Woodbridge TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Finance Committee** held at the **Shire Hall** on **Wednesday 28th October 2026** at **7pm**

Councillors:

Present: Cllrs. Sharon Miller, Robin Sanders, and Katharine Turner.

Apologies: Cllrs. Sue Bale, Ruth Leach, Geoff Holdcroft, Nigel Phipps and Mike Sutton.

In Attendance: Town Clerk (Mr G E Diaper), and no members of the public.

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1. **Apologies**

   Apologies for absence were approved from Councillors Sue Bale, Ruth Leach, Geoff Holdcroft, Nigel Phipps and Mike Sutton.

2. **Declarations of Member Interests.**

   No members made any declarations of interests in relation to items on the agenda.

3. **Requests for dispensations.**

   There were no requests for a dispensation in relation to items on the agenda.

4. **Public Question Time**

   There were no members of the public present.

5. **To agree and approve the Minutes of the meeting held 30th September 2026.**

   The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held 30th September 2026 were approved as a true record.

6. **To consider and agree the Council's Statement of Rental charges for the period April 1st 2027 – March 31st 2028.**

   The Committee agreed that no changes were required to the Statement of Rental charges to cover the period April 1st 2027 – March 31st 2028.

7. **To consider the current and forecast position of the Council's Staffing budget for 2026/27.**

The Committee noted the current and forecast position of the Council's Staffing budget for 2026/27.

8. <u>To consider the 2nd draft of the Council's budget and precept request for the financial year 2027/28.</u>

Income

The Committee noted the income forecast including the reduction in likely rent to be received for the lease of the Kingston Pavilion. No further changes were made to the income forecast.

Expenditure (Operating costs)

The Committee noted the increased amounts provided since draft 1 for insurance and IT support/ licenses and agreed to retain the funds provided for the cleaning of the Kingston Field and Changing Places toilets, which are expected to be provided during the next financial year.

Expenditure (Town Support)

The Committee agreed to include a sum of £20,000 for Town Council supported events in the expectancy that the Town Council may need to support events surrounding the launch of the Sutton Hoo 'longship'.

The Committee asked that the Town Clerk and Estates Officer seek ballpark/ budget costs for the proposed extension to the Kingston Pavilion, in the expectancy that the £25,000 currently allocated may not be sufficient.

The Committee asked that the Town Clerk and Estates Officer seek ballpark/ budget costs for the repair works forecast to be required to the Tide Mill Pond and Whisstocks Quay.

The Committee asked that Cllr. Sadler advise of any forecast in year cost in relation to the ongoing work to assess the future of the Shire Hall and Theatre Street toilets. Furthermore, the Committee agreed to remove the £50,000 'Shire Hall ringfence', as the Council now retains significant reserves in relation to the project.

EMR contributions

The Committee noted the addition of sums to pay for the May 2026 elections and the contribution to the Play Area EMR with a view to building a reserve to replace the 'Bears Wood' item on Kingston Field in two or three years. The Committee also

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removed £10,000 from the Town Support Tide Mill budget, and reallocated it to the Tide Mill EMR contribution.

Staffing budget

The Committee agreed to retain the full-time costs of a Deputy Town Clerk and second Assistant Gardener (both positions to be advertised in the New Year) as requested by the Staffing Committee. The Committee also noted the addition of six months payment (20,000) to the Strategic Change Management Consultant outside of the Staffing budget (code 4605).

The Committee were concerned about the inclusion of funds to employ a Waste Management/ Street cleaning operative and agreed to request that Town Council consider the merits of such an employment at their November meeting.

9. Closure

The meeting was closed at 8.45pm

Councillor Sanders
Chair

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