

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on Monday 8th September 2025 at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllrs Mike Shepherd (Chairman) Nigel Barker, Coral Shepherd, Brett Thomas, and Sarah Whitehead.

In attendance: Jo MacCallum Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)
Geraldine Scanlon Assistant Business Manager (ABM) & Minute Taker.

- 1 Apologies for absence** – All Committee members present.
- 2 Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations by councillors in any agenda item** – None received
- 3 Public participation** – None Present
- 4 Minutes of the Finance & Administration Committee meeting 14th July 2025**
 - a) To approve the Minutes**

The minutes were approved as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman, once the following amendment had been made.
Minute number 8 opening sentence should read
Cllr M Shepherd advised an annual review of the **Risk** Register was required.
 - b) To review action list**

The action list was reviewed with those completed removed.
Cllr M Shepherd said he had started the review on the Information Technology Policy but had not yet finalised it.
 - c) To consider matters arising**

Cllr M Shepherd requested a copy of the risk register, adopted under minute number 8, for posting on SharePoint. . The ABM agreed to arrange for a copy to be sent.
Cllr M Shepherd asked the ABM if the BM had an update regarding minute 15, photocopying costs to allow them to be reviewed for the budget setting.
The ABM said she would speak to the BM for an update.
- 5 Current Financial Position**
 - a) IAC monthly reports**

Cllr M Shepherd advised he had circulated his IAC reports for July 2025 and August 2025 via SharePoint and reported the following.
He confirmed the bank reconciliations for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st August 2025 were in order and the financial reports presented to councillors were numerically correct.
Payments made in July were authorised at the July Full Council meeting. The payments made through August were authorised in advance at the Full Council meeting held 28th July 2025, subject to the presentation of payment approval lists to Council on 22nd September.
 - b) Whole council budgets**

Cllr M Shepherd said all the usual financial reports had been placed on SharePoint prior to the meeting and asked Councillors if they had any questions regarding the finances.
Cllr B Thomas asked why there had been a payment to the energy supplier for the recreation ground? Cllr C Shepherd advised that the ABM usually contacts the supplier to

get the standing charge removed. However, the contractor that maintains the war memorial, on occasion, requires electricity and there have also been two events held at the recreation ground to commemorate VE and VJ day.

Cllr C Shepherd said she would raise the issues of the two electricity boxes at the war memorial gardens and the recreation ground at the next environment meeting. After discussion it was agreed that the BM would contact an electrician in respect of this.

Cllr C Shepherd reported the environment committee have been busy on the maintenance of their assets so several budgets' lines will be spent by October. Due to the Borough Council dramatically increasing the costs of emptying the dog bins, the environment committee will request the remaining amount required to cover the costs from accrued savings.

Cllr M Shepherd highlighted that the printing costs had been miscoded again and put to code 1135 Printer/Copier lease when code 1160 Printing costs should have been used. The error has been corrected. The RFO said she thought the error was happening as a default.

c) Aged debtors

Cllr C Shepherd said she had spoken with the ABM regarding the debtors list. Invoices 2429, 2427, 2426 have now been paid. The ABM had contacted the business owner of invoice 2430 and is awaiting payment.

The two that remain outstanding are invoices 2350 and 2400.

Cllr C Shepherd explained that both business owners have been contacted numerous times and both have had the first and second "Demand for payment" letters.

After discussion it was agreed the RFO prepares the required documents to take the matter to the small claims court, these will be served, in person, to the business owner of invoice 2350. And the ABM would make further contact with the owner for invoice 2400 regarding payment if nothing is received before the next F&A committee meeting the relevant documents will be prepared to take the debt to the small claims court.

d) Reserves

Cllr M Shepherd said the reserves reports have been circulated via SharePoint and advised there were no issues regarding the Reserves.

6 Changes to AGAR Return for 2025/26

Cllr M Shepherd said it had been reported in the Norfolk PTS newsletter that there are two changes to be made to the 2025/26 AGAR form.

The first is Assertion 10 deals with Digital and Data Compliance:

This requires smaller authorities to adopt a written IT policy, to have an official Domain, public website and council email system. Cllr M Shepherd advised he had obtained a template for an IT policy which he is in the process of tailoring for the Parish Council's needs. The council already complies with the rest of the assertion requirements.

The second Assertion 9 relates to Trust Funds:

This will not affect Dersingham Parish Council as we have no trust funds.

Cllr M Shepherd said he is yet to complete the migration of email addresses from .org.uk to Gov.uk.

7 IT Update and update on IT policy

This was covered in item 6.

8 Committee Spending Plans 2025-2026

Cllr C Shepherd reported that a streetlight survey had been carried and it has been advised that 5 streetlights on Woodside Close and Woodside Avenue need to be replaced. The cost of replacement is just under £15,000 and the environment committee would seek authority from Full Council for the payment to come from the project reserves.

Cllr M Shepherd said the F&A committee have not yet confirmed any items they wish to take forward. Cllr C Shepherd said the items previously discussed such as the Owl Pro and pull-down projector screens would assist with hybrid meetings however, the Government are yet to approve hybrid meetings. After discussion the RFO was asked to ascertain if the Government have yet agreed to allow hybrid meetings for councillors and report to the next F&A meeting.

