A MEETING OF ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE WAS HELD ON TUESDAY 27th OCTOBER 2026 AT 7.00 pm AT GLOBE HOUSE, PRIORY ROAD, ALCESTER

Present
Cllr G Forman (Mayor), Cllr R Ashfield (Deputy Mayor), Cllr K Cargill and Cllr D Henderson.

In attendance Mrs V Lowe, Town Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
None.

1. Apologies
None – all councillors present.

2. Declarations of Interest
There were no declarations of interest on agenda items.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings
The minutes of the previous meeting had been signed at Full Council.

4. Matters arising (not otherwise dealt with on the Agenda)
The Town Clerk reported that the new lease for the Bleachfield Street South allotment site had been completed.

5. Staffing Issues
a. The Town Clerk confirmed that all staff were paid the backpay due following the national pay settlement in the September payroll.

b. As agreed by the Staffing Committee, an Employee Assistance Programme with a company called Health Assured has been commissioned for all staff. The EAP is a support service which includes a confidential helpline, open 24/7 365 days a year, sessions of online counselling, practical advice on matters such as legal, financial and family concerns and health and wellbeing information available via an app. This is now provided free to all staff.

c. The Town Clerk has agreed additional hours for the EPCC cleaner to cover the additional bookings now being taken.

6. Finance Issues
a. The September management accounts which had been circulated in advance were approved. There were no questions about the accounts. These accounts are the Q2 figures and will be reported to Full Council in November.

b. The Town Clerk reported that she had transferred £30,000 from the CCLA to Lloyds on 10th September to cover ongoing expenditure. Following receipt of the second instalment of the precept on 14th September, £150,000 was transferred back into the CCLA on 12th October.

c. Cllr Mills had attended the office on 6th October and had signed the bank reconciliations as at 30th September 2026.

d. The Town Clerk reported that the balance of the grant from SDC for the new kitchen (£6624.13) had been received following satisfactory completion of the project.

e. The Town Clerk reported that a grant of £1350 had been received from WCC towards the Visit Alcester website project.

f. The new printer was installed in the office on 20th October.

g. The Town Clerk reported that a donation from Bloor Homes had been received which had covered the costs of the recent Visit to Alcester event. Cllr Bowe had written to thank them.

h. The most significant payments made since the last meeting were for the new roof for the Cemetery store (£4380.00) and the lych gate floor (£3850.00).

i. Two payments had been made to the Public Works Loan Board on 30th September and 1st October in line with the scheduled repayment plan.

j. The Town Clerk reported that she was seeking quotations for the main grass cutting contract from April 2027. Quotations received would be considered at the next Committee meeting.

k. The Town Clerk reported that she had submitted the VAT claim to HMRC up to the end of September which had been paid – a refund of £6549.57.

7. Acquisition and Disposal of Land and Property Policy

The draft policy prepared by the Town Clerk was considered and approved. The Town Clerk explained that the previous policy only covered disposals so therefore she had extended it to also cover acquisitions. There will be a proposition to Full Council to adopt it.

8. Stratford-on-Avon District Council Asset Management Strategy

The draft Expression of Interest forms prepared by the Town Clerk were discussed and approved. The Town Clerk was asked to forward them to Stratford on Avon District Council for consideration.

9. Business Continuity Plan

The Town Clerk reported that she had carried out the annual review of the Business Continuity Plan. No significant amendments were required.

10. Internal audit 2026-2027

The engagement letter from the internal auditor, Louise Baudet of Town and Parish Council Audit Services for the internal audit for 2026-2027 had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was agreed that Ms Baudet was entirely independent of the Council's financial administration, management and decision-making arrangements. The Committee also agreed that Ms Baudet was a competent person to carry out the internal audit as her previous audits had indicated that she had the knowledge, skills, experience and professional judgement needed to carry out the work effectively. The Town Clerk was authorised to accept the terms of the engagement letter.

11. Globe House

The Town Clerk reported that she still awaited the draft lease from Warwickshire County Council despite several reminders. She was advised that the delay had been caused by the need to seek the consent of Stratford on Avon District Council as the freeholders.

12. Flood Resilience

The Town Clerk reported that ATC had been successful in securing a grant of £10,000 from Stratford DC Climate Change fund which would allow for the cleansing and CCTV investigation of drains on School Road and Gas House Lane. She explained that it would make sense to also clean/inspect the drains on Henley Street and at the Town Hall at the same time with the same contractor. It was agreed to use funds held in the CIL earmarked reserve (currently £3944.52) and the budget for flood resilience (£3400.00) as required.

13. Propositions to Full Council

There is a proposition from the Committee at item 7.
It was noted that the Q2 accounts would be shared with Full Council

The meeting was then closed by the Mayor.