



ECCLESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Ecclesfield Parish Council

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Public Participation Session

Prior to the formal commencement of the meeting, there was an opportunity for any members of the public attending to ask questions of the Committee, none were asked.

Minutes of the Finance, Premises and Staffing Committee Meeting held on Thursday 24th July 2025 at the Council Offices

Commenced: 7.00 pm - Concluded: 8.30 pm

Councillors Present. Kate Guest (Chair), Victoria Bowden, Susan Davidson, Denise Fearnley (substituting for John Housley) and Adam Hurst (substituting for Michael Morrissey)

Absent Councillors. John Housley, Carol Levery, Mike Levery and Michael Morrissey

Officers: Andrew Towler – Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer and Laura Tickle – Administration and Financial Officer

Members of the Public. None

Chair's Announcement

The Chair, Councillor Kate Guest, outlined the procedures to ensure that the meeting was effective and lawful.

<u>2025/31</u> <u>(FP&S)</u>	<u>Item 31: Apologies and Reasons for Absence</u> It was reported that four had been received from Councillor John Housley, Councillor Carol Levery, Councillor Mike Levery and Councillor Michael Morrissey. Proposed by Councillor Denise Fearnley, seconded by Councillor Adam Hurst and RESOLVED: That the apologies and reasons given for absence by Councillor John Housley, Councillor Carol Levery, Councillor Mike Levery and Councillor Michael Morrissey be approved. (5 in favour)
<u>2025/32</u> <u>(FP&S)</u>	<u>Item 32: Declarations of Interests</u> There were none declared.
<u>2025/33</u> <u>(FP&S)</u>	<u>Item 33: Exclusion of Press and Public</u> The Chair considered all or part of two items that required the exclusion of the press or public due to the confidential nature of the business to be considered. These were item

	2025/42 'Staffing Issues' and that part of item 2025/43 'Grant Applications' dealing with the consideration of the grant application. Proposed by Councillor Susan Davidson, seconded by Councillor Denise Fearnley and RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from item 2025/42 'Staffing Issues' and that part of item 2025/43 'Grant Applications' dealing with the consideration of the grant application. (5 in favour)
<u>2025/34</u> <u>(FP&S)</u>	<u>Item 34: Finance, Premises and Staffing Committee Minutes</u> An update and general discussion took place on the various actions from the minutes of the meeting held on 19th June 2025. In particular, the following items: a) <u>2024/2025 Annual Governance and Accountability Review (AGAR) (see minute 2024/148 (FP&S))</u> The Clerk reported that this had been successfully submitted to the External Auditor and was now undergoing external examination. b) <u>Banking and Investments (see minute 2025/20 (FP&S))</u> The finance officer reported that arrangements were progressing well for setting up the new account with the Hinkley and Rugby Building Society and the additional investment with CCLA Investment Management both of which had been agreed at a previous meeting. c) <u>Participatory Budgeting (see minute 2024/146 (FP&S))</u> It was explained that this was going well, and several applications had already been received. It was suggested that as the date of the event had been pushed back by a couple of weeks perhaps the deadline for applications could be extended by a couple of weeks accordingly, which was agreed. Proposed by Councillor Susan Davidson, seconded by Councillor Adam Hurst and RESOLVED: That the deadline for applications to the Participatory Budgeting programme be extended until Friday 22nd August 2025. (5 in favour) d) <u>Chapelgreen Advice Centre (see minute 2025/9 (FP&S))</u> The Clerk confirmed that he had not heard from the Chapelgreen Advice Centre following the Council's decision. It was agreed that a general update on benches should be added as an agenda item for the next meeting.
<u>2025/35</u> <u>(FP&S)</u>	<u>Item 35: To consider monthly accounts schedule and budget update</u> A verbal and written report on the bank reconciliation, monthly accounts and the budget up to the end of May 2025 was provided by the Financial and Administration Officer. Proposed by Councillor Denise Fearnley, seconded by Councillor Adam Hurst and RESOLVED: That the bank reconciliation and monthly accounts until the end of May 2025 be approved. (5 in favour)

Adjournment of Meeting

Proposed by Councillor Susan Davidson, seconded by Councillor Denise Fearnley and **RESOLVED:** That the formal meeting be adjourned for 15 minutes to allow representatives from the 25th Sheffield Ecclesfield Scout Group to speak and answer questions in support of their grant applications to be considered at item 2025/43 'Grant Applications'.

(5 in favour)

2025/36 (FP&S)

Item 36: Internal Audit Review 2024/2025

The Clerk provided a verbal and written report on the Internal Audit Review of the Council for the financial year 2024/2025. He explained that the main focus of the review (which was a statutory requirement for local councils) was to review and report on whether a parish councils' systems of financial and other internal controls and procedures are effective.

The main findings were then outlined. Overall, the conclusions were very positive describing the Council (again) as "at a high standard", but there were some recommendations which were contained in the Internal Auditor's report and summarised at Appendix 36a.

Proposed by Councillor Victoria Bowden, seconded by Councillor Denise Fearnley and **RESOLVED:** That

- (a) It is recommended to the Council that the Internal Audit Review 2024/2025 be endorsed.
- (b) The recommendations following the Internal Audit Review 2024/25 (see also appendix 36b) be actioned as soon as possible.

(5 in favour)

It was then reported that the Council's Internal Auditor had stated that she was unable to continue providing this service to the Council. The arrangements for securing a suitable replacement were then outlined.

2025/37 (FP&S)

Item 37: Policies and Procedures for Consideration

The draft Sexual and General Harassment Policy and Procedures was discussed. A few suggested amendments were made and agreed.

