

FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE
SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Town Hall, Saffron Walden on Monday 16 March 2026 at 7.30pm

Present Councillors: Eke, Fiddy, Freeman, Hawke-Smith and McLellan.

Officers: Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

Public: None

In the absence of the Committee Chair (Cllr de Vries) the Deputy Committee Chair Cllr McLellan Chaired this meeting.

F & E 037-26	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Ahmed, Coote, de Vries, McBirnie and Parker.</p>
F & E 038-26	<p>To receive any Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Cllr Fiddy and Freeman declared a generic non-pecuniary interest as District Councillor for Uttlesford District Council.</p>
F & E 039-26	<p>Public Speaking Time</p> <p>There were no questions arising.</p>
F & E 040-26	<p>Minutes of the Finance & Establishment Committee 16.02.2026</p> <p>The 16.02.2026 minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting and were signed by the Chairman.</p>
Financial Matters	
F & E 041-26	<p>Expenditure – to be authorised</p> <p>(a) Payment of the accounts received since 16.02.2026 were approved. (b) Payment of accounts for payments already made since 16.02.2026 were approved. (c) Cllrs Freeman and McLellan would arrange to meet the RFO to approve the invoices for payment.</p>
F&E 042-26	<p>Monthly Reports</p> <p>Committee received and noted the following monthly reports:</p> <p>(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.</p>

Signed as a true and accurate record
Minutes of the Finance & Establishment Committee March 2026

F & E 043-26	<p>Committee Hi-Light Reports</p> <p>Committee received and noted the following:.</p> <p>a) Highlight report Committee noted the decrease in income from the cemetery, a service largely out of the control of SWTC. It was recognised traditional burials are on the decline, in favour of simple, direct cremations.</p> <p>Resolved: that a report would be presented to a future F&E Committee meeting recognising the downward trend in burials, including any potential mitigation or opportunities for SWTC to increase cemetery revenue. Report to include details of national trends in burials/cremations.</p> <p>b) Income and Expenditure report for February 2026 (and YTD)</p> <p>c) EMR report for February 2026 (and YTD)</p>
F & E 044-26	<p>Internal Audit Report – Interim Findings</p> <p>Committee received and noted the internal audit report and the officer covering report.</p> <p>Resolved: To provide a copy of the report at the April Full Council meeting for information, aligning with the recommendation from the Internal Auditor.</p>
F & E 045-26	<p>Tourist Information Centre</p> <p>Committee received the update report, noting a further report from the newly appointed TIC Manager will follow at the April 2026 Committee meeting.</p> <p>It was unanimously resolved, to recommend to Full Council:</p> <p>a) To no longer progress with the option to create a CiC b) To no longer progress with the option to co-locate with a third party</p> <p>The recommendation for cessation of both due to the limited financial benefit derived from either option</p>
F & E 046-26	<p>Risk Assessment Cllr Findings</p> <p>In accordance with Standing Orders, the appointed councillor, Cllr de Vries, has begun to conduct a review on SWTCs Risk Assessment procedures.</p> <p>It was noted this is a work in progress and Cllr de Vries will follow up with officers and report back at the April Committee meeting.</p>

F & E 047-26	<p>Compliance Standards</p> <p>Committee received the written report summarising recent changes to legislation, requiring administrative and management time in overseeing and complying with these changes.</p>
F & E 048-26	<p>Data Protection Training</p> <p>Committee noted an integral part of new compliance standards, is the requirement for staff and Councillors to have received data protection training and Councillors are requested to confirm they have completed the data protection training as per details sent to all Councillors.</p>
F & E 049-26	<p>Policies</p> <p>1. Data Protection & Retention Resolved: To re-adopt the data protection policy with no changes. It was noted Committee previously requested that the policy aligns with UDCs and a copy has been requested as UDC's online version is dated 2020.</p> <p>2. Employee Handbook Resolved: To re-adopt the following policies for inclusion within the employee handbook:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Right to Search b. Intellectual Property c. Expenses
F & E 050-26	<p>Large Grants Process</p> <p>Committee received and noted the written report, detailing options to combine all large grant monies, inviting organisations to apply for large scale funding (perhaps for a two- or three-year scheme) ensuring fairness and equitability in the process.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) To adopt the revised scheme in principle (b) To prepare a large scheme grants process for consideration at a future F&E meeting (c) To ensure this process is incorporated into future budget setting processes
F & E 051-26	<p>Enterprise East CIC – Free of Charge Hire Request - £607</p> <p>Committee considered the grant application requesting FOC hire of the Town Hall Assembly Hall to host their volunteer celebration event.</p> <p>Resolved: Not to award the grant request on the following grounds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Enterprise East have facilities and the event could take place at there

	(b) That the request amounts to 50% of the 2026/27 allocated budget, and providing this large sum restricts future grant opportunities for others
F & E 052-26	Uttlesford Community Travel 2026/27 The UCT grant application was received and noted, with the provision of £6,800 being an integral part of the 2025/26 budget
F & E 053-26	SWTC third party grant applications Committee noted the update, detailing progress made on third party grant applications and grants identified for progression.
F & E 054-26	Urgent Information Items There were no matters raised.
F & E 055-26	Date and time of Next Meeting Next meeting to be held on Monday 20 th April 2026 at the Town Hall, Saffron Walden

The Chairman closed the meeting at 21.20.