



THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Met at Marshalswick Community Centre on Monday 22nd September 2025 at 7.30pm

PRESENT:

Councillors John Hale (Chair), James Lambert, Julie Oakley, Jenny Roberts, Anne Thomas

OFFICERS:

Simon Thwaites, Parish Clerk, Emma Hostler, Deputy Clerk

ABSENT:

Councillor Graham Leonard

IN ATTENDANCE:

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821 Apologies

There was none.

822 Disclosures of Interest and Dispensations

There was none.

823 Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd June 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd June 2025, having been previously circulated, were reviewed. It was unanimously:

Resolved

That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chair.

824 2025/26 Budgetary Control

Members reviewed a budgetary control report showing projected outturn for 2025/26 of £343,838 against an approved budget of £377,832. This represents a reduction on budgeted net expenditure of £33,994 or £27,494 if the Sports and Recreation Committee decides to install football/rugby goals at the Jersey Farm Open Space. Material variations were summarised as;

- New doors at Marshalswick Community Centre
- New tables at Marshalswick Community Centre
- No Parish Event
- Storage Container at the Woodland Park
- Increased Community Centre income/court hire

Post meeting notes: The Sports and Recreation Committee has resolved to install the football goals as above. Please also see the item regarding heating at Marshalswick Community Centre later in these minutes. Additionally, there will be a request to October Full Council to part-fund the new Woodland Park pond.

- 825 Review of Banking Standing Orders and Direct Debits**
Members reviewed a schedule of standing orders and direct debits paid through the Treasurer's Account as required by regulations.
- 826 External audit 2024/25**
The Parish Council's External Auditor, PKF Littlejohn, has now finalised the 2024/25 external audit. The auditor's report is attached with one reference to an unchecked box on Section 1 (box 8) of the return. Other than this there are no matters arising. It was stated that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been published in accordance with legislation. This was formally noted by the Committee.
- 827 Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS)**
The Clerk raised the matter of eligibility for this scheme with the County Association who raised it with the Head of the Regulatory reporting Team at Unity Bank. A decision was reached that, provided the **annual precept** doesn't exceed £431,749 (0.5 million Euros), cover within the scheme remains in place. The Parish Council's precept for 2025/26 is £351,303. This was formally noted.
- 828 Asset Register**
The Clerk informed Members that NALC does not specify a minimum value of items to appear on a asset register and that it is for local councils to decide. The minimum value must, however, be consistently applied.
Following discussion it was unanimously;
- Resolved;**
That a minimum asset value of £500 per item is maintained on the register going forward.
- 829 Earmarked Reserves**
(a) Traffic Calming Reserve
Members noted that a Traffic Calming Reserve (£22,450) has been earmarked for a period of at least eleven years without being called on, even when works were carried out on the St Albans Road last year. As such, it does not strictly meet the criteria for this type of reserve. Following discussion it was unanimously;
- Resolved**
To move the Traffic Calming reserve back to General Reserves, this move to form part of the budget presented to Full Council this coming December.
- (b) Community Centres Reserve**
Members agreed that there is no reason for two separate reserves to be maintained for the two community centres. Following discussion it was unanimously;
- Resolved**
To combine the two reserves to form one single reserve of £30,000. This move to be presented to Full Council in December through the budget setting process.
- 830 Funding Air Source Heat Pumps at Marshalswick Community Centre**
At Full Council on 10th September it was resolved to install heat pumps in the Marshalswick Community Centre and Parish Office. This was subject to approval being given by this Committee for the £12,734 expenditure in 2025/26. Following consideration of the budgetary control position (item 824) it was unanimously;
- Resolved**
That the upgrade to heating will be funded within 2025/26.

831 Neighbourhood News

Members discussed the annual cost of producing four copies of the Neighbourhood News and whether it continues to represent the work of The Council. Also discussed was the question of achieving value for money in reaching the community, its primary purpose. Councillor Hale suggested that the Clerk emails all councillors, asking their opinion on how the magazine might evolve in future. The matter can then go back to the Finance Committee in October.

832 Matters of note

- Quarterly bank reconciliations have been signed off as required. It is a requirement of the Financial Regulations that this is noted by the committee.
- IAC Audit and Consultancy Limited will carry out an interim internal audit of the Parish Council on 10th November 2025.
- A salary award of 3.2% for 2025/26 has been agreed between the unions and the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. This was paid with the August salary. The award is in line with that budgeted.
- The balance of this year's precept (50%) will be received on September 26th 2025.

833 Matters Arising

There was none.

834 Items for Inclusion on the Next Agenda

- Neighbourhood News

Date of Next Meeting – Monday 27th October 2025 at 7.30pm, Marshalswick Community Centre.

The meeting closed at 8.32 pm.

Chair **Date**