

PORLOCK PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Finance & HR Committee Meeting of Porlock Parish Council held at the Old School Centre on Wednesday 25th March 2026 at 6pm

Councillors Present: S Colson (Chair), D Heath (Vice Chair), S McCanlis, D McCanlis & J Adlington

Also present: No members of the public and Clerk J Jones.

Signed: S Colson Dated: 30/6/26

Min Ref:	Minutes	Action:
FH-2025-011	1) Receive apologies for absence - (LGA 1972 s85 (1)) Apologies were received from Cllrs. D Heath and S McCanlis.	
FH-2025-012	2) Resolve any declarations of interest and disclosable pecuniary interest dispensations (LGA 1972 s12 para 41(1)) No declarations were made.	
FH-2025-013	3) Resolve items to be dealt with after the public, including press, have been excluded. (Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 No items were proposed.	
FH-2025-014	4) Resolve the minutes of the Finance & HR committee meeting held on the 17th September 2025 (LGA 1972 s12 para 41(1)) Committee RESOLVED the motion. Cllr. Colson signed the minutes.	
FH-2025-015	5) Receive and note any Finance & HR updates from the Action Log Report There were no outstanding actions.	
FH-2025-016	6) Public participation (LGA 1972 s 12 paras 10(2) (b)) There were no members of the public present.	
FH-2025-017	7) Review council's Financial Regulations and resolve the following: Committee considered proposed amendments to the Council's Financial Regulations relating to delegated spend authority and contract thresholds. Members discussed the practical operation of the current limits and agreed that the proposed revisions would provide clearer delegation while maintaining appropriate financial oversight. In particular, the Committee reviewed and supported revised spending limits as recorded below. The Committee further considered the associated contract thresholds and requirements set out in Regulations 5.6 and 5.8–5.10, noting that these remained proportionate and consistent with good governance, transparency, and value for money. a) Change/add the delegated spend authority for 5.15: i) Clerk from £200 to £300 ii) Environment & Amenities and Burial & Memorial Committees inclusion of £2,000 iii) Finance & HR Committee from £2,000 to £5,000 b) Contract thresholds and requirements for 5.6, 5.8 - 5.10	

Committee RESOLVED items 7a i,ii,iii & 7b and to make recommendation to council.

c) The inclusion of permitted overruns on approved spend

The Committee reviewed the delegations of authority and approvals process and agreed that the existing internal controls should remain unchanged. The motion fell.

d) Subject to the resolution of 1b, the criteria/value of overruns on approved spend

As item 7c fell the motion was not heard.

FH-2025-018 8) Resolve the proposed changes, as highlighted in the revised draft, to the Finance & HR terms of reference for recommendation to council.

Following agreement on the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations, particularly in relation to delegated authority and governance arrangements, the committee considered the consequential implications for the Finance & HR Committee's Terms of Reference. Members noted that the revised delegations and responsibilities required corresponding updates to ensure clarity, consistency, and alignment between the Council's regulatory framework, the committee's remit and alignment with other committees ToRs.

Committee RESOLVED the motion.

FH-2025-019 9) Receive the Asset Register report, resolve next steps and recommendations to council

Committee received the report. The clerk gave an overview of the updated asset register which now holds all required asset related information to meet the Annual Governance and Audit Regulations.

- a) items that have an estimated or known minimum purchase or resale value of £100.00 to be recorded on the asset register.
- b) authorise contractor assessments for Lychgate repairs, signage updates, and safety checks.

Committee RESOLVED to make the above recommends to council.

- c) review and obtain quotes for repainting and décor renewal at the OSC.
- d) create budget proposal for office furniture replacements.
- e) review budget requirements for urgent repairs (Doverhay Toilets, Cemetery structures, Hawkcombe Shed).

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FH-2025-020 10) Receive the initial draft of the year ending 31 March 2026 financial report

Committee received and considered the initial draft financial report for the year ending 31 March 2026. The Clerk highlighted the current financial position and confirmed that expenditure and income remained broadly in line with the approved budget. Members noted the contents of the report and raised no concerns, agreeing that the Council's overall financial position was on track at this stage of the year.

FH-2025-021 11) Resolve council's earmarked reserves requirements for 2026-27 for recommendation to council.

