

FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE
SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Town Hall, Saffron Walden on Friday 19th December 2025 at 10.00am

Present Councillors: Asker (as substitute for Cllr de Vries), Coote, Fiddy (as substitute for Cllr Ahmed), Freeman, Hawke-Smith and McLellan (Deputy Chair).

Officers: Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

Public: Mr Paul Chambers, Representative of Touchpoint

F & E 168-25	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Ahmed, de Vries, Eke, McBirnie and Parker.</p>
F & E 169-25	<p>To receive any Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Cllrs Asker, Coote, Fiddy and Freeman declared a generic non-pecuniary interest as District Councillor for Uttlesford District Council.</p>
F&E 170-25	<p>Public Speaking Time</p> <p>There were no questions arising.</p>
F&E 172-25	<p>Minutes of the Finance & Establishment Committee 17.11.2025</p> <p>The 17.11.2025 minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting and were signed by the Chairman.</p>
F&E 173-25	<p>It was agreed to bring forward agenda item 10, Grant Application Touchpoint</p>
F&E 174-25	<p>Touchpoint grant application - £1,000 requested</p> <p>Committee received the application and a representative explained the request is seeking funds for their Christmas appeal for families in need of support.</p> <p>Resolved: To award Touchpoint with £656 (being the remaining grants monies available).</p>
Financial Matters	
F & E 175-25	<p>Expenditure – to be authorised</p> <p>(a) Payment of the accounts received since 17.11.2025 were approved. (b) Payment of accounts for payments already made since 17.11.2025 were approved. (c) Councillors McLellan and Hawke-Smith were nominated to complete the banking process with officers.</p>

Signed as a true and accurate record
Minutes of the Finance & Establishment Committee December 2025

F & E 176-25	<p>Monthly Reports</p> <p>Committee received and noted the following monthly reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Bank reconciliation statement with supporting statements (b) Income report broken down by budget code – year to date including comparison of income year to date against previous years.
F & E 177-25	<p>Committee Hi-Light Reports</p> <p>The Committee received and noted the Hi-Lighted reports from the RFO. There were no specific items to note or action to be taken in relation to documents 8(a) or 8(c).</p>
F & E 178-25	<p>Review of the Council's Risk Assessment</p> <p>In accordance with the Council's risk assessments and as agreed at the September 2025 F&E Committee meeting, Committee is requested to nominate a designated Councillor to review a selection of practices and policies.</p> <p>Agreed to reconsider in January 2026 and to meanwhile to ascertain if either Cllrs Eke or de Vries may be able to support.</p>
F & E 179-25	<p>Investment policy</p> <p>Resolved: To readopt the policy with no amendments.</p>
F&E 180-25	<p>SWI completed grant monitoring form</p> <p>Committee received the monitoring form concluding this application process.</p>
F&E 181-25	<p>SWTC third party grant applications</p> <p>Committee received the update detailing progress made on third party grant applications and grants identified for progression.</p>
F&E 182-25	<p>Urgent Information Items</p> <p>There were no matters raised.</p>
F&E 183-25	<p>Date and time of Next Meeting</p> <p>Next meeting to be held on 19 January 2025 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall Saffron Walden.</p>
F & E 184-25	<p>Confidential Item – Exclusion of Press and Public (Part II meeting)</p> <p>It was resolved that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.</p>

F & E
185-25

Budget 2026/27

Committee received the following papers:

- (a) Written summary report, based upon information as presented to the Budget Sub-Committee on 15.12.25 with additions demonstrating the costs of variable budgetary increases (as discussed at the Budget Sub-Committee meeting) (confidential report).
- (b) 2025/26 budget, based upon the recommendation from the Budget Sub-Committee (confidential report).
- (c) Copy of the draft F&E Sub-Committee minutes of 15.12.2025 (public document)

It was **Unanimously Resolved to:**

1. Recommend the presented budget at 5% to Full Council in January 2026, subject to the following amendments:
2. That the EMR (Ref 9175) be renamed from Jubilee House to Jubilee Hub/Gardens and that a sum of money be set aside for long-term maintenance/refurbishment. RFO to determine amounts which should be set aside under this renamed EMR code (*post meeting note, the EMR for long-term maintenance of Jub Hub and Gardens is set at £20,380*)
3. That the balance of monies is held under a new code EMR 9375 called 'General EMR Requirements' to boost EMR reserves to properly maintain the Council's assets and provide for their long-term replacement.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 11:50am