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## **Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held in the Anzac Room, Community House on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 7:30pm.**

**Present:** Cllr Alexander (Chair), Cllr Griffiths (Vice-Chair), Cllr Gordon-Garrett, Cllr Rosser, Cllr Donovan, Cllr Fabry, Cllr Gallagher, Cllr Veck, Cllr Davies, Cllr Campbell (non-voting).

**Officers:** George Dyson (Town Clerk), Zoe Malone (Responsible Financial Officer).

No members of the public were in attendance.

### **1. PF1168 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

The Chair opened the meeting at 19:31, welcomed everyone, read out the Civility and Respect statement, ran through the fire exit procedure, asked for phones to be switched off, announced that the meeting was being recorded, and reminded members of the importance of confidentiality on any items listed under the confidential heading.

### **2. PF1169 PUBLIC QUESTIONS - *There will be a 15-minute period whereby members of the public may ask questions on any relevant POLICY & FINANCE matters.***

There were no public questions.

### **3. PF1170 TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE & SUBSTITUTIONS.**

Apologies were received from Cllr Harman, with Cllr Rosser substituting, and Cllr Sharkey, with Cllr Gallagher substituting.

### **4. PF1171 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS.**

Cllr Griffiths and Cllr Alexander declared an interest in item PF1175.

### **5. PF1172 TO ADOPT THE COMMITTEE'S MINUTES OF 7<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2025**

**Proposed by:** Cllr Griffiths                      **Seconded by:** Cllr Gordon-Garrett

The minutes of 7<sup>th</sup> October 2025 were **agreed** and **adopted**

### **6. PF1173 TO REVIEW THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE COUNCIL YEAR TO-DATE: -**

#### **a. Finance Officer's report.**

Committee **noted** the Finance Officer's report.

#### **b. Bank account & Bank Reconciliation statements (for signing).**

**Proposed by:** Cllr Fabry                      **Seconded by:** Cllr Davies

Committee **resolved** to **agree** to the signing of the bank account and bank reconciliation statements.

#### **c. Income & Expenditure report.**

Cllr Gallagher queried the headings on the income and expenditure report, and which headings would be changing in next years budget, the RFO will look at this for the next report.

Committee **noted** the Income and Expenditure report.

**d. Balance Sheet**

Committee **noted** the balance sheet.

**e. CIL & S.106 report (income, expenditure & bids)**

Committee **noted** the CIL & s.106 report.

**f. List of payments (for approval).**

Cllr Gallagher asked about a payment for Bowls Maintenance, which the RFO clarified was for the lawn, as well as the legal costs relating to the Bowls Club lease renewal.

It was proposed to approve the list of payments.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Fabry                      **Seconded by:** Cllr Rosser  
Committee **resolved** to **approve** the list of payments.

**7. PF1174 TO NOTE THE INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

The Clerk summarised the report, highlighting that the only recommendation was reviewing the delegated authority for agreeing payments.

Cllr Donovan asked that thanks to the RFO be noted by the Committee.

Cllr Davies highlighted a need for Councillors to be made aware of assertion 10 requirements relating to data & IT security..

Committee **noted** the interim internal audit report.

*Cllr Alexander and Cllr Griffiths left at this point (19:46)*

**8. PF1175 TO RATIFY THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE.**

Cllr Fabry took the Chair and summarised the meeting that the Grants Sub-Committee had.

It was proposed that Committee ratify the recommendations of the Grants Sub-Committee.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Davies                      **Seconded by:** Cllr Gordon-Garrett  
Committee **resolved** to **ratify** the recommendations of the Grants Sub-Committee.

Committee added their thanks to the RFO and Committees & Assistant Projects Officer for their work on the Grants sub-committee.

*Cllr Alexander and Cllr Griffiths returned at this point (19:50)*

**9. PF1176 TO AGREE 2026/27 ROOM HIRE CHARGES**

The RFO introduced and summarised the report.

It was proposed that the recommendations in the report be agreed.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Veck                      **Seconded by:** Cllr Rosser  
Committee **resolved** to agree to this recommendation.

