

# Charmouth Parish Council

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## MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE ELMS AT 6.00PM ON TUESDAY 12 MAY 2026

In attendance: Cllrs Jane Bremner, Peter Noel (Chair), Katie Moore, Martin Sayers, Judith Sheppard and the Clerk, Lisa Tuck.

### **FGP26/43 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence had been received.

### **FGP26/44 DISPENSATIONS**

No relevant dispensation requests had been received.

### **FGP26/45 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Martin Sayers disclosed an interest in relation to the NCI request and Peter Noel disclosed an interest in relation to the Traders taking on the Christmas lights.

### **FGP26/46 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on the 10 March 2026, circulated to members, were an accurate record and these were signed by the Chair.

### **FGP26/47 SUPPLIER PAYMENTS APRIL AND MAY 2026**

The supplier payments for April (attached B) were approved retrospectively as having been approved by delegated authority and it was

**RESOLVED** that the supplier payments to date for May 2026 (attached C) be approved.

Any additions to the list would be approved by delegated authority and ratified by Full Council.

### **FGP26/48 BANK RECONCILIATION (UP TO END MARCH 2026)**

The Committee proposed approval of the bank reconciliation up to the end of March 2026 (attached D) and it was noted that this is the year end bank reconciliation.

### **FGP26/49 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGETS INC RESERVES (UP TO END MARCH 2026) AND FORESHORE INCOME TRACKER (UP TO END MARCH 2026)**

It was proposed that the income and expenditure accounts for April 2025-March 2026 (attached E1) be approved by the Council. The Foreshore Income Tracker (attached E2) was noted.

### **FGP26/50 RESERVES**

(a) **SCHEDULE UP TO END MARCH 2026** - Reserves schedule for April-March 2026 (attached F) was noted.

#### **(b) BANK TRANSFERS**

i) **PROPOSE TO TRANSFER £50,000 FROM SANTANDER CURRENT TO SANTANDER DEPOSIT NOW THAT THE FIRST HALF OF THE PRECEPT HAS BEEN RECEIVED** – Agreed.

#### **FGP26/51 CLERK'S REPORT**

It is proposed that the Clerk's Report (attached G) be approved by the Council.

#### **FGP26/52 UPDATE OF EXPENDITURE FROM RESERVES**

**(a) REAL TIME BUS INDICATORS** – The Clerk read an update from Dorset Council which confirmed that things are progressing and they are confident that the project can be delivered but probably not in time for the 2026 season.

**(b) EVENTS SHED** – Since the PF,C&SM Cttee, confirmation has been received from the Events Cttee that services won't be installed at this time and the agreed donation has been received. However, due to the time scales, the cost has increased by 4% (£515). It was agreed to ask the Events Committee if they are prepared to meet this additional cost.

#### **FGP26/53 HAZARD AND INCIDENT REPORT**

**(a) SLIPPING OF ELMS GABLE END COPING STONES** - The fixing of the stones failed (due to age probably) causing them to slip and in high winds fall into the East Wing Roof.

#### **FGP26/54 ASSET REGISTER AS AT 31 MARCH 2026 (attached H)**

It is proposed that the Asset Register be approved by the Council.

#### **FGP26/55 END OF YEAR FINANCE REPORT (attached I)**

**(a) APPROVAL OF REPORT** – It is proposed that the report be approved by the Council.

**(b) ALLOCATION OF UNSPENT BUDGETS** – It is proposed that the allocation of unspent budgets be approved as set out. With regard to any additional surplus, it was agreed to look into the replacement of 4/5 of the pink huts (all large and reduce number, in line with Foreshore Cttees previous decision). Quotes would be obtained and brought back through the Committee process.

**(c) CONSIDER WHETHER TO RE-START TRANSFER OF 7.5% OF CAR PARK TAKINGS TO RESERVE FSH2** – As FSH2 reserve currently stands at £62263.53, it is proposed that this allocation is not re-started and is reviewed again next May.

