

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE, FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

2 June 2026

6:30pm to 8:15pm

Minutes

Present Councillors:

Albon	Duck
Alcock	McNaught-Barrow
Coles	Vos

Responsible Financial Officer: Georgina Kerrigan

Town Clerk: Caroline Nash

Press: None

Public: None

1. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair for the Municipal year 2026/27

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED That Councillor Smith be appointed as Chair for 2026/27.

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED That Councillor Alcock be appointed as Vice Chair for 2026/27.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors J Fradgley, Lee, Petrovic and Smith for the reasons given.

3. Declarations of Interest

None given.

4. To receive written requests for dispensation

There were no written or verbal requests for dispensations.

5. Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

6. To approve the draft open Minutes of the Finance & Audit Committee meeting held on 24 March 2026 and the Personnel Committee meeting held on 28 April 2026

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Finance & Audit Committee meeting held on 24 March 2026 and the Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 28 April 2026 be approved as correct records.

7. To note the Terms of Reference for the Committee

Discussions took place on point 7.3.23 in relation to the recruitment, determination and appointment to staff vacancies.

It was agreed that it was for the Committee to determine recruitment for new appointments outside of the agreed establishment, however in general and urgent cases, the Town Clerk should have approval to start the process to expedite matters.

Accordingly, the Terms of Reference to be amended to reflect the above.

Discussions also took place in relation to reviewing the Terms of Reference annually. It was agreed that the Terms of Reference should be a standing agenda item for the time being

8. Town Clerk's Open Report

FINANCE

8.1 Year-End Management Accounts (draft) for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

The RFO presented the draft year-end management accounts for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 and explained any discrepancies. Following some questions the accounts were noted. Most overspends were due to timing of invoicing and would be resolved in the year end process, or were due to emergency works.

8.2 Debt Write-Offs

The RFO explained the two items that were proposed for Write-Off. The £70 invoice was discovered to be an administrative error and could be ignored. The total write off was confirmed to be 1p and was approved.

8.3 Designated Reserves and Virements

The Committee went through the list of designated and restricted reserves at the end of Quarter 4, before any year-end adjustments, and the RFO updated members on the current status of the designated reserves.

After discussion, the suggested movements in Appendix C were recommended, with the following amendments: -

- For events overspend to be deducted from the events reserve.
- Vehicle Replacement Reserve to transfer in the balance of the balloon payments for both open spaces vehicles, to enable them to be cleared in full before FY 2027-28.
- Election Expenses Reserve which the Committee agreed to increase the amount transferred in to £30,000

Discussions also took place on considerations for 2026/27 where it was recommended that:-

- A new reserve be created for Town Hall Commercial Management, and for any year end profits to be held there.
- A new reserve be created for the Garden of Remembrance and to transfer in £1,000.
- A new reserve be created for Monuments and £10,000 be transferred in.

The virement relating to professional fees was approved by Council on 16 September 2025 (minute ref 53) but was included here again as part of the confirmations required for the year end process.

No further virements were suggested.

RECOMMENDED **That any amendments to the Designated Reserves and Virements be approved**

8.4 Council's Reserve Policy

The RFO introduced the Annual Review of the Council's Reserve Policy and the level of general reserves required was discussed. Recommendations received by the RFO have ranged from 3 to 12 months of expenditure, and it was agreed to remain at 3 months. The RFO also noted that the guidance documents referenced be checked for newer editions.

It was also noted that the names of the Committees contained within the document needed to be updated following the recent review, and the above changes in reserve names be updated.

RECOMMENDED **That the Financial Reserves Policy be approved subject to the amendments as detailed above.**

8.5 Professional Fees Expenditure

The RFO explained that the Town Council's insurance policy for 2026/27 was the last year under the current contract and a full review was required for the new policy.

In addition to this, the RFO had been advised that insurance reinstatement valuations should now be carried out every 3 years for buildings, monuments and civic regalia, due to rapidly changing costs, and every 5-10 years for other valuable items.

The RFO advised that quotes had been sought and therefore approval was required for the additional expenditure.

It was queried whether the valuers would have adequate insurance themselves for if an item was misvalued and the Council suffered a

loss as a result. The RFO advised the valuers should have professional indemnity insurance but would seek to confirm this.

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to propose the additional expenditure for recommendation to Council.

RECOMMENDED **That the additional expenditure in relation to the Town Council's insurance policy renewal be approved.**

8.6 Asset Register Review Group

It was noted that the next meeting of the Asset Register Review Group would take place on Friday 5 June 2026 at 2pm.

Councillors appointed to that Group were Coles, Hunter, Lee (Chair) and MacDonald.

The RFO advised that the second visit of the Internal Auditor would be taking place on Wednesday 10 June 2026.

8.7 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Working Group

The RFO advised that not enough members had come forward to be part of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Working Group and therefore responsibility would be adopted by this Committee.

RECOMMENDED **That the RFO convene a meeting of the Working Group and that the Group be established under the remit of this Committee.**

GOVERNANCE

8.8 Document Retention Policy

The Committee considered the proposed Document Retention Policy which proposed to provide a corporate policy framework to ensure that certain documents were dealt with in the correct manner and were retained and/or disposed of in the correct method and timescale.

It was noted that this would apply to both paper and electronic copies of documents and Appendix A listed the schedule of how long each type of document should be kept.

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to approve the Document Retention Policy for recommendation to Council.

RECOMMENDED That the Document Retention Policy be approved for adoption.

8.9 Flexible Working Policy

The Committee considered the proposed Flexible Working Policy. Members noted that the policy reflected employees' statutory rights and current employment legislation. It was noted that employees are entitled to request flexible working from their first day of employment and that the Council is required to consider such requests reasonably and within the prescribed timescales.

Members further noted that, whilst the Council is not obliged to approve every request, any refusal must be based on legitimate operational grounds. The policy also highlighted the Council's legal obligations in relation to reasonable adjustments for employees with disabilities or long-term health conditions.

The Committee agreed that the policy provided a clear framework for considering flexible working requests fairly, consistently and in accordance with employment law, whilst ensuring that the operational needs of the Council continue to be met.

The Committee further agreed that, should a flexible working request be submitted by an employee, the request would be considered by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Personnel Lead (being the Vice-Chair of this Committee) and, where appropriate, the Mayor and/or another member of the Committee, before a recommendation or decision is made in accordance with the policy.

It was then proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to approve the Flexible Working Policy for recommendation to Council.

RECOMMENDED **That the Flexible Working Policy, be amended as outlined above, and adopted.**

RESOURCES

8.10 Organisational Review

The Committee received an update from the Town Clerk on the progress of the Organisation Review and its staffing implications. It was confirmed that all job descriptions for office-based staff were currently being evaluated, following which the two new posts of Deputy Town Clerk and Democratic Services Officer would be advertised.

GENERAL

8.11 Town Clerk and RFO’s verbal update

The Town Clerk updated the meeting on two resource issues which has occurred on the day of the meeting and the Committee agreed with the temporary measures to be put in place for staff shortages.

- 9. The next meeting is Tuesday 2 September 2026 at 6:30pm at the Town Hall.

Chair