MINUTES

Committee: Finance and Policy Committee
Date: Tuesday 18 August 2026
Time: 19.00pm
Venue: Parish Council Office

Present

Cllr Jan Evans (Chairman)
Cllr Vivienne Hodges
Cllr Emily Elliott

Also Present

Samantha Parkin (Clerk)

19/2026 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Fileman-Wright.

20/2026 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS / REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No declarations of interest or requests for dispensations were received.

21/2026 MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr Hodges, seconded by Cllr Elliott, and **RESOLVED** to accept and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2026 as a correct record.

22/2026 STANDING ITEM – CLIMATE AND ECOLOGY EMERGENCY:

The committee noted the Council's commitment to embed the Climate and Ecology Emergency Declaration across all activities, ensuring environmental impacts are considered in a fully integrated approach to climate change mitigation.

23/2026 Q1 BUDGET REPORT

The Q1 Budget Report and a summary had been circulated with the agenda and was noted.

24/2026 COMPLAINTS POLICY

The draft Complaints policy had been circulated with the agenda. Cllr Elliott commented that the policy appeared reasonable, fair, and transparent.

It was proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Hodges, and **RESOLVED** to recommend to the full council to approve the grant Awarding policy.

25/2026 SCHEME OF DELEGATION POLICY

The draft Scheme of Delegation policy had been circulated with the agenda. The Clerk noted that the Scheme of Delegation had been updated to reflect recent changes to the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

It was proposed by Cllr Elliott, seconded by Cllr Hodges, and **RESOLVED** to recommend to the full council to approve the Grant Application form.

26/2026 GRANT APPLICATIONS

A summary of the Grant Applications had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Proper Job – Members were supportive, noting the benefit of filling an empty shopfront, the organisation's proven success in Chagford, and its positive contribution to the community.

Parish Hall Management Committee – The Clerk advised that the Parish Hall has already received a grant in the current financial year and, in line with the Grant Policy, is not eligible for a further award this year.

Moretonhampstead Association for Youth – The Clerk noted that the application was submitted on the old form and required documentation was missing, meaning the application is not eligible under the policy.

Source Point Community Health CIC – Members considered that the application did not clearly align with the purposes set out in the Council's grant policy and were unable to support it.

It was proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Elliott, and **RESOLVED** to recommend the award of the following grants:

- Proper Job - £1,000.00
- Parish Hall Management Committee - £0
- Moretonhampstead Association for Youth - £0
- Source Point Community Health CIC - £0

Total Awarded £1,000.00

27/2026 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE LEVEL 4 QUALIFICATION

The clerk's report had been circulated with the agenda. Members were supportive of the Clerk undertaking the Community Governance qualification, noting that anything which improves, supports, and provides a recognised qualification for the role is positive.

The Clerk reminded members that the budget is likely to increase significantly next year due to the proposed toilet asset transfer and encouraged the Committee to be mindful of the precept impact before committing to additional expenditure. She noted that while it is the right time for her professionally, the question is whether it is the right time for the Council.

The Clerk advised that the qualification costs £8,000 over two years, and that SLCC grants are only available to councils with a precept under £25,000, so the Council would not be eligible.

She suggested that the Council begin budgeting for the qualification and review the position again in a couple of years.

It was proposed by Cllr Evans, seconded by Cllr Elliott, and **RESOLVED** to recommend to the full council that £2,500 be budgeted annually and that the decision be revisited in two years for the 2029 intake.

28/2026 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

The clerk's report had been circulated with the agenda. Members' initial instinct was to move to the Co-operative Bank, but the Clerk advised that Unity Trust Bank may be a more suitable long-term option due to its sector-specific understanding of parish councils and its strong reputation among other clerks.

Members agreed that the Council should move away from Lloyds, noting ongoing difficulties with Lloyds' understanding of the Clerk's role in account administration. The Clerk explained that Lloyds

will not speak to her because she is not a full signatory, despite it being her responsibility to manage operational changes, with councillors' involvement limited to approvals.

Unity's main disadvantage is the lack of a debit card. The Clerk explained why this is important for good governance, noting that when she first started, some payments had to be made from her personal account, which is not appropriate. She suggested arranging a Teams call with Unity to explore their plans and answer any questions.

Members noted that the Co-operative Bank remains preferable to Lloyds, and Cllr Evans confirmed that all banks considered are covered by the FSCS scheme. The Clerk also highlighted that Unity should better understand election-related changes to signatories, which will be relevant next year.

Cllr Hodges commented that Unity's sector-specific focus means their advice is likely to be more tailored and helpful than that of the Co-operative Bank, which serves a wider range of organisations.

It was proposed by Cllr Hodges, seconded by Cllr Elliott, and **RESOLVED** to provisionally recommend to the full council that the Council move to Unity Trust Bank, subject to a satisfactory Teams call with the bank.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 19.18pm.

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