

MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE POLICY & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 APRIL 2025

- * Councillor Follows – Chair
- * Councillor Weightman – Vice Chair

0 Councillor Adam	0 Councillor Holliday
0 Councillor Clayton	* Councillor Kiehl
* Councillor Crooks	* Councillor Martin
* Councillor Crowe	* Councillor PMA Rivers
0 Councillor C Downey	0 Councillor Steel
0 Councillor S Downey	* Councillor Thomson
* Councillor Duce	* Councillor Williams
* Councillor Heagin	

* Present # Absent & No Apology Received 0 Apology for Absence L Late

612. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2025, having been previously circulated were signed by the Chair as a true record.

613. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and recorded as above.

614. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER REGISTERABLE INTERESTS

Councillor Thomson declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 9 – Motion On Notice regarding Farncombe Day Centre on the grounds that she is a Trustee of the Day Centre. A dispensation from Standing Order 67, was granted by the Proper Officer on the basis of Standing Order 72ii, that it was in the interests of persons living in the council area for Cllr Thomson to remain in the Chamber to enable her to respond to Members' questions regarding the current and future financial position of the Day Centre and the proposed actions being taken by the Trustees. Cllr Thomson did not vote on this matter.

615. PETITIONS/STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No petitions/statements/questions had been received from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order No 4.

616. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

No questions from Councillors were submitted in accordance with Standing Order 6.

617. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFERS – UPDATE AND CONSIDERATION OF BUSINESS CASE SUBMISSIONS

Members received an update from the Chair of the LGR Task & Finish Group on the work of that group, including matters relating to Community Asset Transfers (CAT) with Waverley Borough Council (WBC).

Members noted the response from the WBC Executive on 1 April 2025 concerning GTC's question regarding the open-ended cost undertakings currently requested as part of CAT applications, and WBC's capacity to manage the process given the LGR timeframe.

Members received and noted the responses from the residents' survey conducted via the GTC "All Change" leaflet regarding the public's views on potential CATs.

Members reviewed the draft business cases for the following sites:

- The Burys Field
- Lammas Lands – adjacent to Bridge House
- Canon Bowrings Recreation Ground
- Lammas Lands – Charterhouse Green

Members resolved to:

- Note the update from the LGR Task & Finish Group.
- Note the WBC Executive's acknowledgement of the need for clarity around cost undertakings.
- Note the WBC Executive's comments on application capacity and resource implications.
- Note resident support for CATs as indicated in the recent survey.
- Approve the draft business cases for the sites listed above for submission to WBC.
- Authorised the Town Clerk to submit the business cases accompanied by a letter stating that GTC is willing to sign a legal cost undertaking subject to receipt of transparent cost estimates or a revised format that limits financial exposure.
- Approved the use of professional fee reserves to meet the costs associated with the CAT submissions.

618. FINAL ACCOUNTS

Members resolved to approve the final accounts for the year ending 31 March 2025.

Members received and agreed the final accounts for the year ending 31 March 2025 (attached to record minutes).

619. ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE LAST MEETING & SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

	£
Godalming Town Council	
Accounts paid since the 13 March to 23 April 2025	172,040.99
Receipts received since the 13 March to 23 April 2025	681,415.24
Balance held in HSBC Current Account	
Balance at 23 April 2025	95,341.38
Balance held in the HSBC Business Deposit Account	
Balance at 23 April 2025	1,125,795.70
CCLA Deposit Account	
Balance at 23 April 2025	1,050,000.00

A schedule of the accounts paid was tabled for the information of Members and a copy is attached to record minutes. The vouchers relating to these payments were also tabled at the meeting for inspection. All payments made were in line with the agreed budget or other resolution of this Committee or Full Council.

Members agreed that the Chair should sign the schedule of accounts paid.

620. MOTION ON NOTICE

Proposer: Councillor Crowe. Seconder: Councillor Penny Rivers

The Motion:

Godalming Town Council recognises the vital service provided by the Farncombe Day Centre (FDC) to our elderly and vulnerable residents and is concerned that the level of the reduction in funding and unexpected and short notice of the reduction will have an immediate and adverse impact on the longer-term viability of the FDC. GTC should use all means available to it to support the FDC in the immediate short-term of financial year 2025/26 by providing a one-off grant, funded from the general reserve, to enable the FDC trustees the space and time to explore options to stabilise the current situation and provide a viable future for the FDC.

Members considered the Motion and on the proposal of Cllr Follows, seconded by Cllr Penny Rivers resolved to agree to provide £15,000 of immediate financial support to be funded from the Emerging Projects Reserve and that the Town Clerk should write to the Chair of Trustees to ask that GTC be kept informed as work continues on ensuring the options to achieve a longer-term, viable future for the Day Centre.

621. FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT COMPLIANCE

Following recent legislative changes, Members considered a report (attached to the record minutes) on Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) Compliance for GTC's properties, and activities.

Members noted that given the variety and complexity of Council assets — including public buildings, SEND provision, and operational spaces — there is a need to formalise an annual FRA review cycle with trained internal oversight and external assurance. This approach ensures legal compliance, strengthens resilience, and demonstrates best-practice risk management. As such, Members resolved to agree to:

- a. Maintain the existing full FRA cycle (1–2 years depending on site risk) as set out in the report.
- b. Allocate annual budget of £3,000 for independent external FRA reviews across all premises (from 2025/26) to support governance and audit assurance.
- c. Fund officer CPD in fire safety management to reduce future contractor dependency.

622. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY MONITORING REPORT

Members received the annual Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Monitoring Report to 31 March 2025 (attached to the record minutes).

623. BURIAL STATISTICS 2024/25

Members received the burial statistics for the year 2024/25 (attached the record minutes).

624. CONSULTATION – CROWNPITS LANE/BRIGHTON ROAD TELEPHONE BOX

Members received a presentation from Cllr Heagin regarding the opportunity for GTC to 'adopt' the listed telephone box located on Crownpits by the junction of Crownpits Lane and Brighton Road. Members noted that Ward councillors had sought community input to establish whether or not GTC should undertake to acquire it and to what use it should be put and that the majority opinion was for telephone box to be used for the provision of a Defibrillator and a Free Little Library.

Members resolved to agree that the Town Clerk should inform BT that GTC wishes to adopt this telephone box and submit the formal request to do so.

625. APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID – SLAS & GRANT AID IN KIND

Information:	£
25/2026 Grants Budget	65,100.00
Allocations this year to date	45,500.00
Balance available for allocation	19,600.00
25/2026 SLA Fund Allocation	45,500.00
SLA Fund applications this meeting	45,500.00
Balance unallocated	0.00
25/2026 Council Community Fund Allocation	19,600.00
Allocations this year to date	0.00
Council Community Fund - Grant Aid in Kind applications this meeting	2,496.00
Balance unallocated if applications agreed	17,104.00
Total balance unallocated if applications agreed	<u>17,104.00</u>

SLA Funding

Members noted the Service Level Agreements for the organisations listed below:

- Citizens Advice South-West Surrey (CASWS) **£35,000**
- Farncombe Day Centre **£7,500**
- Wharf Nursery School **£3,000**

Grant Aid in Kind (allocated from the Council Community Fund)

Members resolved to approve Grant Aid in Kind for the use of the Town Council's premises to the organisations listed below.

Farncombe & District Allotment Association

Grant Aid in Kind of £54 as an exemption from fees for the use of meeting rooms – 2 times per annum for 3 hours per meeting of the Allotment Association.

Godalming Round Table

Grant Aid in Kind of £240 as an exemption from fees for the use of the Wilfrid Noyce Centre for the operational base for the annual Town Show.

Go Godalming Association

Grant Aid in Kind of £54 as an exemption from fees for the use of meeting rooms – 3 times per annum for 2 hours per meeting of the Go Godalming Association committee.

Go Godalming Association

Grant Aid in Kind of £200 as an exemption from fees for the use of the Wilfrid Noyce Centre of 7 and 3 hours' hire respectively to enable two groups that come under the 'umbrella' of the Go Godalming Association ie. Sport Godalming for its annual sports awards and Godalming in Bloom for its annual prize-giving.

Godalming Run

Grant Aid in Kind of £80 as an exemption from fees for the use of the Wilfrid Noyce Centre for the registration base for the annual Godalming Run.

Godalming Relaxed Cinema Club

Grant Aid in Kind of £960 as an exemption from fees for the use the Wilfrid Noyce Centre 12 times per annum to host the relaxed screening film shows.

ChoirBLAST

Grant Aid in Kind of £278 as an exemption from fees for the use the Wilfrid Noyce Centre for use at ChoirBLAST 2025.

Godalming BID

Grant Aid in Kind of £180 as an exemption from fees for the use The Pepperpot meeting room for 2 hours, 10 times per annum for BID board meetings.

Godalming & District Chamber of Commerce

Grant Aid in Kind of £180 as an exemption from fees for the use The Pepperpot meeting room for 2 hours, 10 times per annum for Chamber of Commerce management meetings.

Godalming First Responders

Grant Aid in Kind of £270 as an exemption from fees for the use the Oglethorpe Hall for use by Godalming First Responders monthly training sessions.

