

**CITY OF ELY COUNCIL
PERSONNEL, FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD AT 7.10 PM ON
3RD NOVEMBER 2025 AT SESSIONS HOUSE, LYNN ROAD, ELY**

PRESENT: Mrs T Coulson – Clerk to the Council

Bold indicates a voting member of the Committee

Cllr C Ní Dhónaill

Cllr R Ward

Cllr M Banyard

Cllr S Sandhu

Cllr M Hucker

Cllr R Denness

Cllr C Phillips

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from **Cllrs Trent and Moss-Eccardt**.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Ní Dhónaill declared an interest in item 13, as she was the Council's representative on the Board of Trustees for Ely Museum.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST PERSONNEL, FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING (HELD ON THE 18TH AUGUST 2025) AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes of the last Personnel, Finance and Governance Committee meeting held on the 18th August 2025, were proposed as a true record by Cllr Ní Dhónaill, seconded by Cllr Banyard and unanimously agreed. They were signed by the Chairman. Pages PFG 178, 179 and 180 refer. There were no matters arising.

4. BUDGET UPDATE AND SETTING OF BUDGET FOR 2026/27

The budget updates, up to the 30th September 2025 was noted. There were no significant variances that councillors had concerns with. The setting of the budget for 2026/27 was discussed as the last item to allow for discussion of item 13. Councillors thanked the Clerk for all her work in managing the accounts and preparing the budget. Cllr Banyard proposed the draft budget for 2026/27, with a precept of £847,235, which would be a 2% increase on a Band D property, be recommended to the next Full Council for approval. This was seconded by Cllr Ní Dhónaill and unanimously approved. Cllr Hucker raised various points with regard to the presentation of the budget and use of interest from investments. It was agreed these should be discussed with the Clerk. Cllr Ní Dhónaill requested that for next years budget the gas and electric be separated into individual headings. The Clerk agreed to look at this.

5. UPDATE FROM THE GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP

Cllr Phillips presented notes of the Governance Working Group meeting held on the 9th October 2025. They had considered the issue of DBS checks for councillors as raised by Cllr Morgan at the last Personnel, Finance & Governance Committee meeting. The Working Group recommended the following:-

1. That given the parish council status of the City of Ely Council and the state of the current regulations regarding DBS checks, no recommendation would be made to introduce them.
2. That the Council, given the upcoming changes to local government and possible new areas of responsibility, keep a close eye on any changes to the law.
3. That councillors should be reminded of their own responsibilities with regard to safeguarding of both themselves and those with whom they come into contact and that the issue of safeguarding training be explored and implemented in the near future.

Cllr Sandhu proposed that these recommendations be approved and reported back to Full Council. This was seconded by Cllr Ní Dhónaill and unanimously approved.

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COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN
9TH FEBRUARY 2026

6. UPDATE FROM THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN WORKING GROUP

The notes from the meeting held on the 21st October were noted. Cllr Hucker and the Clerk gave an update on the last meeting. Cllr Hucker proposed the timeline for the public consultation as detailed in the notes; moving forward with a simple version of the Strategy for the public consultation and the process on how this would go out to public consultation. This was seconded by Cllr Ní Dhónaill and unanimously approved. It was agreed the simple version of the Strategy would be circulated to all members for approval before it was finalised. Cllr Ní Dhónaill proposed Cllrs Hucker and Sandhu be elected on to the Strategic Plan Working Group. This was seconded by Cllr Ward and unanimously approved.

7. UPDATE FROM CIL SUB-COMMITTEE AND TO RECEIVE CIL EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS UPDATE

Minutes of the meeting held on the 6th October 2025 were noted and approved. The recommendations from the CIL applications received for funding had already been considered at the Full Council meeting held on the 27th October 2025, due to time scales. Applications were :- St Mary's Church building improvements - £40,000 – refused; Gateway Phase 4 - £4110 – approved and heating pumps, Maltings - £8812.25 – approved. It was agreed that the minutes should always be considered at the next Personnel, Finance & Governance Committee before they go to Full Council. The CIL Sub-Committee can make an exception and agree they can go to Full Council instead of waiting if felt necessary. It was agreed the CIL minutes should be much fuller, stating reasons for and against applications, ensuring they are balanced. Members also agreed there needed to be a much wider discussion regarding the criteria for CIL funding and how the Council interprets and considers this. The CIL Sub-Committee will need to have this as an agenda item for discussion at the next meeting. They felt CIL funding should link into the Strategic Plan, which at present it does not. The CIL expenditure analysis update, to the 30th September 2025 was noted.

