



MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 04 MARCH 2026 AT 10.30 AM AT THE PAVILION COMMUNITY CAFÉ

PRESENT: - Cllr Waller (Chairman), Cllr Cooke, Cllr Gardener, Cllr Plummer and Cllr Stevens.

IN ATTENDANCE: - Claire Witton (Deputy Parish Clerk)

1. Apologies: None

2. Declaration of Interests:

1. Register of Interests: Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interests.
2. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI): None
3. Other Disclosable Interests (ODI): None

No Questions for Public Question Time

3. Minutes: The minutes of the F&GP Committee meeting of 12.02.2026 were signed as a true and correct record. No matters arising from previous minutes.

4. Youth Centre Energy Efficiency project

- Tree Works - updated quotation from the preferred supplier was reviewed.
It was noted that:
 - The additional tree works (ash tree removal and alder tree pollarding) from the preferred supplier totalled £700, bringing the overall cost to £3,700.
 - The contractor remained the lowest overall quote
 - Members agreed that undertaking the additional tree works now would avoid future increased costs at a later date.

• **Review of the responses to clarification questions from the two shortlisted contractors.**

a. Battery Enclosure and External Installation

Members considered revised proposals for the solar and battery installation, including the recommendation from both shortlisted suppliers that all batteries, inverter and switching equipment be housed within a secure external GRP enclosure.

It was noted that:

- The enclosure would improve public safety and security.
- The enclosure would require a reinforced concrete base, to be supplied by the contractor.
- Planning permission was not considered necessary as the enclosure would be permitted development.

Members agreed in principle that relocating all equipment externally was the preferred and safest option.

b. System Specification and Battery Capacity

Members reviewed the proposed solar PV system, including:

- A 25.8kW solar array
- Options for 18kWh, 36kWh or 54kWh battery storage
- The benefits of maximising battery capacity for resilience and emergency use

Members expressed strong support for installing the maximum battery capacity (54kWh) within the available grant funding.

Action

RECOMMENDATION: That a decision on the preferred supplier be made once comparable quotes had been received. A proposal will feature on the March Parish Council agenda.

- **RECOMMENDATION:** To place a proposal on the March full council agenda to notify the Legacy Grant Scheme of the final specification for all the works and to submit an evaluation report on the received bids together with the details from the preferred suppliers for both the tree works and the solar panel system.

5. Review of IT and Youth Hub Tender Submissions

- Consideration of all received tenders against the published specification, evaluation criteria, and budget. Discussion of next steps and proposals.

Members reviewed progress on the proposed IT Hub and noted the lack of updated or viable quotations within the required funding budget and timescales.

Concerns were raised regarding:

- High infrastructure and groundworks costs
- Capacity and workload implications for the Council
- Limited demonstrated community demand at present

Members agreed that greater value could be achieved by investing in the a) the existing Youth Centre, or b) refurbishment of the existing Pavilion including addressing long-standing maintenance and usability issues.

Action: The Deputy Clerk to prepare a schedule of potential refurbishment works at the Pavilion for Member consideration. Cllr Waller to prepare drawings for a planning pre application for an extension to the small meeting room of the Youth Centre no more than 200m³ capacity

RECOMMENDATION:

- That the IT Hub proposal be placed on hold.
- That the office explore alternative options, including refurbishment or extension of the existing Youth Centre building.
- That Members seek clarification from Malvern Hills District Council regarding flexibility in reallocating Legacy Grant funding.

6. Other Projects update.

- Discussion regarding use requests for the Pavilion Community Café and provision of outdoor seating.

Members received an update on the operation of the Youth Centre café. It was noted that:

- Weekly takings were increasing, with improved spend per head.
- Volunteer engagement remained strong.
- Operational improvements were still being refined.

Members noted that interviews for the Café Manager position were scheduled.

Members considered requests from community and a commercial group to use the café space.

It was agreed that:

- No private party bookings would be permitted at this stage.
- Any regular use by community groups would be subject to café management approval and operational compatibility.

Members discussed the provision of permanent external seating using previously allocated funding.

Action: The Deputy Clerk to bring forward a specific proposal for seating types and location.

RECOMMENDATION: Proposal to feature on the March agenda that delegated powers are granted to the F&GP Committee in conjunction with the Clerk to appoint the Café Manager following interview, subject to satisfactory references.

7. Any Other Business.

- **Parish Lengthsman**

Members discussed the appointment of Parish Lengthsman(s) and the impact of potential changes to the County scheme.

RECOMMENDATION: That proposals for appointment of Lengthsman and Maintenance Technician be considered under confidential session at the next Council meeting, subject to clarification of future funding arrangements.

- **Defibrillator**

Members noted an expression of interest opportunity for a defibrillator.

Action: That the Parish Office explore potential locations, including Kerswell Green, and report back to the Committee.

Correspondence relating to wayleave agreement at Pixham Ferry Lane and National Grid infrastructure was noted.

Meeting closed at 1.05 PM

Signed Chairman Date