UPTON & NORTH ELMSALL PARISH COUNCIL
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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
Held on Tuesday 27th October 2026 at 6:30pm at the Village Hall

Present: Councillor P Atherton
Councillor E MacGregor
Councillor H Owen
Councillor S Spencer – Chair

Helen Senior – Clerk & RFO

Absent: Councillor E Farmer – Vice-Chair

16. Apologies for absence.

16.1. To receive apologies.
RESOLVED: that apologies be received on behalf of Councillor E Farmer.

16.2. To consider approval of the reasons for absence.
RESOLVED: that the reasons for absence be approved on behalf of Councillor E Farmer.

17. Declarations of interest.

17.1. To receive any declarations of interest not already declared under the Council's Code of Conduct or Members' Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
There were no declarations of interest received.

17.2. To consider any applications for dispensation.
There were no applications for dispensation to consider.

18. To approve and sign the draft minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee held on Tuesday 28th July 2026.
RESOLVED: that the draft minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee, held on Tuesday 28th July 2026, be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Signed: _____

19. To receive and scrutinise the Quarter 2 financial position for 2026/27 as at 30th September 2026, including the cashbook reports, balance sheet, budget monitoring report, virements and any actual or potential overspends, and to consider any significant movements since the end of Quarter 1.

Members raised a number of queries in relation to the Quarter 2 financial position, which were addressed by the Clerk & RFO.

RESOLVED: that the Quarter 2 financial position for 2026/27 as at 30th September 2026 be received and noted; and that Full Council be recommended to formally approve that the expenditure incurred in relation to asbestos clearance works at the Community Garden be funded from General Reserves.

20. To receive and scrutinise the completed bank reconciliations and corresponding independent checks for June, July and August 2026, noting the reconciled balances and considering any matters or exceptions arising.

RESOLVED: that the completed bank reconciliations and corresponding independent checks for June, July and August 2026 be received and noted, with no exceptions arising requiring further action.

21. To receive and review the VAT return for Quarter 2 of 2026/27, including the amount reclaimed and confirmation of submission.

RESOLVED: that the Quarter 2 VAT return for 2026/27, including the VAT reclaim of £3,865.26 submitted on 2nd October 2026 and received on 8th October 2026, be received and noted.

22. To review movements in the Council's general and earmarked reserves between 1st July 2026 and 30th September 2026 and consider whether any recommendations should be made to Full Council.

Members reviewed the movements in the Council's general and earmarked reserves and expressed concern regarding the remaining level of General Reserves and the limited available headroom for further unbudgeted expenditure during the remainder of the 2026/27 financial year.

Members noted that Full Council would need to remain mindful of the Council's reserve position when considering any further expenditure.

RESOLVED: that the movements in the Council's general and earmarked reserves between 1st July 2026 and 30th September 2026 be received and noted.

Signed: _____

23. To review the operation of the Council's internal financial controls during Quarter 2, including banking arrangements, online banking, payment authorisation and accounting procedures.

RESOLVED: that the operation of the Council's internal financial controls during Quarter 2 of 2026/27 be reviewed and noted, with no significant weaknesses or exceptions identified requiring further action.

24. To receive and review the initial draft budget for 2027/28, incorporating committee budget requirements, Council services and projects identified by Full Council; to consider projected income, expenditure and reserve requirements; and to establish the Council's indicative baseline budget and precept requirement.

Members reviewed the initial draft budget for 2027/28 and considered the Council's projected income, expenditure and reserve requirements.

Members agreed that the Grants budget should be increased by £1,500, to a total proposed budget of £11,500.

Members also discussed the anticipated costs of the May 2027 Parish Council elections and agreed that any unspent balance remaining within the 2026/27 Elections budget should be retained specifically for this purpose, rather than returning to General Reserves.

RESOLVED: that the 2027/28 Grants budget be increased by £1,500 to a total proposed budget of £11,500; that Full Council be recommended to transfer any unspent balance remaining within the 2026/27 Elections budget at the end of the financial year to an Elections Earmarked Reserve; and that the 2027/28 draft budget be amended accordingly, with the Elections Earmarked Reserve to be utilised towards the anticipated costs of the May 2027 elections.

25. To consider the financial implications and affordability of UNEF's three-year funding proposal, having regard to the Council's own 2027/28 budget requirement established under the preceding item; to consider the resulting impact on the indicative precept, reserves and future-year financial commitments; and to formulate a recommendation to Full Council.

Members gave detailed consideration to UNEF's three-year funding proposal, including the historical funding arrangements, the services currently provided from the Community Library and the potential impact on the community should those services be lost.

Signed: _____

Members considered the youth club provision, the organisation's future sustainability, the information contained within the business plan and the level of historical financial support previously provided. Concerns were also raised regarding the precedent that could be created by the Parish Council funding the staffing costs of an external organisation.

Particular consideration was given to the Council's own financial position. Members noted that the requested funding could not be accommodated within the Council's current financial plans without a substantial further increase to the precept, at a time when the Council was already facing significant increases in the cost of delivering its own services, projects, events and asset management responsibilities.

Members agreed that the current funding proposal should be declined. However, members also considered that the Parish Council should continue to engage informally with UNEF over the following twelve months, with both parties sharing relevant information and exploring all possible options for supporting the future sustainability of the Community Library.

RESOLVED: that Full Council be recommended to:

1. decline UNEF's current three-year funding proposal;
2. engage informally with UNEF over the following twelve months to explore the future needs of the Community Library and any financial or non-financial support which the Parish Council may be able to provide; and
3. consider any future formal request for support only if and when a new proposal is developed following those discussions.

26. To note that the next meeting of the Finance Committee will take place on Tuesday 26th January 2027 at 6:30pm at the Village Hall.

RESOLVED: that the next meeting of the Finance Committee, to take place on Tuesday 26th January 2027 at 6:30pm at the Village Hall, be noted.

In the absence of any further business, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Signed: _____