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Town Clerk – Laura Chrysostomou

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee held in The New Millennium Chamber, Manor House, Church Street, Littlehampton BN17 5EW on Thursday 9 March 2026 at 18.30pm.

Present:

Councillor Butcher – Chair
Councillor Tandy – Vice Chair
Councillor Dr Walsh KStJ
Councillor Woodman
Councillor Daws
Councillor Wiltshire
Councillor May

In attendance:

Laura Chrysostomou – Town Clerk

2025 to 2026

35. Evacuation Procedures

The evacuation procedures were noted.

36. Filming of Council Meetings, Use of Social Media, and Mobile Phones.

The procedures were noted.

37. Apologies

There were apologies from Councillor Lee, Councillor Daws attended as substitute. There were apologies from Councillor Northeast, Councillor Wiltshire attended as substitute.

38. Declarations of Interest

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the agenda. The standing declarations were noted and Councillor Wiltshire declared a personal interest across the agenda as a member of Arun District Council.

39. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2026, previously circulated, were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

40. Chair's Report and Urgent Items

There were none.

41. Public Forum

There were no members of the public present, and no written representations made.

42. Officer's Reports

42.1. Standing Orders / Urgent Actions

The committee received and noted an urgent action, previously circulated, which detailed the decision to extend the Photographer's contract for a year.

It was resolved that:

The urgent action be noted.

42.2. Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan Update

The Town Clerk presented a report, previously circulated, which contained an update on work being undertaken as part of the Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan. This included progress to the Wayfinding Project which was being officially launched on Friday 27 March and an Arun District Council campaign across the district. Members were informed that V2 Radio would be broadcasting from Littlehampton Town Centre on Friday 27 March. This date coincided with the general Friday market at which Town Council Officers would be attending to promote its services and provide additional activities.

It was resolved that:

1. The notes from the Town Centre Action Group's meeting held on 10 February 2026 and action plan updates be noted.
2. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

42.3. High Street Hub

- 42.3.1.** The Committee considered options for the formal name of the new hub. Members acknowledged the value of a descriptive name but also emphasised the importance of selecting a title that is memorable, easy to

use, and reflects the identity of the town. “Connect Littlehampton” was noted to have several positive qualities and connotations. However, the suggestion of “Progress Point” was also well received. Members felt this name aligned strongly with existing civic branding, referencing the word *Progress* featured on both the Town’s shield and the Town Council’s motto, while also conveying the intended purpose of the hub—to support progress within the High Street and the wider town. The Committee discussed how the proposed name would be applied in signage and promotional materials and expressed a preference for incorporating the Town Council’s logo into signage, reflecting the hub would be the Town Council’s offices. Members also supported the use of an accompanying tagline and were favourable to concepts similar to “Connecting our Community”. Officers were tasked with further developing the branding and refining the accompanying tagline.

It was resolved that:

1. The name Progress Point be approved for the High Street Hub.
2. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

42.4. Quarterly Business Plan Progress Report

Members had before them a report, previously circulated, which provided an update on progress with delivering business plan goals as they related to the work of the committee. Members proceeded to review the action plan and noted updates.

It was resolved that:

The updates and contents of the report be noted.

42.5. Consultation: Free Parking – Arun District Council

42.5.1. All Councillors present that were members of Arun District Council redeclared their personal interest in this item of the agenda. The Committee considered the consultation document, previously circulated, and agreed that submitting a written response would be more appropriate at this stage than responding to closed yes/no questions. Members noted that public feedback observed online appeared to favour a three-hour free parking scheme. The Committee expressed support for extending the current scheme to three hours, recognising the changing nature of the High Street as a destination not only for shopping but also for services such as cafés, food outlets, and the banking hub.

42.5.2. Members highlighted that it was difficult to fully evaluate the proposal without a detailed paper outlining the financial implications of extending the free-parking period, particularly as net income figures for parking had not been provided by the District Council. The Committee felt that options for funding a subsidised parking scheme could be explored creatively, considering potential future developments within the Town, and expressed a preference for further detailed discussion rather than being constrained by a

survey format. Members also emphasised the importance of promoting active travel, such as walking and cycling, which could help offset any reduction in parking income. At the same time, the Committee acknowledged the need to support visitors travelling from further afield, including those who may currently use retail parks on the outskirts of the town, by ensuring convenient parking access to the High Street.

