

Finance & General Purposes Committee Minutes

of the meeting
held at
The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich
on
Tuesday 23rd June 2026 at 7pm

Present:

Cllrs Armstrong, Calver, Chable, Fay, Richardson, Todd and Wade

In the Chair: Councillor Morrison

Clerk: Ms L Ballard (Clerk)

Also Present: No press or public present

Question Time:

F001/26 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Saunders

F002/26 Declarations of Members' Interests

None

F003/26 Election of Vice-Chair

With only a single nomination it was **Resolved:** To elect Cllr Calver as Vice-Chair of the F&GP Committee for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

F004/26 Minutes of the Last Meeting

Resolved: That the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 17th March 2026 (circulated separately) be approved by the committee and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

F005/26 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting

- **MIN 171/25** – It was confirmed that **Leisure Attendants** for the 2026 season had been duly appointed and the putting green opened on 6th June.

F006/26 Matters arising from previous minutes

None

F007/26 Grant Requests

The Committee considered grant funding requests:

- **Friends of Cox's Pond** – **Resolved** to award £950 funding.

- **Homestart Harwich - Resolved** to award £950 S137 funding.
The Committee wished to thank the Rotary Club for also sponsoring these events.
- Members considered a request from Teen Talk to extend the grant funding period following the award of £2500. **Resolved:** To grant the extension.

F008/26 Estate Supervisor Report

Members acknowledged the latest report from Estate Supervisor, Mat Newman, in which he reported on various matters including the maintenance works to the putting green, alarm quotations for the Guildhall, the successful installation of the handrail and the illumination of the High Lighthouse. Members thanked the Estate Supervisor for a thorough and informative report.

F009/26 Guildhall Hire Charges

Members considered the charges for hire of the Guildhall and **RESOLVED:** to retain the existing charges for 2026/27.

F010/26 Independent Review of the Accounts

Members acknowledged a report from Cllr Smith following a review of the accounts for the periods Jan - Mar on 12th June. No irregularities were found, and everything appeared to be in excellent order.

F011/26 Virements

Members **Resolved:** to approve the following virements utilising last year's underspends, which were confirmed at the opening of the new financial year:

Credit:

The ICT EMR with £2k; The Skatepark Festival EMR with £3k; The Elections EMR with £5k; The Hill School Maintenance EMR with £20k; The Guildhall Improvements EMR with £12k.

F012/26 Guildhall Curtains

Members considered purchasing replacement curtains and window seat covering in the Chamber owing to the fading and deterioration of the existing ones which had been in place for a considerable time. Members agreed that blue would compliment the chairs and carpet.

Resolved: To proceed with investigating options to bring back to the next meeting.

F013/26 Pétanque Private Hire

Members considered a request for the continuation of an arrangement for the private hire of the Pétanque terrain at the council-managed leisure facility. The clerk confirmed that the arrangement was working as expected and yielded a small income for the council (fixed amount for the period of the open season and adhoc out of season).

Resolved: To grant continued use under the existing terms for a further 12 months.

F014/26 Raffle Prize Request

Members considered a request from Friends of All Saints Primary School (Gt. Oakley) for a raffle prize for their summer fair and music festival OAKFEST on 3rd

July. The clerk reminded members that any benefit may be weighted in favour of residents outside of the parish, although since there was no direct cost to the council it was **Resolved:** To supply a voucher for combined use of the putting green facilities for a family.

F015/26 Guildhall Leaflets

Members considered the need for a revamp and reprint of the Guildhall Information leaflet. Cllr Calver said the content is out of date in a couple of areas and he was happy to provide the content and Cllr Fowler had agreed to assist with the images and layout. The clerk reminded members that the last revamp was in 2018 when 5000 copies were printed at a cost of £310.

Resolved: To proceed with a revamp and reprint of 5000 new leaflets at a maximum cost of £750.

F016/26 Policies Review

Members reviewed the following policies following changes in legislation.

- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Sickness Policy

The clerk highlighted the new/amended text to be inserted and it was **Resolved:** To adopt the new policies.

F017/26 Mayor's Chain

The chairman reported on some essential repairs needed to the mayoral chain. The Clerk and Estate Supervisor are in the throes of seeking a suitably qualified goldsmith to undertake the works and as yet were unable to estimate the extent of the works or the cost.

Resolved: to proceed as appropriate, delegating authority to the clerk and Estate Supervisor to instruct the repairs, which would be funded from the Civic Expenditure budget.

F018/26 Fire Alarm

Since identifying the need to have the fire alarm monitored, the Estate Supervisor was able to secure a method of achieving this easily and it was **Resolved:** To proceed with the necessary measures to ensure monitoring of the fire alarm at an estimated cost of £100 to be expended from the Fire & Safety budget.

F019/26 Matters Received in the Post or Raised by Members

Members **noted** the following correspondence received:

- **Letter of acknowledgement** following receipt of Grant funding from: Harwich Festival
- **Evaluation form** received from: New Years Eve Fireworks; Maze Group; Teen Talk

F020/26 Matters to be Reported

- Members **noted** expenditure of £500, authorised under delegated authority, for vegetation clearance work at the Hill School Site, to be expended from the Hill School Maintenance EMR.
- Members **noted** expenditure of £50, authorised under delegated authority, for attendance by the clerk and Admin. Assistant on the 'Making your Council Documents Accessible' training webinar, to be expended from the Training budget.
- Members **noted** expenditure of £50, authorised under delegated authority, for attendance by the Admin. Assistant on the 'Dealing with Difficult People and Conversations' training webinar, to be expended from the Apprenticeship Incentive EMR.
- It was confirmed that a refund had been received from an unspent grant of £2420 from Colchester United Community Foundation, which has been credited to the Debtor control account.

F021/26 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee is to be held on Tuesday 22nd September 2026 at 7pm at The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich.

F022/26 Exclusion of public and press

Pursuant to Sub-Section 2 of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, it was **Resolved:** To declare the meeting closed to the press and public for the transaction of the under-mentioned business:

- **Putting Green Licence**

The public part of the meeting was closed at 7.42 pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATE