

MINUTES OF FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday 7th July 2025 at 7.15pm, Henfield Hall



MINUTES OF WESTERLEIGH & COALPIT HEATH PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING 7.15pm Monday 7th July 2025

Present: Cllr Jon Lean (Chair) Cllr R McCullough, Cllr K Kelliher, Cllr Tristan Clark

Meeting Clerk: Rachel Davis (Clerk & RFO)

One member of the public

477. To appoint a Committee Chair

RESOLVED: Cllr Jon Lean was proposed, seconded and voted in as Chair of the Committee.

478. To NOTE Apologies for absence

Cllr D Margetts.

479. To RECEIVE Declarations of Interest relating to this meeting, as required by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members and the Localism Act 2011

Cllr T Clark advised the Council that as he is a member of the South Gloucestershire Development Management Committee, he is still permitted to speak and vote on planning items and issues (see min 483) and would only have to declare an interest if he had a pecuniary interest or an additional non-pecuniary interest **Any contributions he makes are based upon the submitted documents available at this time and he retains an open mind should any application be subsequently referred to one of South Gloucestershire Council's planning committees for determination.**

480. To RECEIVE questions and comments from members of the public present with respect to business on the agenda (in accordance with Standing Orders 3 e-3 i)

None.

481. To appoint 3 members to the Staffing Sub-Committee

RESOLVED: To appoint Cllr J Lean, Cllr K Kelliher and Cllr R McCullough to the Staffing Sub-Committee.

482. To APPROVE timetable for RFO probationary review and revised appraisal timetable

RESOLVED: Staffing Sub-Committee to conduct the RFO six-month probationary review and Clerk's appraisal together, w/c 24th November 2025. (Note the roles have been combined.) The following year the annual appraisal for will revert to September.

483. To discuss and COMMENT on any Planning Applications or other Planning Matters (necessary due to deadline dates):

- (i) [P25/01298/F](#) Change of use from office (Class E) to a SEN School (Class F1) as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). External works to building including alterations to existing windows and doors; installation of 1no. MUGA, erection of 3m perimeter fencing and associa...Apex House Turner Drive Yate South Gloucestershire BS37 5YX

RESOLVED: Westerleigh & Coalpit Heath Parish Council SUPPORTS this application on the grounds that it will help to address the unmet need for SEN provision within South Gloucestershire.

- (ii) [P25/01388/F](#) Erection of 1no. self build dwelling with access, parking and associated works. Plot 6, Cow Leaze Blackberry Park Coalpit Heath South Gloucestershire BS36 2WB

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RESOLVED: Westerleigh & Coalpit Heath Parish Council makes no comment on this application.

- (iii) P25/01417/CLP Installation of 1no. rear dormer and 1no. front rooflight. 32 Vicarage Road Coalpit Heath South Gloucestershire BS36 2RU

RESOLVED: Westerleigh & Coalpit Heath Parish Council queries the size/ scale of the proposed dormer and whether it requires planning permission.

- (iv) P25/01455/PN1 Prior notification of the intention to upgrade existing base station by removal of 1no existing 17.5m monopole and 3no existing antennas, to be replaced with 1no new 20m monopole accommodating 6no new antennas with associated ancillary works thereto. Telecommunications Site Ivory Hill Farm Park Lane Winterbourne South Gloucestershire

RESOLVED: Westerleigh & Coalpit Heath Parish Council makes no comment on this application.

484. To NOTE receipt of bank statements and APPROVE bank reconciliation 1st April – 30th June 2025
NOTED.

RESOLVED: To APPROVE the bank reconciliation to 30th June 2025. Signed by the Chair.

485. To NOTE full lists of payments & receipts for 1st April – 30th June 2025
NOTED.

486. To NOTE information on 2025/26 Receipts & Payments vs Budgets and forecasts and discuss/APPROVE any required decisions.

The RFO presented two reports which were NOTED.

The summary report shows spend against operational budget and % of each budget line remaining. The RFO explained that as the F&GP Committee has not been meeting every quarter, the summary report will be reviewed by Full Council quarterly (next report to October meeting).

The net position report shows the above plus balances of earmarked reserves i.e. budget lines with carry forward amounts and community benefit pots (CIL, Says Court Solar Farm and GPoC grant pot).

Noted income received as expected, although bank interest is higher than expected due to increased balances in savings accounts this financial year. Expenditure as expected, but noted Bitterwell Lake aerator (electricity costs) may go over budget next quarter due to extended use during June heatwaves. Also, there has been £0 expenditure against the maintenance budgets for Pansy Vale, The Pound, Mayshill and Ivory Wood. The committee may consider combining these budgets for 2026/27. Finally, there is a large amount of unallocated CIL funding in earmarked reserves (£71,275.38) which must be spent within five years.

RESOLVED: RFO to prepare a summary report for the next F&GP Committee meeting to show CIL amount remaining from each financial year and future spending commitments. This will inform forward planning for CIL expenditure by the committee.

487. To NOTE requirement for 2025/2026 accounts to be prepared on an Income & Expenditure basis (ref SAPPP guidance 2.3) and for 2024/25 AGAR figures to be restated
NOTED.