#### **FGP26/56 2025/26 AUDIT**

**(a) REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL (attached J)** – The Report was reviewed and it is considered that the system is still effective. It is proposed that the effectiveness of internal control be approved by the Council.

**(b) INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (attached K1 and K2)** – The internal auditors had visited today and the reports were circulated physically at the meeting. Due to an oversight the Internal Auditor is unable to complete a positive assertion to B on the annual return and will provide the following explanation in this regard:

“The Council has purchased new beach huts during the year under review with a value in excess of £30,000. The initial decision made by the Finance and General Purpose Committee was to purchase 5 beach huts with a value of less than £30,000. At the following Full Council meeting it was decided to purchase more huts pushing the value of the contract over £30,000. The Financial Regulations state that for contracts in excess of £10,000 three fixed price quotes must be obtained and for contracts in excess of £30,000 the contract should be advertised on the Contract Finder website in accordance with The Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Quotes were obtained for the new beach huts as far as was possible, but the contract was not advertised on the Contract Finders website.”

Other recommendations include:

- balancing the petty cash at the year end to ensure that the balance of actual cash in the tin is the same as the balance on Scribe;
- if the Council is to fully comply with the Transparency Code, more information should be added to the Compliance section of the website relating to land and building assets as well as more detailed information relating to contracts over £5000.

The Committee proposes to accept the report and recommendations.

**(c) ANNUAL INCOME/EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS (attached L1)/BALANCE SHEET (attached L2)** – It is proposed that the income/expenditure accounts and the balance sheet be approved by Council.

**(d) ANNUAL RETURN TO AUDITOR**

**(i) ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (attached M)** – In line with the internal auditors comments, it was agreed by the Committee that the answer to assertion 3 has to be “no” in line with the beach hut contract not being advertised on the Contract Finder Website. It is proposed that the Annual Governance Statement be approved by the Council.

**(ii) ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS (attached N)** – It is proposed that the Accounting Statements be approved by the Council.

**(e) BDO - CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION** – Providing no Councillors have a conflict of interest with BDO it is proposed that the declaration be approved.

**(f) COMPLIANCE WITH TRANSPARENCY CODE** – Following advice from the Internal Auditor, as stated above, in order for the Council to comply fully with the Transparency Code, additional information relating to land, buildings and contracts over £5000 should be added to the website. It is proposed that this guidance be followed.

#### **FGP26/57 FORESHORE COMMITTEE**

**(a) LOCKABLE SKIP HIRE** – It was agreed to obtain a lockable skip from Axe Skip Hire at a cost of £375 plus VAT per skip (up to a month each time). This would be used for recyclable beach rubbish (rope, wood etc) and would hopefully mean that the bins are not over weight. Skips would be obtained when there is almost enough rubbish to fill one so that they don't have to be removed before they are completely full. This cost would be taken from the current Foreshore/Beach cleaning budget.

**(b) NCI CAMERAS (attached O) – Martin Sayers left the room for this item.** The report circulated explained the technical side of the request which is explained below by the NCI:

“Sirius are working for the government to improve security around the coastline. They have teamed up with NCI as we have 60+ stations around the coast which can be used as locations for their systems. The pro quid quo is that we have access to their cameras to support our operations.

The Charmouth camera which we had previously installed was failing, and, when Sirius offered to replace it we jumped at the chance. I was aware that they needed to replace the point to point link, that transfers the pictures from the camera to the lookout as that was failing as well!

They mentioned that they wanted to fit some static cameras, that was news to me, we will have access to these cameras, so they will be of some use, and enhance our purview of the area.”

The Committee agreed that this is an upgrade to the current permission and this was approved.

**(c) SEASONAL FOSSIL WARDEN – UPDATE** - Disappointingly the National Trust have been unable to secure internal funding of this position and although they are continuing to look for funding, it won't be in time for the coming season. CPC has reiterated that the situation hasn't changed from last year and it still isn't able to take on the employment of the role.

**(d) SWIM BUOYS 2026** – The Clerk has received an update from DC Harbour Master and was hoping for a quote for the suggested repairs. This will continue to be chased as the buoys would normally be installed in May.

**(e) FUTURE COAST CHARMOUTH – UPDATE** - An email has been received from FCC, informing that the projects recently suggested do not qualify and that the designs for steps are progressing.

**(f) CAR PARK SIGN** - The bottom section of the main car park sign in the Foreshore Car Park is to be replaced as the stickers over the times keep being peeled off and the coating of the actual sign is also peeling. This has been agreed by delegated authority at a cost of £100 plus VAT with Creative Solutions installing the new sign in situ.

**(g) PICNIC TABLES/PLANKS** – Discussions are ongoing with Reformed Plastics to ensure the correct products are ordered and it was agreed to proceed with an order under delegated authority with the details to be confirmed in due course.

#### **FGP26/58 PLAYING FIELD, CEMETERY AND STREET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**(a) BARRS LANE** – A response is awaited from the agent following the Council's request for more details.

**(b) CHAIN LINK FENCING REMOVAL - GROUNDWORKS REQUIRED** - Following approval of the removal of the fences, this can be undertaken "in house" but needs careful co-ordination to ensure removed materials aren't left on site causing a hazard and that the levelling of the ground is undertaken following removal. A quote is awaited for the levelling and removal of metal.

#### **FGP26/59 ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP**

Jane Bremner reported that the last meeting of the Environment WG had just taken place and it had been agreed that after 5 years a separate working group is not now necessary and the Committees are now fully considering environmental issues in conjunction with other decisions. Julie is drafting a Environmental Policy for use moving forward.

#### **FGP26/60 INSURANCE**

**(a) RENEWAL OF GENERAL INSURANCE COVER** - Renewal details have been received from Zurich who have been the Council's insurers for over 30 years. To enter into a another three year agreement would incur a renewal premium of £5931.70 for the 26/27 year (as opposed to £6415.93 for 1 year). The current year's premium is £5590.26. Quotes have been sought previously but the cost difference was negligible and given the complexity of the Council's requirements as well as the time required to source and review other quotes, it is proposed to enter another three year agreement with Zurich.

**(b) RENEWAL OF TRACTOR/KUBOTA INSURANCE** - Renewal has been received via John Peers (broker for agricultural vehicles) at a cost of £904.11 (as opposed to £905.67 for the current year). The Committee confirmed approval for the renewal from current budgets.

#### **FGP26/61 ELMS**

**(a) ELMS LEAD VALLEYS – UPDATE** - The fibre glassing of the Elms roof valley adjoining the East Wing is about to start.

**(b) ELMS ROOF ISSUES** - Following the incident reported above, luckily this was spotted quickly, the remainder of the stones removed to safety and the East Wing roof repaired (costs incurred: Paul Crosby £446.60; Perennial Roofing £105 plus VAT). A subsequent quote (£3115 plus VAT) was accepted by delegated authority from Perennial Roofing to re-bed the coping stones prior to undertaking the rest of the work to the valley. This work has been done and has been completed at a slightly cheaper price of £2915 plus VAT as the extras weren't required. A large part of the cost is for the additional scaffolding. This additional cost will also be taken from General Reserve GEN4 Elms Maintenance.

**(c) RENTERS' RIGHTS ACT – LANDLORD UPDATE (attached P)** - This is an update on previous information received from the Council's letting agent. All requirements will be taken care of by the agent.

#### **FGP26/62 GENERAL**

**(a) ADMIN KEY STAFF ANNUAL TASK DIARIES (attached Q – Office Administrator)** – Noted.

**(b) NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES 2026/27** – Rates for all areas are within budget for 26/27.

**(c) WEBSITE REVIEW**

**(i) ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW** - A review of the website was recently undertaken by Martin Sayers and small issues raised (broken links) have been rectified.

**(ii) SONDER WEBSITE MOT SERVICE** - Information has been received from Sonder regarding a new website MOT service being offered. The cost is £75 per month or £200 per quarter. It was agreed that this is not necessary as a programme of annual checking by a different Councillor each time has already been implemented.

