FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE
SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the FINANCE & ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Town Hall, Saffron Walden on Monday 21st September 2026 at 7.30pm

Present Councillors: de Vries (Chair), Eke, Fiddy, McLellan and Parker

Officers: Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

Public: None present

F & E 126-26	**Apologies for absence** Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Asker, Ahmed, Coote, Curtis, Freeman and McBirnie.
F & E 127-26	**To receive any Declarations of Interest** Cllr Fiddy declared a generic non-pecuniary interest as a District Councillor for Uttlesford District Council.
F & E 128-26	**Minutes of the Finance & Establishment Committee 20.07.26** The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting and were signed by the Chairman.
F & E 129-26	**Public Speaking Time** No members of the public present
Financial Matters	
F & E 130-26	**Expenditure – to be authorised** (a) Payment of the accounts received since 20.07.26 were approved, with the following additional extra payments: £23k Essex Pension Fund £226 Sonia Villiers (supplier to TIC) (b) Payment of accounts for payments already made to 31.08.26 were approved. (c) DD, Standing Orders, debit card payments and cheques issued since 31.08.26 were approved (d) Date for processing payments: Cllrs McLellan and de Vries agreed to attend the office on Tuesday 22nd September 2026 to electronically authorise payments
F & E 131-26	**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 132-26	**Committee Hi-Light Reports** Committee received and noted these reports from the RFO: (a) Highlight report (b) Income and Expenditure report for July and August (c) EMR report for August 2026 (and YTD) Committee noted the opportunity of working with residents in managing land at Linden Homes site, asking them to volunteer to water newly planted trees etc. This matter to be progressed by Officers and reported back via the A&S Committee; examples were given of similar schemes in Hills Road Cambridge, and Blackheath Conservation Area.
F&E 133-26	**Annual Governance Reports** Committee received and noted the reports as attached, including the signing off of accounts by the external auditor, with no qualifications.
F & E 134-26	**Saffron Music Trust – Grant Funding** Committee noted the payment of £2,000 to the Saffron Music Trust in accordance with the Council's 2026/27 budget and with the SLA.
F & E 135-26	**Bedazzle Grant Monitoring Form** Committee received and noted the completed grant monitoring form, concluding this grant.
F & E 136-26	**SWTC Grant Process – New Process for Large Grants** Committee considered the report and revised grant process as presented. **Resolved:** To adopt the proposed new large grants as presented, save for changing the application dates as follows: (a) Grant window open for applications: October to November of each year (b) Officers to review applications and time to reconcile queries: December of each year (c) Grants considered: January of each year, accompanied with a report and recommendation from Officers

F & E 137-26	**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 138-26	**Policies** A number of policies were reviewed, it was **Resolved:** (a) To adopt the following policies as presented, with no amendments proposed: • Reserves • Complaints • Privacy • Mental Health • Menopause (b) To adopt the following new policies as presented: • Compassionate and bereavement leave • Parental bereavement leave (c) To adopt the following policies with amendments: • Training: to add that training for Assets and Services Committee members is also mandatory • Data Protection: p12, to amend typo from 'personnel' to 'personal'
F & E 139-26	**Urgent Information Items** Cllr Eke raised a query regarding use of Swan Meadow car park by a filming crew, impacting on parking for local people and visitors to the town – noted this is a UDC owned car park and queries should be reported directly to them.
F & E 140-26	**Date and time of Next Meeting** Next meeting to be held on Monday 19 October 2026 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall, Saffron Walden.
F & E 141-26	**Confidential Item – Exclusion of Press and Public (Part II meeting)** 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. This item is confidential because it relates to personnel matters

F & E 142-26	**Town Clerk's Appraisal** The Town Clerk and Cllr de Vries reported on a successful appraisal review, conducted on 4.8.26
F & E 143-26	**Finance & Establishment Sub-Committee (Budget) Update** It was **Resolved:** To commend the draft budget as presented by the Sub-Committee for adoption to Full Council, subject to noting the following concerns: (a) The figure allowed for inflation may need to be increased (b) The 3% figure allowed for pay rises may need to be increased, given that historic pay agreements have been around 3.3% (c) That attendance at the Sub-Committee had been 4 attendees; those Members of the Sub-Committee who had been absent from the meeting on 08.09.26 had not felt able to express any views or opinions. It was noted the Sub-Committee meeting had however, been quorate and the determination of the Sub-Committee was valid.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.50pm