FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE
SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Town Hall, Saffron Walden on Monday 20 July 2026 at 7.30pm

Present Councillors: Asker, Curtis, de Vries (Chair), Eke, Freeman and McLellan.

Officers: Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

Public: Representatives of grant applicants - Riding for the Disabled and The Nutritious Way

F & E 109-26	**Apologies for absence** Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Ahmed, Fiddy, McBirnie. Absent Cllrs Coote and Parker.
F & E 110-26	**To receive any Declarations of Interest** Cllrs Asker and Freeman declared a generic non-pecuniary interest as District Councillor for Uttlesford District Council.
F & E 111-26	**Minutes of the Finance & Establishment Committee 15.06.2026** The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting and were signed by the Chairman.
F & E 112-26	**Public Speaking Time** Representatives of Riding for the Disabled (agenda item 11) and The Nutritious Way (agenda item 12) spoke further to their grant applications. 1. Riding for the Disabled Explained their sessions support Saffron Walden pupils, with typically 24 children attending per week. The application is seeking monetary support for the continuance of the sessions. 2. The Nutritious Way Explained the application is seeking monetary support to launch affordable health classes as a pilot project. Representatives were thanked for their time and left the meeting.
	Financial Matters
F & E 113-26	**Expenditure – to be authorised** (a) Payment of the accounts received since 15.06.2026 were approved, with the following additional extra payments:

	£21k Essex Pension Fund £616 toilet hire for wedding at BEG £65 Design Mill (b) Payment of accounts for payments already made since 15.06.2026 were approved. (c) Date for processing payments: Cllrs Curtis and McLellan agreed to attend the office on Wednesday 22nd July 2026 to electronically authorise payments
F & E 114-26	**Monthly Reports** Committee received and noted the following monthly reports: (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 115-26	**Committee Hi-Light Reports** Committee received and noted these reports from the RFO: (a) Highlight report (b) Income and Expenditure report for June 2026 (and YTD) (c) EMR report for June 2026 (and YTD). Committee noted the costs already incurred under elections and that costs (anticipated at £25k) must be provisioned for within the 2027/28 budget.
F&E 116-26	**Quarterly Reports** Committee received and noted these reports from the RFO: (a) Cash Book – showing all income and expenditure for the quarter April - May 2026 (b) Tourist Information Centre - Profit and Loss Account for the period ending June 2026, including the projected loss of income arising from the cancellation of events at Audley End (c) Graphs: Cemetery (burials) TIC (shop sales) Market for the first quarter
F & E 117-26	**Financial Administration 2026/27** Committee received and considered the following documents relating to financial administration and management for 2026/27 (a) Internal Auditor's scope of works, seeking appointment of the internal auditor (b) Committee gave specific consideration of the independence and competence of the Internal Auditor (c) Insurance Agreement – for information Officers have renewed the insurance agreement for 2026/27 (d) Cllr de Vries confirmed he had reviewed several risk assessment matters (as per June Min Ref F&E 103-26) and commended the RFO on practices and processes.

	Unanimously resolved: To appoint the Internal Auditor for 20226/27 having considered their independence, competencies and scope of works.
F & E 118-26	**Review of Cemetery Income** Committee received and noted the Cemetery Income report (as presented at to the Assets and Services Committee meeting).
F & E 119-26	**Grant Application – Riding for the Disabled - £500-£1000** Committee discussed and considered the grant application seeking monetary support. **Resolved:** To not award the application at this present time, acknowledging the group has considerable sums (£20k) held in reserves. Should the group require monies toward the end of the financial year they would be welcome to re-apply, providing updated figures on their projected year end costs.
F & E 120-26	**Grant Application - The Nutritious Way - £492** Committee discussed and considered the grant application seeking monetary support for The Nutritious Way, to host pilot sessions at Jubilee Hub. **Resolved:** To not award the application – this is due to the commercial make up of the organisation and typically SWTC supports community-based activities. Officers to send details of UDC Economic Development Team (for potential funding) and of UCAN (for potential partnership working with NHS bodies) to the applicant.
F & E 121-26	**Grants Processes** Committee discussed and considered the proposed changes to the grants processes for Large Grants and Free of Charge Venue Hire as detailed within the written report. For Large Grants, it was **Resolved:** (a) To amend current practices where funding for some organisations had historically been a core part of SWTC budget and instead to provide a sum of £20k (to be confirmed and subject to 2027/28 budget) for larger grants. Committee agreed that establishing a process with open opportunity for all organisations was a fairer and more transparent means of supporting local community groups. (b) In progressing this revised methodology, it was further agreed that Officers would present a draft, revised application process for large grants to a future F&E meeting, having due regard to: • Defining funding criteria • That applications must support SWTC's core objectives • Projects must directly serve SW residents • Funds may be awarded over 3-years • There must be a demonstrable local impact in SW because of the service

- No maximum grant limit to be set, but noting the total funding is £20k
- That funding could be used to offset free of charge spaces offered for the activity, ie spaces funded by SWTC
- Likely funding stream opening early January 2027, closing end February 2027.

For Free of Charge Hire and Small Grants Scheme, it was **Resolved:**

(a) To offer free of charge hire to the following organisations on a standing-basis and until such time as Council may determine otherwise.

Organisation	**Event**	**Typical awarding amount**
Saffron Walden Round Table	Carnival Weekend 3 yearly Easter Egg Hunt – Annually Fireworks – Annually	FOC Common Hire – IRO £4k FOC BEG Hire- IRO £3k FOC Hire Common – IRO £600 (+ utilities paid by SWTC)
Saffron Walden Initiative	Dance in the Square – Annually	FOC Hire Town Hall – IRO £910
Saffron Walden Arts Trust	Fete de la Musique – 3 yearly	£1,700 FOC hire (Town Hall, Band Stand etc)

(b) That the Town Council would offer the above on a free of charge basis to those organisations shown, provided:

- The organisations enter into an agreement (similar to that already held with Saffron Hall and Saffron Screen), regarding free of charge hire.
- The organisations are required to acknowledge SWTC's financial support in marketing and promotional material.
- The venue hire is free of charge and in a similar vein to existing agreements of this nature, SWTC reserves the right to charge for any incidental or staffing costs incurred in addition to the FOC hire
- Venues must be booked in advance and subject to availability

(c) For other free of charge venue hires and small grants, existing practices should continue with applications being made to the Committee for individual determination. Committee acknowledged this process works well providing 12-months continuous opportunity for small grants and recording of free of charge hire and support awarded throughout the year.

F & E 122-26

SWTC third party grant applications

Committee noted the attached update; detailing progress made on third party grant applications and grants identified for progression.

F & E 123-26	**Policies** **Resolved:** To adopt the following policies as proposed: (a) Scheme of delegation (b) Performance Management (c) Expenses – adding the expenses will be paid at the then prevailing rates
F & E 124-26	**Urgent Information Items** There were no matters raised.
F & E 125-26	**Date and time of Next Meeting** Next meeting to be held on Monday 21 September 2026 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall, Saffron Walden, it was noted there is no August Committee meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.20pm

Signed as a true and accurate record …….