



Chichester City Council

MEETING OF COUNCIL

Minutes

Date 25 June 2025

Time 6.00pm – 7.45pm

Location The Council Chamber, The Council House, North Street, Chichester. West Sussex • PO19 1LQ

PRESENT: The Mayor, Councillor McHale (SMc), Councillors Apel (CA), Butler (AB), C Gershater (CG), J Gershater (JG), Kondabeka (JK), Miall (RMi), Moore (RMo), Pramas (LP) and Russell (NR).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Council Services and Support Manager, Property Maintenance Manager, Project Manager, Communities Officers (from 7.13pm), West Sussex County Councillors Hunt (North Division), Joy (West Division), Oakley (East Division) and Sharp (South Division). One member of the public.

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Council noted apologies for absence from Councillors Chant, Corfield, Knight, Loxton, Quail, Scicluna, Squire and Vivian.

12. DISPENSATION REQUESTS

No requests had been received.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL IN MATTERS ARISING ON THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING

No declarations were made.

14. MINUTES OF COUNCIL

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held on 14 May 2025 as an accurate record to be signed by the Mayor.

15. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor extended thanks to Councillors Vivian and Scicluna for undertaking Mayoral engagements whilst he was recently away travelling and also extended his thanks to the City of Chartres for making him so welcome on a recent trip to France.

16. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None were received.

17. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

a) Planning and Conservation Committee

Councillor Butler presented the minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2025 and the notes of the inquorate meeting on the 22 May 2025.

Council was advised that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2025 were not yet available and would be presented at the next meeting of Council.

She then summarised some of the discussions that had taken place at the meetings and highlighted the projects that had been completed or were in progress as part of the City Council's Net Zero commitments.

Council **NOTED** the minutes of the meetings as presented.

b) Community Affairs Committee

In the absence of the Committee Chair, the Town Clerk summarised the minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2025.

Councillor Apel advised that an updated poster for the charity cycle ride mentioned in the minutes had been produced with a corrected link to the donation website.

Council **NOTED** the minutes as presented.

c) Finance Committee

Council **NOTED** the notes of the inquorate meeting held on 18 June 2025.

Councillor Miall presented the minutes of the Property Sub-Committee meeting held on 27 May and highlighted the pieces of work that were in progress, namely the assessment of allotment costs and charges as well as the review of the Council House budgets and running costs.

Council **NOTED** the minutes of the Property Sub-Committee meeting held on 27 May 2025 and the Business Plan Sub-Committee held on 28 May 2025.

18. COUNCIL HOUSE CLEANING CONTRACT

Councillors considered the Property Maintenance Manager's report and following a detailed discussion **RESOLVED** to appoint company A, Simply Clean (Chichester) LTD, at a cost of £13,585 per year.

Members expressed concern that the contract was having to be awarded based on a limited number of quotes received and it was further **RESOLVED** that the Property Sub-Committee review the situation in the autumn and seek further quotations to ensure that best value was being achieved.

19. PERFORMANCE STAGE PROJECT – PHASE 1 – COUNCIL HOUSE

Councillors considered the Project Manager's report and following a detailed discussion regarding the proposed solutions, suitability for City Council use and accessibility for users; **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to purchase a suitable system of staging to the Town Clerk up to a maximum expenditure of £10,000, with full details of the final system to be reported back to the next Finance Committee meeting.

The Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) reminded Members that, due to the Finance Committee meeting held on 18 June 2025 being inquorate, the statutory end of year accounts and audit requirements had been deferred for Full Council to resolve in advance of the 30 June 2025 deadline for submission to the External Auditors.

20. **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2024-2025**

Proposed by Councillor Miall, seconded by Councillor Pramas and **RESOLVED** that the Statement of Accounts 2024-2025 be approved and signed by the Chair and the RFO.

21. **BUDGETS TO BE CARRIED FORWARD FROM 2024/2025 AND BUDGETS TRANSFERRED TO RESERVES**

Proposed by Councillor Miall, seconded by Councillor C Gershater and **RESOLVED** that the carry forward of the budgets to financial year 2025-2026 and the transfer of funds to the general and earmarked reserves be agreed as per the RFO's report.

22. **INTERNAL CONTROL POLICY**

The Deputy Town Clerk summarised the policy and highlighted and explained the matters raised in the document.

Councillors were also advised that, in order to provide resilience in some of the financial processes, the Deputy Town Clerk would be seeking additional signatories from the Council for authorising banking transactions.

Proposed by Councillor Miall, seconded by Councillor Butler and **RESOLVED** that the Internal Control Policy as presented be adopted and signed by the Chair and RFO.

Councillor Apel left the meeting at 6.39pm

23. **INTERNAL AUDIT – ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (AGAR) – 2024-2025**

The Deputy Town Clerk summarised the report as presented and explained that a difference between receipts and total payments had been identified by which was related to the trade-in of the old van during the purchase of the new vehicle.

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Report (AGAR) for 2024-2025 be received and noted for the AGAR submission.

Councillor Kondabeka asked that a vote of thanks be recorded to recognise the hard work undertaken by the Deputy Town Clerk and other Officers in preparing and presenting the accounts.

