

NORTHWAY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee held on Wednesday 28th January 2026, commencing at 7:00 p.m. in the Ray Shill Room at Northway Community Hub.

Present: Cllr S Terry (Chair) Cllr P Godwin (Vice-Chair)
Cllr M Barnes Cllr K Poole (from Min Ref FIN/09/25*)
Cllr J Roberts Cllr S Ward

In Attendance: Mrs C Woodward, Clerk of the Council
Mrs L Stewart, Clerk's Assistant

FIN/05/26 **Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Shelton had tendered apologies. No further apologies were received.

FIN/06/26 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest, as required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 12th April 2023 (Minute Ref C/85/23), were made.

FIN/07/26 **Minutes of the Previous Finance Committee Meetings**

26th November 2025 - Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Minutes of the Meeting that took place on 26th November 2025 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Barnes SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

14th January 2026 – Cllr Barnes PROPOSED that the Minutes of the Meeting that took place on 14th January 2026 should be approved as a true and accurate record. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: Cllr Barnes Cllr Godwin
Cllr Roberts Cllr Terry

ABSTENSIONS: Cllr Ward

FIN/08/26 **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

FIN/46/25 Cupboards / Kitchen Units (Min Ref C/283/25 refers) – The cupboard units were now installed.

FIN/58/25 Signage – A 'Ramp Access' sign had been erected at the back of the Community Hub.

FIN/03/26 Financial Requirements for the year 2026/2027 – The Precept request in the sum of £240,060.00 had now been forwarded to Tewkesbury Borough Council.

FIN/268/25 Financial Requirements – DCK Accounting Solutions have been contracted to undertake the Year End Close Down and Financial Statement Preparation.

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FIN/09/26 Parish Council's Accounts up to 31st December 2025

- a. **Review of Statements** – Cllrs Ward and Roberts undertook a review of the statements and invoices to ensure there were no discrepancies. This formed part of the Council's Risk Management Programme, they confirmed that all was in order.

*7.06 pm Cllr Poole joined the meeting.

- b. **Bank Reconciliation and Balance Sheet** – Members reviewed the Bank Reconciliation and Balance Sheet up to 31st December 2025. The Bank Statement and Accounts reconciled and there were no queries relating to the Balance Sheet. Cllr Ward PROPOSED approval. Cllr Godwin SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- c. **Budget Statement** – Members reviewed the Budget Statement (detailed income and expenditure) which should be sitting roughly at 75%. Overspends had been noted at previous meetings. There were no causes for concern.

Cllr Ward PROPOSED approval of the Budget Statement. Cllr Poole SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- d. **Under and Over Spends** – Members AGREED not to vire any funds between budgets.

FIN/10/26 Interim Internal Audit Report

The completed Interim Internal Audit report had been returned by Auditing Solutions Ltd with no issues raised, this would also be received by Full Council.

FIN/11/26 Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit

Members reviewed the Effectiveness of Internal Audit and did not feel any changes were necessary except for a typing error under 'scope of internal audit'. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that this was recommended to Full Council for approval. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/12/26 Review of Risk Assessment

Members reviewed the Risk Assessment, and it was noted that the CCTV covering the skatepark should also be included. No other changes were made. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that this was recommended to Full Council for approval.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/13/26 Legionella Testing

The Clerk tabled reports from CDI Facilities who had undertaken the testing and sampling for Legionella. The Administration Assistant had also conducted interim testing. No action was necessary at this time.

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FIN/14/26 Northway Community Hub

- a. **Leaking Roof** – The Clerk reminded Members that she had been asked to contact the Council's insurers to see where it stood on the leaking roof, the 15-year guarantee and the lack of action from the firm that installed it. She went on to say that she had held off on doing this as she had tried contacting the installers and she had a number of contractors looking at the roof.

The first contractor had suggested that to find the problem would mean a much closer inspection and there would be a cost attached to this. Another contractor had been that day and felt that before any inspections could be done the drains all required a proper clean and advised that they would provide a quotation for the work. A third contractor was still awaiting.

