



THAXTED PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, 5th March 2026 – Following the Personnel Committee Meeting
The Community Hall, Newbiggen Street, Thaxted

PRESENT

Chair: Cllr Andrew Frater (Vice Chair of Finance Committee, acting as Chair in the absence of Cllr Ray Williams)

Members:

Cllr Terry Frostick
Cllr Jenna Perkins
Cllr Robert Silver
Cllr Nicky Tisseyre

In Attendance: Dena Oxley, Parish Clerk & RFO
Cllr Victoria Knight

FC/26/1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received and were accepted from Cllr Ray Williams.

FC/26/2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Victoria Knight declared a disclosable interest in agenda item FC/26/14(a) (Windmill Committee – Free Use of Parish Council Hall) by reason of her role as representative on the Windmill Trust, and confirmed she would withdraw from the meeting for consideration of that item.

No other declarations of interest were received.

FC/26/3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present. There were no questions or comments to receive.

FC/26/4 MINUTES

The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 20th November 2025 had been circulated with the agenda and taken as read.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 20th November 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed accordingly.

FC/26/5 BANK RECONCILIATION

The bank reconciliations for November 2025 through to February 2026 had been circulated with the agenda.

NOTED. The bank reconciliations for November 2025 – February 2026 were received and noted.

FC/26/6 BUDGET REVIEW – Q3 2025/2026

The Committee received and considered the Q3 budget review and associated financial reports.

(a) Q3 Budget Review (October – December 2025)

RESOLVED: That the Q3 Budget Review for the period October – December 2025 be received and noted.

(b) Earmarked Reserves (EMR) Report

RESOLVED: That the Earmarked Reserves Report be received and noted.

(c) Receipts and Payments Schedule

RESOLVED: That the Receipts and Payments Schedule be received and noted.

(d) Year End Debtors Report

The Committee received the year end debtors position as at 5th February 2026 (year ending 31st March 2026). Outstanding debtors after adjustment: Establishment £65.00 | Allotments £260.00 | Other Rents £150.00 | Market Rents £780.00 | Guildhall £301.60 | Community Hall £40.00 | Total: £1,596.60.

RESOLVED: That the year end debtors report be received and noted.

(e) Ratification of Debts Written Off / Closed by the RFO

The Committee considered the debts of £920.80 written off by the RFO in accordance with Financial Regulation 13.3 (pre-adjustment total: £2,517.40). Write-offs comprised: Allotments £176.80 | Other Rents £90.00 | Clarence House Gardens £365.00 | Market Rents £119.00 | Guildhall £170.00.

RESOLVED: That the write-off of debts totalling £920.80 by the RFO in accordance with Financial Regulation 13.3 be ratified.

(f) Credit Control and Debt Management

The Committee considered the internal audit recommendation regarding rising debtor days.

RESOLVED: That a formal credit control policy be prepared by the Clerk/RFO and presented to Full Council for consideration and adoption.

FC/26/7 COMMUNITY HALL – OPENING AND RUNNING COSTS TO DATE

The Committee received the Clerk/RFO's report on Community Hall opening and running costs to date.

RESOLVED: That the report be received and noted, and that a detailed spend versus budget analysis be presented to the next Finance Committee meeting.

FC/26/8 CHG WALL REPAIRS – APPORTIONMENT OF EXPENDITURE AND EMR APPROVAL

The Committee considered the apportionment of expenditure for the recently completed Clarence House Gardens wall repairs and the proposed drawdown from the relevant Earmarked Reserve.

RESOLVED: That the apportionment of expenditure for the Clarence House Gardens wall repairs be approved, and that the sum of £28,539.18 (net) be drawn down from the Clarence House Gardens Earmarked Reserve. The Committee noted that this drawdown will result in a negative balance in that Earmarked Reserve, and that this position will be reported accordingly.

FC/26/9 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – FEBRUARY 2026

(a) 2nd Interim Audit Report

The Committee received the 2nd Interim Audit Report by Vicky Waples (visit: 24th February 2026; report: 26th February 2026). The Committee expressed its appreciation and commended the Clerk/RFO on the findings and quality of the work evidenced within the report.

