

A meeting of the Finance Working Party was held in the Village Hall, Station Road, Countesthorpe, on Wednesday 12th November 2025

Present: Cllrs S Turner, M Gillespie, P Mount, W Read and M Smith

Parish Council Manager: Miss J Leech

Assistant Parish Council Manager: Miss E Frost

1. Apologies for absence, if any
Apologies were received from Cllr K Pearce.
2. To receive disclosures of interest
There were no disclosures of interest.
3. To verify accounts for payment
It was recommended to approve the accounts for payment for the Parish Council and the Village Hall.
4. Review budget and expenditure 2025/2026
The budget as at 31st October 2025 was received and all was in order.

The following was noted when discussing the budget and expenditure:

. That the cellar cooler had failed and was beyond repair. Approval had been sought to replace the system at a cost of £3755. Any bar wastage was yet to be calculated but estimated to be around £200

. That the water heater in the men's toilets had failed and a quote for a repair/replacement was being obtained

. Due to the recent increase in book stock value, there had been an increase in the insurance premium of £85

Recommended for approval

To approve the action of the Parish Council Manager, Chairman and Chair of Finance in placing the order for the replacement cellar cooler at cost of £3755.

To not proceed with purchasing a mower to replace the oldest on site at present due to other demands being placed on the budget via repairs and projects.

Following receipt of a quote totalling £890 for a repair on the John Deere, to arrange for the 1000 hour service as soon as possible.

To proceed with renewing the air compressor insurance, at a cost of £463.37.

To accept the quote from Secom to install two smoke detectors in the main hall, at a cost of £2130.

To not proceed with replacing the hard drive on the CCTV system at present, following the initial quote being provided in May 2025, due to there having been no further issues.

To accept the quote of £825 from Memsafe, for the required repair works to five memorials which failed the recent memorial inspection and to contact other parishes with cemeteries as to whether they had a policy on covering the cost to repair memorials.

5. Six monthly Internal Audit
The six monthly internal audit report was received and the recommendations noted which related to inputting in errors in the payment approval lists and that when the bank reconciliations are checked by a member, they should be signed and dated rather than just an initial.

6. Verification of bank reconciliations against bank statements and payments – To note that Cllr K McGovern had verified the bank reconciliations against the bank statements and payments for all accounts to 30th September 2025

It was noted that Cllr K McGovern had verified the bank reconciliations against bank statements and payments for all accounts for the second quarter.

7. Verification of online bank statements against bank reconciliations – To note that Cllr C Ibbotson had verified the bank statements against bank reconciliations for all accounts to 30th September 2025

It was noted that Cllr C Ibbotson had verified the bank statements against bank reconciliations for all accounts for the second quarter.

8. Investments

Further to the Parish Council's approval, £40,000 had now been reinvested into a Lloyds 12-month fixed rate account.

9. To review and approve the direct debits list

The current direct debits list was reviewed and approved.

10. Practitioners Guide – Year end 2025/2026 changes – Standing item

It was noted that Vision ICT had undertaken an MOT on the Parish Council's website and the compliance statement had been updated accordingly. Any requirements arising from the MOT report would be actioned in due course.

11. Local Government Pension Scheme – Employer contributions

- a. Correspondence from Leicestershire County Council in response to queries on employer contribution rates for the forthcoming year

Correspondence regarding queries on employer contribution rates for the forthcoming year, from Leicestershire County Council, was received.

- b. Local Government Pension Scheme 2025 valuation and to agree responses to the feedback form

The draft Local Government Pension Scheme valuation had been received with it being noted that the employer pension contribution rates are set to decrease from 1st April 2026 and the draft rate for the forthcoming three financial years was noted. Responses to the feedback form, requested as part of the correspondence from Leicestershire County Council, were agreed and would be submitted. It would be queried as whether the new figure took into account Ill Health Insurance.

12. HR Advice contract

Details of quotations obtained in relation to HR Advice contract which renews in the new year was noted.

Recommended for approval

To proceed with renewing the HR Advice contract with Worknest, upon completion of the existing contract in 2026, at a cost of £1962 per annum for five years.

13. Budget 2026/2027

The draft budget for 2026/2027 continued to be discussed and would be further reviewed at the next meeting of the Finance Working Party, scheduled for 10th December 2025. The draft would be circulated to the Parish Council for its December meeting for initial consideration. The final budget would be adopted at the January meeting of the Parish Council. Details of the current financial commitment relating to repairs and projects was noted.

14. Reinstatement/revaluation cost assessment

It was noted that all of the revaluation reports had been received and submitted to Gallagher who had subsequently submitted to update the insurers.

15. Grant aid
There were no grant aid applications to consider.
16. S106 payment
There was nothing to discuss.
17. To receive any correspondence
There was no correspondence.
18. Matters arising for information purposes
There was nothing to raise.
19. Date of next meeting
The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 10th December 2025.