



Minutes of the **Finance & Scrutiny Committee** held at 7:00PM on Wednesday, 29th July 2026 – Held at: Filton Town Council Conference Room, Elm Park Leisure Centre, Filton, Elm Park, BS34 7PS

PRESENT: Cllrs M. Elmorssy (*Chair*), T. Mewies (*Mayor*) and A. Mills.

IN ATTENDANCE: Simon Davies (*Town Clerk*), Robert Hutton (*Deputy Clerk*), & Peach Jones (*Support Officer*).

APOLOGIES: Cllrs A. Bird J. Baverstock, D. Harris, A. Doyle and B. Mead.

NON-ATTENDANCE: None

MEETING STARTED AT 7:05PM

01. EVACUATION PROCEDURES – Noted.

02. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Noted: Cllrs Bird, Baverstock, Harris, Doyle and Mead together with Benjamin Roberts (*Finance & Governance Officer*).

03. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

A. To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda.

All members present declared personal interests in relation to Item 12 due to council owned land - Elm Park.

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: That no items on the agenda required the exclusion of the press and public.

05. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9TH JUNE 2026

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance & Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 29th June 2026 be approved as a true and accurate record, subject to an amendment to councillor attendance and duly signed by the Chair.

06. MATTERS OF REPORT ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT OTHERWISE COVERED BY THE AGENDA

NOTED: No matters arising from the previous minutes were raised under this item.

07. ACCOUNTS: INCOME AND EXPENDITURE JUNE 2026

Members The Town Clerk presented the detailed Income and Expenditure Report for the period ending 30th June 2026, prepared under the Council's revised budget headings. At the end of Month 3, the report recorded year-to-date income of £556,428 against an annual budget of £2,376,000 and expenditure of £343,174 against the same annual budget. This resulted in a year-to-date net income position of £213,255.

Financial Position to June 2026				
Category	Actual Year to Date (£)	Annual Budget (£)	Remaining Budget (£)	Percentage Received/Spent
Income	£ 556,428	£ 2,376,000	+ £ 1,819,572	23.4%
Expenditure	£ 343,174	£ 2,376,000	+ £2,032,826	14.4%
Net Income Position	+£ 213,255			Net income

Key Budget Lines to June 2026					
Budget Heading	Annual Budget (£)	Actual YTD (£)	Available (£)	Used	Position
Community Grants	£11,000	£5,020	+ £5,980	45.6%	Within budget
Education & Play Grant (EMR)	£30,000	£18,395	+ £11,605	61.3%	Monitor
Christmas Lights Refresh (EMR)	£12,000	£0	+ £12,000	0.0%	Not utilised
Christmas Lights Deployment	£6,000	£0	+ £6,000	0.0%	Not utilised
Special Expenses Grant	£35,000	£0	+ £35,000	0.0%	Unallocated
Mayoral Allowance	£1,000	£0	+ £1,000	0.0%	Not utilised
Northville Community Garden	£1,000	£41	+ £959	4.1%	Within budget
The Sidings Allotments	£4,500	£0	+ £4,500	0.0%	Not utilised
Accounts & Audit	£20,000	£9,561	+ £10,439	47.8%	Monitor
Legal & Professional Fees	£13,000	£5,367	+ £7,633	41.3%	Within budget
Filton Library SLA	£4,500	£4,620	- £120	102.7%	Over budget
Elm Park	£3,000	£2,641	+ £359	88.0%	Monitor closely
Blenheim Drive Play Area	£250	£480	- £230	192.0%	Over budget
Events & Outreach	£39,000	£19,043	+ £19,957	48.8%	Within budget

Members considered the report and raised the following questions and observations:

- **Community grants:** Councillors queried the available grant provision and its relationship with the applications under consideration. The report showed £5,020 spent against the £11,000 Community Grants budget, leaving £5,980 available. It also recorded £4,502 in community grant income against the budgeted £8,500.

