



**MINUTES OF THE
FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Date: Tuesday 10 March 2026

Time: 7.00pm

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

Members to be present:

Cllr Elliot Costa
Cllr Tosin Amuludun
Cllr Erika Skingsley

Cllr Debby Rye
Cllr Faiza Rizvi

Clerk: Jason Selvarajah
RFO: Olga Linkeviciene

Members of the Public and Councillors are 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 are 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.

1. FG110/25 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Members received and **AGREE** to accept apologies from Cllr Debby Rye.

2. FG111/25 - ANY OTHER ABSENCE

None.

3. FG112/25- DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. FG113/25- MINUTES

Members considered and **AGREED** the minutes of the previous meeting held 13 January 2026 (**Appendix 1**).

5. FG114/25- PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

6. FG115/25- FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS AND BANK RECONCILIATIONS

Members **REVIEWED** the Summary Report from the Financial Officer (**Appendix 2**)
Members **REVIEWED** and **APPROVED** the proposed payments for March (**Appendix 3**)
Members **REVIEWED** and **APPROVED** the card payments for February (**Appendix 4**)
Members **REVIEWED** and **APPROVED** the bank reconciliation to 28 February (**Appendix 5**)
Members **REVIEWED** and **NOTED** the report detailing salary, superannuation and tax payments for March 2026 paid 11 March (**Appendix 6**)
Members **NOTED** the reported cemetery activities to 28 February 2026 (**Appendix 7**)

7. FG116/25- FINANCIAL REGULATION 5.15 EXPENDITURE

As per Financial Regulation 5.15, Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by the Clerk or RFO, under delegated authority, for any items below £1,000 excluding VAT. Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.

Members **NOTED** the expenditure of individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure authorised by the Clerk or RFO for the period to 04 March 2026 (**Appendix 8**)

8. FG117/25- FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

Members heard recommendations from the Financial Officer and **AGREE** an appropriate course of action (**Appendix 9**)

The RFO presented an overview of the Council's financial position, focusing on general reserves, earmarked reserves, and investments. Based on the 2026/27 budget recommending maintaining at least three months of general reserves. It was **AGREED** in principle and will be presented at full council.

The RFO reported ongoing work on the Asset Register and Assets Policy, to be presented to Finance & Governance and Full Council in May. Work continues on internal control procedures in preparation for the internal audit in May, with reports due to Full Council at the end of May/June.

The RFO will also produce a variance report comparing year-on-year income trends, welcomed by the Committee for providing clearer financial trajectory insights.

9. FG118/25- TENDER DOCUMENT

Members **RECEIVED** an update from officers and **NOTED** progress on the tender document for Community Hub and Victory Hall improvement works (**Appendix 11**) and were updated that the deadline to submit the application to Epping Forest District Council has been extended beyond the original 31st March deadline. It was **AGREED** that officers would continue to work on the tender document and present to full council.

10. FG119/25- IT POLICY

Members **CONSIDERED** the officer report (**Appendix 12**) and **AGREED** in principle and will be presented to full council to be adopted at the March meeting.

11. FG120/25- STANDING ORDERS AMENDMENT TO ALIGN WITH FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members **AGREED** in principle that an inconsistency exists between Standing Order 18(a)(v)—which continues to reference the *Public Contracts Regulations 2015* and *Contracts Finder*—and Financial Regulation 5.6, which requires compliance with the *Procurement Act 2023* and *Procurement Regulations 2024* for contracts exceeding the statutory threshold. This matter will be presented to Full Council.

Members **AGREED** in principle to amend Standing Order 18(a)(v) with immediate effect to clarify that contracts below £30,000 (including VAT), or those exempt due to special circumstances, do not require a formal tendering or procurement exercise. This amendment will be presented to Full Council.

Members further **AGREED** in principle that page numbering and cross-references should be updated for consistency, and that the Standing Orders should be aligned with Financial Regulation 5.6, confirming that contracts exceeding £30,000 (including VAT) must be subject to formal tendering. This requires obtaining at least three tenders or issuing an open invitation to tender, in accordance with Appendix 1. These amendments will be presented to Full Council.

12. FG121/25- ALLOTMENTS AGREEMENT AMENDMENT

Members **CONSIDERED** the officer report (**Appendix 13**) and **AGREED** in principle and will be presented at full council.

13. FG122/25- STAFF HANDBOOK AMENDMENT

Members **CONSIDERED** the officer report (**Appendix 14**) and **AGREED** in principle and will be presented at full council.

14. FG123/25- UPDATE FROM THE CLERK

Members **NOTED** the officer report (**Appendix 15**)

15. FG124/25- MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD OR FOR DISCUSSION WITH NO DECISION

No separate decisions: matters folded into RFO's future reporting obligations.

16. FG125/25- DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

AGREED by Full Council as 7 May 2026

17. FG126/25- EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

Members **CONSIDERED** and **AGREED** the following motion 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.”

18. FG127/25- INCIDENT LOG

Members **NOTED** an incident involving an unauthorised entry to the Council offices, which raised governance, health & safety, and security concerns. Appropriate reports and evidence have been secured, and the matter is now being handled through the Council’s internal HR processes. No further decisions were required at this stage.

Members **AGREED** in principle and will be presented at full council that where necessary and on a voluntary basis, the caretaker may be offered double-time payment for essential unsociable-hours checks during bank holidays related to income generated premises bookings. It was reaffirmed that the caretaker must always have the option to decline.

Members **AGREED** in principle and will be presented at full council to follow good practice in a recent compassionate case by waiving any interment fee and ensuring the proper collection and burial of ashes, with an appropriate audit trail maintained.

19. FG128/25- INSURANCE POLICY RENEWAL

Members **RECEIVED** an update on options for the Council’s insurance renewal. Comparative costs for one-year and three-year agreements were reviewed, along with current budget provision and ongoing claims considerations. Members **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** to full council renewal with the current insurer on a one-year term agreement.

20. FG129/25- TOWN & PARISH PENSION VALUATION RESULTS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Members **NOTED** the officer report and delegated signing to the Clerk. This will be presented to full council.

21. FG130/25- LEGAL MATTERS

Members **CONFIRMED** concerns raised regarding procurement and legal compliance for legal costs. It was confirmed that the project had been approved (FC010/25) under the relevant exemption in place at the time according to the requirement under the procurement act 2023.