FILTON
TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Finance & Scrutiny Committee** held at 7:00PM on Tuesday, 10th March 2026 – Held at: Filton Town Council Conference Room, Elm Park Leisure Centre, Filton, Elm Park, BS34 7PS

PRESENT: Cllrs D.Harris *(Chair)*, J.Baverstock *(Vice Chair)*, A. Bird, A.Doyle, B.Mead *(Deputy Mayor),* T.Mewies *(Mayor)*, A.Monk.
IN ATTENDANCE: Simon Davies *(Town Clerk)*, Robert Hutton *(Deputy Clerk)*, & Peach Jones *(Support Officer).*
APOLOGIES: Cllrs S. Milestone
NON-ATTENDANCE: E.Adjeivi

MEETING STARTED AT 7:05PM

01. EVACUATION PROCEDURES – Noted.

02. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Noted: Cllr Milestone.

03. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

A. To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda. — None.

B. To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any). — None.

C. To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate. — None.

04. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC
RESOLVED: Item 18 was declared for exclusion, with no public or press in attendance.

05. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10TH FEBRUARY 2026
RESOLVED: The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.

06. MATTERS OF REPORT ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT OTHERWISE COVERED BY THE AGENDA
NOTED: No matters were raised on this item.

07. ACCOUNTS: INCOME AND EXPENDITURE TO JANUARY 2026
The Town Clerk presented the Income and Expenditure report for the period ending January 2026.

Income & Expenditure to January 2026 - Financial Position					
Category	**Year to Date (£)**	**Annual Budget (£)**	**Variance (£)**	**% Spent**	**Status**
Income	1,114,017	1,307,422	193,405	85.2%	On Target
Expenditure	1,178,499	1,307,422	128,923	90.1%	Within Budget
Net Position	64,483	—	64,483	—	Normal Mid-Year Deficit

Members were advised that most of the larger invoices tend to appear in March at the end of the financial year.

RESOLVED: All committee members approved the Income and Expenditure from January 2026 as presented.

08. ACCOUNTS: DETAILED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE TO JANUARY 2026

The Town Clerk presented the detailed Income and Expenditure report listing cost centres for the period ending January 2026.

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading

Service Area	Annual Budget (£)	Actual YTD (£)	Variance (£)	Status
Leisure Centre - Outsourcing	£469,400	£332,199	£137,201	Within Budget
Playing Fields	£4,250	£6,159	£1,909	Over Budget
Play Areas	£11,000	£1,328	£9,672	Underspend
Millennium Green	£2,500	£683	£1,817	Underspend
Allotments	£4,275	£3,081	£1,194	Within Budget
Community Development	£79,700	£95,239	£15,539	Over Budget
Central Services	£188,287	£192,848	£4,561	Over Budget
Outside Services	£145,789	£169,361	£23,572	Over Budget
Leisure Centre Redevelopment	£299,596	£163,739	£135,857	Within Budget

Status:	Within Budget - Spending as expected	Underspend - Budget not yet used	Over Budget - Spending exceeds allocation

Members discussed the reported variances. Cllr Mewies queried several cost centres where no expenditure had yet been recorded.

The Town Clerk explained that the Council's historic cost-centre structure differs from more conventional accounting arrangements. As discussed at previous meetings, proposals have been brought forward to restructure and update budget headings in order to provide clearer financial reporting and improved transparency across service areas.

It was noted that, following these updates, future reports should more accurately demonstrate where expenditure is occurring within each cost centre.

Cllr Monk queried whether the Salaries and Wages cost centre could be further broken down to reflect staff roles or project allocations (for example, separating finance, administration, or project-related work).

The Town Clerk clarified that salaries are currently recorded as full role costs within a single cost centre. While a more detailed allocation of salary costs could improve transparency, implementing such a system would likely require either specialist accounting software or professional accountancy support. The suggestion was acknowledged in principle for potential future development.

RESOLVED: All committee members approved the detailed Income and Expenditure report from January 2026 as presented.

09. ACCOUNTS: BANK RECONCILE TO FEBRUARY 2026

The Town Clerk presented the bank reconciliation statements for February 2026, covering the Unity Trust Bank Account, NatWest Imprest Account, and NatWest Business Account.

