

Minutes of Feock Parish Council Finance & General Purposes Committee

held on Monday 3rd November 2025 at 6pm at the Parish Council Office, Market Street, Devoran

Councillors present:

Richard Brickell	Carnon Downs ward
Cathy Kemp	Carnon Downs ward
Alison Avar	Carnon Downs ward
Keith Hambly-Staite	Feock ward

In attendance: Debra Roberts, Parish Clerk

Chair: Richard Brickell

1. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

PROPOSAL: CLLR AVARD PROPOSED THAT CLLR BRICKELL BE ELECTED AS CHAIR OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE, SECONDED BY CLLR KEMP AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PROPOSAL: CLLR KEMP PROPOSED THAT CLLR HAMBLY-STAITE BE ELECTED AS VICE CHAIR OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE, SECONDED BY CLLR BRICKELL AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies received.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING

RESOLUTION: CLLR BRICKELL PROPOSED THAT THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 10TH OCTOBER 2024 WERE APPROVED AS AN ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING, AND SIGNED BY THE CHAIRMAN, SECONDED BY CLLR HAMBLY-STAITE AND CARRIED UNIMOUSLY.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Kemp declared an interest in any items that may include reference to Devoran Pre-School as she was employed as the Manager.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present.

6. FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND CONTROLS

a. Review of the External Auditor's Report

The report had been circulated and the Clerk explained the comments.

b. Review of the Internal Auditor's Report (2024/25)

RESOLUTION: CLLR KEMP PROPOSED THAT THE COMMITTEE NOTES THE REPORT AND THANKS THE INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR THEIR WORK, SECONDED BY CLLR BRICKELL AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

c. Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2026/27

Members noted that the current Internal Auditor will retire following completion of the 2024/25 audit and reviewed submitted proposals/quotations for a new Internal Auditor.

RESOLUTION: CLLR BRICKELL PROPOSED THAT JT AUDIT BE APPOINTED AS INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2025/26, BEING INDEPENDENT AND COMPETENT, SECONDED BY CLLR HAMBLY-STAITE AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

d. Review of Internal Controls Policy

The Committee reviewed the Council's Internal Controls Policy.

It was agreed that the existing controls remain effective and proportionate, there were two changes to the policy which related to cash receipts for volunteer drivers and the need to update the internal and external auditors details.

RESOLUTION: CLLR KEMP PROPOSED THAT THE INTERNAL CONTROLS POLICY BE APPROVED AND RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL FOR ADOPTION, SECONDED BY CLLR HAMBLY-STAITE AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

e. Financial Risk Assessment Review

Members reviewed the updated Financial Risk Assessment for 2025/26. There were no significant unmanaged risks identified.

RESOLUTION: CLLR AVARD PROPOSED THAT THE FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT 2025/26 BE APPROVED AND RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL, SECONDED BY CLLR BRICKELL AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

f. Review of Financial Policies and Procedures

The Committee reviewed the updated Financial Regulations and Investment Policy.

RESOLUTION: CLLR BRICKELL PROPOSED THAT THE UPDATED FINANCIAL REGULATIONS POLICY AND THE INVESTMENT POLICY BE RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL, SECONDED BY CLLR KEMP AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

g. Compliance with Financial Regulations and Legislation

Members reviewed compliance with statutory requirements under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the Practitioners' Guide. The Clerk confirmed that proper practices were being followed.

7. FINANCIAL POSITION AND PERFORMANCE

a. Review of Current Financial Situation

The Committee reviewed the current income and expenditure against the approved 2025/26 budget. Variances were discussed and explanations noted. The Clerk explained variances.

It was agreed to split out defibrillators into a separate line. The Clerk would provide details on enhancement projects covered by this line.

The Clerk explained how the Chairman's Allowance worked and what it was able to be spent on.

b. Review of Bank Balances

Members received a report showing current bank balances and investment holdings.

c. Review of Current Direct Debits.

A schedule of all current direct debits was reviewed, no changes were required.

d. Review of Financial Reserves

The Clerk had circulated the statement of restricted and allocated reserves.

RESOLUTION: CLLR KEMP PROPOSED THAT THE LEVEL OF RESERVES IS CONSIDERD ADEQUATE AND JUSTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPHS 5.31 – 5.32 OF THE PRACTITIONERS' GUIDE, SECONDED BY CLLR AVARD AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. BUDGET AND PRECEPT PLANNING FOR 2026/27

a. Review of 2025/26 Budget Performance

Members reviewed current year budget performance and noted areas of underspend and planned commitments.

b. Forecast of End-of-Year Position 2025/26

The Committee noted the projected year-end financial position and impact on reserves.

c. Projected Income for 2026/27

Members considered anticipated income.

d. Projected Expenditure for 2026/27

Members considered anticipated expenditure.

e. Draft Budget for 2026/27

The Clerk presented the draft budget and explained assumptions that had been included (inflation, pay scales, energy costs). It was agreed to add 10% to the bus shelter, parks, quays and footpath budget line.

RESOLUTION: CLLR HAMBLY-STIAITE PROPOSED THE COMMITTEE APPROVES THE DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2026/27, PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPHS 5.25-5.28 OF THE PRACTITIONERS' GUIDE AND RECOMMENDS IT TO FULL COUNCIL, SECONDED BY CLLR KEMP.

f. Recommendation of Precept 2026/27

RESOLUTION: CLLR AVARD PROPOSED THAT BASED ON THE AGREED DRAFT BUDGET, MEMBERS CONSIDERED A PRECEPT LEVEL FOR 2026/27 BE RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL OF £183,450.00, SECONDED BY CLLR KEMP AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. TO NOTE ITEMS FOR THE NEXT COMMITTEE AGENDA

There were no items to note for the next Committee agenda.

In accordance with S100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business as it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as specified in the paragraphs of the Act.

10. STAFFING MATTERS

Cllr Hambly-Staite suggested that we should re-tender for the maintenance of our bus shelters, footpaths, quays and weed control to be effective April 2026 on a self employed basis, with one contractor carrying out all work.

It was agreed to discuss this further at the Access and Amenities Committee.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.19pm