



THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Met at Marshalswick Community Centre on Monday 3rd November 2025 at 7.30pm (postponed from 27th October)

PRESENT:

Councillors John Hale (Chair), James Lambert, Jenny Roberts, Anne Thomas, Graham Leonard

OFFICERS:

Simon Thwaites, Parish Clerk, Emma Hostler, Deputy Clerk

ABSENT:

Councillor Julie Oakley

IN ATTENDANCE:

-

835 Apologies

There was none.

836 Disclosures of Interest and Dispensations

There was none.

837 Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd September 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on the 22nd September 2025, having been previously circulated, were reviewed. It was unanimously:

Resolved

That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chair.

838 2025/26 Budgetary Control and 2026/27 Draft Budget

Members reviewed and discussed the draft budget for 2026/27. It was noted that the reserves position and five year forecast (see next item) were based on projected net expenditure of £362,592 in 2025/26 against a budget of £377,832 representing a projected underspend on budget of £15,240.

In summary, draft proposed net expenditure for 2026/2027 was noted to be £373,497, a reduction of 1% on the current year's budget. The draft budget is a combination of ongoing operational expenditure and new one-off items of expenditure as previously agreed by committees. In summary, material changes from 2025/26 to 2026/27 are :

- Increased administration £5,916
- Increase in Grounds Maintenance contract costs £6,939
- Decrease in Sports & Recreation capital spend £11,787

It was unanimously;

Resolved

To approve the draft 2026/27 budget as circulated subject to funding (see minute 840) and subject to final approval by Full Council on 10th December 2025.

839 5 Year Model

A five-year financial model gave Members an overview of the draft 2026/27 budget by identifying trends in the levels of reserves held.

It was accepted that the projection supported both the recommended draft budget at minute 838 and the recommended precept at minute 840. Reserves, it was noted, will begin to increase from 2026/27. An error on the value of contributions to reserves from 2027/28 was accepted and a corrected version was circulated the following day.

840 2026/27 Draft Reserves, Precept and Funding Requirement

Members reviewed the projected opening and closing position on reserves including **a new item from the Sports and Recreation Committee to annually set aside (earmark) £25,000 for future large-scale projects.**

The projection assumed that (i) the draft 2026/27 budget was approved and (ii) a 7% increase on the 2025/2026 precept was agreed. Also assumed was the accuracy of the 2025/26 projected outturn. The following was noted when considering the above positions.

It was proposed by Councillor Hale, seconded by Councillor Lambert and unanimously;

Resolved

To recommend to Full Council to apply an increase on the 2025/26 precept of 8% when next meeting on December 10th 2025.

841 Neighbourhood News

Members considered a report and recommendation from the Clerk relating to achieving value for money through this method of communication. Two key issues were **(i) Magazine Content** - The quality of the existing magazine in terms of content beyond what the schools and churches are submitting and whether all councillors can be more involved. Additionally, what is felt to be an excessive level of advertising. **(ii) Format** - The hard copy format of the magazine in comparison to other forms of social media. The meeting was split on these points although both arguments were agreed as subjective given the difficulties in consulting with end users. Members did however agree that a further review is fully necessary. it was unanimously;

Resolved

To recommend to Full Council in December to continue with current arrangements for one year (four editions commencing Spring 2026). A working party of three councillors and the Editor to be formed after each edition (commencing December 2025) to explore content for the next. The Councillor members (chosen at Full Council) to change after each edition. This is hoped to encourage fresh ideas and to encourage submissions by Councillors.

842 Matters of note

- The 2025/26 salary award has been agreed between unions and the National Joint Council for Local Government Services and is reflected in Appendix 1.
- The Council is in discussion with the District Council around the provision of toilets in Marshalswick and Sandridge village.

843 Matters Arising Since the Circulation of The Agenda.

There was none.

844 Items for Inclusion on the Next Agenda

- Neighbourhood News
- Public toilets

Date of Next Meeting – Monday 9th February 2025 at 7.30pm, Marshalswick Community Centre.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Chair **Date**