Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting
**Date:** Wednesday 02 September 2026
**Time:** 6:30pm
**Venue:** Town Hall, Bridge Street, Downham Market PE38 9DW

**Present**

Chair – Cllr Lane

Councillors Brewer, Campbell-Robb, Jordan, Leivers, Pegg, Perkin (7)

Non-Committee Member –The Mayor, Councillor Wiles & Cllr J Pyatt

Claire Dornan (Town Clerk)

There was one member of the public present.

**1. Welcome, Apologies, and Health & Safety Notices (Chair)**
**To receive apologies for absence.**
**To note the location of fire exits.**
**To remind attendees that mobile phones should be switched to silent.**

Apologies were given for Cllr S Moyses who was working.

**2. Declarations of Interest**
**To receive any declarations of personal or pecuniary interests relating to items on the agenda.**

There were no declarations of interest made.

**3. Public Participation**
**Members of the public may speak on matters on the agenda (maximum of 3 minutes per person, at the Chair's discretion).**

The non-Committee members present did not wish to speak.

The Town Clerk advised that correspondence had been received regarding items not on the agenda. These related to the Sunday Market and hire of the Town Hall on a Sunday. No decisions were made however the Town Clerk was supported to respond on behalf of the Council.

**4. Minutes**
**To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 August 2026.**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 August 2026 are a true and accurate record.**

Proposed: Cllr Campbell-Robb Seconded: Cllr Lane 6 In Favour 1 Abstention

**5. Financial Regulations**
**To review the final draft of the Financial Regulations, consider any final amendments, and recommend their adoption to Full Council.**

The document was not available for review. The item was therefore rolled forward to the next meeting.

**6. Standing Orders**
**To review the final draft of the Standing Orders, consider any final amendments, and recommend their adoption to Full Council.**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the final draft of the Financial Regulations be approved for recommendation to Full Council, subject to the following amendments:**

1. **Remove the words "stand when speaking" under paragraph 3(i).**
2. **Add "January" to paragraph 5(j)(iv).**
3. **Change "Council's" to "Councillors" under paragraph 13(d)(iii).**
4. **Add page numbers throughout the Financial Regulations document.**

Proposed: Cllr Lane Seconded: Cllr Campbell-Robb 6 In Favour 1 Against

**7. Risk Register**
**To review the final draft of the Risk Register, consider any final amendments, and recommend their adoption to Full Council.**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the final draft of the Risk Register be approved for recommendation to Full Council, subject to the following amendments:**

1. **Correct the spelling error on page 17, changing "car carks" to "car parks" in the wording relating to Council assets being in a poor state of repair.**
2. **Add "Central Government" to the section "Restrictions placed on Council by Local Government" on page 22.**

Proposed: Cllr Lane Seconded: Cllr Leivers 6 In Favour 1 Against

**8. Financial Matters**
**8.1 To receive the Bills for Payment schedule.**

**RESOLVED:**

**That payments 346 - 384 from the 2026/2027 financial year be approved.**

Proposed: Cllr Pegg Seconded: Cllr Lane All In Favour

**8.2 To receive the Receipts schedule.**

**RESOLVED:**

**That receipts 431 - 478 from the 2026/2027 financial year be approved.**

Proposed: Cllr Lane Seconded: Cllr Leivers All In Favour

**8.3 To receive the outcome of the monthly Councillor checks (July 2026).**

Cllrs Leivers & Perkin confirmed that they had completed the checks for July 2026 and had found no issues.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Committee accept the findings of Cllrs Leivers and Perkin.**

Proposed: Cllr Leivers Seconded: Cllr Perkin All In Favour

**8.4 To agree a rota for completing the monthly Councillor checks.**

The Committee considered the suggestion by the Town Clerk to introduce a rota for the monthly Councillor checks. Members felt that, rather than the checks being limited to members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, responsibility should be shared across all Councillors.

Members considered that this would provide a wider range of Councillors with an understanding of the checks being undertaken and allow different Members to view the records on a regular basis, providing greater transparency and independence in the checking process.

The Committee also noted the importance of maintaining an appropriate separation of duties and agreed that Councillors responsible for payment approvals should not undertake the monthly checks.

The Committee agreed that the suggestion should be referred to Full Council for consideration and agreement, including the arrangements for establishing a suitable rota.

**8.5 To receive an update on the Bank Mandate.**

The Town Clerk provided an update on the Bank Mandate. A complaint had been made to Lloyds Bank regarding the handling of a previous request, where Cllr Lane's signature was considered different from the signature held on the bank's system. Lloyds Bank acknowledged that, rather than sending an encrypted email which the Council had previously advised it was unable to open, they should have contacted the Council by telephone or post. Lloyds Bank had offered £30 compensation, which had been accepted.

It was reported that a new request will need to be submitted to remove the Deputy Clerk who has now retired. The previous request to add the new Deputy Clerk had, however, been successfully revived and remains in progress.

The Committee was also advised that Cllr Sims and Cllr Perkin had been changed to full signatories, enabling them to approve changes to the Bank Mandate and assist with the process going forward.

The Committee noted the update.

**8.6 To consider any Committee Overspend requests.**

The Committee considered an initial request from the Property Committee for expenditure of £6,100 + VAT to introduce measures to better control parking at the Jubilee Community Centre.