Proposed by Councillor Victoria Bowden, seconded by Councillor Denise Fearnley and **RESOLVED:** That, subject to the agreed amendments being made, the draft Sexual and General Harassment Policy and Procedure be recommended to Council for approval.

(5 in favour)

2025/38 (FP&S)

Item 38: Chapeltown Toilets

A verbal report was provided. The Clerk explained that following repairs undertaken by the Council, one of the toilets was now open. The second, which required more substantial repairs, remained closed. It was understood that Sheffield City Council were still investigating the scope of the works required to bring the second one back into use. It was noted that the toilets had now been closed for over a year awaiting the works to be undertaken by Sheffield City Council

Proposed by Councillor Susan Davidson, seconded by Councillor Victoria Bowden and **RESOLVED:** That it is agreed that the Council should write to the Director of Parks &

	Leisure at Sheffield City Council requesting an immediate detailed breakdown on the repairs required and associated costs. <i>(5 in favour)</i>
<u>2025/39</u> <u>(FP&S)</u>	<u>Item 39: Community Room</u> The Financial and Administration Officer provided a verbal report on bookings and other issues. She said that there had been no significant changes from her previous monthly report though a few enquiries about potential new bookings had been received.
<u>2025/40</u> <u>(FP&S)</u>	<u>Item 40: To receive an update on various issues relating to Council facilities and consider next steps</u> a) <u>Installing an additional flag post outside the Council Offices (in furtherance of minute 2025/19 (FP&S))</u> The Financial and Administrative Officer provided an update with the aim being to bring the recommended option to the next meeting of the Finance, Premises and Staffing Committee. b) Usage of Defibrillators over the last year A verbal and written report was provided. It was noted that their use had been authorised by the ambulance service over 80 times during the last year, potentially saving many lives. This was welcomed and underlined their need. It was noted that one of the nine (Hesley Wood Scout Activity Centre) has never been used in the last few years. A discussion then took place on whether we should seek to move it to another location or ask Hesley Wood Scout Activity Centre (and on whose land it was located) to take over its maintenance. The general view was that we should prioritise locations with the greatest risk. Proposed by Councillor Adam Hurst, seconded by Councillor Victoria Bowden and RESOLVED: That is agreed that the Council should write to Hesley Wood Scout Activity Centre asking whether they would like to take over the maintenance of the defibrillator, which is currently maintained by the Council, at the Activity Centre. <i>(5 in favour)</i> c) Improvements to the CCTV system in the Council Offices An update was provided on the agreed improvements to the CCTV system in the Council Offices, that had been prompted following an independent inspection of it. d) Fire Alarm The clerk reported that an independent assessment by a qualified person had highlighted some issues with the Fire Alarm System in the Council Offices that required immediate attention. He had obtained a quote from a suitable person to undertake these works, which were circulated. The Clerk intended to use the delegated power available to him under para 5.15 of the Council's Financial Regulations to authorise these works. Proposed by Councillor Denise Fearnley, seconded by Councillor Adam Hurst and RESOLVED: That the Clerk be authorised to appoint Ashton Alarms to undertake the required works to the Fire Alarm system in the Council Offices on the basis of their quote dated 26th June 2025. <i>(5 in favour)</i>

	The Clerk also reported that an inspection of the Council notice boards, walk-in posts and benches had been undertaken the findings of which would be reported at the next meeting of the Finance, Premises and Staffing Committee. It had highlighted that urgent repairs to one of the walk-in posts were required, which were being progressed. <i>(5 in favour)</i>
<u>2025/41</u> <u>(FP&S)</u>	<u>Item 41: Councillor and Staff Training</u> An update was provided on the Dementia Friendly Training that took place on Thursday 10th July 2025 at 6.00 pm. The general view was that this had been very instructive and useful. A discussion then took place on the extent to which the Council, in principle, should provide support to Councillors experiencing stress, anxiety, or other mental health challenges. The view was that it should provide support. It was confirmed that, in the short term, any associated costs should be met from the Council's Training Budget pending the full costings and service offered which will be reported and considered during the budget setting process. Also, that Councillors should be informed of the support accordingly.
<u>2025/42</u> <u>(FP&S)</u>	<u>Item 42: Staffing Issues</u> The Clerk provided a verbal report on general staffing issues. He made special mention to that the employers organisations and the unions have now reached agreement on the rates of pay for local council employees that are engaged on NJC terms and conditions, which affects all Parish Council staff, from 1 April 2025. A 3.2% pay increase had been agreed.
<u>2025/43</u> <u>(FP&S)</u>	<u>Item 43: Grant Applications</u> One grant application was considered. Proposed by Councillor Susan Davidson, seconded by Councillor Victoria Bowden and RESOLVED: That it is recommended to Council that a grant of £1,085 be awarded to the 25th Sheffield Ecclesfield Scout Group for one new large troupe tent. <i>(5 in favour)</i>
<u>2025/44</u> <u>(FP&S)</u>	<u>Item 44: Grant Monitoring</u> It was reported that grant monitoring forms had been received from Ecclesfield Spartans and Thorncliffe Villa FC. Three were more than 6 months outstanding, however, from: • South Yorkshire County Scouts Group • Friends of Grenoside Park • Chatty Crafters As a consequence, the groups listed above are in breach of the conditions of the award. The Clerk was asked and agreed to formally notify the three groups of the Council's intention to withdraw their grant unless they provided the required information within four weeks.
<u>2025/45</u> <u>(FP&S)</u>	<u>Item 45: Date and Time of Future Meetings</u> It was confirmed that the next Finance, Premises and Staffing Committee meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 18th September 2025 at 7.00pm in the Council Offices.