

Minutes approved on:	
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DRAFT

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and Staffing Committee held on Wednesday 1 June 2016 in The John Heggadon meeting room, Shinfield Parish Hall, commencing 19.30 hrs.

Present: Cllrs A Grimes, C Hughes, P Hughes, I Montgomery, D Peer and R Pike.
Attending: S E Roberts (Clerk).

16/FS/1 Election of Chairman

Cllr Grimes was appointed as committee Chair for the ensuing year.

16/FS/2 Election of Vice-Chairman

Cllr Pike was proposed as committee Vice-Chairman, nominated by Cllr Peer and seconded by Cllr C Hughes. Cllr Pike was duly elected as Vice-Chairman of the committee for the ensuing year.

16/FS/3 Public Questions

There were none.

16/FS/4 Apologies and declarations of members' interests

- 4.1 Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr I Clarke.
- 4.2 There were no declarations of interest.

16/FS/5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 5.1 It was proposed and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of 27 April 2016 were a correct record of the meeting, and these were signed by the chair.
- 5.2 Matters arising:

15/38.2: Mileage payments

The Clerk had previously reported that the claimable mileage rate, currently 45ppm, is set by the Government. Members discussed whether councillors should be able to claim for any journeys both within and outside the parish carried out on council business, as currently the policy is for journeys over 5 miles. The Clerk was asked to speak to other clerks locally to investigate what other parish council policies are regarding this matter.

15/38.2.3: Bank funds

The Clerk reported that the process was underway to close the council's accounts with the Bank of Ireland and Barclays Bank, although this would not be completed until after this year's audit. Members discussed options for any surplus funds identified and agreed these should be used to purchase additional interest bearing bonds at the appropriate time.

15/39.2: Orta Solar grant

The Clerk confirmed the grant has been received and there is no claw-back period, but the recommendation is that the funds should be spent on the promotion of sustainable energy, energy efficiency and carbon reduction uses to benefit the community.

16/FS/6 **Dissolution of Committee and new Standing Committees**

- 6.1 Members considered the dissolution of the current Finance and Staffing Committee and proposals to establish 2 new Standing Committees which would report direct to Council: Finance and General Purposes Committee and Staffing Committee. Members discussed proposed terms of reference for both committees (previously circulated) and made the following changes:

Finance and General Purposes:

Under Membership: The committee should comprise the chairs of each of the Council's Standing Committees plus up to two additional members, **add "appointed by the committee"** with relevant expertise and experience in financial management and/or accountancy.

Under Delegated Powers:

- Add after appointment of a Grants Working Party, **"to comprise 4 members, to include the chair of the Communications and Policies Committee"**
- Add an additional power: **establishment of new working parties as required"**

The Clerk agreed to revise the terms of reference for the committee accordingly.

Staffing Committee:

There were no changes to the proposed terms of reference for the new committee.

- 6.2 Members agreed to **RECOMMEND** to the June Council meeting that the Finance and Staffing Committee be dissolved and that a new Finance and General Purposes Committee and Staffing Committee be established as 2 new Standing Committees reporting direct to Council.
- 6.3 It was noted that subject to Council approval of the new committee arrangements, appointment to the Grants Working Party and its first meeting would have to follow the first meeting of the new Finance and General Purposes Committee, which would mean a delay in the grants process. Members agreed this should be seen as a one-off for this year only and should not delay any grant payments unduly. The Clerk agreed to monitor the position to ensure this did not happen.

16/FS/7 **Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**

- 7.1 Members reviewed the proposed changes to Council's Standing Orders for 2016 (previously circulated). Members noted that one further change had been previously agreed by Council, clause 33.1(b): "The Chairman's Allowance will be paid in quarterly instalments **in arrears**" (not in advance).
- 7.2 With the additional change, the committee agreed to **RECOMMEND** to the June Council meeting that the updated Standing Orders for 2016 be adopted.

- 7.3 Members reviewed the proposed changes to the Council’s Financial Regulations for 2016 (previously circulated). Members agreed that clause 4.2 should be further amended to delete the words “or tender” in line one, and replace the word “tender” with “purchase” in line 4.
- 7.4 With the additional change, the committee agreed to **RECOMMEND** to the June Council meeting that the updated Financial Regulations for 2016 be adopted.
- 7.5 The Clerk confirmed that in future proposed revisions to Council Standing Orders, regulations, and policies should be properly referenced and dated until finally approved by members.

16/FS/8 2016-17 Priorities

- 8.1 Members discussed suggestions for the Finance and General Purposes committee’s priorities for 2016-17 and agreed these could include the following:
- i. Improve the council’s financial management and control in line with the agreed budget, including enhanced monitoring of budget priorities, cost centres, and risk;
 - ii. Improve the efficiency of council business using best value principles, including robust cost-benefit analysis of the council’s contracts and suppliers;
 - iii. SMARTer working across the council through improved performance management.
- 8.2 The Clerk agreed to add a report on priorities linked to the council’s vision and policy objectives to the agenda for the first meeting of the Finance and General Purposes committee.

15/FS/9 Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

The meeting ended at 21.35.

List of actions

Ref	Action	Action by
15/38.2.1	Determine what policies other parishes have for paying members’ mileage claims	Clerk
6.1	Revise the terms of reference for the new Finance and General Purposes Committee	Clerk
6.2	Present the terms of reference for the 2 new committees to June Council with the recommended resolution to dissolve the Finance and Staffing committee and replace with the Finance and General Purposes and Staffing Committees	Clerk
6.3	Arrange the first meeting of the Grants Working Party as soon as possible to minimise any delay in the 2016-17 grant application process and payment of grant awards	Clerk
7.2	Update the 2016 Standing Orders and present to June Council for approval	Clerk
7.3	Update the 2016 Financial Regulations	Clerk
8.2	produce a report on 2016-17 priorities to the first meeting of the new Finance and General Purposes Committee	Clerk