

Terms of Reference for Finance and General Purposes Committee

version 16 – adopted 17th August 2026 (Minute 668/26)

1. Constitution

- 1.1. The Finance and General Purposes Committee is constituted as a Committee of the East Preston Parish Council.
- 1.2. The Committee's terms of reference may be amended at any time by the Council. Minor amendments can be made within the committee itself.
- 1.3. The Committee may from time to time investigate, discuss or review matters outside its terms of reference if required to do so by the Council.

2. Authority

- 2.1. The Committee is authorised by the Council to manage any activity within its terms of reference.
- 2.2. The Committee is authorised by the Council to obtain external legal or other professional advice and to secure the attendance of anyone it considers has relevant experience, expertise or knowledge with the agreement of the Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
- 2.3. Where a decision is needed ahead of a committee meeting, and this can clearly be justified, a decision can be made on behalf of the committee by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee in conjunction with the Clerk or Assistant Clerk. Wherever possible, committee members should be consulted electronically first. (Full Council, 4th May 2021, Minute 351/21, Resolution 1529)
- 2.4. The Chairman (or in his or her absence, the Vice-Chairman) may be required to attend regular meetings with the council's tenants – Angmering-on-Sea Lawn Tennis Club, East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club, East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation and East Preston Cricket Club – alongside the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman) of the Council and the Chairmen of the Amenities and Audit & Governance Committees. These meetings should take place at least twice-yearly.

3. Membership

- 3.1. The Committee shall be appointed by the Council from amongst its members and shall consist of not less than three members and not more than five. In accordance with Standing Order 4g, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council may attend all committee meetings and may exercise their right to speak and vote.
- 3.2. The Committee shall elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the municipal year at its first meeting in every year.
- 3.3. The Clerk of the Council is Secretary to the Committee.
- 3.4. The Chairman of the Committee will automatically sit as a member of the council's Audit & Governance Committee. On occasion, the Chairman of the Committee may send another member of the committee to Audit & Governance Committee meetings as an official, named substitute.
- 3.5. Where there are more councillors willing to sit on a committee than spaces available, the Chairman of the Council and incumbent Chairman of the Committee, should agree to one of those extra councillors becoming the committee's official substitute.

Where it is necessary to include a substitute councillor, because of known absence or a conflict of interest, the official substitute should be approached first. Where that councillor is also unavailable or the committee does not have an official substitute, the Chairman of the Committee and the Clerk should agree between them the order in which to approach other councillors.

The maximum number of substitute councillors at any one committee meeting should be three (for committees of seven members) or two (for committees of five members). (added by Full Council on 4th November 2019, Minute 946/19, Resolution 1372)

4. Meetings

- 4.1. Meetings shall be held at least four times a year.
- 4.2. Additional meetings may be called by the Council or by the Chairman of the Committee.
- 4.3. The quorum necessary for the transaction of the business of the Committee shall be at least one half of the members or not less than 3.
- 4.4 After any evening meeting, regardless of the venue, the Chairman and / or Vice-Chairman of the Committee must stay with the Clerk or Assistant Clerk until he or she has locked up the whole of the venue, as necessary. (added by Full Council on 4th November 2019, Minute 946/19, Resolution 1373)

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 To budget for the Council's administration requirements for each financial year, and manage and control spending from this budget during the year.
- 5.2 To set an annual contingency budget for Council's spend on other matters for which no other Committee has responsibility and manage and control spending from this budget during the year.
- 5.3 To collate budgets from other committees, negotiate adjustments, and recommend a total budget to Council in January of each year.
- 5.4 To recommend to Council, no later than January of the current financial year, a precept to be raised for the following financial year.
- 5.5 To ensure adequate financial reporting to Council against budget on a quarterly basis unless otherwise requested.
- 5.6 To ensure that professional services such as banking, insurance, legal, and similar are reviewed regularly and competed as necessary, and to recommend appointments to Council.
- 5.7 To ensure that the Council's Asset Register is monitored and updated on an annual basis. A review should take place at the committee's second full meeting of each municipal year.
- 5.8 To ensure that a financial Risk Assessment is completed annually, and a Risk Register maintained. A review should take place at the committee's second full meeting of each municipal year.
- 5.9 To consider financial proposals referred to it by Council where no budget exists as provided in Financial Regulations §3.2 or otherwise under Standing Order 18, to request and receive reports from the relevant Committee on such proposals and to recommend to Council virements between budgets or other actions to enable council to achieve the aims of these proposals.
- 5.10 To receive latest financial statements from local organisations, with respect to requests for grants from these organisations, along with statements of benefits to East Preston residents, and to decide grants under Sections 137 and 144 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 5.11 To receive report on Council's insurance cover and to advise or make recommendations to full Council as appropriate.
- 5.12 To regularly consider the limit amounts contained in the Schedule to the Financial Regulations and recommend changes to Council where appropriate.

6. Reporting Procedures

- 6.1 The Chairman of the Committee shall provide a written summary of each meeting to the following Full Council meeting.
- 6.2 Draft minutes shall be circulated to all members of the Council as soon as practical after each Committee meeting.