- **Christmas lights:** Members requested clarification regarding the anticipated timetable for obtaining quotations and progressing the Christmas lights programme. The report showed no expenditure against the £12,000 Christmas Lights Refresh earmarked reserve or the £6,000 Christmas Lights Deployment budget as at 30th June 2026.
- **Earmarked reserves:** The Town Clerk advised that the Council intended to establish and record the relevant earmarked reserves more fully by September 2026. This would improve the allocation and monitoring of funds committed to specific projects and future liabilities.
- **Reserves and PWLB provision:** Members discussed whether regular transfers of approximately £12,000 or more should be made into designated accounts or earmarked reserves, including the possibility of building provision towards future Public Works Loan Board repayments.
- **Special Expenses and Bus Gate funding:** Members discussed the unallocated Special Expenses provision and the proposed £5,000 allocation for the Bus Gate highway improvement request. The Town Clerk confirmed the proposed allocation. The Income and Expenditure Report recorded a £35,000 Special Expenses Grant budget, with no expenditure recorded at the reporting date.
- **Mayoral Allowance:** Councillors queried whether any expenditure had been incurred against the £1,000 Mayoral Allowance during the current financial year. The Town Clerk advised that the position would be checked against the relevant records. The report showed no expenditure against this budget as at 30th June 2026.
- **Northville Community Garden:** Members discussed the position regarding proposed development and site-improvement works at Northville Community Garden.
- **The Sidings Allotments:** Members queried whether income received from annual allotment rents was legally required to be reinvested in the allotment site. The Town Clerk advised that there was no such requirement identified, although many councils choose to apply allotment income towards site maintenance and improvements. The report showed a budgeted income of £4,500 and a corresponding expenditure budget of £4,500, with no income or expenditure recorded at the reporting date.

Members also discussed improvements to the processing and recording of invoices and purchase orders through the Rialtas accounting system, supported by the Finance & Governance Officer. It was noted that the strengthened processes should provide a clearer audit trail, improve expenditure monitoring, and support more accurate budget preparation and reporting in future years.

RESOLVED: That the Income and Expenditure Report for the period ending 30th June 2026 be approved as presented.

08. **ACCOUNTS: BANK RECONCILE ACCOUNTS FOR JUNE 2026: APPROVE PAYMENTS AND SIGN BANK STATEMENTS**

The Town Clerk presented the bank reconciliation statements for the NatWest Current/Deposit Account and the Unity Trust Current Account as at 30th June 2026.

Members reviewed the balances and noted that neither account contained any unrepresented payments or receipts. The balances recorded on the bank statements agreed fully with the corresponding cashbook balances, with no reconciliation differences identified.

Natwest Bank Reconciliation Summary – June 2026				
Bank Account	Statement Balance (£)	Unpresented Payments (£)	Unpresented Receipts (£)	Cashbook Balance
NatWest Current/Deposit Account	£ 19,803.10	£ 0.00	£ 0.00	£ 19,803.10
Unity Trust Current Account	£ 408,004.42	£ 0.00	£ 0.00	£ 408,004.42

Total Council Funds	£ 427,807.52	£ 0.00	£ 0.00	£ 427,807.52
----------------------------	---------------------	---------------	---------------	---------------------

Following review, members confirmed that the bank statement balances corresponded with the cashbook records and agreed that both accounts had been satisfactorily reconciled. The relevant bank statements were approved for signature, and the associated payments were authorised.

RESOLVED: That the bank reconciliations for the NatWest Current/Deposit Account and Unity Trust Current Account as at 30th June 2026 be approved, that the associated bank statements be signed, and that the relevant payments be authorised.

09. PAYMENTS TO BE AUTHORISED BY DEPUTY CLERK

Members received the schedule of payments due to be authorised. It was explained that, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, outstanding payments would be loaded by the Town Clerk and co-authorised by the Deputy Clerk to assist in clearing the backlog of invoices.

Councillors queried the process for reviewing, approving and authorising the outstanding invoices. The schedule included a number of aged creditor payments, together with routine operational expenditure, grants, insurance payments and contractor invoices. The supporting document recorded total payments of £227,227.41 for the month.