Members noted that, under the current Financial Regulations, the expenditure exceeds the Committee's approval limit of £5,000 and therefore requires approval by Full Council. The Committee considered the reasons for the proposed expenditure, including the increasing number of vehicles parking on the grassed areas, causing damage to the grounds and potentially obstructing fire exits and emergency access routes.

Members also noted concerns regarding vehicles parking beneath the tree at Rouses End, where repeated vehicle movements and parking could cause soil compaction and potentially damage the tree's root system. The proposed measures were considered necessary to improve the management of parking, protect the Council's assets and surrounding environment, and reduce potential safety risks.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Finance & General Purposes Committee recommend to Full Council the approval of the Property Committee's initial request for expenditure of £6,100 + VAT to introduce measures to better control parking at the Jubilee Community Centre.**

Proposed: Cllr Jordan Seconded: Cllr Lane All In Favour

The Committee considered a request for emergency expenditure in relation to the temporary relocation of the NHS Breast Screening Van.

Council had previously agreed that the Breast Screening Van could be located free of charge in Hollies No. 1 car park for a period of eight weeks. However, following the tender process for the resurfacing of the car park, the contractor advised that the new tarmac would not be guaranteed if a static vehicle of the weight of the Breast Screening Van remained on the surface. The Property Committee therefore agreed that the van should instead be located behind the bus stop in Hollies No. 2 car park.

As the relocated position required electricity and water to be supplied to the van, road covers were initially authorised by the Property Committee on 27 August 2026. However, following a trial of the road covers, it became apparent that the smooth surface of the new car park meant that the covers could move when vehicles travelled over them at speed. Although there is a 10mph speed restriction in the area, this is not always observed. Movement of the covers could result in the electrical cables being pulled from the electrical box or the Breast Screening Van, potentially causing damage to the NHS equipment and/or Morrisons' electrical box.

The Committee noted that cancelling / rescheduling the Breast Screening Van would present a significant reputational risk to the Council, given the importance of supporting the local community and providing access to NHS breast screening services locally. There was insufficient time to convene an Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council before the van was due to be located, and an alternative solution was therefore required as a matter of urgency.

J R Light & Sound had agreed to construct a temporary gantry at short notice to safely carry the electrical and water services to the van. The costs provided, all plus VAT, were:

- Gantry hire: £350 per week x 8 weeks = £2,800
- Cable hire: £40 per week x 8 weeks = £320
- Installation: £450
- Removal: £450
- Fencing: £60 per week x 8 weeks = £480
- Plywood to prevent access/climbing of the gantry: £30

The total estimated cost was therefore £4,530 + VAT.

The van is due to leave the site on 3 November 2026.

The Committee considered whether structural drawings should be obtained, at an estimated additional cost of £400–£500, but agreed that these were not necessary. It was noted that the gantry would require a minimum one-tonne weight on each side to provide stability in the event of high winds. The contractor would be responsible for insuring the installation and removal of the gantry. The Council would remain responsible for any graffiti, theft or damage caused by a vehicle striking the structure.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Committee approve the emergency expenditure of £4,530 + VAT for the provision of the temporary gantry, cabling, fencing, installation and removal required to safely accommodate the NHS Breast Screening Van in Hollies No. 2 car park for the agreed eight-week period, noting that there was insufficient time to convene an Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council and that cancellation of the service would present a significant reputational risk to the Council.**

Proposed: Cllr Jordan Seconded: Cllr Lane All In Favour

Although The Mayor, Cllr Wiles, was unable to vote, he asked that his support be recorded for this resolution.

**9. Phishing Campaign & Usecure Report**
**To receive the Phishing Campaign and Usecure Report.**

Members noted the Phishing Campaign report dated 11 August 2026.

The Usecure report had not been received ahead of the meeting so could not be considered.

**10.Investment Strategy**
**To agree an investment strategy and make a recommendation to Full Council.**

**RESOLVED:**

**That consideration of the Investment Strategy be deferred until after the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget, to allow Members to consider the implications of any announcements and changes arising from the Budget before agreeing an Investment Strategy and making a recommendation to Full Council.**

Proposed: Cllr Lane Seconded: Cllr Leivers All In Favour

**11. Market Licence**
**To review the Market Licence in accordance with the resolution of Full Council (Minute 14, Tuesday 14 April 2026), consider any proposed amendments, and make a recommendation to Full Council.**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Finance & General Purposes Committee recommend to Full Council that responsibility for the Market Licence be transferred from the Finance & General Purposes Committee to the newly established Market & Tourism Committee, with the Market &**

**Tourism Committee responsible for reviewing, managing and making any future recommendations in relation to the Market Licence.**

Proposed: Cllr Jordan Seconded: Cllr Lane 6 In Favour 1 Against

**12. Next Meeting**
**To agree the date and time of the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.**

Members discussed the day and time of future meetings and noted that a Tuesday meeting would assist a Member who had found it difficult to attend on the current meeting day.

Members also recognised that a change of day could have an impact on other Members, particularly in relation to childcare and work commitments.

It was therefore agreed to trial holding the Committee meetings on a Tuesday and review the arrangement as appropriate.

The next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee was agreed for Tuesday 20 October 2026 at 6:30pm at the Town Hall.

**Meeting closed:** 7:47 pm