



**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING ON
TUESDAY 02nd DECEMBER 2025 AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN
COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, 4 SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE
COMMENCING AT 7.00PM**

PRESENT:

Cllr. D Strachan (Chairman)
Cllr. I Agnew (Deputy Chairman)
Cllr. M Foster
Cllr. M North
Cllr. D Albone (Ex-officio Member)

Mr P Tarrant – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Mr E Bour – Head of Finance & Deputy RFO
Miss A Green – Committee Clerk

Members of the Public – 0

Meeting Formalities:

Following a reminder to meeting attendees, both panel and public, that this is a formal meeting, the Chairman advised that members of the public will be given an opportunity to speak during public open session but not at other times. The meeting is being filmed and by being present attendees are deemed to have agreed be filmed and to the use of those images and sound recordings. The Chairman advised that attendees should not disclose any personal information of individuals as this would infringe the Data Protection Rights of the individual. The Chairman asked everyone to mute their microphones when not speaking.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

a. Apologies were received from the following Members:

Cllr. M Knight, Cllr. M Russell, Cllr. C Thomas, Cllr. J Woodhead.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a. Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

No disclosable pecuniary interests were declared.

b. Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item:

No disclosable non-pecuniary interests were declared.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. On behalf of all Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, the Chairman thanked all staff for their efforts in delivering the Christmas Lights Switch-On event held on Friday 28th November. He noted the event was highly successful.

4. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No members of the public were present, either online or in person.

5. INVITED SPEAKER

No guest speaker was invited.

6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

- a. None.

7. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS

- a. No amendments were made to the minutes.

The Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 16 September 2025 and the Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes.

8. MATTERS ARISING

- a. There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

9. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. **Fees and Charges**

The Committee reviewed the schedule of fees and charges.

Members **RESOLVED** to recommend adoption of the proposed fees to Full Council.

b. **Budget and Precept Planning**

Members considered Officer's report.

Following discussion, Members **RESOLVED** the following:

- a) That the draft budget for the 2026/2027 financial year, as presented in Appendix D, be noted and that Members guide Officers on their preferred level of budget. The draft total income is £2,208,688 and the draft total expenditure is £2,208,688.
- b) That the draft precept for the 2026/2027 financial year, as presented in Appendix D, be noted and that Members guide Officers on their preferred level of precept. The draft precept is £1,927,103 (4.82% increase) and the draft Band D Charge is £239.27 (3.20% increase).
- c) That Members approve the Officer recommendation regarding the minimum level of General Reserve for the 2026/2027 financial year, being a sum not lower than £552,172, equivalent to three months' gross expenditure, in line with good accounting practice and statute.
- d) That Town Council allocate £25,000 in the next financial year as a contingency for emerging capital expenditure.
- e) That all such initial determinations be subject to the precept resolution of the Finance & General Purposes Committee on 6 January 2026 and ratification and resolution of Full Council on 20 January 2026.

c. **Grant Policy**

Following the consideration of the Officer's report, Members **RECOMMENDED** that the amended Grants Policy be adopted by Full Council at the next Town Council Meeting.

d. **Credit Control Policy**

Members noted the small amendments officers had made to the policy.

Members **RECOMMENDED** adoption of the revised Credit Control Policy by Full Council at the next Town Council Meeting.

e. **Mayoral Expenses**

Members considered Officer's report.

During discussion, Members queried whether the inclusion of costs related to twinning within the examples implied that such expenditure had been formally approved. Officers clarified that this reference was illustrative only and did not constitute budgetary commitment, as no resolution on twinning expenditure had yet been agreed by Council. Members also reviewed the section on travel claims and noted that the wording could be improved for clarity. It was agreed that the phrase currently in brackets should be amended to read as a separate clause: "Mileage to and from events, public transport fares, and taxi fares where no other alternative is available." This change was intended to ensure that the policy is unambiguous.

Subject to Members' amendments, the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Mayoral and Civic Expenses Policy be adopted by Full Council at the next Town Council meeting.

10. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

There were no items for information.

11. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

- a. No members of the public were present, either online or in person.

12. **EXEMPT**

- a. **Exempt minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting 16th September 2025**

No amendments were made to the minutes.

The exempt minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 16 September 2025 and the Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **8:00pm**