Payments for Authorisation – June 2026			
Date	Supplier / Payee	Description	Amount (£)
01/06/2026	Biffa Waste Services Ltd	Recycling and waste services	£ 1,547.96
03/06/2026	Kraken Explorer	Community grant	£ 500.00
03/06/2026	Filton Concert Brass	Community grant	£ 2,500.00
03/06/2026	Armed Forces Day Grant 2026	Community grant	£ 2,000.00
05/06/2026	FACE	Half-yearly Youth Work Grant	£ 14,448.00
05/06/2026	Liam Holden	Contractor hours for May 2026	£ 1,862.12
05/06/2026	IT Resource Management Ltd	IT services	£ 754.19
05/06/2026	Rockwell Signs Ltd	Two A2 Elm Park signs	£ 378.00
05/06/2026	Rockwell Signs Ltd	Signage services	£ 600.00
05/06/2026	Playsafety Ltd	RoSPA inspections	£ 436.80
05/06/2026	SSE Energy	Energy services	£ 129.47
05/06/2026	Zurich	Aged creditor insurance payment	£ 13,785.72
05/06/2026	Rachel Tadman	Aged creditor payment	£ 450.00
05/06/2026	Alide Hire Services	Aged creditor payment	£ 565.68
05/06/2026	Biffa Waste Services Ltd	Aged creditor payment	£ 1,982.79
05/06/2026	Chandlers Ltd	Aged creditor payment	£ 1,023.41
05/06/2026	Chew Valley Trees Ltd	Aged creditor payment	£ 1,902.60

05/06/2026	DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd	Aged creditor payment	£ 677.16
05/06/2026	DL IT Solutions Ltd	Aged creditor payment	£ 427.75
05/06/2026	Everflow Ltd	Aged creditor payment	£ 70.21
05/06/2026	Greentech	Aged creditor payment	£ 324.60
05/06/2026	Alex Hebden	Aged creditor payment	£ 961.00
05/06/2026	Keep Britain Tidy	Aged creditor payment	£ 466.80
05/06/2026	Microshade Business Consultants Ltd	Aged creditor payment	£ 185.81
05/06/2026	Parkwood Leisure Ltd	Aged creditor payment	£ 120,953.84
05/06/2026	Party Peeps	Aged creditor payment	£ 216.00
05/06/2026	Playsafety Ltd (RoSPA)	Aged creditor payment	£ 2,203.00
05/06/2026	Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	Aged creditor payment	£ 1,244.90
05/06/2026	South Gloucestershire Council	Aged creditor payment	£ 275.00
05/06/2026	SSE Energy	Aged creditor payment	£ 84.20
05/06/2026	IT Resource Management Ltd	Aged creditor payment	£ 124.93
05/06/2026	IT Resource Management Ltd	IT services	£ 109.44
05/06/2026	Liam Holden	Adjustment relating to May 2026 hours	£ 0.01
05/06/2026	Biffa Waste Services Ltd	Waste services	£ 1,982.79
10/06/2026	NatWest Current/Deposit Account	Monthly transfer between Council accounts	£ 30,000.00
11/06/2026	Olympus Academy	Filton Hill Primary School grant	£ 18,394.82
11/06/2026	Friends of Filton	Community grant	£ 20.00
25/06/2026	Zurich Municipal	Vehicle insurance	£ 464.76
25/06/2026	Filton Voice Ltd	June 2026 services	£ 1,980.00
25/06/2026	Filton Voice Ltd	Additional services	£ 480.00
29/06/2026	Liam Holden	Contractor hours for June 2026	£ 705.45
30/06/2026	Bank charges	Bank service charges	£ 8.20
Total payments for the month:			£227,227.41

Members briefly discussed the contractor payments to Liam Holden, including invoices of £1,862.12 for May 2026 and £705.45 for June 2026. It was noted that the associated Sports Development role and its future arrangements would be considered in greater detail at the next meeting of the Staffing Committee.

Concerns were also raised regarding inconsistencies between the Council's asset records and the insurance figures recorded within the accounts. The Town Clerk advised that further work was required to ensure that the relevant ledger entries reconciled with the Council's asset and insurance records, particularly in relation to land and the swimming pool, and to confirm that these assets had been appropriately recorded and insured.

