



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 26 February 2026 at 19:30

Present

Members

Cllrs G Bridgman (Chairman), H Geary, S Hill, K Strong and J Todd.

Other Councillors

None.

Officers of the Council

Danielle Davis.

Public/Press

There were no members of the public or press in attendance.

Commencement

The meeting commenced at 19:30.

Part I

25/084 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs N Carter, D Kilshaw and D Morsley.

25/085 To receive any declarations of interest

None received.

25/086 Public Questions

None.

25/087 Minutes of last meeting

The Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Thursday 8 January 2026 were received with no amendments and approved with one abstention for signature by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.

25/088 Chairman's remarks

The Chairman had no remarks to make.

25/089 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was received.

25/090 Items to be taken into private session

Cllr Bridgman proposed that items 25-091.2 Risk Register, 25-091.3 Asset Register and Asset Valuation and Register Policy, 25-091.4 Council Insurance, and 25-091.7 Report from Personnel Sub-Committee be taken into private session. Seconded by Cllr Geary.

Resolved unanimously.

25/091 Items for consideration

1 Policies

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

a SMPC Communications Policy v1.1 (to note only)

The draft Policy was noted and will be taken to the Community Committee on April 23.

b SMPC Health and Safety Policy v1.1

The Council reviewed the updated draft Health & Safety Policy. It was agreed that the definition of "Land" for which the Custodian is responsible (as set out in the Estate Management Committee's Terms of Reference) should be clearly set out within the document.

Subject to this amendment, it was agreed to recommend the revised Policy to Full Council on 12 March

c SMPC Personnel Policy v1.2

Following a discussion, the draft Personnel Policy was proposed for adoption by Cllr Bridgman and seconded by Cllr Todd.

Resolved unanimously.

d SMPC Scheme of Delegation v6.1

The Council reviewed the updated Scheme of Delegation v6.1. It was agreed that, now construction was imminent, oversight of the Mortimer to Burghfield Footpath and Cycleway should move from the Community Committee to the Estate Management Committee (although the Steering Group would actually undertake management of the project in accordance with its Terms of Reference).

There was then a discussion about the role of the Finance & General Purposes Committee in relation to personnel matters and it was agreed that the Committee Appendix within the Scheme of Delegation should make it clear that:

- appointing a new Officer, and the initial terms of their employment, was a matter for Full Council to agree, following a recruitment process by the Personnel Sub-Committee and F&GP; and
- agreeing subsequent changes to Officer pay scales, contractual terms, etc, was a matter for F&GP to agree following advice from the Personnel Sub-Committee (and subsequent report to Full Council).

It was agreed to recommend the revised draft Scheme, incorporating the above amendments, to Full Council on 12 March.

e **SMPC Policy Guidance and Glossary v4.1;**

A minor typographical correction was identified. Subject to this amendment, it was agreed to recommend the draft Policy Guidance and Glossary to Full Council on March 12.

2 **Risk Register**

To review and agree any changes and approve the Risk Register for reporting to full Council on the 12 March.

Minuted at Part II.

3 **Asset Register and Asset Valuation and Register Policy**

a **To review and approve the Asset Valuation Register Policy.**

The Asset Valuation and Register Policy (v2.2 but to be relabelled as “2026” since it is an annually reviewed/revised policy) was proposed for adoption by Cllr Bridgman and seconded by Cllr Geary.

Resolved unanimously.

b **To receive the Asset Register to date and consider and approve the estimated asset replacement costs**

Minuted at Part II.

4 **Council Insurance**

To consider the level of insurance required in order that renewal quotes may be sought.

Minuted at Part II.

5 **Annual Subscriptions and Continuous Payments 2026/27**

To review the annual subscriptions and continuous payments and approve for recommendation to full Council on the 12 March.

The annual subscriptions and continuous payments were reviewed and approved for recommendation to full Council on the 12 March following correction of some minor typos.

6 **Draft Meeting Timetable**

To consider options for the meeting timetable for 2026/2027 and agree what to put before Council.

The Committee reviewed options for the 2026/2027 meeting timetable, with version 9.2 considered the most suitable basis, subject to moving the July Full Council meeting to later in the month in order to spread the gap between Full Council meetings somewhat. A revised version would be prepared for Full Council to consider.

Post-Meeting Note:

Further review identified that simply moving the July Full Council meeting created knock-on impacts for F&GP and meeting spacing. Additional adjustments were tested, resulting in version 9.4, which provides balanced intervals between meetings, aligns F&GP and Estate Management with Planning where appropriate, and maintains the total of 28 meeting days. Version 9.5 extends this pattern into 2027/2028.

Recommendation: version 9.4 to be presented to Full Council for approval.

7 Report from Personnel Sub-Committee

- a **To note the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 28 January 2026 and;**
- b **To resolve the recommendations of the Personnel Sub-Committee regarding Scale Point increases and contractual changes.**

Minuted at Part II.

25/092 Finance

1 Accounts to 31 January

To receive and consider the Income and Expenditure Report to 31 January 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 31 January 2026.

The return on investment as at 31 January 2026 was noted as being 3.88%.

3 Bank Reconciliation

To receive and note the reconciliation has been undertaken for the period of 1 October 2025 – 31 December 2025.

4 Internal Financial Control (IFC)

To receive and note the IFC Confirmation for the period 1 October 2025 – 31 December 2025.

25/093 Items for information only

None

25/094 Minor matters (if any)

None

25/095 Communications

The Annual Parish Meeting was discussed, and the Committee were advised on the speakers invited.

25/096 Future agenda items

None other than standard identified.

Part II (if needed)

25/084 Exclusion of Press and Public (if needed)

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.

Cllr Geary seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

1 Risk Register

To review and agree any changes and approve the Risk Register for reporting to full Council on the 12 March.

The Risk Register was reviewed, and wording will be checked to ensure it aligns with the current policy landscape. The version reference will be updated to 2026.

It was noted that, in future, the Council should consider options for digitising paper records, including potential external scanning services.

Following review, it was resolved to approve the Risk Register with the agreed amendments for reporting to Full Council on 12 March. The proposal was made by Cllr Bridgman and seconded by Cllr Geary.

Resolved unanimously.

2 Asset Register and Asset Valuation and Register Policy

a To review and approve the Asset Valuation and Register Policy.

Minuted at Part I.

b To receive the Asset Register to date and consider and approve the estimated asset replacement costs.

The Clerk advised that, since the circulation of meeting papers, the following assets require addition to the Asset Register: The Fairground fence, the Cemetery extension, and the bus shelters.

The Asset Register to date was received, and the estimated asset replacement costs were approved, subject to inclusion of the additional items. The updated Register will be reported to Full Council in March.

Proposed by Cllr Bridgman, seconded by Cllr Hill.

Resolved unanimously.

3 Council Insurance

To consider the level of insurance required in order that renewal quotes may be sought.

The Clerk reported that the Council Insurance is due for renewal and that new quotes will be sought.

4 Report from Personnel Sub-Committee

a To note the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 28 January 2026; and

b To resolve the recommendations of the Personnel Sub-Committee regarding Scale Point increases and contractual changes.

The recommendations of the Personnel Sub-Committee were considered and it was agreed to recommend the relevant changes to Officer contracts and pay scales to Full Council on 12 March.

Close

The meeting closed at 20:58

Date of next meeting: 30 April 2026.

Miss Danielle Davis

27/02/2026