24. **PROVISION OF INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES 2025-2026**

Proposed by Councillor C Gershater, seconded by JK and **RESOLVED** to re-appoint Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd to provide the City Council with Internal Audit services for the following three years (2025-2028) fixed at the 2024-2025 rates provided in the quote that had been circulated with the agenda.

25. **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (Part 1 of the Annual Return)**

Proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor J Gershater and **RESOLVED** that the Annual Governance Statement (Part 1 of the Annual Return) 2024-2025 be approved and signed by the Chair and the Town Clerk.

26. **ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS (Part 2 of the Annual Return)**

Proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Butler and **RESOLVED** that the Accounting Statements (Part 2 of the Annual Return) 2024-2025 be approved and signed by the Chair and the Responsible Finance Officer.

27. **INVESTMENT REGISTER**

RESOLVED to **NOTE** the balances of the City Council's investments as presented in the report circulated with the agenda.

28. **TO NOTE AND RATIFY THE FOLLOWING RECONCILIATIONS AND TRANSACTIONS**

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

- a) MONTHLY RECONCILIATION WITH EVIDENCE OF BANK STATEMENTS FOR MARCH 2025

Chair of the Finance Committee and Deputy Town Clerk (RFO) to sign the reconciliations as a correct record.

- b) LIST OF PAYMENTS MADE FOR MARCH 2025

- c) LIST OF BARCLAYCARD PAYMENTS FOR MARCH 2025

Councillor Russell left the meeting at 7.05pm

29. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION**

Council **NOTED** receipt of the Town Clerks report and the briefing from the Deputy Clerk and Councillor Miall who had attended a conference in London on 23/6/25.

Following a lengthy discussion which included comments and updates from the West Sussex County Councillors present at the meeting; Council agreed that they would wait until the position of the new Unitary Authority was clearer as this would likely allow the City Council to have a stronger negotiating position in taking on service delivery areas and assets as required.

They also noted the recommendation by the Chair of the Finance Committee that a reserve be created to provide for the payment of legal fees and other costs of future transactions associated with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and that there should be provision for this in the budget.

Council requested that the Devolution Working Group prepare a detailed report on issues and likely costs and to begin to plan for taking on services and assets in 2028.

AGREED that the Town Clerk would write to Chichester District Council to obtain confirmation of their position on asset transfers and car parks.

The Communities Officer joined the meeting at 7.13pm.

Council queried the programme for engagement with the wider community on the subject of LGR and whether the City Council could assist in contacting the residents associations and groups across the city.

Members were advised that consultation was expected to take place in July and August and that it may be necessary to call an extra ordinary Council meeting to ensure the City Council's response was submitted in time.

30. CITY COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Council **NOTED** the explanation from the Town Clerk and the reasons for combining the Standing Orders and Code of Conduct document as being to expedite an annual review of the Code of Conduct further to comments made by the Internal Auditor.

31. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Council **NOTED** the report from Councillor Vivian that had been included with his City and District Council reports as circulated with the agenda.

Members were reminded that any reports received after publication of the agenda would be circulated with the meeting minutes.

32. WARD REPORTS FROM CHICHESTER CITY COUNCILLORS

Council **NOTED** the report from Councillor Vivian that had been included with his Outside Body and District Council reports as circulated with the agenda.

Councillor Pramas advised that she would be submitting a report and raised an issue concerning residents' fears about safety in relation to school drop-off and pickup when Jesse Younghusband school moved to its new site on Minerva Heights.

Following a short discussion, the Mayor and Councillor Pramas agreed to write to West Sussex County Council highlighting their concerns about pedestrian safety following the move of the school to its new site.

Members were reminded that any reports received after publication of the agenda would be circulated with the meeting minutes.

33. REPORTS FROM CHICHESTER DISTRICT AND WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S WARD MEMBERS

Council **NOTED** the reports that had been received from West Sussex County Councillor Sharp and Chichester District Councillors Sharp and Vivian.

Members were reminded that any reports received after publication of the agenda would be circulated with the meeting minutes.

34. QUESTIONS

None had been received.

35. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT) 1960

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for agenda item 26 due to the nature of the business to be transacted, namely confidential business matters with third parties (corrected from Personnel Matters in the agenda).

West Sussex County Councillors Oakley and Sharp remained in the meeting as members of the Working Group that had prepared the report to be discussed.

36. COMMUNITY SPACE IN THE SOUTH OF THE CITY

Council reviewed the Project Manager's report regarding the proposed location of the new community space in the south of the city and **AGREED** to initiate a project to develop a community centre in Florence Park, exploring the opportunities of working with other community groups to deliver a multi-use facility.

37. COMMON SEAL

RESOLVED that the Common Seal be affixed to any documents necessary to give effect to the resolutions passed at this meeting.

DATE OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING: 24 September 2025 at 6.00pm

The meeting closed at 7.45pm

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

Minute ref.	Action	Assigned to
29	Letter to be written to Chichester District Council to obtain clarification of position on asset transfers and carparks.	TC
32	Letter to be written to West Sussex County Council to raise concerns about parent/child safety on St Pauls Road following the move of Jesse Younghusband school to the Minerva Heights site.	The Mayor and Councillor Pramas