Cllr Roberts suggested that the insurers could be contacted alongside these other inspections, so the Clerk agreed to make contact and bring it back to the next meeting.

b. **Utilities:-**

- i. **Electricity and Gas** – Although the Council was still in contract with all utilities except for water, there were anticipated increases in standing charges coming forward and it was recommended that the Council go into further contracts. The Clerk tabled some costings provided through the broker Fusion for Business that had set up the Council's existing accounts. There were three firms listed SmartFIX, OSC and Yu all quoting similar costings. The only supplier listed that could be found with a good review was Yu. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that if Yu was offering a green tariff to accept the 2-year contract. Cllr Roberts SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- ii. **Water** – The Clerk tabled information relating to Water and it appeared that Waterplus was the cheapest option to go into contract with and, as this was the existing supplier, it made sense. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that the Council should enter a three-year contract with Waterplus saving the council £110.00 per year. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- iii. **Direct Debits** – The Clerk tabled a notification of a change in monthly budget payment with Smartest Energy for information.

- c. **Kitchen Stores** – The Clerk tabled an audit that the Caretaker had undertaken of the kitchen supplies. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that when 5 or more items were missing a replacement order should be made.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- d. **TV Licensing** – The Clerk informed Members that a 'No Licence Needed Declaration' had been received from TV Licensing. The Clerk had already completed this as there was a short return date. Previously, this had been a case of ticking a yes or no box but was now more in depth. As the 'No Licence Needed' option had been picked (as was usually the case) the only concern raised was that hirers may live stream, and this was outside of the control of the Council. Members talked about including this in the hire policy and changing the terms and conditions to cover this. Cllr Terry PROPOSED that a statement stating 'Please do not live stream TV and radio during your hire as there is no TV Licence for the facility. If you ignore this request you do so at your own risk' should be included.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- e. **Landlord Safety Certificate** – The Clerk tabled an up-to-date Landlord Gas Safety Record Certificate. She also mentioned that she had been contacted by the Fire Service who wished to undertake an audit over the telephone.

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FIN/15/26

Changing Room Facility

- a. **Inspection** – The Clerk had met with Cllrs Roberts and Ward at the Changing Room to undertake a further inspection following the one in the autumn last year to ensure that the items raised had been rectified.

Photographs were tabled with comments as follows:-

- The gutter end piece had come off again (Cllr Ward fixed this on site)
- The goal posts were leaning on the guttering

Remind the Club again that the goal posts should not be leaning on guttering at any time.

- A piece of carpet and an aerosol can were on the large water heater (fire risk)

Members asked that these fire hazards were removed.

- The boiler room door was open

Members wanted the Club to be reminded that this door needed to be closed at all times.

- A lot of clutter on the floor of the boiler room including mops and brooms

Members agreed that the boiler room was still too cluttered and all trip hazards should be removed.

- The entrance hall had shelving, buckets, wooden reel, bins but was a fire exit and need to be clear

As the entrance doors were the only way in and out of the building it was essential that the hallway should be completely clear at all times and this should be relayed to the Club.

- The entrance and hallway were very muddy (although signage said no football boots)

The general state of cleanliness was not good and it was noted that the Clerk's Assistant had to undertake legionella checks in the building and it needed to be safe for her to do so. This should be raised with the Club.

- Kitchen clutter
- Line marker stored in ladies' toilets
- Toilets dirty but flushed
- Mower store tidy but where the equipment was stored made it dangerous for the caretaker to take the sub-meter readings

Members were particularly concerned about the dangers for the caretaker in trying to obtain meter readings and it was suggested that hatch marking tape was used to show a space that needed to be clear to make it safe as the Council has a duty of care to ensure her safety. Cllr Ward felt that with a bit of imagination things could be changed. Cllr Terry PROPOSED this concern was forwarded to the Football Club.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

- Old goal posts need removing

The Club had said they were waiting for a scrap metal merchant.

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FIN/15/26 **Changing Room Facility** (Continued)

- Last PAT Testing sticker seen said a retest was required in May 24 and no evidence that this had been done.

Members wanted the Club to be asked for assurances that all PAT Testing was up to date and to provide the Council with a completed report.