Following consideration of the schedule and supporting documentation, members agreed that the backlog of outstanding invoices should be cleared through the established authorisation process.

RESOLVED: That the schedule of outstanding payments presented within Annex C be approved and that the payments be loaded by the Town Clerk and co-authorised by the Deputy Clerk in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

10. **ACCOUNTS: DEBIT CARD PAYMENTS FOR JUNE 2026**

The Purchase Card Transaction Log for June 2026 was presented to members for review. The report recorded net expenditure of £1,662.62, VAT of £313.26, and total gross transactions of £1,975.88.

Debit Card Payments Summary – June 2026	
Net expenditure	£ 1,662.62
VAT	£ 313.26
Gross expenditure	£ 1,975.88

Members noted that the transactions included expenditure relating to fuel, Open Spaces materials and equipment, flags, recruitment advertising, office supplies, postage, software subscriptions, and other operational requirements. Each transaction was recorded as having been checked against the corresponding bank statement.

The transaction log also included declarations confirming that the report had been reviewed and reconciled against the bank statement, and that the expenditure had been incurred in accordance with the Council's purchase card procedures.

RESOLVED: That the debit card payments for June 2026, totalling £1,975.88, be acknowledged and approved as presented.

11. **GRANT APPLICATION: GRIEF ENCOUNTER**

Councillors considered a grant application from Grief Encounter for £5,000 to fund specialist bereavement therapy for children and young people aged between 5 and 25 in the Filton area.

Members noted that the requested funding would provide up to 50 hours of free, one-to-one bereavement therapy, at a cost of £100 per session. Grief Encounter reported that, during the previous 12 months, it had supported 23 children and young people in the Filton Council area and delivered 106 free therapy sessions, representing approximately £10,600 in service costs. The organisation had also experienced an increase of more than 38% in local referrals during the same period.

Members expressed their appreciation for the organisation's work and recognised the potential value of providing timely, specialist support to bereaved children and young people in Filton. Discussion took place regarding whether the Council should award the full amount requested or approve a reduced contribution.

Councillors considered the application alongside the Council's remaining grant budget and the other grant applications included on the meeting agenda. Members discussed whether funds

could be reallocated from other appropriate budget headings to support the expenditure, while maintaining sufficient provision for any further applications received during the remainder of the financial year. It was noted that the funding currently available within the grants budget would be sufficient to meet the three applications presently under consideration, but would leave little or no capacity for future requests.

Members also considered the wider community impact and public perception of the decision. It was acknowledged that declining support for a service focused on the welfare and emotional wellbeing of bereaved children and young people could be viewed negatively. Conversely, members recognised that approving the application would fully utilise the current grants allocation, but would direct those funds towards a service capable of benefiting children, young people and families affected by bereavement.

The application was also considered in relation to the Council's grant-awarding procedures and governance requirements. It was noted that the application had not been submitted as an emergency request. Members were advised that, should the application not be approved at this meeting, Grief Encounter would need to submit a further application for consideration during the next grant application round in October 2026.

Following discussion, it was proposed that Filton Town Council award the full amount requested.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £5,000 be awarded to Grief Encounter to fund up to 50 hours of specialist one-to-one bereavement therapy for children and young people in the Filton area, subject to the Council's usual grant conditions and governance requirements.

12. GRANT APPLICATION: FILTON FOXES

Councillors considered an emergency grant application from Filton Foxes Cycle Speedway Club for £4,950 towards the purchase and installation of a portacabin at the Multi-use Surface Track within Elm Park.

Rob Absalom, Secretary of Filton Foxes Cycle Speedway Club, attended the meeting to explain the reasons for the application, answer questions from members and discuss how the Council and the club could work together to provide a secure, tamper-resistant storage and operational facility.