- a) New earmarked reserves, limitations and transfers as and the movement of required funds.
- a) Earmarked reserves set to return to operational cost at the end of 2026-27
- b) End of year balance adjustments across the earmarked reserve portfolio
- c) Required movement of funds from general reserves to earmarked reserves

- d) The value and investing of funds from the community library reserve to British Government Stocks

The committee received and considered the report setting out the proposed draft Earmarked Reserves requirements for 2026–27. Members reviewed the proposed creation of new reserves, the continuation or expiry of existing reserves, funding limits, and planned transfers, together with the principle that specified reserves are subject to annual review and, where agreed, return to operational budgets at the end of their lifecycle. The committee further noted the proposed redistribution of funds and the movement of balances from General Reserves where required. Subject to end of year reconciliation, the proposals set out in the report the draft totals indicated a 2025–26 closing earmarked reserves balance of £64,580.08, a committed spend of £31,601.89, available funds of £32,978.19, and a proposed 2026–27 opening earmarked reserves balance of £76,188.74 following approved transfers.

Committee RESOLVED to recommend the draft Earmarked Reserves schedule for 2026–27, as detailed in the report items 11a-c) to Council, with the exception of the item 11d) relating to the value and investment of funds from the Community Library Earmarked Reserve, which was DEFERRED.

FH-2025- 12) Receive an update on current business banking and resolve next steps

022

The Clerk provided an update on the Council's current banking arrangements. In accordance with the Council's investment policy, funds held in the Unity Trust accounts now exceed the level protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. The NatWest reserve account is outdated and does not provide online banking facilities, and upgrading the account would be cost prohibitive. The Clerk therefore proposed a review of the Council's banking arrangements to ensure they better meet operational and reserves management needs.

Committee RESOLVED that the Clerk undertake a review of the council's banking arrangements and produce a report outlining potential options and associated costs with suitably rated banks.

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FH-2025- 13) Resolve the value of the sponsorship and grants fund 2026-27 for recommendation to council

023

Committee noted that for 2025–26 the Allotment Trust Reserve Account opened with a balance of £23,475.86, received income of £1,386.82 and incurred expenditure of £7,523.00, resulting in a current balance of £17,321.68; after allowing for £7,755 of spend awaiting transfer, available funds amount to £9,566.68. The Grants and Sponsorships Earmarked Reserve opened the year with £8,425.88, with awards totalling £8,125.76, leaving a closing balance of £300.12. For 2026–27, a previously agreed top up of £5,000, together with the carried forward balance, gives a forecast Grant and Sponsorship Fund total of £5,300.

Committee RESOLVED to recommend to council a 2026-27 sponsorship and grants fund of £8,425.76 plus the balance of the fund at year end.

FH-2025- 14) Resolve the draft list of regular and contractual payments for 2026/27 for recommendation to council (Fin Reg 6.8)

024

Committee considered the draft list of regular and contractual payments for the financial year 2026/27, prepared in accordance with Financial Regulation 6.8. Members reviewed the schedule, including the proposed amendments, and were satisfied that the arrangements provided appropriate oversight, transparency, and operational efficiency.

Committee RESOLVED to approve the draft list of regular and contractual payments for 2026/27, as amended, and recommend it to Council.

- FH-2025-025 15) Resolve the payroll internal controls process for recommendation to council**
Committee considered the proposed payroll internal controls process, including the amendments set out in the revised draft. Members reviewed the arrangements for payroll processing, authorisation, and oversight, and were satisfied that the controls provided appropriate separation of duties, assurance, and compliance with financial and employment governance requirements.

Committee RESOLVED to approve the payroll internal controls process, as amended, and recommend it to Council.

- FH-2025-026 Meeting Extension 10 mins**
Committee RESOLVED an extension of 10 mins.

- FH-2025-027 16) Resolve to review council's current pension arrangements and the cost involved in joining the Local Government Pension Scheme in April 2027**
Committee discussed council's current pension arrangements and the alternative Local Government Pension Scheme.

Committee RESOLVED that the Clerk undertake a review of the council's pension arrangements and produce a report outlining potential options and associated costs for consideration by the committee and council.

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- FH-2025-028 17) Receive the National Association of Locals Councils (NALC) pay awards for 2026-27**
The pay award report was not received from NALC.

- FH-2025-029 18) Note outstanding items:**
a) Resolve and make recommendation to council the value and investing of funds from the community library Earmarked Reserve to British Government Stocks

- FH-2025-030 19) Any other business (For information only)**
No other information was received.

The meeting closed at 20:10