626. POLICY DOCUMENT REVIEW

Community Engagement Strategy

Members noted that Officers had suggested a number of amendments to the Community Engagement Policy and had provided Members with a redrafted policy (attached to the record minutes) having considered the proposed draft document, Members resolved to recommend its adoption by Full Council.

Equality & Diversity Policy/Statement

In light of a recent Supreme Court Ruling on a specific aspect of the Equality Act 2010, members resolved to defer consideration of this policy document until updated guidance has been received from government regarding the public sector equality duty.

Scope of Application

Although councillors are mentioned in parts of the policy, the application to elected members should be explicitly stated up front by stating:

“This policy applies to all employees, councillors, volunteers, contractors, service users, and members of the public engaging with the Council.”

This reflects expectations placed on elected members under the Councillor Code of Conduct and will strengthen the Council’s position when dealing with third-party conduct issues.

Reference to Training & Development

There’s mention of encouraging staff development, but it would help to add a clear commitment to training:

627. UPGRADE OF COUNCIL IT SYSTEMS – TRANSITION TO WINDOWS 11

Members received a report from the Support Services Executive relating to the requirement for the Council to transition its computer hardware to Windows 11 and noted that GTC had been advised by its external IT support that due to Windows 11 being brought in later this year, a number of GTC’s PC’s/laptops will need to be replaced as it is not possible to upgrade them to the new version. Having considered the report, members resolved to:

- a) Approve the proposed upgrade and replacement programme as outlined in the report.

- b) Authorise expenditure of £8,970.00 to be funded from the Council's IT budget or General Reserves.
- c) Instructs Officers to proceed with procurement, ensuring all new equipment is:
 - Pre-installed with Windows 11 Pro
 - Backed by warranty and ongoing support arrangements
 - Compatible with GTC's existing systems, cloud services, and backup protocols.

628. HENRY SMITH CHARITY TRUSTEES

The two charities, the Educational Foundation of Henry Smith Charity and the Henry Smith Charity, based in Godalming (not to be mistaken for the Henry Smith Charity based in London) are jointly operated under a common board of Trustees. These charities exist to make grants to the needy in the ancient parish of Godalming, Busbridge & Shackleford. The joint annual income generated from investments enables grants of approximately £4,000 per annum in support of children/young people and adults in need.

Historically, the Town Council nominates three Trustees to represent the town, with the trustees serving 4-year terms. However, it should be noted that the Town Council nominees are not restricted to elected members and the 'term of office' of a Trustee is not linked to the election cycle.

Following a request from the Secretary of the Henry Smith Charity, Members resolved to approve the following nominees as the Town's Trustees of the local Henry Smith Charities:

Cllr Joan Heagin, Mr Steve Cosser, Mrs Angela Terelak

629. UPCOMING EVENTS

Members noted the following upcoming event(s):

Date	Event
Saturday, 3 May	Godalming Street Market
Sunday, 18 May	Godalming Run
Saturday, 7 June	Godalming Town Show & High Street Parade
Saturday, 14 June	Farncombe Market

630. TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL BODIES

There were no updates received.

631. COMMUNICATIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

Members identified the support for the Farncombe Day Centre and the adoption of the Crownpits telephone box for additional publicity.

632. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy & Management Committee is scheduled to be held in the Council Chamber on Thursday, 22 May 2025 at 7.00pm or at the conclusion of the preceding Environment & Planning Committee meeting, whichever is later.

633. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

IN PURSUANCE OF THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 S.1(2), THE COMMITTEE RESOLVED TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FROM THE MEETING AT THIS POINT PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM(S) 23 BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED I.E STAFFING MATTERS

634. STAFFING MATTERS

Members received an update from the Chair of the Staffing Committee relating to:

- a. An independent review and evaluation of the grading of the Town Clerk's position.
- b. The changing of the descriptor used to identify the Council's Proper Officer and Head of Paid Services.
- c. Establishment of the position of Deputy Chief Officer.
- d. Review and evaluation of the grading of the Finance Assistant position.

Having considered the recommendations, Members resolved to:

- a. Regrade the Proper Officer from LC4 below substantive range to LC4 substantive range at SCP 53, back dated to 1 April 2025
- b. Change the descriptor used to identify the Council's Proper Officer and Head of Paid Services from Town Clerk to Chief Executive Officer, such changes to be incorporated over time to avoid administrative costs, with the title Town Clerk to be retained for ceremonial and civic purposes.
- c. For the Staffing Committee to establish the Job description and grade for the recruitment of a Deputy Chief Officer.
- d. For the Finance Assistant position to be regraded from LC1 substantive range to LC1 above substantive range at SCP 13, back date3d to 1 April 2025.