Members were advised that the club had been operating for more than 12 months, had met its initial objectives and was now seeking to expand its activities. The proposed facility would provide:

- A secure area for displaying policies and safeguarding information.
- Space for registering riders, welcoming new members and recording contact details.
- Storage for promotional materials, the club's public-address system, speedway bicycles and specialist adapted bicycles.
- A base for first-aid coordination, administration, volunteer support and event management.
- Improved facilities for community engagement, coaching and the hosting of regional and potentially national or international events.

The club currently stores a number of its bicycles within the Open Spaces Team's maintenance building with the permission of Filton Town Council. However, members were advised that other equipment, including the public-announcement system and specially manufactured accessible bicycles, had to be transported separately by club members in their own vehicles, creating logistical difficulties.

The application had been submitted as an emergency request because specialist lifting equipment would be required to position the facility. The club wished to complete the installation

while ground conditions remained firm, as access by a lifting vehicle during wetter winter conditions could damage the surrounding field and result in substantial reinstatement costs.

The club expressed an initial preference for constructing an approximately 21-foot concrete base within the centre of the track. Members raised concerns that placing the facility in the central area could obscure spectators' and officials' views of riders and potentially create a collision hazard if a rider lost balance or was forced off course. It was considered important that the central area remain clear and accessible as a safety zone.

Members expressed a preference for locating the facility adjacent to one of the existing surfaced access points on the outside of the track. It was agreed that the final position should be considered through a separate site consultation involving the club, relevant Council officers, including the Open Spaces Team. The Filton Foxes Secretary confirmed that the club was willing to work with the Council to identify a safe and practical location.

Questions were raised regarding the possible requirement for planning permission. It was suggested during the meeting that a temporary structure such as a storage container might not require planning permission. However, members agreed that all relevant planning, landowner, safety, accessibility, and installation requirements should be verified before procurement or installation proceeded.

The indicative costs and available suppliers were discussed. Mr Absalom advised that:

- A new basic container from a supplier in Lydney was estimated to cost approximately £8,000.
- A fully fitted office-style container could cost approximately £10,000.
- second-hand containers had been considered but were not the club's preferred option.
- A supplier in Avonmouth appeared capable of providing a potentially suitable facility within budget, with favourable transport and delivery options.

Members agreed that any facility purchased must be secure and resistant to tampering and vandalism. Where an office-style unit included windows, suitable anti-vandal shutters or equivalent security measures would be required. The Council's procurement procedures would also require three quotations, meaning that the club's preferred supplier could not be guaranteed.

Councillors noted that the club had recently become established as an independent charitable organisation, strengthening its ability to seek additional funding. Mr Absalom also reported that current participation included approximately 20 paid junior members and casual riders and that the club expected membership to continue growing.

Members asked whether the proposed facility could be shared with other community organisations. Mr Absalom confirmed that the club would be willing to explore a shared arrangement, subject to suitable access, storage, security, and operational arrangements. This was considered alongside Filton Community Garden's separate request for £750 towards a secure storage shed. Members discussed whether a combined allocation of approximately £6,000 could support a shared, multi-purpose facility and provide better value than two separate awards.

Following discussion, members concluded that the project should no longer proceed as a direct grant payment to Filton Foxes. Instead, the Council would investigate purchasing the facility itself, recording it on the Council's asset register, and entering into an appropriate lease or licence arrangement with the club, potentially at a peppercorn rent. It was agreed that £6,000 should be allocated from the relevant £30,000 budget heading to support the project, subject to procurement, site suitability and the necessary governance requirements.

The Deputy Clerk was requested to liaise with Mr Absalom regarding the specification, quotations, location, installation requirements, and the potential for shared use. The proposal would be referred to the Assets & Open Spaces Committee on 15th September 2026, or considered sooner at the next Extraordinary Full Council Meeting if required by the installation timetable.

