

A meeting of the Finance Working Party was held in the Village Hall, Station Road, Countesthorpe, on Wednesday 8th April 2026

Present: Cllrs M Gillespie, K Pearce, W Read and M Smith.

Parish Council Manager: Miss J Leech

Assistant Parish Council Manager: Miss E Frost

The meeting was chaired by Cllr M Smith.

1. Apologies for absence, if any

Apologies were received from Cllrs P Mount and S Turner.

2. To receive disclosures of interest

Cllr K Pearce declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 13, specifically the grant aid application received from The Next Chapter.

3. To verify accounts for payment

It was recommended to approve the accounts for payment for the Parish Council and the Village Hall.

4. Budget and expenditure 2025/2026

The budget as at 31st March 2026 was received and all was in order. The final balances would be presented in the budget document for 26/27 to compare against estimated year end balances.

5. Budget and expenditure 2026/2027

It was noted that a replacement door, to be fitted in-house, had been ordered for the cellar at a cost of £218.

It was noted that, with regards the national pay offer, the employers had made a full and final offer of a 3.3% increase, which the Unions would now consult with their members on.

The gate at Dale Acre play area was reported to have been successfully repaired in-house, with a further two repair kits now scheduled to be ordered for further repairs, as previously approved.

Recommended for approval

To purchase a replacement office chair at a cost of £131.

6. LGPS – Employer contribution rates 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2029

It was reported that the employer contribution rate in the Local Government Pension Scheme had reduced to 15.4% (reduced from 16.4% in that the Parish Council has Ill-Health Insurance cover). This is a reduction of the current employers contribution rate of 26.3% and would cover to the period 31st March 2029.

7. Review of regular payments and direct debits list

The current regular payments and direct debits list was reviewed and approved.

8. Review the effectiveness of internal control of financial systems

Recommended for approval

For the review of the effectiveness of internal control of financial systems to be adopted by the Parish Council and confirmed in Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2026.

9. Quarterly finance reports as at 31st March 2026

The quarterly finance reports were received and would be circulated to all councillors.

10. To verify bank reconciliations against bank statements and payments – for Cllr K McGovern to verify bank reconciliations against bank statements and payments for all accounts

Arrangements would be made for Cllr K McGovern to complete relevant checks of the bank

statements and payments against bank reconciliations for the final quarter of the 2025/26 financial year, to 31st March 2026.

11. To verify online bank statements against bank reconciliations – for Cllr C Ibbotson to be appointed to verify the bank statements against bank reconciliations for all accounts
Arrangements would be made for Cllr C Ibbotson to complete relevant checks of the bank reconciliations against bank statements for the final quarter of the 2025/26 financial year, to 31st March 2026.
12. Grounds maintenance equipment
 - a. Replacement mower
Recommended for approval
To purchase a Kress mower bundle from Chandlers, to include an electric mower, battery pack and charger, at a cost of £1999.
13. Grant aid
 - a. The Next Chapter
Recommended for approval
To award a grant of £500 to The Next Chapter towards the cost of an isolation shelter.
14. S106 payment
There was nothing to discuss.
15. To receive any correspondence
There was no correspondence.
16. Matters arising for information purposes
There was nothing to raise.
17. Date of next meeting
The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 13th May 2026.