A meeting of the Finance Working Party was held in the Village Hall, Station Road, Countesthorpe, on Wednesday 11th November 2026

Present: Cllrs P Mount, K Pearce, W Read, until item 12, and M Smith

Also present was Cllr B Gulyas, until item 16.

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 Cllr M Gillespie.

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. Budget and expenditure 2026/2027
   The budget to 31st October 2026 was received and there were no items of concern. A copy of the budget report was made available to all councillors on the members area of the website.

   Following a query raised at the parish council meeting, regarding an item of expenditure on the quarterly reports with regard to the Adverts heading, it was reported that one item had been allocated to this incorrectly and had now been moved to the correct heading under the Library as it related to promoting the Summer Reading Challenge.

   It was noted that a tree on Willoughby Road Playing Fields had suffered damage during the recent storm and had been cordoned off for safety. An order had been placed with Beddows Tree Specialists to undertake remedial works at a cost of £1,600.

   It was noted that the Ryobi Patio Cleaner had worked well and a request for an additional battery had been received. More information would be obtained regarding the batteries and cost before being brought back to a future meeting.

   Recommended for approval
   To accept the quote of £435.88 from Extinguish Fire Solutions for five replacement extinguishers required following the recent inspection.

   To proceed with undertaking an annual service on the John Deere, as previously agreed for preventative maintenance to prolong the life of the equipment. Also to proceed with having the engine coolant changed, due in 2027, at the same time as the service. It would be scheduled before the start of the grass cutting season.

5. To receive the six monthly Internal Audit report 2026/27
   The six monthly internal audit report for 2026/27 was received with no recommendations made.

6. Lamppost testing quote – two yearly
   Recommended for approval
   To accept the quote of £2265 from Kiwa for the two-yearly lamppost testing, due in January 2027. It was noted that 2027 would be the last year of the current three-year hanging basket contract.

7. Heating pump
   Recommended for approval

To accept the quote of £835.80 from Crown Heating and Plumbing for a repair to the heating pump, identified as faulty during works recently carried out on the boiler.

8. Additional fire alarm sounder
   Recommended for approval
   To accept the quote of £750 from Secom for an additional fire alarm sounder to be installed in the cellar.

9. Initial information on ride-on mower options
   Recommended for approval
   To allocate £5,000 of the 2027/2028 budget for a new ride-on mower, following initial information and costings of the various options being received.

10. Direct Debit/BACS payments list annual review
    The current direct debit and BACS payments list was reviewed and approved.

11. Investments
    It was noted that the Lloyds 12 Month Fixed Rate Account had matured and the £40,000 originally deposited, as well as the £896 interest, had now been transferred back into the Lloyds deposit account.

    Recommended for approval
    To monitor the interest rates over offered the next few weeks and, should the rate remain the same or increase, to proceed with reinvesting £40,000 into a Lloyds 12 Month Fixed rate Account. The rate at the time of the meeting is 2.75%.

12. Insurance – air compressor
    Recommended for approval
    To not proceed with renewing the air compressor insurance at a cost of £551.35, following consideration of increasing costs and its limited use. As a consequence of this, to decommission the air compressor with immediate effect, writing to all relevant employees to advise and to investigate whether it can be sold or scrapped.

13. Cemetery fees review
    Recommended for approval
    To implement an increase to the cemetery fees of 3% on resident rates and 5% on non-resident rates, with immediate effect.

14. Budget 2027/2028
    The draft budget for 2027/2028 was reviewed and would be circulated to all councillors ahead of the parish council meeting for initial comments.

15. Youth worker budget
    Recommended for approval
    To note the increase in the Young Leicestershire Youth Worker provision at a of £9813.75 (£9093 in 2026/27) from Young Leicestershire for the 2027/2028 youth worker provision.

16. To review the internet bank signatories
    a. To remove existing signatories
       The process of removing the out of date signatories from the banking system was noted as ongoing.

    b. To approve adding additional councillors to Unitary Trust Bank as authorisers
       It was noted that arrangements would be made to add the approved councillors to the Unitary Trust Bank as authorisers once they had successfully been set up with Lloyds.

    c. Assistant Parish Council Manager – It was noted that the Assistant Parish Council Manager's signatory and access user status had been updated as it was not showing on

the Lloyds bank as what is required. The status is now the same as the Parish Council Manager

17. Consider removal of petty cash system and update Financial Regulations
Recommended for approval
To remove the petty cash system and instead pay employees for expenses incurred via BACS payment, but to monitor for any issues and investigate alternate payment processes if required.

    For the updated Financial Regulations to be approved and adopted to be circulated for the December meeting of the Parish Council.

18. Dates of meetings – discussion
There was discussion regarding the dates of future meetings, with the recommendation of the Estates Working Party being considered also. The Finance Working Party indicated that it would be open to consider recommendations as discussions progress.

19. Grant aid
There were no grant aid applications to consider.

20. S106 payment
There was nothing to be discussed.

21. To receive any correspondence
There was no correspondence.

22. Matters arising for information purposes
It was noted that Blaby and Whetstone Football Club had not yet paid their lease for use of Willoughby Road Playing Fields, nor returned the signed lease agreement. Additionally, the Parish Council was being contacted by E-on regarding an outstanding electricity bill which belonged to the football club. They would be chased as a priority and, should the need arise, their use of the playing fields be revoked.

23. Date of next meeting
The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 9th December 2026.