

Minutes of the FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE meeting held Thursday 23rd April 2026 at 3pm at the Town Hall.

Present; Cllrs Jarvis (Chair), Davy, Flunder, Goldsmith.

1. **Apologies:** To receive apologies for absence. Nil
2. **Declarations of interest:**
To receive any declarations of ORI/ Non-Registerable interest regarding the agenda. Nil
To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest regarding the agenda. Nil
To receive any request for dispensations regarding the agenda. Nil
3. **Matters from the public on matters relating to matters on the agenda.** Nil
4. **Minutes of the previous meetings** – approved.
5. **To Review year end 12-month management accounts to 31st March 2026.**
Members reviewed the 12-month management accounts to 31st March 2026 on a line-by-line basis including;
Income
All precept received
Income from properties in excess of budget – hub income included.
Car parking – donations £8510 exceed budget £5000 on Gardner Rd car park area.
Donations / grants received £19,958– will be offset by grants paid out.
Car charging income will be offset by car charging expenditure – any excess will offset capital costs of installing the high-power chargers.
Insurance contributions include some from 2024.2025 which were outstanding.
Cil £2500 added to Cil reserves for the year. Annual return drafted.
Total Income before year end alterations - £565,511 against budget £519,699.

Expenditure
Insurance – we have pre-paid for 2026 – 2027 and this will be corrected through re payments at year end.
Loan balance is now £45,000.
Elections – no election called for the vacancy – so no costs incurred.
Donations exceed budget but additional budget of £10k made available through ‘community support services.
Highways budget costs are allocated to the 20mph and courtesy crossing/ signage schemes.
Car parks/ parking/ EVC – are the cost for operating the chargers.
CCTV/ wi fi Budget – see Land E cttee report and update re this project.

Hurren Terrace gable end – works are now complete and final invoice is expected.

Station Rd refurb project £55,809 – final invoices now paid.

Town Hall works have not commenced.

Various other budget lines are for projects not yet commenced. These budgets will be transferred to earmarked reserves as required.

Total expenditure £542,377. Total budgets for all potential projects amounted to £1,001,450 (with £250k allocated for Gable End and £200k for town hall refurb).

6. **To review the balance sheet** and to approve reconciliations to 31st March 2026

With debtors, creditors etc posted on the accounts system, the year end balances amount to £1,238,891 which is as has been expected – approved and agreed by all for Chair to check and sign the reconciliations and balance sheet.

7. **To review Reserves** – Agreed by all.

Virements made at year end to/ from the appropriate accounts including Grants/ Pledges, CIL reserve fund, and capital account amount to net -£89,343.39. This leaves reserves at £1,087,492.76 plus a general reserve of £151,398 as at year end.

8. **Investment – CCLA** – to consider whether withdrawals / investment required.

No transfer required for year end.

9. **Cil Balances – as at end March 2026**

Cil balances for year end have been assessed and annual return prepared. Cil balances as of 31st March 2026 are £11,664.23 excluding the Roads CIL

10. **Year End Arrangements 2025 – 2026.**

Year end close of accounts software completed as per figures above.

SALC internal audit has been scheduled. All accounts to be approved for PKF and sent off by 30th June 2026.

11. **Banking arrangements.**

Lloyds has now confirmed that all queries have been answered to their satisfaction and accounts can continue as normal. Complaint had been raised by the town clerk as to the nature of the queries being raised and their irrelevance to a Local Authority. Complaint has been upheld and the bank has paid £150 to cover the solicitor / accountant and staff time costs.

12. **Quotes to consider – NIL.**

ESS has suggested having an approved minimal spend sum for the routine maintenance on both play areas to avoid the need for individual permissions from STC. Recommend approval. ESS is an approved inspector of play areas, and this should mean that routine maintenance up to this sum can be carried out quicker than at present. **Suggested that approved maintenance limit for ESS be £200 per month for routine inspection repairs and maintenance – approve for 12 months.**

13. **E V Chargers – options**

Plug in Suffolk has a new supplier for the Chargers which they are rolling out. Full details of possible costing options will be forwarded in due course. Roads cttee to consider.

14. **Policies to review; Nil**

15. **Grants / Donations** including;

Grant Monies Received - Box up monies received – see L and E minutes.

Other Grants / donations, information.

VESS - See L and E cttee minutes for North Parade Project

Heritage Open Days – See L and E cttee minutes. STC to apply for the ESC grant monies for production of the advertising brochure with the other 3 towns.

High Street Security Improvement Grant – See L and E cttee minutes. STC has applied for match funding for the CCTV request around the North Parade/ Pier Ave

Thriving Places funding opening in April. Details awaited.

Request received – From The Old Hospital for a Defib for outside their premises. Cost of defib £1647.99. 10-year installation and running costs estimated at £1300. Total 10-year life span purchase and maintenance costs assessed at £3000. Request to STC - £1647.99.

Discussion about costs of a defib and whether there were any opportunities now to get one free of charge as in the past. Query to be raised with the Old Hospital.

Updates on grant expenditure – *CCF Revenue balance.* The digital screen/ map for the TIC is eligible for funding from these monies, along with the monthly Menta sessions for businesses.

16. **Heritage Lottery Fund – expression of interest.**

Cllr Davy provided an update on the meeting between the consultant and the Heritage Focus Group. Information from the consultant to be made available towards the end of May to enable council to consider and approve an Expression of Interest being made to HLF. Note that there are other funders who might also be interested in the heritage project.

17. **Website Domain -.gov.uk – costs**

Local Councils are being encouraged to convert their websites to .gov.uk. STC will need to purchase a new domain name from '.gov.uk' and the web consultant will then transfer the site over to the new domain. Budget £300 required (£150 consultant and £150 for domain)

18. **Risk Register review.**

Items listed in previous minutes have been inserted into the Risk Assessment.

Discussion about cyber security and how to ensure safety on the councillors own devices – see Use Your Own Device Policy. **It was agreed to recommend offering the bank**

signatories an appropriate antivirus package if required. Budget £500 to be approved for this purpose (from I T Budget)

For May 2027 council elections – may need to consider offering councillors a council based ipad or similar to undertake council work, to ensure that that all council work/ documentation is protected correctly.

Cyber policy and Use Your Own Device Policy to be checked to ensure these are up to date. For a future agenda.

AI – discussion re risks associated with use of AI in local government. Policy to be considered – for a future agenda.

19. **LGR** – No update .

20. **If Required Exclusion of Public and Press:** *Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it is proposed that, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following.*

a. Rental matters

Recommendations

Suggested that approved maintenance limit for ESS be £200 per month for routine inspection repairs and maintenance of the 2 play areas– approve for 12 months.

Local Councils are being encouraged to convert their websites to .gov.uk. STC will need to purchase a new domain name from ‘.gov.uk’ and the web consultant will then transfer the site over to the new domain. Budget £300 required (£150 consultant and £150 for domain – from Website budget)

It was agreed to recommend offering the bank signatories an appropriate antivirus package if required. Budget £500 to be approved for this purpose. (From I T Budget)