



**MEETING OF THE
FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Date: Tuesday 10 June 2025

Time: 7.00pm

Location: Chigwell Council Parish Offices, Hainault Road, Chigwell, IG7 6QZ

Members to be present:

Cllr Elliot Costa
Cllr Tosin Amuludun

Cllr Debby Rye
Cllr Jamie Braha (acting ex-officio)

Acting Clerk:

Cllr Celina Jefcoate

Members of the Public and Councillors were asked to **NOTE** that in accordance with Standing Orders 3 (i) and the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, photographing, recording, broadcasting, transmitting or otherwise reporting the proceeding of a meeting may take place.

Councillors were asked to **NOTE** that in the exercise of their functions, they must take note of the following: equal opportunities; crime and disorder; human rights; health and safety and biodiversity

FG001/25 - ELECTION OF A CHAIR

Cllr Rizvi was elected Chair

FG002/25 - ELECTION OF A VICE CHAIR

Cllr Costa was elected Vice Chair

FG003/25 - TERMS OF REFERENCE

The [Terms of Reference](#) under which this committee was determined by Full Council were **NOTED**

FG004/25 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and **AGREED** from Cllr Faiza Rizvi

FG005/25 - ANY OTHER ABSENCE

Cllr Alana Aradeon

FG006/25 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

FG007/25 - MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held 8 April 2025 were **APPROVED** ([Appendix 1](#))

FG008/25 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

FG009/25 - HANDOVER FROM OUTGOING CHAIR

The report from the outgoing Chair was **NOTED** ([Appendix 2](#))

FG010/25 - FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS AND BANK RECONCILIATIONS

- The Summary Report from the Financial Officer was **REVIEWED** ([Appendix 2A](#))
- The proposed payments for June were **APPROVED** ([Appendix 3](#))
- The card payments for May were **APPROVED** ([Appendix 4](#))
- The bank reconciliation to 30 April and 31 May were **APPROVED** ([Appendix 5](#))
- The report detailing salary, superannuation and tax payments for May 2025 was **NOTED** and the report detailing salary, superannuation and tax payments for June 2025 was **APPROVED** - ([Appendix 6](#))
- The reported cemetery activities for April and May were **NOTED** ([Appendix 7](#))

FG011/25 - FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

Nothing further than the above

FG012/25 - INTERNAL AUDIT

Members **CONSIDERED** the findings of the [Internal Audit](#) and the officer reports provided ([Appendix 8](#)) and **AGREED** to:

- **NOTE** its support for the Chair/Vice Chair together as Proper Officer model as a safeguard while a councillor serves as Acting Clerk
- **NOTE** the external auditor's comment, confirming no formal recommendation was made
- **NOTE** its support for the Chair/Vice Chair together as Proper Officer model as a safeguard while a councillor serves as Acting Clerk

- **RECOMMEND** that the above actions are put before to Full Council for noting
- Officers undertaking an internal review of recording practices, communication, reconciliation and alignment between physical and digital cemetery records
- The review will establish the scope for any further audit or professional advice needed
- That officers report findings and proposed scope back to F&G Committee which will make a recommendation to Full Council regarding further action or expenditure
- That thanks to the RFO for all her hard work be minuted

FG013/25 - APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Members **CONSIDERED** the correspondence regarding the appointment of an internal auditor and officer report ([Appendix 9](#)) and **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council to:

- Approve the appointment of Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd as internal auditor for a further two years to carry out interim and final audits each year.
- Authorise officers to confirm the engagement, manage scheduling with Mulberry and update Council records and financial controls documentation accordingly.

FG014/25 - AGAR

Members **CONSIDERED** the AGAR and **AGREED** it should be presented to Full Council for signing ([Appendix 10](#))

FG015/25 - PREMISES COSTS AND USAGE

Members reviewed the proposal regarding the costs and usage of the Parish Office and a proposed resolution ([Appendix 11](#)) and **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council that they:

- Authorise officers to begin formal negotiations with the local Primary Care Network, the ICB and other stakeholders regarding a peppercorn lease for the exiting office building, strictly conditional on its use as a GP surgery.
- Approve in principle the relocation of staff from the current office building to alternative premises (subject to feasibility and refurbishment assessment).
- Commission an independent valuation of the building and a costed plan for staff relocation and refurbishment of alternative premises in conjunction with any existing works if possible
- Ask officers to research funding opportunities in consultation with stakeholders, local and central government, grant availability
- Request a full business case then be presented to Council including planning feedback, financial implications, community consultation and legal safeguards in any proposed lease terms

FG016/25 - FIXED INTEREST ACCOUNT - CHARITY BANK

Members **CONSIDERED** the correspondence regarding Charity Bank and officer report ([Appendix 12](#)) and **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council that it:

- Approves the reinvestment of £88,780.99 into a new 1-year fixed term account with Charity Bank at an interest rate of 4.01%.
- Authorises the Responsible Financial Officer to proceed with the reinvestment and to make appropriate records in the Council's financial systems.

FG017/25 - HIRE CHARGES

Members **CONSIDERED** the officer report based on a proposal from Cllr Rye ([Appendix 13](#)) and **AGREED** to:

- Approve a temporary £5 per hour reduction in Victory Hall hire charges for the Senior Citizens' Lunch Club, effective immediately and continuing until kitchen facilities are reinstated
- Authorise officers to apply the discounted rate and notify the club in writing, updating booking and invoicing systems accordingly

FG018/25 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD OR FOR DISCUSSION WITH NO DECISION **None**

FG019/25 - DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Agreed by Full Council as 8 July 2025

FG020/25 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

Members **CONSIDERED** and **AGREED** the following motion to be proposed by the Chair:

"That the public and the press be excluded from the meeting, the Council believing that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed."

FG021/25 - GRANT FUNDING APPLICATION

The Committee **CONSIDERED** the officer report provided and **AGREED** to:

- Carry out a Cost Review
Specifically to validate the necessity scope and pricing of the kitchen, toilet facilities, contingency allowance and all other proposed works to avoid overpayment and budget overruns.
- Undertake a Strategic Review of Facility Use
To assess the financial operational and community impact of existing and proposed exclusive use arrangements and explore options to maximise wider community access and revenue.
- Request EFDC to Review the Terms of the Grant Agreement
Ask Epping Forest District Council to reconsider the grant conditions including the free use

schedule and detailed scope of the proposed works taking into account the concerns regarding equity, cost validity, community access and financial sustainability outlined in the report.

- Delay Signing of Grant Agreement Until Reviews Complete and EFDC Responds
The Council should defer signing the agreement until the reviews are complete and EFDC has reviewed the terms, ensuring that any agreement reflects fair, affordable and sustainable arrangements.

FG0022/25 - COMPLAINTS/FOI/SAR RECEIVED

Members heard a report from the Acting Clerk and **AGREED** to delegate responsibility to her to investigate and respond appropriately