- Ref's shower room dirty
- The showers and changing rooms were muddy
- Side store – quite full

Cllr Roberts felt that the Council needed to make a stronger representation to the Club as things could not continue as they were he went on to PROPOSE that these issues were raised with the Football Club and that they were allowed one month to resolve them all. They should be informed of the costs incurred by the Council for maintaining the building and reminded that the lease was up for renewal and the charge was being reviewed. The Club Chairman should be included in the correspondence. Cllr Barnes SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

It was also noted that the gutters on the outside of the building were quite full of moss and needed cleaning, Members AGREED this should be arranged.

b. Repairs

- i. Following a request from the Football Club, a repair had been made where the previous alarm system had been installed, although this had not been painted.
 - ii. Members considered whether a new self-closing unit was purchased for the kitchen door. Following the installation of new doors (requirement of the Fire Risk Assessment) the heavier door was causing the self-closer to move. A further repair had been made to this, and it seemed it was now working better so members did not feel the need to install a new one at this time.
- c. **Lease** – It was AGREED that the Clerk should check the calendar and offer some dates for the Working Party to meet.

FIN/16/26 **Northway Village Hall**

No matters were raised relating to Northway Village Hall.

FIN/17/26 **IT Policy**

Members reviewed the draft IT Policy that was based on the latest one supplied by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). A few amendments to make it 'fit for purpose' for Northway Parish Council had been made. Cllr Roberts PROPOSED adoption of the new IT Policy which should be forwarded to all Councillors and be kept on a yearly review. Cllr Poole SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/18/26 **Bleed Cabinet**

The Clerk informed Members that she had been requested to re-register the Bleed cabinet and although previously this had not been recognised by SW Ambulance, they were now in the 'drop down' of choices which was positive.

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FIN/19/26 **Cyber Insurance**

The Clerk said she had not taken this any further as it seemed pertinent to get the IT Policy adopted prior to seeking cyber insurance cover.

FIN/20/26 **Ashchurch Gardens**

Following on from the agreement to contract Thomson & Bancks Solicitors to look into the Council obtaining adverse possession of the land between Oak Drive and Kingston Road (Min Ref FIN/64/25 & FIN/70/25 refers) a response had been received from the Solicitor. This confirmed that to be able to claim adverse possession the Parish Council needed to provide evidence that it had been maintaining this area for 30 years. The Clerk knew that this had been the case for at least 25 years, when the Council (then Ashchurch Parish Council) contracted Tewkesbury Borough Council to cut the grass on its behalf, but there were no records of this. She had been in contact with Tewkesbury Borough Council but they no longer had these records either.

Upon the dissolution of the land it would have been immediately vested in the Government Legal Department as 'Bona Vacantia' land, under statute. There was a formal process by which they could be notified that the Council was interested in acquiring the land and there would then be two options available to them whereby either, they agreed to sell the land to the Council, or they would disclaim their rights to the land, it then would automatically become vested in the Crown and the Council would have to apply to them to acquire the land.

If they agreed to sell the land the Council would have to be responsible for the Government Legal Department fees as well as their valuation fees (currently £3,000) and market value would have to be paid for the land. This would not be a quick process.

Members felt the process was very complicated and costly, and as the Council had maintained the land for so many years, at some point there would be evidence of 30 years of maintenance. The matter would go to GP to see how they wished to proceed i.e. tree planting.

Cllr Roberts PROPOSED that work to acquire the land was not continued and this should be recommended to Full Council. Cllr Ward SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

FIN/21/26 **Annual Governance**

The Clerk informed Members that as there would be some additional requirements known as Assertion 10 to the Annual Governance for the current year. This included an updated IT Policy, GDPR training for staff and councillors, web page checks, ensuring there was a gov.uk domain name and suitable email addresses for Councillors. The new IT Policy was adopted earlier in the meeting, and the Clerk was still investigating the other requirements.

FIN/22/26 **Correspondence for Action**

- a. **Penninsula** – Members received information from this company who had provided a quotation for giving Employment Law and Health & Safety advice. This was something that was covered under the advice that would normally be obtained from NFU. Cllr Roberts expressed an interest. Cllr Ward PROPOSED that the Council did not take up the offer for their services. Cllr Terry SECONDED.

FOR: UNANIMOUS

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FIN/66/26 **Correspondence received after 22nd January 2026**

- i. **Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government** - Details of the Section 137 expenditure limit had been set at £11.60 per elector for the 2026-2027 financial year, the previous year being set at £11.10.

As there was no other business the meeting concluded at 8.45 pm.