8. UPDATE FROM THE INCLUSIVITY WORKING GROUP

The Working Group had not met.

9. UPDATE FROM THE NORTH ELY HUB AND COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP

The Working Group had not met. Cllr Ní Dhónaill proposed that Cllr Sandhu be elected on to the North Ely Hub and Community Working Group. This was seconded by Cllr Ward and unanimously approved.

10. TO CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT OF A NEW YOUTH LEAD

It was agreed to defer this item again to allow for a review of what is required of the person undertaking this role, as this was currently unclear. It was also felt that the Ely Children and Young People's Action Plan should be reviewed and this will be sent to members. It was also suggested that perhaps the Council could look at having a youth representative from Bishop Laney Sixth Form Centre or a Mayor's cadet. It was agreed that the Governance Working Group should look at these suggestions and report back to the next committee meeting.

11. UPDATE FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS & PR WORKING GROUP

The Working Group had not met. The Clerk informed members the specification for the website had now been drawn up and quotes were being sought.

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COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN
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12. TO CONSIDER FORMATION OF A NEW WORKING GROUP TO CONSIDER IMPLICATIONS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR)

Cllr Banyard felt the Council needed to be prepared and proactive with regard to the LGR. He said that all members would need to be involved and share their ideas on the Council's way forward in relation to this reorganisation. He will speak to all members individually and hoped they would attend a short meeting in January to discuss. A paper would then be prepared for a future Personnel, Finance & Governance Committee meeting, where a formal Working Group could be proposed, if felt necessary. The Clerks will also be consulted for their views. It was felt that research would also need to be undertaken to understand what had been handed down to parish councils in areas where a unitary authority had already been formed.

13. TO CONSIDER ELY MUSEUM'S REQUEST TO AMEND THE SLA TO A FOUR YEAR AGREEMENT INSTEAD OF BEING ANNUALLY REVIEWED AND TO CONSIDER ADDING TO THE SLA A CLAUSE WHICH WILL INCREASE THE REVENUE GRANT FROM THE COUNCIL BY THE RATE OF RPI AT JULY OF EACH YEAR

Cllr Ní Dhónaill explained the Museum had made these requests due to providing them with more security and permit them to undertake longer term planning. Cllr Ward proposed the SLA be amended to a four year agreement with effect from April 2026 and the addition of a clause to the SLA which will increase the revenue grant from the Council by the rate of RPI at July of each year. This was seconded by Cllr Sandu and unanimously approved. Cllr Ní Dhónaill did not take part in this vote.

Cllr Denness left the meeting at 8.15 pm.

14. TO APPROVE AMENDED POLICY FOR USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT IN COUNCIL BUILDINGS

Cllr Ní Dhónaill proposed the amended Policy for Use of Personal Electrical Equipment in Council Buildings be approved, adopted and signed by the Chairman of the Council, as agreed at the last Full Council meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Banyard and unanimously approved.

15. TO DISCUSS THE STAINED GLASS MUSEUM

Cllr Sandu has requested this item after the presentation at the Full Council meeting and his visit to the Museum. He had discussed with them the challenges the Museum is facing and the possibility of them relocating elsewhere in the country. They have issues with regard to space and possibilities with the Cathedral at their other sites have not been successful. Members discussed if there was any possibility of the Council supporting them financially and it was agreed that this was not possible. They should be encouraged to continue applying through the grants process and if they had a project that would be eligible for CIL funding to apply through that process as well. Cllr Banyard agreed to talk to the Cathedral to see if they could assist in any way with regard building space for them. Cllr Sandhu will feedback to the Museum.

16. HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES

Members noted the Zurich Engineering Report for the passenger lift at Sessions House, which had no issues raised.

17. PERSONNEL ISSUES

There were no personnel issues.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on the 9th February 2025.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

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COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN
9TH FEBRUARY 2026