



## Wivenhoe Town Council

MINUTES of the Finance and Personnel Committee meeting held in the Council Chamber, 77 High Street on Tuesday 13 January 2026 at 7:00pm **Chair Approved**

Present: Cllr Guy (Chair), Cllr Burke, Cllr Hailes-Morley, Cllr Boughton, Cllr Luxford-Vaughan, Cllr Widgery, J Beighton-Emms (Town Clerk) & E Buckley (RFO)

**FP.01.26/01 Apologies for absence:** Cllr Maltby, apologies received and noted.

**FP.01.26/02 Declarations of interest:** None.

**FP.01.26/03 Minutes of the previous meeting:** The approval of the minutes for the committee meeting held on 24 November 2025 were proposed by Cllr Hailes-Morley and seconded by Cllr Burke, with all who attended in agreement as an accurate record of proceedings.

**FP.01.26/04 To discuss and approve the fees and charges for 2026/2027:** RFO discussed the previously circulated report about the fees and charges recommendations for 2026/27. The committee discussed the need to keep charges reasonable, whilst still being able to maintain the standard of the facilities for the community.

As per the report it was proposed by Cllr Guy to recommend to Full Town Council the following:

- William Loveless Hall resident and class – fees increases as per the list (by either 50p or £1)
- Not to increase the non-resident charges (in order to close the gap that had been created)
- Storage charges to remain the same
- Chamber hires to remain the same
- Dinghy and Canoe Spaces to be increased by 5%
- Caddy liners and dog bags to remain the same

This was seconded by Cllr Hailes-Morley with all councillors in agreement.

The minibus and cemetery will be reviewed when the information has been reviewed.

**FP.01.26/05 To discuss and recommend for Full Town Council approval the 2026/2027 annual budget and set the precept for 2026/2027:** The RFO reported that the tax base information from Colchester City Council had been received, the tax base is 2937.0, which is slightly higher than last year. The recommended budget has been calculated and equals a 5.89% increase on last year's precept. The previous years have been 10% and 7% increases. The current CPI is 3.4%.

The council has calculated the budget for 2026/27, with a rationale of being fair and reasonable. Over the past few years, the council has worked hard on updating and maintaining its assets within the town. There have been improvements and new additions, which have been made possible by the grant funding that the council has received.

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The council are aware that overheads and maintenance costs are increasing and these budgets have been increased by 5%. There were also discussions about reviewing long-term suppliers going forward to ensure value for money.

In consideration of keeping the precept as low as possible, the committee has decided to not increase many of the expenditure budgets, keeping them the same as the previous year.

Larger budget increases have had to be made to professional and legal fees and the election budget. This is due to the expectation of higher legal fees during 2026/27, due to the project at Mede Way. The charge for an election has greatly risen this year, so the committee has been prudent and increased the budget to £8,500, which will cover one election.

The committee discussed the budget and have made the following changes. Reducing the environment/climate budget from £3,792 to £2,500. Increasing the planning budget from £2,500 to £3,792.

It was proposed by Cllr Guy to recommend to Full Town Council for approval the budget for 2026/27, expenditure £591,924 and income £618,339, with a surplus of £26,415. As per the forward budget details report (appendix a). This was seconded by Cllr Burke, with all in agreement.

It was proposed by Cllr Guy to recommend to Full Town Council for approval a precept of £502,615 for 2026/27. This breaks down as a council tax for band D properties at 171.13, and an 5.89% increase from the previous year's budget. This was seconded by Cllr Burke with all in agreement.

**FP.01.26/06 Budget update:** Following on from next years budget setting, the RFO reported that the current budget report shows a predicted surplus of £19,000. There is expenditure still expected for the car park improvements and potential energy efficiency improvements for the police houses. There are concerns about the election expenditure and whether another will be called in the current financial year.

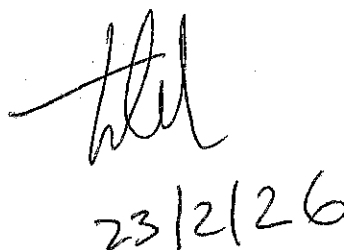
**FP.01.26/07 Minibus Working Group update:** A meeting is to be arranged for the minibus working group. The minibus engine is currently in restricted mode, which is safe to drive but would need mechanical work to fix the issue.

**FP.01.26/08 Update from the Finance & Personnel meeting held on 24 November 2025:** Cllr Multon has resigned from the council so RFO will remove him from the banking signatory list. Cllr Luxford-Vaughan is an approved banking signatory, RFO will contact the bank and ensure that Cllr Luxford-Vaughan can have online access to approve payments.

**FP.01.26/09 Date of Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be held on Monday 23 February 2026.

**FP.01.26/10 Exclusion of Press and Public:** Cllr Guy proposed to close the meeting and move to Part B, this was seconded by Cllr Boughton, with all Councillors present in agreement.

The meeting was closed at 20:01



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