**(d) LB1 BUS SERVICE – COMMS/QUOTE FROM CHAIR OF CPC** - Information has been issued on the new bus service which was taken from a post by LRTC. This has also been sent to the Charmouth Caravan Parks. Katie Moore attended the launch on Friday 2 May.

**(e) EVENTS COMMITTEE - CHRISTMAS LIGHTS – Peter Noel left the room for this item.** The events Cttee are taking steps to transfer the Christmas lights to the Traders on a legal footing but would like confirmation from the Council that the current arrangements they have with the Council for the storage and payment of the annual erection of the lights, can be transferred to Charmouth Traders. It is proposed to Full Council that this arrangement continue with the Traders.

**FGP26/63 POLICIES**

**(a) SAFEGUARDING POLICY REVIEW (attached R)** – It is proposed that the current Safeguarding Policy be approved without any changes.

**(b) COMMUNICATIONS POLICY REVIEW (attached S1 and S2)** – It is proposed that the Communications Policy be updated in line with the recommendations. In relation to correspondence recently received, following advice taken via DAPTC, a response was agreed.

**FGP26/64 STAFF/HR ISSUES**

**(a) STAFF REPORT (attached T)** – The Committee approved payment of the Clerk's additional hours. In view of current staff shortages, additional hours of other staff were noted. Current staff holidays were noted.

**(b) SEASONAL BEACH ASSISTANT UPDATE** – The seasonal position has now been filled.

**(c) CEMETERY GRASS CUTTING – CONTRACTOR** - Due to current staff holidays, Mark Wickenden has been commissioned to cut the grass at the cemetery while staffing is tight. The cost is as previously of £100 per cut plus fuel. This was agreed by delegated authority and can be taken from the current Cemetery Maintenance budget initially.

**(d) JURY SERVICE SUMMONS** – The Clerk has been summoned to undertake Jury Service from 1-12 June. It was agreed that wages should be paid in full during this time and the Clerk will continue working as much as she is able.

**FGP26/65 IN COMMITTEE**

**(a) LAND AT HIGHER SEA LANE – UPDATE** - Still no further update from the Land Registry since the apology for overlooking in January.

**(b) LEASE 1 RENEWAL – UPDATE** – The terms of a new lease have now been agreed and a draft lease has been sent to the tenant's solicitor.

**(c) LEASE 2 RENT REVIEW – UPDATE** - Proposed rent increase agreed by tenant.

**(d) LEASE 4 RENT REVIEW – UPDATE** - Proposed rent increase currently being considered by tenant.

**(e) ELMS 2<sup>nd</sup> FLOOR ROOM 1 – UPDATE** - Tenants have given notice to vacate from 28 May. Advert to be placed locally without using an agent as previously.

**(f) LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME – UPDATE** – To be advertised in due course.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

**Proposals:**

- FGP26/47 May Supplier payment additions
- FGP26/48 Bank Reconciliation
- FGP26/49 Income and Expenditure against Budget
- FGP26/51 Clerk's Report
- FGP26/52(b) Events Shed additional cost – response from Events Committee?
- FGP26/54 Asset Register
- FGP26/55(a) Approval of End of Year Report
- FGP26/55(b) Allocation of Unspent Budgets
- FGP26/55(c) Transfer of 7.5% of car park takings to Reserve FSH2
- FGP26/56(a) Effectiveness of Internal Control
- FGP26/56(b) Internal Audit Report – acceptance of report and recommendations
- FGP26/56(c) Income/expenditure accounts and balance sheet
- FGP26/56(d)
  - i) Annual Governance Statement
  - ii) Accounting Statements
- FGP26/56(e) Conflict of Interest Declaration
- FGP26/56(f) Compliance with Transparency Code
- FGP26/60(a) Insurance renewal
- FGP26/62(e) Transfer of Christmas lights arrangement to Traders
- FGP26/63(a) Safeguarding Policy
- FGP26/63(b) Communications Policy update