9 NARS/EAAA – CPR and Defib training

The BM has now obtained costs from NARS and East Anglian Air Ambulance for providing training and a summary has been provided on SharePoint. The committee discussed Councillors attending a training session and felt that there would be insufficient numbers to justify a session. Cllr S Whitehead suggested that the staff working in the buildings where the defibs are located could be offered training as they are in the vicinity should anyone require assistance. NARS have quoted £200.00 for 20 people to attend if it was run as a public training course. It was agreed that the BM contacts the Spar shop, Thaxters, Co-op, and the Social Club to ask how many members of staff would be willing and able to attend a course if one were provided. The BM would then report back to F&A to discuss if booking a course is viable. It was agreed that the course should be free of charge to the participants.

10 Grants

10.1 Request for grant increase to Dersingham Sportsground Association

Cllr M Shepherd said a request had been received from the Dersingham Sportsground Association (DSGA) to increase the grant from the Parish Council from £6700.00 to £7000.00 for the next financial year. This will be reviewed when the budget setting commences for 2026/27 financial year. Cllr C Shepherd said she will write to the DSGA to update them on our process. Cllr C Shepherd said she will also contact the Church to ask if they require an increase to their grant.

10.2 Release of payments to Church and DSGA

After discussion it was agreed that the outstanding balance of the approved grants should be released. Cllr M Shepherd proposed the payments be added to the BACs list for authorisation at Septembers Full Council meeting. **It was resolved to approve the proposal.**

11 Asset Register update process

Cllr M Shepherd said a process needed to be established to update the Asset Register on Edge and Parish Online maps whenever new assets are purchased, replaced or disposed of.

Cllr M Shepherd suggested the RFO, BM, ABM and Cllr C Shepherd have a meeting to discuss the process needed and it was agreed that Cllr M Shepherd would organise a meeting.

12 Internal Auditor for 2025/26 Accounts.

The RFO reported she had contacted six companies for quotes to carry out the next Internal Audit but only two have responded to date. She will compile a report for the next

F&A committee meeting giving an overview of the responses received. Cllr C Shepherd suggested the RFO speaks to the BM to see if she could obtain other company details through the Clerk group.

The RFO advised the committee that the Parish Councils income has exceeded the threshold to use Receipts and Payments accounting. The Parish Council will have to switch to Income and Expenditure (I&E) accounting. This is achievable using the current EDGE accounting package. The RFO will discuss with EDGE what is needed to implement I&E and will report back to the committee.

13 Business Manager Update

13.1 Defibrillator Checks

Cllr M Shepherd said the BM had placed her report on SharePoint prior to the meeting. The Defib checks have been carried out and there had been no issues.

13.2 DVCA photocopying invoice.

The invoice has been issued to DVCA for the quarter from 2nd June to 1st September for £22.94

14 Correspondence

None received

15 Items for inclusion on the next agenda

Savings Account.
Budget Setting.

16 Date of next meeting – Monday 13th October 2025 at 7pm in the Loft.

The meeting was placed in closed session at 8.31pm

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider passing the following resolution: "That by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

17 Leases Update

17.1 Sportsground

Cllr C Shepherd advised the Sportsground underlease has now been finalised and signed and has been sent to land registry to be registered. Cllr M Shepherd asked for the item to remain an agenda item until the lease has been registered.

17.2 Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hall

Cllr C Shepherd advised that work on the lease is progressing

With no further business the meeting was closed at 8.35pm

Action Points

Cllr M Shepherd

- To organise a meeting to discuss the process for updating of the Asset registers for the RFO, BM, ABM and Cllr C Shepherd to attend

Cllr C Shepherd

- To contact a builder/contractor for advice and quotation for installation of safety roof anchorage points.
- To acknowledge receipt of grant increase request from DSGA and contact the Church to ask if they require an increase to their grant for 2026/27.

RFO

- To review auditors and accountants for future Internal Audits.
- To contact the BM re Internal Auditor contacts.
- To prepare documents for the small claims court regarding the non-payment of invoice 2350
- To ascertain if the Government had agreed to hybrid meetings for councillors and when they became effective.
- To add the second part payment of the grants to both the Sportsground association and the Church to September's payments list for approval by Full Council
- To present a report regarding the quotations for next year's Internal Audit.
- To discuss with EDGE IT Income and Expenditure accounting.

Business Manager

- To amend the readoption date to this year's Risk Register and place on SharePoint.
- To contact the Spar shop, Thaxters, Co-op, and the Social Club to ask how many members of staff would be willing to attend a course. The BM would then report back to F&A to discuss if booking a course is viable.
- To contact an electrician to attend the recreation ground and advise what is needed to ensure the electrical outlets are secure and obtain a quote for a safety inspection/testing.

Assistant Business Manager

- To speak to the BM regarding the amendment to the readoption date of the Risk Register as the version held on SharePoint shows last year's date.
- To liaise with the BM regarding the photocopying costs prior to Budget Setting.
- To contact the company regarding the unpaid invoice 2400.