

Kidlington Parish Council

Exeter Hall, Oxford Road, Kidlington OX5 1AB

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Minutes for the Meeting of Finance and Assets Committee held at Exeter Hall on Thursday 10 July 2025 at 6.30pm

Present: Cllr Nik Soheili (Chair), Cllr Dave Kanonuwa (Vice-Chair), Cllr Lesley Mclean and Cllr Ian Middleton, Cllr Naveed Barakzai Pace and David Robey

In Attendance: Clerk – Sarah Kearney, RFO – Laura Pike and Facilities Manager – Graham Kearney

Apologies: Cllr Alison Street and Cllr David Betts

25/25 To receive Councillors' Apologies for Absence - Councillors who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Clerk prior to the meeting.
The Council unanimously **RESOLVED** and accepted the apologies from Cllr Alison Street and Cllr David Betts.

25/26 To Record Members' Declarations of Interest regarding the Agenda Items -
To receive any requests for Dispensations or Declarations of Interest from Councillors relating to items on the agenda, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, and to note any gifts and hospitality
Cllr Dave Kanonuwa – Kidlington Connection as he member of their meetings
Cllr Lesley McLean – CDC District Council Planning Committee, unable to comment on OUFC

25/27 Public Participation - Public participation is limited to 10 minutes in total. Members of the public may make only one address to the Council of no more than five minutes' duration and only concerning topics on the agenda.
1 – member of the public attended the meeting

25/28 To Approve and Sign the Minutes of the Finance and Assets Committee meeting of 12 June 2025
The Council unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by Chair Cllr Soheili

25/29 Governance:

5.1 **Internal Controls** – to consider and agree to adopt this new version
Cllr Kanonuwa noted that there were sections of the policy he did not fully understand and requested that these be reviewed and clarified before the policy is formally approved.

25/30 Financial Report – to receive a report on the account status to date – update
The Council unanimously **RESOLVED** and acknowledged they were happy with the Financial Report

25/31 Invoices Payments for June 2025/26 – to acknowledge the June invoices schedule payments which had been completed online for the whole June.
The Council unanimously **RESOLVED** and acknowledged and signed the scheduled payment for the whole of June.

25/32 Budget Monitoring for July 2025 – to consider any overspends
The Clerk reported: on several budget items that have already been overspent and provided explanations for why this had occurred. The Councillors, Clerk, and RFO discussed the importance of retaining these overspend figures in the current year's budget to clearly highlight areas where allocations need to be increased in future budgets, thereby avoiding similar issues next year.
It was also suggested that some items could potentially be funded from the Earmarked Reserves (EMR). In particular, it was agreed that the cost of the Pavilion boiler could be considered for reallocation from EMR. Without this adjustment, there would be insufficient funds available for further spending under the Maintenance, Materials, and Landscape budget lines for the remainder of the year.
ACTION: The Clerk and RFO to review this matter and report back.
Additionally, the Clerk advised that a number of existing EMRs relate to projects or items that may no longer be going ahead. It was agreed that a review of these reserves should be brought forward for discussion at the next meeting.
The Council unanimously **RESOLVED** to acknowledge and accept the Budget Monitoring Report for July

25/33 Traffic Consultation Fee – to consider and agree on the amount
Please note that Cllr Lesley McLean left the room during this item and did not participate in the discussion or vote.
The Traffic Consultation was brought up at the Full Parish Council meeting on 26th June under *Chair's Announcements*. The Clerk advised that no councillor could formally agree or approve the item at that meeting, as it was not listed on the published agenda. Furthermore, because the matter involved expenditure, no decision could legally be taken at that time.
Following an in-depth discussion among councillors, it was informally voted to refer the matter to the Finance and Assets Committee for formal consideration and for a proposed amount to be reviewed and agreed upon.
At the Finance and Assets Committee, Cllr Naveed Barakzai Pace expressed concerns that this process had not been handled correctly. He stated that the item should not have been voted on at Full Council as it was not on the agenda and had been introduced via the Chair's Announcements. In his view, the appropriate procedure would have been for the matter to be referred to Finance and Assets for discussion and agreement on the amount and then returned to Full Council for final approval of the recommendation.
The Clerk had, before this meeting, sought guidance from the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) to clarify whether Full Council could legally vote to send an item raised under Chair's Announcements to a committee for further consideration. It was

