

KESGRAVE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting, held on 15 September 2025 at the Town Council office

Councillors present:

Cllr N Beecroft-Smith

Cllr A Comber

Cllr R Gibson

Cllr G Lynch

Cllr J Ogden (*Chair*)

Officers present:

J Abbott – Town Clerk

A Dougall - Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

- 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Ogden welcomed all those present.
- 2. Declaration of Interests** – Cllr Ogden, agenda item 7 – Scout Leader, non-pecuniary. Cllr Comber, agenda item 7 – Scout Leader and RFC Director, non-pecuniary.
- 3. Minutes of the last Meeting** held on the 2 June 2025, the Committee received, considered and agreed following the vote.
- 4. Clerks/Officer Report/Update** – A Dougall reported:-
 - A recent fault with the internet connection led to the system being down for most of the week, including telephones. The router was replaced. There was no automatic switch over to the mobile network as per contract agreement, compensation to be sought.
 - Cllr Gibson recommended checking the existing insurance policy to ensure that the solar panels were included under the buildings insurance. The panels currently have warranty/maintenance contracts as provided by the supplier on installation. The panels have now been included within our Zurich insurance policy at no extra charge. A Dougall also provided Zurich with the warranty/maintenance certificates for both the Millennium Jubilee Hall and KTC Offices.
 - The 2025-26 NJC pay awards were agreed in July 2025. All staff have received the backpay from 1 April 2025 to 31 July 2025 in the August payment and the new rates applied from August 2025.
- 5. Members of the Public** – none present.
- 6. Bank Reconciliation for July 2025** – These were received, considered and agreed following the vote.
- 7. Receipts and Payments for July 2025** – These were received, considered and agreed following the vote.
- 8. Detailed Income and Expenditure to 31 July 2025** – The report was received and reviewed.
- 9. Trial Balance for July 2025** - The Committee reviewed and noted the report.

10. Citizens Advice East Suffolk Service Level Agreement (SLA) April 2026:- Cllr Gibson proposed two amendments to the draft;

- 4.1 to include “*...and at all times be responsible for ensuring the quality and adequacy of the advice given including that, where appropriate, advisers retain prescribed qualifications in accordance with any applicable laws and regulations.*”
- 5.5. last sentence to read “*A return of grant payment will be made by CAES to KTC proportional to the remainder of the agreement period.*”

Cllr Lynch proposed, seconded by Cllr Comber to accept these proposals. All agreed, following the vote.

11. KTC Website review/upgrade, incorporating domain upgrade to .gov.uk – Cllr Beecroft-Smith confirmed that the .gov.uk name has been registered and awaiting approval. Work on the new website is progressing.

12. KTC Policies-

- a. Publication Scheme – This is a legal requirement by the ICO. It should be noted that the hyperlinks on the draft document are not compatible with the accessibility compliance. All in favour, following the vote, to accept the draft policy subject to fulfilling the accessibility compliance with the new website.
- b. IT Policy -J Abbott explained the requirement to agree the new Assertion 10 in the 2025-26 AGAR return. The new assertion covers website addresses, emails, GDPR and IT. It was agreed to consider the use of an external IT company with council experience to provide support and maintenance to KTC. Cllr Ogden and J Abbott to investigate.

13. Land for Auction, Land at back of 10 Quebec Drive, Kesgrave – the conditions for sale stipulate a fenced area for the land. This condition does not align with the council's interest. Cllr Lynch proposed, seconded by Cllr Gibson, not to pursue making a bid. The sale will be monitored and possible negotiations with National Highways if a sale is not achieved, without this condition. All agreed following the vote.

14. KTC Budget 2026/27 – Cllr Gibson explained that the budget should cross-reference with the Council's Business Plan as part of the budgeting process with all actions checked and appropriate costs assigned. Other areas for consideration are:-

- A potential review of the Neighbourhood Plan. Funding has now been withdrawn, so consultant costs and surveys to consider, approximately £10,000.
- Land maintenance – A strategy is required for the maintenance of Public Open Spaces, hedgeworks and treeworks for KTC owned land. C&R committee to discuss.
- Vehicles, equipment and storage – C&R committee to discuss.
- Staffing – including additional hours to manage projects and effects of the Suffolk restructure. Cllr Ogden and J Abbott to review.
- Monument – ownership to be confirmed.
- Expand community events.
- SID's – budget needed for maintenance under Road Safety Initiatives.
- Land Adoptions – professional fees, maintenance costs.

15. Other/Urgent Communications – None.

16. Date of Next Meeting – Monday 13 October 2025 at 7.15pm in the Council Chamber, Town Council Offices.

17. Agenda Items for Next Meeting – None.

The meeting finished at 7.57 pm

Chairman..... Date.....