



## Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

### **Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes held at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, 17 West End Road, Mortimer, RG7 3TB on Thursday 27 November 2025 at 19:30**

#### **Present**

##### **Members**

Cllrs G Bridgman (Chairman), D Kilshaw, D Morsley and J Todd.

##### **Other Councillors**

Cllr R Saunders.

##### **Officers of the Council**

Danielle Davis.

##### **Public/Press**

There was one member of the public and no members of the press in attendance.

#### **Commencement**

The meeting commenced at 19:30.

#### **Part I**

##### **25/056 To receive any apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs N Carter, H Geary, S Hill and K Strong.

##### **25/057 To receive any declarations of interest**

None received.

##### **25/058 Public Questions**

The owner of the Pizza Press van attended in relation to agenda item 25/063.4. No public questions were raised.

##### **25/059 Minutes of last meeting**

The Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Thursday 30 October 2025 were received with no amendments and approved unanimously for signature by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.

## **25/060 Chairman's remarks**

The Chairman reported that, following a meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee immediately prior to this meeting, the Deputy Clerk will be paid for hours worked on a specific project at an agreed rate until the project is completed (instead of as a contractor).

The Personnel Sub-Committee had also conveyed its congratulations to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk on their CiLCA training achievements to date.

## **25/061 Items to be taken into private session**

Cllr Bridgman proposed that item 25/062.2 (Budget) be taken into private session. Seconded by Cllr Morsley.

**Resolved** unanimously.

## **25/062 Items for consideration**

**#Cllr Bridgman brought agenda item 25/062.4 (Pizza Press) forward** – minuted in agenda order below.

### **1 Policies**

**To consider any Policies within the ambit of the Committee requiring consideration, amendment or proposal to full Council**

None.

### **2 Budget 2026/27**

**To consider and approve the draft budget for circulation to Council members for comment.**

Minuted at Part II.

### **3 Investment Strategy 2026/27**

**To review and approve the Investment Strategy for recommendation for approval by full Council.**

Following a discussion, Cllr Bridgman proposed that the revised policy was recommended to full Council. Cllr Kilshaw seconded.

**Resolved** unanimously.

### **4 Request from Pizza Press Van Operator**

**To consider a request from the operator of the Pizza Press van for:**

**1 The agreed 3-month review of the continuation of the service.**

**2 Approval to increase operating days at the site from three to seven days per week (an additional four days).**

Items 25/063.4.1 and .4.2 were considered together.

The Council noted positive feedback from residents, with the site kept clean and no reported disturbances. The operator indicated they would like to be able to operate six days a week (excluding Sundays). Members discussed operating flexibility and expressed that Friday evenings should remain a core trading day.

It was agreed to create a formal contract and the question of a charge from the Council to the operators was debated. It was agreed that a peppercorn rent (eg £1 per annum) would be appropriate to avoid passing costs to customers.

The operator advised they would be attending the St John's School Christmas Bazaar and donating 10% of takings to the school. The Council noted this positively and congratulated the operator on the continued success of the business.

Cllr Bridgman proposed to approve the continued operation of the Pizza Press van at the site with flexibility to operate up to six days per week; to set an expectation of Friday evening trading as a core period; to apply a peppercorn consideration; and to draft an agreement for agreement. **Seconded by Cllr Todd.**

**Resolved** unanimously.

## **25/063 Finance**

### **1 Accounts to 31 October**

**To receive and consider the Income and Expenditure Report to 31 October and the Balance Sheet as at that date.**

The reports were received and noted.

### **2 The Public Sector Deposit Funds (TPSDF)**

**To note the return on investment as at 30 September 2025.**

The return on investment as at 30 September 2025 was noted as being 4.12%

## **25/064 Items for information only**

None.

## **25/065 Minor matters (if any)**

None.

## **25/066 Communications**

A paper copy of the bulletin will be delivered to sheltered housing in an effort to reach people who do not use email; spare copies will be used as posters for noticeboards and are available for any other people who can be identified. The Council noted the increasing effort required to reach residents who are not online. Further discussion will continue at the Community Committee.

## **25/067 Future agenda items**

None other than standard identified.

## **Part II**

## **25/068 Exclusion of Press and Public**

**To pass a resolution under s.1(2), Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.**

Cllr Bridgman proposed to proceed into Part II, Cllr Morsley seconded.

**Resolved** unanimously.

### **1 Budget 26/27**

**To consider and approve the draft budget for circulation to Council members for comment.**

The draft budget and report were received and discussed, and changes agreed. The report and updated draft budget shall be circulated to all councillors for comment, prior to debate at the January Full Council meeting

There was a discussion about the operating reserve. It was recalled (as noted in the budget papers) that this should be 25% of operating costs, rounded up to the nearest £10k, and thus should now be increased to £60k. The Clerk was asked to clarify the meeting at which this formula had been agreed (since the papers referred to a “Reserves Policy” but there was no formal document with that title).

## **Close**

The meeting closed at 20:38

Date of next meeting: 08/01/2026.

**Miss Danielle Davis**

**28/11/2025**