## **10. PF1177 TO AGREE RECOMMENDATIONS ON MUSIC LICENCE FEES**

The RFO explained the background to this item, summarising how the music licence fee works

Cllr Veck highlighted that nowhere that she was aware of passes the cost of the PRS licence onto a hirer, Cllr Gallagher agreed with this sentiment.

There was a brief discussion about how the PPL/PRS is administered.

It was proposed that PTC continue to absorb the cost of this licence.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Veck                      **Seconded by:** Cllr Donovan  
Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

## **11. PF1178 TO AGREE RECOMMENDATIONS ON A COMMUNITY WALL PROJECT**

Cllr Donovan gave Committee an overview of the project. Cllr Campbell asked about the labelling of the circles on the design shown in the papers, Cllr Donovan confirmed that these would be fixed labels relating to a subject heading.

It was proposed that Committee agree to the proposed project to create a Community Wall, and that the TFG continue to progress this.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Rosser                      **Seconded by:** Cllr Gordon-Garrett  
Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

## **12. PF1179 TO AGREE TO RECOMMEND THE 2026/27 DRAFT BUDGET TO COUNCIL**

The RFO introduced the draft budget, and explained the key differences between the options that were presented to Committee.

Cllr Campbell queried the reduction in the small grants budget and discussed the implication for room hire grants. Cllr Campbell also raised concern about the large grant to LDCA being reduced.

The Town Clerk reinforced that reducing room income would have the same net effect as increasing the expenditure budget.

Cllr Griffiths stated that she could not support option 2 with reducing grants budgets, as it's a cut to the groups that support this town.

Cllr Gordon-Garrett also spoke in support of option 1, and maintaining the level of support.

Cllr Rosser suggested that the smaller grants are symbolic, and that we need to be effective with the money we have and that we should continue this support.

Cllr Gallagher asked for clarification on the draft tax base, which has not gone up as much as was hoped.

Cllr Gordon-Garret suggested an 'option 3' which was an increase in LDCA grant by £2000, reduce the small grants budget to £6000, and to remove the Town Criers outfit budget entirely.

Cllr Davies highlighted a need to keep the precept increase as small as possible.

Cllr Donovan asked about the Civic & Events budget increase of £300, and whether we could maintain this at the same figure as this year.

It proposed that Committee recommend to Full Council that they agree an 'option 3' budget, made up of amending option 2 by agreeing the full amount requested by LDCA, but removing the whole budget for the Town Crier's outfit.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Gordon-Garrett      **Seconded by:** Cllr Gallagher  
Committee **resolved** to agree by majority vote, with 2 against.

**13. PF1180 TO RECEIVE VERBAL UPDATES FROM THE FOLLOWING TFG's**

a. Audit Working Group

The Working Group is currently arranging a date for the next audit to take place.

b. Community Buildings Working Group

Cllr Gallagher gave a summary of the work that has been taking place, in looking at Community House and the Hub, which last met on 13<sup>th</sup> October. The borescope survey has now taken place, and further advice on the results of this are to be taken.

A quote is also being sought about replacing the current gas boilers with more efficient alternatives, as well as seeking estimates for the roof replacement at Community House, and the solar panels. A grant application has been put in for £75,000 for upgrading to Air Source Heat Pumps.

The Hub stakeholder consultation is now taking place on 4<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> December. A consulting firm are now looking into the phase 1 Hub project, and some flexibility in the CIL funding to include windows has been agreed at Lewes District Cabinet.

The group will exchange some information by email over the coming weeks.

**14. PF1181 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – TUESDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2026**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

**15. PF1182 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM THE FOLLOWING ITEMS**

**Proposed by:** Cllr Veck      **Seconded by:** Cllr Gordon-Garrett  
Committee **resolved** to **exclude** press and public from the remaining agenda items.

**NOTE:** *In accordance with Standing Order No. 3(d) and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1, in view of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted, the public and press are excluded from the rest of the meeting.*

**16. PF1183 UNPAID INVOICE REPORT**

Committee **noted** the unpaid invoice report.

**17. PF1184 TO AGREE 2026/27 RENT INCREASES**

The RFO introduced the report, and the recommendations to rent increases.

It was proposed that the report recommendations be agreed.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Davies      **Seconded by:** Cllr Donovan  
Committee **resolved** to **agree** to this proposal.

*There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 21:01*