



Chichester City Council

MEETING OF FINANCE COMMITTEE Minutes

Date Wednesday 17 September 2025

Time 5:30 PM -- 7:07 PM

Location Council Chamber

PRESENT: Robert Miall, Stuart Loxton, Anne Scicluna

ALSO PRESENT: Cllr Clare Apel, Town Clerk (TC), Deputy Town Clerk (DTC), Property Maintenance Manager (PMM)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: WSCC Cllr Simon Oakley

FIN2025/18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors McHale, Squire, and Pramas.

FIN2025/19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by members of the Committee.

FIN2025/20. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been received in advance of the meeting.

FIN2025/21. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 July 2025 were reviewed and approved by the committee. The Chairman signed the minutes as a correct record.

Decision: The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 July 2025 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

FIN2025/22. UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The committee noted the updates from the previous meeting. The City Council has registered with the Crown Commercial Services government procurement scheme to benefit from centrally negotiated prices.



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FIN2025/23. MINUTES FROM SUB COMMITTEES

FIN2025/23.1. Property Sub-Committee

The committee noted the minutes of the Property Sub-Committee meeting held on 26 August 2025 and approved the urgent works to the Council House roof at an estimated cost of £180k, funded from the Council House Reserve. The Old Court Room roof lantern will be replaced at an estimated cost of £30k, funded from the Energy Efficiency allocation from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts.

The committee considered the Property Maintenance Manager's report on works required at the Council House to address ongoing maintenance conservation needs.

The committee requested that a professional specialist conservation surveyor be asked to assess the planned programme of works and provide advice on the urgency and sequencing of the works and the costs of completing them.

Decision: The committee recommended completion of the urgent works to the Council House roof at an estimated total cost of £180k. The Old Court Room roof lantern will be replaced at an estimated cost of £30k, funded from the Energy Efficiency allocation from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts and the remaining £150K will be funded from the Council House Reserve.

Decision: The committee resolved that a professional specialist conservation surveyor be asked to assess the planned programme of works and provide advice on the urgency and sequencing of the works and the costs of completing them.

FIN2025/23.2. Property Sub-Committee budget for 2026-2027

The committee discussed the report from the Property Sub-Committee Budget Working Group, outlining the potential costs for taking on additional assets in the City and the

report from the Property Maintenance Manager outlining the additional essential works required to preserve the Council House.

FIN2025/23.3. Personnel Sub-Committee

The committee noted the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 17 July 2025. Additionally, the committee acknowledged the requested change to the Sub Committee terms of reference and requested that they be proposed to Council for adoption.

Task: The committee noted the request from the sub-committee that the terms of reference be updated as a part of the annual review of the terms of reference and scheme of delegation.

FIN2025/23.4. Business Plan Sub-Committee

The committee noted the minutes of the Business Plan Sub-Committee meeting held on 19 August 2025.



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FIN2025/24. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO END OF JULY 2025

The committee noted the latest budget monitoring report and the current financial position.

The Town Clerk advised that the Council Civic and Support Manager had requested that a working group be established to review IT requirements and a suitable budget for Councillors' IT equipment to ensure that it is suitable for hybrid meetings and to meet our obligations under the new assertion 10 (GDPR Compliance), which will be part of the annual return next year.

The committee resolved to establish a small working group comprised of Gareth Bowen, Stuart Loxton and up to two other Councillors.

Decision: The committee resolved to establish a small working group comprised of Gareth Bowen, Stuart Loxton and up to two other Councillors to review councillor's IT needs.

FIN2025/25. EAR MARKED RESERVES

The committee noted the current balance of the Council House reserve and that there would be very little money left once the essential roof works had been completed.

FIN2025/26. INVESTMENTS UPDATE

The committee noted the current investment performance and discussed the options for securing a better return on the Council's reserve balances.

The committee agreed to recommend to Council that the money currently held in the Public Sector Property fund be liquidated and placed in an accessible fund on the basis that liquidity of our assets was important to cover the potential impacts of Local Government Reorganisation and to smooth out delays in anticipated CIL income from the Minerva Heights phase 2 development.

The committee requested that a cashflow forecast on all planned projects and activities for the next five years be brought back to the next meeting so that a view can be taken on how much money could potentially be invested in alternative funds.

Decision: The committee agreed to recommend to Council that the money currently held in the Public Sector Property fund be liquidated and placed in the Public Sector Deposit Fund.

Task: The committee requested that a cashflow forecast on all planned projects and activities for the next five years be brought back to the next meeting.

FIN2025/27. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) UPDATE

The committee noted the expenditure to date and the proposed schedule for spending CIL receipts.

FIN2025/28. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR)

The committee noted that the business case for Local Government Reorganisation had now been published. Each council will be making individual decisions on the option they prefer on 23/24 September.



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It is expected that West Sussex County Council will favour option A (1 unitary), whilst Chichester, Arun, Worthing, Adur, Horsham, and Mid-Sussex are expected to favour option B2. Crawley Borough Council have not recommended any of the options to their members, so it is not clear what preference will be submitted.

FIN2025/29. STATUTORY POLICY REVIEWS

The Committee considered the Council scheme of delegation and terms of reference for the Finance Committee and all relevant sub-committees. The following amendments were proposed to be recommended to full council:

The wording for the Personnel Sub-Committee Terms of Reference (ToR) should be amended to make reference to ACAS guidelines, specifically:

- Members should act as a disciplinary panel as set out in the Green Book and as an appeals panel in the case of any appeal against disciplinary action, in line with ACAS best practice guidelines.
- Members should hear any formal grievance in line with ACAS best practice guidelines.

The committee recommended that the Terms of Reference for the Business Plan Sub Committee be further reviewed and considered at the next Finance Committee meeting.

Decision: The Committee decided to recommend the proposed amendments to the Personnel Sub-Committee Terms of Reference to full council, adding specific reference to ACAS guidelines into the handling of disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Task: Consider the Terms of Reference and delegated powers of the Business Plan Sub-Committee at the November Finance Committee meeting.

FIN2025/30. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND BANK MANDATE 1

The Deputy Town Clerk (DTC) explained the proposed changes to financial regulations, to expand the delegated authority to authorise payments to the Clerk up to a value of £5,000.

The Committee agreed to recommend to full council that the proposed amendment to the financial regulations be approved.

Decision: The Committee decided to recommend the proposed amendment to the financial regulations to full council.



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FIN2025/31. TO NOTE AND RATIFY THE FOLLOWING RECONCILIATIONS AND TRANSACTIONS

The committee reviewed and ratified the list of transactions and reconciliations as presented. This included the monthly reconciliation with evidence of bank statements for April to July 2025, the list of payments made for April to July 2025, and the list of Barclaycard payments made for April to July 2025. The Chair and RFO had previously signed the reconciliations as the correct record.

Decision: The committee ratified the list of transactions and reconciliations as presented.

FIN2025/32. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Annual budget
Proposed 5-year cashflow forecast
Review of annual subscriptions and membership fees for other bodies
Review of Business Plan Sub Committee Terms of Reference

FIN2025/33. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next ordinary meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 19 November 2025 at 5.30pm.