



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

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Terms of Reference for the Finance & General Purposes Committee

Reviewed: May 2026

Approved: 26th May 2026 (*Minute No: 2026/83 iii*)

Date for Next Review: May 2027

Purpose: To oversee, manage and monitor the Council's financial affairs and wider administrative, service and operational functions within the Council's remit, including amenities, public assets and community services and to make recommendations to Full Council where required.

This Committee is a standing Committee of the Full Council and is delegated responsibility for the following areas:

Responsibilities

Financial Matters

The Committee shall have delegated authority to:

- Review and monitor monthly expenditure against approved budgets.
- Review monthly bank reconciliations.
- Review quarterly expenditure against the approved budget and report to Full Council.
- Receive and determine grant applications up to £500; referring larger applications to Full Council.
- Review the Council's Grant Policy and Service Level Agreements, recommending changes where necessary.
- Review banking arrangements and mandates.
- Lead the preparation of the annual budget, precept and reserves and make recommendations to Full Council.

- Oversee procurement and contract management in accordance with Financial Regulations.
- Appoint an internal auditor and oversee internal audit processes.
- Authorise expenditure on works and services within approved budgets and delegated financial limits.
- Review and make recommendations regarding the Council's use and management of administrative assets, IT systems and digital infrastructure.

General Purposes and Operational Oversight

The Committee shall also oversee general administrative and operational functions, where such matters are referred to it by Full Council or arise from its financial and governance responsibilities, including:

- Oversight of council-owned buildings, open spaces, recreational areas, cemeteries and other public amenities, making recommendations for maintenance, improvement, or development.
- Review of town maintenance schedules and services (e.g., street furniture, signage, lighting, and litter bins).
- Recommendations on matters relating to civic events, public engagement initiatives and community services that fall outside the remit of other committees.
- Receiving reports from the advisory groups of Minehead Town Council and taking appropriate action or making recommendations to Full Council where necessary.
- Monitoring compliance with health and safety obligations in council-run facilities.
- Receive reports from officers regarding operational delivery and make recommendations as appropriate.
- Consider feedback or representations from residents, local organisations and community groups relating to services under the Committee's remit and respond appropriately.
- Promote and support environmentally sustainable practices across Council-owned assets, amenities and service delivery.
- Consideration of staffing resources where they relate to administrative and service functions, including reviewing recommendations from the Staffing Sub Committee and, where necessary, referring further recommendations to Full Council.
- Developing or reviewing policies and procedures not specific to other committees.
- Supporting the implementation of Council decisions and strategic objectives across departments.

Membership

The Committee will comprise all Councillors, reviewed annually at the Annual Council meeting, or at any other Council meeting should an interim need arise.

The Quorum of the committee is five (5) members. No business may be transacted at a meeting unless the set quorum of Councillors is present and eligible to vote.

To ensure impartiality and avoid any perception of undue influence, the Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee must not be the spouse, partner, or close relative of the Chair of the Council. Where such a relationship exists, the councillor concerned shall remain eligible to serve on the Committee but shall not be eligible for election as its Chair.

Declarations of Interest

This requirement is in addition to each Councillor's statutory obligation to maintain an up-to-date Register of Pecuniary and Other Interests. All members of the Committee must declare any relevant pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests at the start of each meeting, even where such interests are already recorded in the Register.

Where a declared interest relates to an item of business, the member shall take no part in the decision-making and must not seek to influence the views of other members. With the permission of the Chair, the member may provide factual information or contextual clarification if this assists the Committee's understanding of the matter.

After doing so, and at the discretion of the Chair, the member may be required to withdraw from the discussion and leave the meeting room for the remainder of that agenda item. The Chair will determine whether the member's continued presence could reasonably be perceived as influencing debate, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

Resignation of the Chair

The Chair of the Committee may resign from the role at any time by giving written notice to the Town Clerk. Upon receipt of the notice, the role of Chair shall be considered vacant.

The first item of business on the next available Committee agenda shall be the election of a new Chair, in accordance with these Terms of Reference and the Council's procedures.

Meetings

Meetings will be held monthly. The Chair is elected annually at the first meeting following the Annual Council Meeting. In the absence of the Chair, a temporary Chair shall be elected at the start of the meeting. Decisions are made by majority vote. The Mayor has the casting vote in the event of a tie.

Minutes

Minutes of all meetings will be recorded by the Town Clerk or Deputy Clerk & RFO and circulated at the next Full Council meeting before being approved at the subsequent committee meeting.

Delegated Authority to Authorise Payments

- The Committee may authorise expenditure up to £3,000 (excluding VAT) per item within approved budget lines.
- Grants up to £500 may be approved directly by the Committee.
- Any spending above these limits requires Full Council approval.

Restrictions

The Committee may not:

- Exceed the £3,000 expenditure limit or approved budget lines.
- Approve expenditure that would create or extend services, assets, or projects not already approved by Full Council.
- Award or enter into contracts above thresholds set in Financial Regulations.
- Cause any budget to be exceeded.
- Make decisions reserved to Full Council under the Scheme of Delegation

Operation of the Committee

- The Committee may appoint sub-committees or working groups as needed.
- It may not exceed its delegated powers and must refer significant or strategic decisions to Full Council.
- All agendas will be published at least three clear days before meetings on the Council's website and noticeboard.
- Any amendments to these Terms of Reference require Full Council approval.