MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OF
FOWLMERE PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE
which was held in the Dorothy Pluck Room, St Mary's Church, Fowlmere
on **THURSDAY 23rd October 2025 at 19:30**

PRESENT: Cllr Baker-Oxley Cllr Hobro, Cllr Lennon, Cllr Mulholland, Cllr Roberts, Cllr Sargeant (chair)

IN ATTENDANCE: The Clerk and 0 members of the public.

Business to be Transacted

In accordance with LGA 1972 schedule 12 10(2) (b) which states that business must be specified.

25/F18 To elect a Chair of the FPC Finance Committee for the civic year 2025-2026
Cllr Sargeant was **Nominated by:** Cllr Lennon **Seconded by:** Cllr Hobro
No other nominations
Cllr Sargeant accepted the nomination and was elected uncontested.

25/F19 Apologies for absence *(LGA 1972 s 85(1))*
We have none.

25/F20 Declarations of interest & requests for dispensations in agenda items *(Localism Act 2011 s 31 s33)*
Cllr Mulholland declared an interest in agenda item F24 & 25 due to a close personal relationship.

25/F21 Minutes of Previous Meeting ***(click here)*** *(in accordance with standing order 12a)*
Proposal: The Finance Committee of Fowlmere Parish Council herewith agree the minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2025.
Proposed: Cllr Roberts **Seconded:** Cllr Baker-Oxley **motion passed.**

25/F22 Public Participation Session
There were none.

25/F23 Review of 2026/2027 draft budget
Proposal: to recommend draft budget to Full Council for approval
The budget was discussed line by line and in detail. Specific highlights were:

- Play equipment maintenance: Is it better to replace rather than continuously repair wooden equipment? s.106 money can be used to purchase new equipment.
- Electricity for street-lighting: Due to the Ofgem mandated change to billing of un-metered electricity supplies our account was now on the "market-wide half hourly settlement". Recent bills that has seen a marked increase in cost and the billed kw/h. Looking into this it seems we are being overcharged. All information has been emailed to brokers to help investigate the price increase. Agreed unanimously to cancel the Direct Debit for now and for the Clerk to contact broker, OfGem and SSE to investigate the increase.
- Building maintenance at the cemetery: Planned replacement of west facing doors. Future budgets to replace east facing. Using ear-marked reserve to reduce what is needed to be budgeted for so doors can be replaced in the next financial year.
- Tree work, including tree surveys: Concern raised about the potential/predicted increase of the tree work next year with having a very dry summer this year.
- One off additional cost of Chrishall Grange LHI, plus the additional costs of purchasing MVAS and solar power battery. Agreed to purchase solar power for existing machine, and divide the cost of the next machine between this budget and the following years budget.
- Office Equipment: ear-marked reserve total at £1000.00. Need will arise soon for a new printer, and also a device to download the data from the increasing number of MVAS machines.
- Councillor training increased budget due to 2026 being an election year, potential new councillors, plus general training need and potential training needed with local government re-organisation
- Election Contribution remains but ear-marked reserve will re-start after election.
- An absolute final precept figure would be known after 31st December interest payments.
- After adjustments had been made following the discussions, the proposal was moved.

Proposal: To recommend draft budget to Full Council for approval.
Proposed: Cllr Roberts **Seconded:** Cllr Baker-Oxley **motion passed**

25/F24 To note the NJC Pay award for the year 2025/2026
Award of 3.2% to be backdated to April 2025 (as per contract)

25/F25 Clerk's out of pocket expenses
Proposal: to agree out of pocket expenses.
Proposed: Cllr Lennon **Seconded:** Cllr Hobro **motion passed**

Meeting closed 20:55

Any business to be considered at a Parish Council meeting must be delivered to the clerk for inclusion in accordance with Standing Order 9b.