A summary of the reconciled balances is shown below:

Bank Reconciliation Summary – February 2026			
Bank Account	**Statement Balance (£)**	**Unpresented Payments (£)**	**Cashbook Balance**
Unity Trust Current Account	£23,706.60	£85,298.55	£61,591.95
NatWest Imprest Account	£100.00	–	£100.00
NatWest Business Account	£18,159.27	–	£18,159.27
Total Council Funds	£41,965.87	£85,298.55	£43,332.68

Members queried whether the payment made to Speller Metcalfe represented the final payment due and requested clarification on the payment made to Monsoon Marketing.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the payment shown represents the final payment for the remedial works for the leisure centre shower drainage and tile repairs, and that Monsoon Marketing are the council's uniform suppliers.

RESOLVED: All councillors approved the bank reconciliations for February 2026 and confirmed that the account balances were accurate as presented in the reports.

10. ACCOUNTS: PAYMENTS FEBRUARY 2026

The Town Clerk presented the schedule of payments made during February 2026 for Members to review.

PAYMENTS LIST - FEBRUARY 2026		
Supplier	**Description**	**Amount (£)**
Chandlers (Farm Equipment) Ltd	Equipment & tools	£107.70
Chandlers (Farm Equipment) Ltd	Lawncare tools	£997.92
Chew Valley Trees Ltd	Tree planting stock	£260.76
DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd	Accountancy services	£689.70
Glasdon UK Ltd	Replacement bin lids	£555.33
DL IT Solutions Ltd	IT support services	£231.00
DL IT Solutions Ltd	Microsoft 365 licences	£247.97
Filton Voice Ltd	Newsletter advertising	£540.00
Fleet (Line Markers) Ltd	Pitch marking fluid	£246.06
Irwin Mitchell	Legal fees - Leisure Centre tender	£5,100.00
Microshade Business Consultants Ltd	IT security licence	£677.05
Parkwood Leisure Ltd	Leisure Centre management fee	£60,476.92
Rubicon Play Ltd	Play sand	£1,177.20
South Gloucestershire Council	Christmas lights storage	£6,177.60
South Gloucestershire Council	Garage cutting service	£1,130.31
Travis Perkins	Limestone dust	£206.93
Travis Perkins	Trade materials	£196.86
YZDesigns	Website amendments	£96.00
	Total Payments	£79,116.31

RESOLVED: All members approved and reconciled all payments made in February 2026 as presented.

11. RECEIPT OF GRANT MONIES

NOTED: The Deputy Clerk confirmed that Filton Town Council received a £5,000 grant from South Gloucestershire Council from their Improving the Highstreet fund.

12. UPDATE ON DCK ACCOUNTANTS

NOTED: The committee was advised that the Town Clerk met with Derek Kemp (Managing Director of DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd) and held a positive discussion on the proposed accounts restructure which makes for a more clearly structured headings and what they mean within Rialtas accounting and finance software.

Derek confirmed that they are still able to do our accounting and feels strongly that Filton Town Council should not be without an accountant due to the high volume of assets the council has.

13. LEISURE OPERATOR BASE TRADING ACCOUNT (LOBTA)

NOTED: Members noted that the December and January Leisure Operator Base Trading Account (LOBTA) reports have not yet been received. This delay is understood to be due to a query relating to the utilities billing for the building, which must be resolved before the reports can be issued.

The Town Clerk advised that the matter has now been resolved and that the outstanding LOBTA reports are expected within the next week, after which the relevant invoices will be generated upon receipt.

Cllr Mewies queried where the financial risk sits in relation to the utilities matter. The Town Clerk confirmed that the risk lies with Parkwood Leisure as the current leisure centre operator.

Cllr Baverstock raised a query regarding historic energy supplier payment issues associated with the previous leisure centre provider prior to its liquidation. The Town Clerk clarified that Filton Town Council's involvement at this stage was limited to the TUPE process, and that Parkwood Leisure, as the current provider, is responsible for the operational and billing arrangements moving forward.

14. URGENT GRANT APPLICATION FROM THE COMMUNITY GARDEN

The Committee considered an urgent grant application from Filton Community Garden requesting £60 to support an Easter Egg Hunt event scheduled for Saturday, 28th March 2026.

Members noted that the funding would contribute towards the purchase of reusable eggs, children's buckets, and small party bags containing treats and seeds for participating children. The event is intended as a community activity for local families and attracted over 60 children in the previous year.

RESOLVED: The Committee unanimously approved the urgent grant of £60 to Filton Community Garden to support the Easter Egg Hunt event.

15. URGENT GRANT APPLICATION FROM FACE

The Committee considered an urgent grant application from FACE requesting a donation of £30 to support its community coffee morning group.

