Castle Cary Town Council
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MINUTES OF FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
held on Monday 9th February 2026 at 7.00pm

Present: Judi Morison (Chair), Linda Ball, Philippa Biddlecombe, David Bright, Gavin Crisp, Trevor Oats, Angela Piggott
Clerk: Lisa Davis
In attendance: Cllr Henry Hobhouse, 1 member of the public

Open session

A member of the public raised queries relating to the agenda item regarding FOI's and made some suggestions about how they felt CCTC could be more proactive.

The meeting started at 19:10

2025

F066 Apologies for absence
Frances Alden, Margaret Bebbington, David Gill and Tom Trouton had all sent their apologies.

F067 Declarations of personal or pecuniary interest (these must be declared BEFORE the agenda items concerned are discussed. Persons with a declared pecuniary interest must leave the meeting room when these are discussed).
Judi Morison declared an interest in item F077

F068 Minutes of the Finance and Management Committee meeting held on 12th January 2026 to be signed by the Chair.
RESOLVED: it was proposed and agreed (4 – for, 0 – against, 3 – abstained) to approve the minutes of the meeting on 12th January 2026

F069 To review action points from previous meetings The Town Clerk had responded to the questions raised by Robert Brown.

F070 To note the Year to date budget report
The Year to date budget report up to 31/1/2026 was reviewed and the key points noted. David Bright asked if it would be possible to include a budget forecast in the report to make the year end position easier to understand. The Town Clerk agreed to contact Edge and find out if this was possible.

F071 To discuss options for Town Council bank accounts Gavin Crisp reported back on possible high interest accounts following initial enquiries. It was agreed that the Town Clerk, Judi Morison and Gavin Crisp would look at how much to transfer.
Action 260209/1: Town Clerk, Judi Morison, Gavin Crisp

F072 To consider quote for flooring for the new toilet at the Market House

RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to accept the quote from SJH for flooring for the new toilet at the Market House

F073 To consider quote for repairs to bench and handrail at Fairfield
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to accept the quote from SLR for a handrail (on one side only) and repairs to the bench, subject to APC being in agreement.

F074 To agree hire charges for new kitchen area at the Market House The hire charges were discussed and it was agreed to add a clause regarding the number of hours the standard fee for the kitchen included before presenting to Full Council for approval.
Action 260209/2: Angela Piggott / Marketing and Communications Administrator

F075 To consider a voluntary contribution in support of a request for a judicial review following the appeal decision for the development at Foxes Run Cllr Henry Hobhouse reported that £8,069 had been raised to date. The letter needs to be delivered to the Planning Inspectorate by 19 February and they then have three weeks to respond. The amount needed for stage one is £10,500.
RESOLVED: it was proposed and agreed (6 – for, 0 – against, 1 – abstained) to defer for one week and discuss at the Full Council meeting when there is a better understanding of the money raised to make a more informed decision.

F076 To consider retaining Darkin-Miller Ltd as the Town Council's internal auditor
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to retain Darkin-Miller Ltd. on an annual rolling contract.

F077 To consider grant application from Castle Cary Scout group
RESOLVED: it was proposed and agreed (6 – for, 0 – against, 1 – abstained) to approve a grant of £150 towards the Scout trip to France.

F078 To consider grant application from Crimestoppers Southwest It was agreed that a completed grant application form to support the request was needed before this could be considered.

F079 To elect new Chair of HR Committee Philippa Biddlecombe would like to step down from the HR Chair role due to too many other priorities.
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to elect Linda Ball as the new Chair of the HR Committee.

F080 To consider adoption of Bullying and Harassment Policy It was agreed that the policy would be cross-checked with existing policies.
RESOLVED: it was proposed and agreed (6 – for, 0 – against, 1 – abstained) to recommend approval of the Bullying and Harassment Policy

F081 To consider adoption of IT Policy It was agreed to use the NALC template and that a draft policy would be presented to Full Council.

F082 To review Debt Policy It was agreed to defer this to undertake some research regarding historic agreements.

F083 To discuss elevated workloads of employed CCTC colleagues in light of a high number of FOI requests, and to discuss possible solutions to proactively manage the issue
Concerns were raised by Councillors regarding the recent high number of FOI requests and the need to support staff to ensure that workloads are manageable whilst managing the legal responsibilities for FOI's. It was agreed to seek professional advice before discussing further.

F084 Update on request to query cemetery business rates exemption Advice had been sought from a resident whose background is in business rates assessment and they had advised that the Cemetery was not exempt from business rates.
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed not to progress any further following expert advice as there was no grounds for challenge.

F085 Audit, Financial Governance and Budget Scrutiny

a) **Update following specific questions for Officer response** A written response had been provided to Robert Brown. It was agreed to publish the initial questions with answers on the website.

F086 Somerset Council devolution of assets/services

a) **Update** There was no update.

The meeting closed at 9.09pm

The date of the next Finance and Management Committee meeting will be Monday 9th March 2026. Any items for inclusion on the agenda should be forwarded to the Town Clerk by Thursday 26th February.