RESOLVED:

- That the original request for a direct grant of £4,950 to Filton Foxes Cycle Speedway Club not proceed in its current form.
- That Filton Town Council investigate the direct procurement of a secure, vandal-resistant, multi-purpose storage and operational facility, with a budget allocation of up to £6,000 from the relevant £30,000 budget heading.
- That three quotations be obtained in accordance with the Council's procurement requirements.
- That the Deputy Clerk liaise with Filton Foxes Cycle Speedway Club, Filton Community Garden, and the Open Spaces Team regarding the facility's specification, location, installation, security, access, and potential shared use.
- That the facility, if purchased, remain an asset of Filton Town Council and be made available through an appropriate lease or licence arrangement.
- That the proposal be referred to the Assets & Open Spaces Committee or, if necessary, an Extraordinary Full Council Meeting for further consideration and approval.

13. GRANT APPLICATION: FILTON COMMUNITY GARDEN

Councillors considered a grant application from Filton Community Garden for £750 towards the purchase of a second secure storage shed and the preparation of a suitable level base.

Members noted that the group's existing storage facility was not large enough to accommodate some of its longer tools, including rakes and brushes, which were currently stored outside behind the compost bins. The application stated that tools had previously been stolen and that additional secure storage would help protect the group's existing and future equipment.

The application was considered alongside the proposal for a secure storage and operational facility for Filton Foxes Cycle Speedway Club. Members discussed whether a larger, shared, multi-purpose facility could meet the storage requirements of both organisations and provide better value than approving separate facilities. Filton Foxes had confirmed that it was willing to explore a shared arrangement, subject to suitable access, storage, security, and operational arrangements.

It was proposed that the Council investigate the direct procurement of a secure, tamper-resistant facility, with an indicative allocation of up to £6,000 from the relevant £30,000 budget heading. The proposed facility would remain an asset of Filton Town Council and would be made available to the relevant organisations through appropriate access, lease, or licence arrangements.

Members agreed that the Deputy Clerk should consult Filton Community Garden, Filton Foxes Cycle Speedway Club and the Open Spaces Team regarding:

- The storage requirements of each organisation.
- The required size and specification of the facility.
- Suitable arrangements for shared access and security.

- The location and installation of the facility.
- The allocation and separation of storage space.
- Any ongoing responsibilities relating to maintenance, insurance and management.

Members emphasised that Filton Community Garden's application had not been rejected or voted against. Consideration of the application was deferred while the shared facility was investigated. It was confirmed that Filton Community Garden could return to the Council with a further or revised grant application at any time should consultation establish that the shared facility would not adequately meet the group's requirements.

RESOLVED:

- That consideration of the £750 grant application from Filton Community Garden be deferred pending consultation on the proposed shared, multi-purpose storage facility.
- That the Deputy Clerk liaise with Filton Community Garden, Filton Foxes Cycle Speedway Club and the Open Spaces Team regarding the specification, location, security, access, and management of the proposed facility.
- That Filton Community Garden be permitted to submit a further or revised grant application should the shared facility be found unsuitable for the group's needs.

14. SPECIAL EXPENSES

NOTED: The Town Clerk provided members with an update on South Gloucestershire Council's proposed Special Expenses Policy following the consultation process. Members were advised that the consultation had received responses from 40 of the 50 town and parish councils, with broad support for the principles of fairness, transparency, and local accountability, alongside concerns regarding affordability, capacity, liability, and implementation timescales.

It was noted that the revised proposals included a phased transition over three annual implementation waves, allowing town and parish councils to move towards local delivery at different stages. The revised arrangements would also provide options for councils to deliver services directly, appoint contractors, or purchase a managed service from South Gloucestershire Council.

Under the revised policy proposals:

- Bus shelters and common land currently maintained by South Gloucestershire Council would move into its general expenditure.
- Closed churchyards would remain funded through Special Expenses.
- Allotments, public conveniences, play areas, playing fields, parks, open spaces, acquired housing land, and commuted sums would become local-choice services capable of being funded through town or parish council precepts.

The Town Clerk advised that three bus shelters within Filton are owned by Filton Town Council, while the remaining shelters are understood to be owned by the West of England Combined Authority. Members noted that the ownership and maintenance responsibilities associated with individual shelters would need to be taken into account when considering the implications of the revised policy.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - NOTED: Tuesday, 8th September 2026 at 7PM.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8:25pm