



GREAT HORKELESLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD MONDAY 12TH JANUARY 2026 AT GREAT HORKELESLEY NEW VILLAGE HALL AT 10.00AM

Those present:

Cllr G Baker (Chairman) Cllr C Arnold
Cllr M Mead Cllr P Tempest

F25/19 Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the Clerk for providing a detailed budget in good time prior to the meeting.

F25/20 Apologies and Reasons for Absence

All members were present.

F25/21 Declaration of Interests

No member declared an interest with respect to any item of business on this agenda.

F25/22 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held 10th November 2025 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

F25/23 Third Quarter Accounts

Members reviewed and approved the Third Quarter accounts as at 31st December 2025 for the 2025/26 financial year. Cllr Arnold said that he was concerned that as the Council acquired more assets, it became more likely that there would be unforeseen and urgent spending to address safety and security issues. He felt that the Council should establish a Repairs and Renewals reserve at an agreed level, to be restored to that level annually as part of the budget process. This would be preferable to each area of the Council's activities having its own reserve, the sum of which would most likely be greater than the proposed Repairs and Renewals reserve. If the Repairs and Renewals reserve was exhausted in any year, there would always be the general reserve to fall back on.

Cllr Arnold also said that, in recent years, he felt he had had to ask members rather to often to move funds from the general reserve into the approved budget to cover the cost of something which, with a bit more thought, could have been put into the budget to start with. He said that while this was legitimate, he hoped that members were not going to get into the habit of doing it instead of ensuring that the approved budget was accurate in the first place. There were no other specific points to note.

F25/24 Budget & Precept

The draft budget for the 2026/27 financial year circulated by the Clerk prior to the meeting was considered and discussed at length. Members reviewed each line of the budget and the following minor amendments were made:

- Hall Bookings Income (200/1200) increased to £28,006, with the expectation of getting a new regular hirer for one hour per week.

- Hall Improvements (200/4330) reduced to £2,000, now that the Council is not expecting to need to replace the sound system.
- Electricity costs (200/4210) reduced to £3,000, based on this year's usage.
- Cleaning costs (200/4300) reduced to £1,320, based on this year's expenditure.
- Water costs (200/4315) increased to £1,040, based on this year's usage.
- General Maintenance costs (200/4320) reduced to £250, based on expected expenditure for the coming year. Any unexpected maintenance costs will come out of Village Hall reserves.
- Jubilee Green Play Area costs (250/4450) increased to £10,500, to include £500 to spend on installing signs asking residents to clear up after their dog, as designed by children from Bishop William Ward Primary School two years ago.

It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Baker) that this Second Draft of the budget be recommended to Full Council for approval.

Members discussed the precept for the 2026/27 financial year.

It was unanimously agreed (proposed Cllr Baker) that it be recommended to Full Council that no reserves be used to support the budget for the next financial year and that, based on the figures in the Second Draft of the budget, the Council Tax for Parish Purposes (precept) be set at 54.76. This gives a 21% increase on last year's precept figure, which works out as less than £1 more per month for the majority of properties in the parish.

F25/25 Regular DD Payments

The list of regular payments made by Direct Debit for the year ahead was reviewed, to be recommend to Full Council for approval.

F25/26 Next Meeting of the Finance Committee

The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be on Monday 13th April at 10.00am and will focus on reviewing and approving the Year End accounts and financial policies and procedures.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 11.17am.

These minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed

Date