future Finance Committee meeting.

The Committee **AGREED** to **DELEGATE** decisions regarding the purchase and implementation of the solution to the Property Sub-Committee.

#### 113. **CITY COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS REVIEW**

The Committee considered the recommendations from the Standing Orders Working Group.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council on 30 April 2025 that they be adopted subject to the following revisions:

- 1) SO 25 (Lead Councillors) be **REMOVED** from the draft

The Committee **REQUESTED** that a training session be made available for all Councillors to talk through the proposed changes to the Standing Orders.

#### 114. **TO NOTE AND RATIFY THE FOLLOWING RECONCILIATIONS AND TRANSACTIONS**

The Committee **NOTED** the reports as presented and **RATIFIED** the following reconciliations and payments:

- a) **Monthly reconciliation with evidence of bank statements for January and February 2025**

The Chair and DTC signed the bank reconciliations as a correct record

- b) **List of payments made for January and February 2025**
- c) **List of Barclaycard payments for January and February 2025**

#### 115. **ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA**

- Final accounts for 2024/2025
- Annual statements (AGAR)
- End of year Internal Audit report

## 116. DATE OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING

DATE OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING – Wednesday 18 June 2025 at 5.30pm

The meeting closed at 7.16pm

### **ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING**

<b>Minute ref.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Assigned to</b>
102	Implement the E-Display project and place orders for the installation of the trial display units	Project Manager
103	Initiate the application for Chichester City Council to join the Viv-up staff benefits scheme.	Deputy Town Clerk
104	Action the Committee's decisions in respect of twinning association budgets and earmarked reserves	Deputy Town Clerk
105	Conduct a review of Council House expenditure and identify the various cost categories	Property Sub-Committee/Deputy Town Clerk/Property Maintenance Manager
105	Investigate availability of heritage grants for works on the Council House	Deputy Town Clerk/Property Maintenance Manager
105	Investigate listing the Council House with filming location agencies	Town Clerk
111	Put in place processes for better control and oversight of suitable indemnities for contractors undertaking work on behalf of the City Council	Property Maintenance Manager
111	Review the risk assessment statements and allocate risks according to the Committee or Sub-Committee responsibility for each area of activity	Town Clerk and appropriate Officers
112	Assess current Councillor laptops for suitability for effective participation in hybrid meetings	Council Services and Support Manager/Property Maintenance Manager
112	Ensure that any proposed hybrid meeting system would be capable of streaming meetings to non-participant attendees via a suitable streaming platform.	Council Services Support Manager
113	Arrange a training/briefing session for interested Councillors to talk through standing orders and enable them to better understand the process and the changes being made.	Town Clerk