



Minutes of the meeting of Finance & Governance Committee on Monday 27th October 2025 at 5.45pm in Committee Room at Town Hall

Present: Joseph Athorn, Barry Darch, Richard Stubbings, Christine Wheeler

In Attendance: Paul Cunningham, Town Clerk; Gary Jones, Finance Officer

Apologies:

Absent: Gillian Birrell, Peter Shannon

Members of public: No members of the public.

1 - Apologies for absence

None, although councillors noted that Peter Shannon has an ongoing leave of absence.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

2 - To receive Declarations of Interest or any requests for the granting of dispensations in relation to any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda

There were none.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

3 - To approve the minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 22nd September 2025

Motion to approve minutes: Cllr Wheeler.

Seconded by: Cllr Stubbings.

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore

RESOLVED To accept for accuracy and adoption the minutes of the Finance and

Governance Committee meeting held on Monday 22nd September 2025.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

4 - To review spend against budget for April to September

RFO Gary Jones introduced the report. He noted that he had no significant concerns with the report. He commented that the overspend on the Soapbox Derby budget is due to a refund of c£7000 on the payment for the screen from the contractor who had to drop out at the last moment.

RFO invited questions. Cllr Stubbings asked what the £56186 grant was for and RFO confirmed that this was the annual grant to the Fenland Trust.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

5 - To review draft TC budget for 2025-26

RFO explained that the draft budget that had been circulated included an inflation increase of 4%. He noted that the budget included items suggested by the committee at its last meeting but not changes suggested by other committees. Town Clerk circulated a brief update with budget suggestions from Personnel, Assets and Development committees, which amounted to £32,727. Councillors agreed to ask each committee for more detail to support each request, for consideration at the November Finance & Governance Committee meeting.

RFO commented that he will work with Town Clerk to look in detail at each budget line before the next draft is produced for this meeting.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

6 - To consider what changes if any are needed to the list of payments to authorise at full council

Town Clerk noted that this item had been added to the agenda following comments at the last full council meeting that the report did not provide sufficient information for councillors. Town Clerk noted that the report is a requirement of the Local Government Act but that in reality individual purchasing decisions will already have been made, in accordance with the council's Financial Regulations. The report to full council is therefore 'rubber stamping' actual payments, rather than authorising the expenditure.

RFO noted that including more detail for all transactions would in effect turn the report into a monthly statement of spend against budget.

Councillors asked RFO to provide commentary on future reports only for exceptional items of expenditure.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
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There are no actions for this item.

7 - To consider terminating our relationship with Anglia Farmers wef 31st March 2026.

Cllr Stubbings proposed that the arrangement with Anglia Farmers be terminated at the end of our current electricity supply contracts (i.e., end of March 2027) and that we give notice in sufficient time to ensure that the contract did not 'roll on' by default.

Seconded by Cllr Darch .

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore

RESOLVED To terminate the council's arrangement with Anglia Farmers at the end of our current electricity supply contracts (i.e., end of March 2027) and that we give notice in sufficient time to ensure that the contract did not 'roll on' by default.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
Terminate contract with Anglia Farmers in 2026.	Paul Cunningham Gary Jones	27/03/2026

8 - To consider revised Press & Media Policy section on Social Media use

Town Clerk noted that the he had made minor amendments to the policy to incorporate councillor suggestions at the previous meeting. He further noted that he had seen East Suffolk Council's social media use policy but that this covered use by staff rather than by councillors.

Cllr Darch proposed that the draft Press & Media Policy be recommended to full council for approval.

Seconded by Cllr Athorn.

Councillors voted in favour and it was therefore

RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL To approve the revised Press & Social Media Policy.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

9 - To consider granting a lease to Scouts & Guides for the 'Orchard site' in line with their existing lease

Councillors were concerned that granting a lease until 2068 would 'tie the hands' of future councils too much.

Cllr Stubbings suggested that a licence to occupy the site may be better than a formal lease. Town Clerk noted that the District Council retained a 'charge' over the site when transferring it to the Town Council.

Councillors asked Town Clerk to seek advice from the council's solicitors regarding the charge over the land and whether a formal lease would risk triggering this charge.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
Seek advice from the council's solicitors regarding the charge over the land and whether a formal lease would risk triggering this charge.	Paul Cunningham	17/11/2025

10 - To receive a verbal update on progress with health & safety actions

Town Clerk reported that he and Deputy Town Clerk had started work on the outstanding Health & Safety actions, including completing DSE assessments, requesting quotes for ladders at the Quay and commencing work on allotment site risk assessments.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		

11 - Date of next meeting

This was agreed as Monday 24th November at 5.45pm.

What?	By Whom?	By When?
There are no actions for this item.		