



EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk: Samantha Heynes BA (Hons), FSLCC

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FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday 1st October 2026

Committee Members:

- Cllr Farren (Chair)
- Cllr M Belsey (Vice Chair)
- Cllr S Reeves* (Town Mayor)
- Cllr C Pond* (Deputy Mayor)
- Cllr S Barnett
- Cllr L Gibbs
- Cllr E Godwin
- Cllr J Mockford
- Cllr S Ody

In attendance:

- Town Clerk
- Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

15. TO RECEIVE ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE OR SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies received from Cllrs Pond & Reeves which were noted.

16. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25th JUNE 2026

RESOLVED: To accept and approve the minutes of the meeting dated 25th June 2026.

17. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mockford advised she was a member of the Town Twinning Committee therefore her interest in item 27 was noted.

Cllr Barnett noted he was a member of both Girl Guides and Chequer Mead in relation to item 24 Community Grants, which was also noted.

18. TO RECEIVE ANY CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

News of the successful sale of St Margaret's Loop at auction was shared, this was expected to complete on 22nd October 2026.

A staff survey had been completed in 2026, this was the second survey since the first in 2022. The average scores had increased across all categories which was a positive outcome.

Finally, work on the 2027/28 budget was due to commence imminently with a view to preparing this for consideration in January 2027.

19. TO RECEIVE THE LIST OF APPROVED PAYMENTS FOR JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST 2026

The account entries for the dates above were noted.

20. TO CONSIDER THE TOWN COUNCIL FINANCES – POSITION STATEMENT

A query was raised regarding how interest earned on capital funds was displayed in the accounts, this was shown within cost centre 1100.

The committee noted the position.

21. TO NOTE THE COST OF LIVING PAY AWARD OF 3.3%

This item was noted, with an observation that the budget set had been 3.2%; the 0.1% increase was negligible within the accounts and would not cause any negative budgetary implications.

22. TO CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS WITH FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FROM OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES FOR APPROVAL BY F&GP

None to report.

23. TO NOTE ANY DELEGATED DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST F&GP MEETING

None to report.

24. TO CONSIDER APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FOR THE COMMUNITY REVENUES GRANT FUND AND ALLOCATE BUDGET

Regarding the annual standing grants for 2026-2027, it was proposed that the Age UK grant of £1,000 be withheld due to the news received this week that Glen Vue would be closed and the permanent venue for Age UK within East Grinstead would cease to exist from November 2026. The Clerk would include this for approval on the next Full Council agenda in January 2027.

The applications for this year's community revenue grants had totalled almost double the £5,000 allocated budget, and the following recommendations were made:

Organization	2026 Amount	Comment	Amount applied for 2026
East Grinstead Art Society	£200		£300
Trowelskillz Ltd	NIL	Not yet an established organisations	*
4Sight Vision Support	£440	This would support 4 people	£880
AAs Landscape Gardening Services	NIL	This is a private profit-making business	£500
Arise Counselling Service	£500	An ever growing need for this service in our community	£500
East Grinstead Choral Society	£300	Grant for hosting a free event. Suggest maybe ask for donations to attend the event	£1000
St Catherine's Hospice	£300	Continued hospice support for our community	£300
East Grinstead Bowling Club	£500	Help with repair to the vandalized damage	£500
The EG Bookshop Chess Club	£200	This will purchase 10 new clocks at a cost of £20 each (the request was for chess clocks)	£640

Organization	2026 Amount	Comment	Amount applied for 2026
The Haven Baby & Toddler Group	NIL	Not East Grinstead	£500
1343 (EG) Squadron RAF Air Cadets	£450	To assist with their need to enhance their outside area	£2000
Girlguiding EG Division	£450	Camp Contribution (matches the Air Cadets)	£865
EG Community Bonfire	£450		£900
CAP Debt Centre	£260	The request was for funds for a laptop and items for someone to train. The grant is supplied on the basis of supporting training not purchasing an asset	£850
Being Neighbourly	£950	Towards the cost of mounting the EG Jazz Festival	£1,000
Total applied for	£5000		£9735.00

RESOLVED: Committee approved the above grant applications.

25. TO CONSIDER THE PURCHASE OF ANNUAL CYBER INSURANCE

Clarification of the insurance being offered was sought, including that home working officers would be covered and that the recent move to the cloud had provided a much more secure environment.

The largest financial transaction received was the 50% payment of the annual precept, on this basis we had only sought cover up to £1m.

Two councils had been hacked in the past, one of which included a bank payment interception.

RESOLVED: Committee resolved to purchase the £1,000,000 cover premium of £1,845 which would be met from within the current insurance budget, effective immediately.

26. TO NOTE THE CURRENT POSITION OF EARMARKED RESERVES

Noted.

27. TO APPROVE AN INCREASE IN THE TOWN TWINNING GRANT TO £7,500 PER ANNUM FOR 2026/27 AND 2027/28, AND TO AGREE TO UNDERWRITE ANY ADDITIONAL FUNDING REQUIRED BY TOWN TWINNING TO HOST THE 2027 EVENT, UP TO A MAXIMUM OF £15,000, WITH ANY FUNDING PROVIDED UNDER THIS ARRANGEMENT TO BE REPAID TO THE COUNCIL WITHIN TWO YEARS

Committee raised concerns regarding the ability of the Town Twinning organisation to repay any funds that were underwritten to enable the event to proceed, and what the consequences of this may be.

RESOLVED: Committee resolved to approve the grant and to underwrite the event to £15,000, however there must be a written agreement in place to reflect the need to repay any of the underwritten funds.

28. TO CONSIDER THE BUSINESS PLAN PRIORITIES FOR THE F&GP COMMITTEE

Most of the business plan items for this committee were deemed business as usual items reflecting the general council responsibilities for good governance.

The one item that fell outside this was development of an updated website, the focus for this would be prioritised for 2027.

This item was noted.

29. TO NOTE THE ACTIONS LIST

A meeting with the Museum was being planned to discuss their financial needs for 2027-28.

Council policies would be reviewed and updated in the new year now a new HR provider had been secured.

These items were noted.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.31pm the Chair announced the next F&GP meeting would take place on **Thursday 14th January 2027.**

SIGNED:

CHAIRMAN