It was resolved that:

The Committee's comments be used to form the response appended to these minutes as Appendix 1 and be forwarded to Arun District Council in response to the Free Parking consultation.

43. Finance

43.1. Committee Budget Monitor

43.2. The Town Clerk presented a previously circulated report, which highlighted any significant variances from budget in Income and Expenditure relating to the Policy and Finance Committee's budget for 2025 to 2026. Members considered the list of potential earmarked reserves detailed within the report, and having confirmed these were in line with the consolidation work on the earmarked reserves, supported the transfer of these accordingly by the Responsible Financial Officer, once all current year expenditure was known.

It was resolved that:

1. Authority be delegated to the Responsible Financial Officer to transfer to earmarked reserves once the current years expenditure is known.
2. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

43.3. Debtors Review Update

43.3.1. The Committee reviewed in detail the actions undertaken to recover the outstanding bad debts and noted the related discussions held at meetings of the Governance and Audit Committee. Given the historic nature of these debts and the potential costs associated with pursuing legal action, the Committee agreed that the longstanding outstanding amounts should be written off.

It was resolved that:

1. The £10,882.49 of longstanding debts be written off.
2. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

43.4. Annual Investment Strategy

The Town Clerk presented a report, previously circulated, which proposed the investment strategy for 2026 to 2027. The Committee evaluated the

details within the report and were satisfied with the proposed strategy as recommended.

It was resolved that:

1. Council be recommended to approve the Annual Investment Strategy for 2025 to 2026.
2. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

44. Exempt Business

There was none.

The meeting was closed at 19:27 pm.

Chair

Littlehampton Town Council's response to Arun District Council's Consultation on Parking Provision

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the current consultation regarding proposed changes to the parking scheme. The Town Council welcomes the chance to provide constructive feedback and has considered the matter in detail at its recent Policy and Finance Committee meeting.

The Council is submitting a written response to articulate its position more fully as it felt that the survey's reliance on closed yes/no questions limited the ability to provide nuanced feedback on a topic with significant financial and community implications.

1. Support for a Three-Hour Free Parking Scheme

Feedback observed within the community, including online comments, indicates a strong preference for a three-hour free parking period.

The Council supports extending the free-parking allowance to three hours, recognising that:

- The nature of the High Street has evolved, with visitors increasingly accessing not only retail but also services such as cafés, food outlets, and the banking hub.
- A longer free-parking period would better align with typical visit durations and support the economic vitality of the Town Centre.

2. Need for Financial Information

The Council is unable to fully evaluate the proposal without key financial data. In particular, the Council seeks:

- Net parking income figures for the relevant car parks.
- An assessment of the financial impact of extending the free-parking period to three hours.
- Comparative modelling for alternative options.

This information is essential for understanding the sustainability of any proposed scheme.

3. Consideration of Funding Options

The Council believes that funding for a subsidised free-parking scheme could be explored creatively. Potential opportunities may arise in connection with ongoing and future developments within the Town. The Council would welcome further discussions with the District Council on possible approaches.

4. Encouraging Sustainable Travel

While recognising the value of providing accessible parking, the Council also highlights the importance of supporting and encouraging active travel—such as walking and cycling—to help mitigate any loss in income from extended free-parking arrangements.

5. Supporting Visitors from Outside the Immediate Area

The Council acknowledges that visitors will travel from outside the town, including from nearby retail parks. For these users, convenient access to parking in close proximity to the High Street remains important. Any future scheme should balance active-travel promotion with the needs of those who rely on car access.

Conclusion

The Town Council appreciates the opportunity to provide this written response. While supportive of extending free parking to three hours in principle, the Council believes that a fully informed decision can only be made once the necessary financial information is available. The Council would welcome further engagement and discussion as proposals are refined.