STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE, FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

3 November 2026

6:30pm to 8:40pm

Minutes

Present

Councillor Alcock (Deputy Chair)

Councillors:

Albon	Lee
Coles	Petrovic
Duck (until 7:30pm)	Vos

Responsible Financial Officer: Georgina Kerrigan
Town Clerk: Caroline Nash
Press: None
Public: One member of the public present

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19. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Smith and the Mayor for the reasons given.

It was noted that Councillor J Fradgley was absent from the meeting.

20. **Declarations of Interest**

None given.

21. **To receive written requests for dispensation**

There were no written or verbal requests for dispensations.

22. Public Participation

The following question was asked:-

"Please can the Committee explain the risk based calculations supporting the general reserves and provide a schedule showing the purpose, clear use and review date of every designated and restricted reserve?"

In light of the in-depth response required to the question it was agreed that a full detailed response would be provided in due course.

23. To approve the draft open Minutes of the Governance, Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 22 September 2026

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Governance, Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 22 September 2026 be approved as a correct record.

24. Town Clerk's Open Report

FINANCE

24.1 Management Accounts for Q2 July to September 2026.

The Committee considered the Management Accounts for Q2 2026/27. Members noted that the Council was reporting an overall net surplus position of £700,096 at the six-month stage, whilst acknowledging that a significant proportion of expenditure would fall within Q3 and Q4.

Members discussed the performance of Cemetery & Open Spaces, noting the anticipated deficit and ongoing work to resolve outstanding mast income issues.

The RFO provided verbal updates to the questions previously raised around split of staff hours across the open spaces areas and use of Community Infrastructure Levy monies.

Concern was expressed regarding overspends in General Repairs & Maintenance and Street Furniture budgets, attributed to survey costs, vandalism, and increased service charges.

The Committee noted that there were no significant concerns at present but agreed that expenditure lines approaching or exceeding budget should continue to be closely monitored.

RESOLVED That the quarterly management accounts for the period July to September 2026 be noted.

24.2 2027/28 Budget Process

The Responsible Financial Officer provided a verbal update on discussions of the Budget Working Group regarding the development of the 2027/28 budget. Members considered the proposed process and timetable for budget preparation and noted that further recommendations would be brought forward during the budget-setting cycle.

It was confirmed that each committee chair will meet with the RFO to discuss each committee's budget requirement, and for councillors to pass their input to Committee chairs ahead of this. Any councillor can pass comment to any committee chair, it is not limited to the committee(s) they sit on.

Each committee will be provided with a draft budget specific to them, a forecast and a timetable for budget setting, with the final budget to be approved at Town Council on 19 January 2027.

The RFO confirmed the tax base is usually issued in November, which impacts the precept calculations and so the budget, and the RFO anticipated receipt imminently. It was requested by Councillors that the RFO chase the District Council for a specific date the tax base could be expected to be announced.

The Chair highlighted the need to get anything into the budget that might support the Town Council as a whole and therefore reminded Members to reach out to the relevant Committee Chair in order to start the process.

Following further discussions, it was

RESOLVED That the update be noted and the budget process continue in accordance with the agreed timetable.

24.3 Draft Budget 2027/28

The Committee reviewed the draft budget for 2027/28, prepared as a basis for discussion using previous expenditure levels and inflationary assumptions.

Members discussed a number of budget areas and identified matters requiring further consideration before a final recommendation was made to Full Council in January 2027.

The RFO reminded councillors of the possibility of a cap on setting the precent which has been repeatedly highlighted by external bodies.

RESOLVED That the draft budget be received and comments incorporated into the next version for further consideration prior to submission to Full Council.

GOVERNANCE

24.4 Annual Review of Policies and Procedures

The Committee considered the annual review of the Council's governance documents, including:

- Financial Regulations
- Standing Orders
- Reserves Policy
- Investment Strategy
- Risk Management Policy
- Risk Register
- Community Infrastructure Levy Policy

Detailed discussions took place on the various policies, with particular focus on the Financial Regulations.

Members noted that the Standing Orders Working Group was due to commence its review of the revised documents. It was agreed that any comments or suggested amendments arising from the discussions would be forwarded to the Working Group at its

meeting the following day to enable the documents to be finalised in readiness for ratification by Council on 24 November 2026.

It was agreed that the Community Infrastructure Levy Working Group should reconvene to undertake a review of that policy and report back with recommendations. The Working Group to comprise of Councillors Alcock, Coles, Vos and the RFO.

RECOMMENDED **That the following policies and procedures, as amended, be adopted:-**

- **Financial Regulations**
- **Reserves Policy**
- **Investment Strategy**
- **Risk Management Policy**
- **Risk Register**

RESOURCES

24.5 Appointment of Deputy Chief Officer and Deputy Town Clerk

The Committee considered a report regarding the appointment of a Deputy Town Clerk and Deputy Chief. Members welcomed the appointment of Victoria Flynn on a year secondment basis and recognised the additional management capacity and resilience the role would provide.

RECOMMENDED **That the appointment of Victoria Flynn as Deputy Town Clerk and Deputy Chief Officer on an interim basis for an initial period of one year through a secondment arrangement be approved.**

GENERAL

24.6 Town Clerk and RFO's verbal update

The Town Clerk and RFO updated the meeting on:-

- Recording of meetings policy/protocol to be submitted to the Town Council in November

- Assets to be disposed of
    - The sofas from the Ballroom which had reached end of life and stored off-site were not successful in being sold. They have further deteriorated in storage and now require disposal.
    - It was agreed at the Community, Wellbeing and Place meeting of 13 October 2026 that the Mayoral Car will be disposed of before the next MOT and service is due in early 2027. Avenues for sale were being explored.

25. To note the Terms of Reference for the Governance, Finance and Resources Committee

It was noted that the Terms of Reference as circulated had not changed, however, further amendments would be made in relation to delegations and therefore the revised Terms of Reference for the Governance, Finance and Resources Committee would need to be agreed by the Committee at a later date.

26. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED That the press and public be excluded due to the confidential nature of the business under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings Act) 1960 s1. Sub section 2.

27. Staffing matters

The report was noted and the appropriate action taken as outlined in the Town Clerk's report.

Chair ……