(b) Recommendation to Full Council

RESOLVED: That both interim audit reports (November 2025 and February 2026) be formally recommended to Full Council at its March 2026 meeting, in support of Assertion 7.

(c) Internal Audit Action Plan

The Committee noted that no formal action plan or Finance Committee resolution had been evidenced following the 1st Interim Report.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk/RFO produce a written action plan arising from both interim audit reports, identifying responsible officers and target completion dates.

(d) AGAR Publication Deadline – 2025/2026

The Committee noted that the 2024/25 AGAR was published beyond the statutory deadline of 30th September 2025.

NOTED. The Committee resolved to ensure that the 2025/26 AGAR is published within the statutory deadline of 30th September 2026.

FC/26/10 TRANSPARENCY CODE 2015 – CONTRACTS PUBLICATION

The Committee noted that as the Council's annual income/expenditure now exceeds £200,000, the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 apply, including quarterly publication obligations under Sections 31 and 32 in respect of contracts exceeding £5,000.

NOTED. The compliance requirements and the outstanding publication obligations identified in the audit report were noted. The Clerk/RFO will prepare a compliance plan for presentation to the next meeting.

FC/26/11 GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK – REQUIREMENTS AS A LARGER COUNCIL

The Committee considered the Council's governance obligations arising from its growth.

NOTED. All sub-items (a) through (d) – comprising governance structures, internal control environment, AGAR readiness and Clerk/RFO capacity – were received and noted by the Committee.

FC/26/12 ASSERTION 10 – WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE

The Committee received and considered the Council's current compliance position under the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018.

RESOLVED: That the annual maintenance for WCAG 2.2 AA audit and maintenance be for Assertion 10 be considered. All other sub-items were received and noted.

FC/26/13 POLICY REVIEWS

The Committee received and considered all policies presented for review, together with the Policy Revision Summary identifying key changes.

RESOLVED: That the following policies be approved and adopted: (a) Electronic Equipment Policy; (b) General Privacy Notice; (c) Media Relations Policy; (d) Risk Management Policy; (e) Subject Access Request – Staff Policy; (f) Training and Development Policy; (g) Wellbeing Policy; and (h) Investment Policy (Revised).

RESOLVED: That the Clerk/RFO prepare a draft Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy for consideration by the Committee at its next meeting.

FC/26/14 GRANTS

(a) Windmill Committee – Free Use of Parish Council Hall

Cllr Victoria Knight declared a disclosable interest and withdrew from the meeting prior to consideration of this item.

The Committee considered the request from the Windmill Committee for free use of the Parish Council Hall.

RESOLVED: That the application from the Windmill Committee for free use of the Parish Council Hall be refused, The Clerk/RFO reported that car park charges already paid by the Windmill Committee shall be refunded accordingly.

Cllr Victoria Knight returned to the meeting.

(b) Touchpoint Christmas Appeal – £300

The Committee considered the application for a grant of £300 from the Touchpoint Christmas Appeal.

RESOLVED: That the application from the Touchpoint Christmas Appeal be refused. The Committee determined that grant funds should be directed towards activities and organisations whose work directly benefits the residents of Thaxted in the longer term.

FC/26/15 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Committee considered membership of the following organisations:

UALC – Uttlesford Association of Local Councils

RESOLVED: That membership of UALC (Uttlesford Association of Local Councils) be not renewed.

RCCE – Rural Community Council of Essex

RESOLVED: That membership of RCCE (Rural Community Council of Essex) be continued.

Council Wise – Training and networking

RESOLVED: That membership of Council Wise be not entered into.

FC/26/16 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

NOTED. The date and time of the next Finance Committee meeting is to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 9.38 pm.

Signed as a correct record:

Cllr Andrew Frater, Chair of Meeting

Date: _____

These minutes are draft until confirmed at the next meeting of the Finance Committee.