confirmed by SLCC that this process was legally valid and that the subsequent steps taken to place the item on the Finance and Assets Committee agenda were appropriate. The motivation behind commissioning the traffic report was due to questions that arose concerning the traffic modelling in the Ridge report, which had been submitted in support of the OUFC planning application. The Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) response was also considered questionable in its discussion of traffic issues. As a result, Kidlington Parish Council (KPC) sought an independent, professional review to assess matters such as proposed road closures on matchdays and any additional traffic or safety concerns that might arise.

It was therefore agreed that KPC would obtain a quote from Mayer Brown, a specialist consultancy, for the proposed work. A quotation was received for **£1,320.00 + VAT**, and the Clerk was instructed to commission the work. This appointment was made under the provisions of Financial Regulations Section 5.12, which allows exemptions where specialist services are required and where competitive quotes may not be feasible.

25/34 CCLA Account – to consider and agree whether funding should be moved

Cllr Soheili reported that he and Cllr Kanonuwa are currently analysing the figures relating to the growth of the investment since KPC allocated funds into the account. It was agreed that further analysis is required, and they will aim to report back at the next meeting with more detailed information

25/35 Assets – update

The Clerk confirmed that a more detailed and up-to-date record of the Council's assets is needed and that this task is on her list of priorities.

The Facilities Manager highlighted that essential works are required on the barn at Exeter Close and noted that no budget has currently been allocated for this. It was suggested that this should be considered during the 2026/27 budget planning process. It was also reported that the clock at Exeter Hall, which has been non-functional for many years, is scheduled to be assessed next week as part of ongoing efforts to restore it.

The Facilities Manager further noted that several maintenance tasks remain outstanding around Exeter Hall, but the future of the building remains uncertain at this time. Until a decision is made, larger-scale improvements are on hold.

Cllr Lesley McLean confirmed that discussions are ongoing and that the Council is awaiting confirmation from Waitrose regarding whether the site footprint is suitable for their requirements. Once this has been clarified, the Council will be in a better position to plan and prioritise future maintenance and capital works

25/36 Gala Day for 19 July – report from Clerk

The Clerk reported: that the Gala Day for this year is expected to exceed its allocated budget. She outlined several contributing factors, including inflation, additional activities added over the years, and the fact that the budget line has only seen minimal increases despite the event's growing scope.

Councillors acknowledged the explanation and accepted the anticipated overspend, agreeing that Gala Day is a valued community event that provides enjoyment and benefit to Kidlington residents and is therefore a worthwhile investment

25/37 Grants – to consider and agree

13.1 Kidlington Connection – Grant towards new website

Please note that Cllr Kanonuwa left the room during this item and did not participate in the discussion or vote

The councillors held a detailed discussion regarding the grant application submitted concerning a newly developed website. It was noted that the website in question had already been designed and launched before the application was submitted to Kidlington Parish Council.

Members expressed concern that the funding request was retrospective, with no prior engagement or request for support before the completion of the project. Councillors felt that it was unusual and inappropriate to apply for a grant after the work had already been carried out, as this goes against the usual expectations for how public funding is requested and allocated.

After careful consideration

The Council unanimously **RESOLVED** not to award a grant towards the website project, because the project had already been completed and the application did not demonstrate prior need, consultation, or partnership with the Parish Council

Action: The Clerk to write a letter to let the company know

25/38 Chair's Announcements

Cllr Soheili reported: that he had contacted Oxford Airport to explore the possibility of securing additional grant funding towards the Park Hill Playground project. He explained that a few additional items had recently been added to the project scope, and external support would help cover these costs. The committee noted his efforts and thanked him for taking the initiative to seek supplementary funding for the benefit of the project

Date of Next Meeting – 4th September 2025 from 7.30pm

Meeting Finished: 8.30