The Town Clerk informed Members that the group, which regularly meets at FACE, had recently assisted with seed-packing activities to support Filton Town Council's Bee Squared Project, with seeds being prepared for distribution to local schools, beginning with Filton Hill Primary School as part of the Conygre Regeneration Project.

Members welcomed the positive community engagement, particularly the involvement of local elderly residents who contributed their time to support the initiative. Councillors noted that this represented a strong example of collaborative working within the community and encouraged the Council to continue supporting similar engagement opportunities in the future.

RESOLVED: The Committee unanimously approved the £30 urgent grant to FACE to support its community coffee morning group.

16. INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND POLICY

The Committee considered the Investment Strategy and Policy presented by the Town Clerk, prepared in response to recommendations made by the Council's Internal Auditor.

Members discussed the principles within the proposed policy and the Council's approach to managing investments.

Cllr Monk raised a concern regarding ethical considerations in treasury management, including compliance issues such as modern slavery risks within investment portfolios. He advised that he would provide the name of a relevant investment management company for further consideration at a later date.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Council already holds investments through CCLA and agreed to obtain a portfolio profile and breakdown report from CCLA for Members to review.

Cllr Doyle queried whether the proposed policy includes monitoring of the Council's risk profile and whether Members would be notified should any investments fall outside acceptable risk levels. The Town Clerk advised that such notification procedures are not currently in place.

Cllr Monk asked how the Council's investments were currently performing. The Town Clerk responded that the Council presently operates a low-risk, low-return investment profile, reflecting the Council's cautious approach to managing public funds, and noted that the current annual return on investments is approximately £2,000-£3,000.

Cllr Monk suggested that the Council may wish to consider setting a minimum investment return threshold of around 4%, subject to appropriate risk management. The Town Clerk noted that this could be explored further and agreed to review potential trigger points and report back to a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

A. The Committee agreed to adopt and implement the Investment Strategy and Policy as presented.

B. The Town Clerk will obtain a portfolio profile and breakdown report from CCLA for Members' consideration and report back at a future meeting.

17. AUDIT UPDATE

The committee received an update on the internal and external audit:

A. External 2024-2025 audit update

NOTED: The external audit for the 2024–2025 financial year is still being processed by the Council's appointed External Auditor, BDO.

B. In Year Assurance (Internal Audit) 2025-2026
NOTED: The internal audit report is currently awaited.

The Town Clerk advised that a further update is expected and will be provided to Members in the following week.

18. POTENTIAL NEW ROLES AND STRUCTURE FOR CORPORATE SERVICES
Members considered proposals from the Staffing Committee regarding new roles and a revised structure for Corporate Services, with a view to recommending to Full Council. The Town Clerk outlined the rationale, including a revised *Project Support Officer* role to support the Deputy Clerk with increasingly complex projects.
Members raised a range of concerns and suggestions:

Financial and strategic concerns:
Cllr Doyle and Cllr Monk highlighted uncertainty around budgets, long-term planning, and the current financial position. Several members suggested delaying decisions until there is more clarity, particularly regarding the leisure centre operator.

Use of fixed-term contracts:
There was general support for introducing roles on a temporary basis (e.g. up to June 2027 or 1 year) to allow review by a future council.

Sports Development role:
This was the most debated role. Some members questioned its necessity, suggesting responsibilities could sit with a leisure operator or be included as KPIs. Others raised concerns about inclusivity and whether broader community engagement should be considered instead.

Project Support Officer role:
Broadly supported, with recognition of its potential value, though questions were raised about hours allocation and structure.

Finance role:
The Town Clerk emphasised the need (10–15 hours/week) due to workload (e.g. audit demands), noting it could reduce reliance on external accountants. Some members questioned whether the proposed hours were justified.

Alternative approaches:
Suggestions included:
Expanding administrative support instead of multiple new roles
Introducing roles incrementally
Exploring internships or partnerships with universities and local organisations
The Town Clerk acknowledged concerns and suggested a **trial period using temporary roles**, highlighting risks of delaying capacity given ongoing and upcoming projects.

Outcome:
Cllr Mewies proposed taking the matter to Full Council with further information to be reviewed by the Chairs' Emergency Group.
Cllr Mead seconded.
Vote: 3 in favour, 2 against, 1 abstention – **motion carried**.

A. Finance and Governance
RESOLVED: To raise at Full Council.
B. Events and Outreach
RESOLVED: To raise at Full Council.

C. Reorganisation of Corporate Services
RESOLVED: To raise at Full Council.

19. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** - **NOTED:** Tuesday, 14th April 2026 at 7PM.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8:39pm