488. To NOTE reduction in Redwood Account interest rate from 8th July 2025
NOTED reduction from 2.94% to 2.70%.

489. To NOTE any update on external audit process
No update. NOTED the Council needs to appoint a new Internal Auditor for 2025/2026 financial year. RFO to begin appointment process in September.

ITEMS REQUIRING A DECISION

490. To consider and APPROVE any Grant Applications including:

- (i) Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA) - £2,000 contribution to lifeboat helmet headsets (deferred from June FC meeting and additional information provided)

RESOLVED: To award a partial grant of £1,000 from the GPoC grant fund.

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491. To APPROVE purchase cost of replacement blinds for Bitterwell Lake chalet, funded from chalet maintenance budget

The committee considered a quote from Harmony Blinds and two price comparisons from online blind suppliers (excluding additional costs of removal/ disposal of existing blinds and fitting of new).

RESOLVED: To APPROVE quote from Harmony Blinds for £1,383.33 +VAT to remove/ dispose of existing blinds and supply/ fit new blinds, paid from Bitterwell Chalet Maintenance budget.

492. To consider/ APPROVE purchase of supplementary aerator for Bitterwell Lake to protect against low dissolved oxygen levels caused by extreme weather/ one-off events £1074

The Lake Manager compared prices and availability of a Force 7 aerator (as recommended by other fishery managers), and selected Aquaculture Equipment Ltd as the best supplier.

RESOLVED: (i) To APPROVE purchase of a supplementary aerator at a cost of £1074 from the Bitterwell Lake maintenance budget. Lake Manager to confirm how/ where it will be stored when not in use. (ii) To investigate alternative permanent aeration solutions for future investment e.g. solar-powered aerator. RFO to progress with Lake Manager and report to next F&GP meeting.

PMN – The actual cost of the aerator paid was £1059.50.

493. To APPROVE list of regular payments for 2025/2026 (standing orders and direct debits)

RESOLVED: To approve the following list of regular payments:

Monthly

Type	Date	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
SO	1 st of month	Storage Unit	PE King	£73.33	£14.67	£88.00
DD	16 th of month	Bitterwell Lake aerator	EON			varies
DD	22 nd of month	Council mobile phone	Three (H3G)	£2.50	£0.50	£3.00 (+ occasional charges)
DD	31 st month	MS 365 & IT support	Absolutely PC (GOCARDLESS)	£38.50	£7.70	£46.20
DD	31 st of month	Bank Charges	NatWest Bank		n/a	Varies (£0.35 per transaction)

Other

Type	Date	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
DD	5 th March	Annual data protection registration	ICO		n/a	£47.00
DD	April 1 st July	Bitterwell Chalet loan repayments	PWLB		n/a	varies

494. To APPROVE Parish Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies

RESOLVED: To approve the following list of subscriptions:

Scribe Accounting Software	£458.04 (01/01/2025 – 31/12/2025)
CPRE membership	£60 (approved FC 13/01/2025 min 3911 (ii) – for 01/01/2025 – 31/12/2025)
SLCC membership for Clerk	£240 (01/01/2025 – 31/12/2025)
ALCA/NALC	£899.19 (2025/26 financial year)

495. To discuss and APPROVE response to internal audit recommendations:

i) Set minimum value for permanent assets (recommendation 3.2) – see min 499.

496. To review the Council's banking arrangements, bank mandate and signatories and make a recommendation to Full Council

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RESOLVED: The following recommendations to Full Council were approved:

- (i) The Council to move its current account as soon as possible from NatWest to Unity Trust Bank, to enable dual authorisation of electronic payments.
- (ii) The bank mandate and signatories to be as follows:
Service administrator (view accounts, set up payments, make transfers) - Clerk & RFO
Signatories (view accounts, authorise payments) – Cllr Lean & Cllr McCullough are existing signatories on the Unity Trust Savings Account. They will remain signatories and have primary responsibility for approving payments. Cllr Kelliher, Cllr Clark and Cllr Margetts to be appointed as additional signatories.
- (iii) Payments to be authorised online by two signatories on two dates per month, the 10th and/or 25th. (NOTE a payment only leaves the account once both signatories have authorised it).
- (iv) The RFO will set up the electronic payments and email all related invoices to two signatories on the payment date/s. Signatories to check the amount of each invoice against each payment, before authorising it online. Signatories to email the RFO to confirm they have checked all invoices and authorised all payments.
- (v) A list of payments made in the previous month will be reported to the next Council meeting.
- (vi) Financial Regulations to be updated to reflect the revised payment system.
- (vii) The Council to close its NatWest Business Reserve account and transfer funds. See min 501 for recommendation on transfer of funds.
- (viii) The Council's existing Unity Trust instant access savings account to act as the first reserve account (i.e. first port of call for transfers to the current account to maintain cashflow).

497. To review the bank mandate and signatories for the Council's Redwood 35 Day Notice Savings Account and Unity Trust Instant Access Savings Account and make a recommendation to Full Council

RESOLVED: To recommend/ confirm the following bank mandates to Full Council for approval:

- (i) Redwood 35 Day Notice Savings account signatories: Clerk&RFO, Cllr Lean, Cllr McCullough. (Note: Any one signatory can transfer funds to/ from the nominated council current account. Two signatories must approve change of nominated account or bank mandate.)
- (ii) Unity Trust Savings Account – as per min 496 (ii).

498. To approve the Lead Officer for the Council's Avon Pension Fund Account and list of key contacts

RESOLVED: To confirm Clerk & RFO as Lead Officer and Cllr McCullough, Cllr Lean and Cllr Kelliher as key contacts.

POLICY REVIEW (recommendations to Full Council)

499. Review draft Asset Register Policy and revised asset register for recommendation to Full Council

RESOLVED: (i) To recommend the draft Asset Register Policy to Full Council for approval, once advice from ALCA on custodian trustee assets has been incorporated. Asset register to then be updated for Council approval. (ii) RFO to obtain independent advice and report back to the committee on recommended risk management checks to be carried out on the Council's freehold property (Manor Hall) which is leased to the Manor Hall CIO, e.g. requesting evidence of insurance.

500. Review draft Reserves Policy and level and purpose of earmarked reserves for recommendation to Full Council

RESOLVED: To recommend the draft Reserves Policy to Full Council for approval and the creation of the following additional earmarked reserves:

- (i) EMR – CIL/S106 sub fund for Frampton Cotterell Youth Service – transfer £4667 from EMR CIL/S106

Purpose – to fund one year contribution to Frampton Cotterell Youth Service (agreed in budget)

- (ii) EMR – CIL/S106 Smile & Shine Grant - transfer £5,400 from EMR CIL/S106

Purpose – to fund one year of hall hire at Westerleigh Village Hall (agreed by Council min 4033i)

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(iii) EMR GPoC grant fund – transfer £10,000 from General Reserve

Purpose - to fund grants (agreed in budget)

The recommended list of earmarked reserves is included at appendix 1.

501. Review Investment Policy/ Strategy and approve locations of funds for recommendation to Full Council

The current situation at 07.07.25 is:

NatWest Current - £52,810.04

NatWest Reserve - £80,507.61

Redwood Bank 35 day notice Savings account - £85,776.62

Unity Trust Bank Instant Access Savings account - £83,756.67

Deposit Protection Scheme (DPS) £836.00

RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council for approval the following:

(i) Revised Investment Policy/ Strategy

(ii) Transfer of £31,000 from the NatWest Reserve to the NatWest Current account, to cover the upcoming invoice for new play equipment at Newman's Field.

(iii) The remaining balance of the NatWest Reserve account (£49,507.61) be transferred to a savings account with a third bank covered by the FSCS, once the transfer of the current account to Unity Trust is complete. The RFO to research accounts and present a recommendation to the next Full Council meeting. Up to 35 days notice on the third savings account considered acceptable.

502. Review revised risk assessment schedule for recommendation to Full Council

The revised schedule was reviewed.

RESOLVED: the revised schedule is recommended to Full Council for approval with the following addition to appendix 1 - risks relating to staffing structure – an encrypted list of passwords relevant to the Clerk and RFO roles to be added to the MS365 folder. The password for the list will be added to the emergency envelope held by the Chairman.

503. To NOTE items considered urgent by the Chairman

None.

504. Dates of future Committee meetings

F & GP Committee meeting Monday 3rd November 2025 Manor Hall, Red Brick Annexe

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

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Appendix 1 – Earmarked Reserves and General Reserve Balances after proposed transfers (mid year) for approval by Full Council:

<u>Reserve</u>	<u>OpeningBalance</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Spend</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>CurrentBalance</u>
Earmarked					
EMR Election costs		4,150.00			4,150.00
EMR Says Court Solar Farm Cc		13,477.93	2,400.00	19,800.00	30,877.93
EMR LNAP (from Says Court S		3,769.15			3,769.15
EMR Tree works		1,870.92			1,870.92
EMR Chalet Repair Fund		11,322.98	2,068.16		9,254.82
EMR Manor Hall Repairs		10,461.07			10,461.07
EMR CIL/S06 unallocated		54,774.26	7,460.00	23,961.12	71,275.38
EMR CIL/S106 sub fund for bins		1,192.00	550.00		642.00
EMR CIL/S106 sub fund for FC		4,667.00			4,667.00
EMR CIL/S106 sub fund for NF		26,439.10			26,439.10
EMR GPoC Grant Fund		10,000.00	650.00		9,350.00
EMR war memorial works		500.00			500.00
EMR Advertising		475.00			475.00
EMR Office equipment		300.00			300.00
EMR The Pound outstanding w		125.00			125.00
EMR CIL/S106 Smile & Shine I		5,400.00	828.00		4,572.00
Total Earmarked	0.00	148,924.41	13,956.16	43,761.12	178,729.37
TOTAL RESERVE		148,924.41	13,956.16	43,761.12	178,729.37
GENERAL FUND					123,332.80
TOTAL FUNDS					302,062.17