

Swilland and Witnesham grouped Parish Council

Clerk: Alison Burrows

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Finance Committee Meeting Thursday 23rd October 2025, 7.30pm at Witnesham Baptist Church

Minutes

Cllrs Present: Richard Nicol Chair, Paul Sharples, Susan Ross
Clerk: Alison Burrows

1. **Chair's Welcome and Apologies** – Chair opened meeting, no apologies all present.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – none received.
3. **To confirm the minutes of Finance Committee meeting dated 6th January 2025 as a true record** – all agreed minutes a true record, signed by Chair.
4. **To Review Parish Council spending for the year 2025/2026 so far** – Clerk reported:
 - Expenditure to date £14,545.11
 - Income to date £25,595.27 including grants, not including CIL
 - Unity Trust bank account balance £33,908.46
 - Suffolk B/soc account Balance £88,449.24
5. **To consider any required adjustments to current Parish Council Budget for 2025 – 2026 and reserves** – following discussion all agreed no adjustment required at present.
6. **To consider a donation to the Baptist Church for hall hire** – proposal by Richard Nicol to increase the donation from £120 to £150 as the Parish Council have held more meetings there this year, seconded by Paul Sharples, Clerk to action donation.
7. **To consider pay increase for Clerk** – all agreed pay increase in accordance with SLCC annual pay rise. Also raise Clerks wage scale from 7 to level 9 to be back dated to 18th September 2025– proposed by Richard Nicol and unanimously agreed by committee. To be presented to PC meeting in Nov.
8. **To review the rents levied at the Playing Field and Allotments-**
 - Playing Field - WASPS annual rent, all agreed to raise from £950 to £975 for 26/27.

- Allotments – all agreed to leave rents the same as last year due to re-organisation of Coopers Close Allotments and for the encouragement of new tenants:
Hall lane £11
Coopers Close £18 each plot.
To be presented to PC meeting in Nov.

9. **To review Audit Reports –**

Clerk advised:

- Matter reported from External Audit - to record Gross salary on AGAR form.
- Recommendation from Internal Audit -To ensure Earmarked Reserves include all unspent CIL funds prior to the 2024 - 2025 financial year and any restricted grant funds.

Finance Committee thanks Clerk for positive audit results.

10. **To consider any potential major projects referencing the current Council Project Planning Document to include Finance of Village Hall Repairs.**

Current proposed spending:

Already Committed to:

Maljon to carry out work to deal with damp quote £2k

Harts to removal and dispose of flooring, replace with new - £4k

Whole floor needs sanding and sealing in future - £4-5K next financial year

Car park quote £25K will possibly need planning permission for discussion at Planning and Property Committee meeting 3rd November 2025.

These can be funded by CIL – clerk to draft letter for Cllrs to sign to transfer £30k of CIL funds to cover costs so far predicted.

11. **To review the Parish Council Draft Budget for 2026 – 2027 –**
reviewed and figures agreed, Clerk to circulate following meeting.

12. **To set the Precept recommendation for 2026 – 2027 –** all agreed to 5% increase which is the highest percentage increase we can request.

13. **Other matters:**

Richard Nicol reported that glass has been broken in Phone Box nr Church lane, he will arrange for its repair.

Clerk to chase East Suffolk Councillor Dan Clery regarding 2nd grant towards cost of the New Bus Shelter at Burwash.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm