



**Minutes of a meeting of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee held on Tuesday 13 January 2026 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, East Street, Wareham at 7.30pm.**

**Committee Members Present:** Councillors S Dean (Chairman), Z Gover (Vice Chairman), D Budd, K Critchley, B Dean, V Green, R Holloway, L Kirk, M Tighe and S Wheatley.

**Officers present:** N Gray, Town Clerk & RFO, S Dickins, Deputy Town Clerk

**Also present:** Councillors D Cleaton, M Cotton, A Dallimore, I Davey and M Hill.

**PRF 060/25-26 Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**PRF 061/25-26 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**PRF 062/25-26 Public participation time**

There were two members of the public present, one of whom spoke in support of the Town Council including provision for Neighbourhood Plan funding within its budget recommendation to Full Council.

**PRF 063/25-26 Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee, held on 11 November 2025, were **APPROVED** subject to the following amendments and would be signed Chairman following the meeting.

PRF 046/25-26: Amendment of “pecuniary” to “non-pecuniary” in both instances.

PRF 054/25-26: Removal of superfluous last clause in the final sentence of the first paragraph.

**PRF 064/25-26 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting**

There were no matters arising.

**PRF 065/25-26 Payment of outstanding creditors**

The Committee considered the list of payments for approval.

It was **RESOLVED** that the payments to creditors in the sum of £43,377.06 be **APPROVED**.

**PRF 066/25-26 Bank Reconciliations**

The Town Clerk advised that a 5p adjustment had been required following receipt of the Joint Burial Committee final accounts after the Town Council's accounts had been submitted to External Audit. This required the bank reconciliations to be re-run from 1 April to ensure the accounts were balancing.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the bank reconciliations from April to December 2025.

**PRF 067/25-26 Q3 Budget Monitoring**

The Committee considered the Q3 budget position for the 2025/26 financial year.

The Q3 budget position for the 2025/26 financial year was NOTED.

**PRF 068/25-26 Howards Lane Car Park Cash Collection Contract**

The Committee considered the report regarding the review of contractors to manage the Town Council's cash collections from the Howards Lane car parking terminals.

It was **RESOLVED** that RMS Cash Solutions Limited TA Pivotal be appointed to provide fortnightly cash collections from the Howards Lane car parking terminals at a cost of £16 (excluding VAT) per terminal per visit and 0.95% (excluding VAT) coin processing fee to be drawn from the "Howards Lane Car Park – Cash Payment Fees" cost centre.

It was **RESOLVED** that delegated authority be given to officers to increase the service frequency to weekly collections should business needs demand more frequent collection in the summer months.

**PRF 069/25-26 Interim Audit Report**

The Committee received and noted the interim internal audit report 2025/26 following the internal auditor's first visit and the management responses provided.

The Interim Audit Report was NOTED.

**PRF 070/25-26 2026/27 Draft Budget and Precept Setting**

The Town Clerk presented the options which had been drafted for the 2026/27 budget, explaining that Appendix A showed the total budget including all items requested by all committees and Appendix B showing the total budget including all items requested by all committees with a £50,000 deficit funded by the general reserve to reduce the precept burden.

Option A would result in an increase of £52.43 per annum on a Band D property, or £1 per week, or 14p per day, and would take Band D from £247.55 to £299.98. This equated to 21.18%.

Option B would result in an increase of £30.70 per annum on a Band D property, or 59p per week, or 8p per day. This would take a Band D from £247.55 to £278.95. The equated to 12.40%.

Both options were considered at length with the Town Clerk advising Council as its RFO that to use its general reserve would leave Council financially vulnerable at a time where it would be undertaking some major projects.

Consideration was given to the Neighbourhood Plan budget line, including whether it was required in the 2026/27 financial year at all, or whether the burden to the taxpayer could be spread across 2 years. It was agreed that as the budget had been produced with it included, and the total annual increase was only £2.43 above the indicative rise for the Museum purchase alone, so the public were already prepared for that level of increase. It was also noted

that even though a budget line had monies set within it, it did not mean all the monies must be spent.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to full council the approval of the proposed draft budget at £690,430 with a proposed precept increase of 21.18%.

**PRF 071/25-26 Any other items the Chairman deems urgent**

There were no items deemed urgent.

**PRF 072/25-26 Date of next meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee was scheduled to be held at 7.30pm on **Tuesday 10 March 2026**.

Chairman.....Date.....