

**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT THE FAKENHAM CONNECT BUILDING, OAK STREET, FAKENHAM**

TUESDAY 18th November 2025 AT 18:00

Attending Committee Councillors: A Glynn (Mayor), V Joslin (Deputy Mayor), M Dutton & J Rockett

Attending Non-Committee: None

Clerk: L Meanley

RFO & Deputy Clerk: K Lindsay

General Public: None

Press: None

Number	Agenda
88/25 GF	To receive Apologies for Absence Apologies received and accepted from Councillors D Hunter, P Bucknell & L Harrison
89/25 GF	To adjourn the Meeting for Electors' questions None received
90/25 GF	Declarations of Interest: Members are asked at this stage to declare any Interests, which they may have, in any of the following items on the agenda None declared
91/25 GF	To confirm the minutes of the Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 21st October 2025 On the proposition of Cllr Glynn, seconded by Cllr Joslin, the minutes of the Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 21 st October 2025 were AGREED by all and signed by the Chair
92/25 GF	To discuss any matters arising from the Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 21st October 2025 No matters were discussed
93/25 GF	To discuss 9 Norwich Street Cllr Rockett invited representatives from NNDC to attend the meeting; however, they were unable to do so.
94/25 GF	To review and agree policies and risk assessments for update: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Body Camera Policy Councillors reviewed the Body Camera Policy and RESOLVED to approve it
95/25 GF	To review finance reports for month ending October 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To receive and review October 2025 receipts and payments for Fakenham Town Council and Charter Market Cllrs RESOLVED to approve for presentation and approval by Full Council <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To receive and review October 2025 consolidated bank reconciliation reports for Fakenham Town Council and Charter Market bank accounts Cllrs RESOLVED to approve for presentation and approval by Full Council <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To note the current Income and Expenditure Budget vs Actuals report Cllrs RESOLVED to approve for presentation and approval by Full Council Councillors noted the receipt of the grass-cutting credits and their allocation against the relevant invoices. They further noted that, although current calculations indicate the budget is broadly in balance, an underspend will be required at year end to restore the General Reserve to the appropriate level, and this will need to be monitored. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To receive and approve the October 2025 schedule of payments over £500 for display on the website

	<p>Cllrs RESOLVED to approve for presentation and approval by Full Council</p>
96/25 GF	<p>To note that in the absence of councillors available to authorise payment run 16 at Barclays the Clerk completed authorisations including November Salaries</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Cllr Glynn is now in receipt of her Barclays PIN, which should remove the need for the Clerk to authorise future payment runs.</p>
97/25 GF	<p>To receive the RFO's report</p> <p>Councillors reviewed and RESOLVED in principle to maintain the required target reserve levels within the designated reserve accounts (Barclays Business Reserve and CCLA). The calculated transfer amount is £8,933.78; however, as £8,172.60 is required for cash flow for the Town Ambition Programme (Minute 98/25), only £761.18 will be transferred at this time. The remaining £8,172.60 will be transferred upon receipt of grant and sponsorship funds.</p> <p>Councillors further RESOLVED to transfer £50,000 from the Barclays Business Reserve Account to the CCLA account to achieve a better return.</p> <p>Councillors noted that insurance policy quotations are in hand, although responses to date have been limited. Review and approval are therefore unlikely before the Full Council meeting on 17 December 2025.</p>
98/25 GF	<p>To discuss the Town Ambition Programme Bid (F&A 26-71)</p> <p>Councillors RESOLVED to proceed with the Town Ambition Programme bid, noting that the Council must initially cover all project expenditure and be confident that all grant and sponsorship funds will be reimbursed. Before any costs are incurred, written confirmation must be received that the Council will hold copyright ownership of all designs produced for the project, and formal agreements must be in place with all sponsors.</p>
99/25GF	<p>To receive and review the Interim Internal Audit</p> <p>Councillors reviewed the Interim Internal Audit and noted:</p> <p>Item 5.11 As noted at Minute 95/25, the General Reserve shown on the balance sheet is inadequate. Restoring it to the appropriate level will require an underspend at year end, and this must be carefully monitored to ensure it is achieved. The Internal Auditor will review at year end.</p> <p>Recommendation 1: The word 'DRAFT' should be removed from minutes saved on the website once these are finalised. Agendas and minutes should be saved under the appropriate heading on the website.</p> <p>The office has reviewed the nomenclature of minutes on the website, removing 'DRAFT' where appropriate, and has checked and reorganised the filing of agendas and minutes as necessary.</p> <p>Recommendation 2: The Policy folder should contain the most up to date policies. All policies should be included on the policy list or updates/reviews may be missed. All policies should be published on the website and updated when necessary.</p> <p>The policy folder has been updated, and all policies have been checked and confirmed as published on the website.</p> <p>Recommendation 3: The Cemetery charges should be published on the website as soon as approved.</p> <p>The Cemetery charges are published on the website as an appendix to the Cemetery Rules and Regulations.</p> <p>Recommendation 4: The CIO reports should be discussed at full Council meetings and any recommendations made agreed and enacted.</p>

	<p>'To receive the Internal Controller Review' is now a standing item on the Full Council agenda.</p> <p>Recommendation 5: The Head of Estates when employed performs a full review of the assets listed on the fixed asset register to ensure all items are still in ownership of the Council and no items are missing.</p> <p>The Estate Team Leader has been employed, start date 24th November 2025 and will be tasked with a full review of assets.</p> <p>Recommendation 6: The statutory accounts for Fakenham Recreation Ground Charity (FRGC) (Registration no. 303946) should be approved by the Trustees prior to submission to the Charity Commission.</p> <p>This recommendation will be made to the first available meeting of the FRGC.</p>
100/25GF	<p>To receive and review the Norfolk Pension Fund Triennial Valuation 2025-Fakenham Town Councils Draft Valuation Results</p> <p>Councillors noted the 2025 Actuarial Valuation – Notification of Draft Employer Result, indicating that contributions from 1 April 2026 will be 19.5% of pay (applicable to one employee).</p>
101/25 GF	<p>To discuss Budget setting for 2026/27</p> <p>Councillors discussed budget setting principles and RESOLVED to make the following recommendations to Full Council:</p> <p>1. Depot Project – Initial Set-Up Funding</p> <p>Approval is sought to allocate funds in 2026/27 to progress preparatory work for the Depot project (feasibility, design, compliance and early site work).</p> <p>This allocation will be supported by the existing EMR for the Welfare Unit and any transfer from the 2025/26 Trap Lane budget line.</p> <p>Construction costs are expected to be funded through a PWLB loan in later years.</p> <p>2. Streetlighting – High-Priority Replacement Programme</p> <p>Agreement is required to fund a two year phased replacement programme for unsafe, high-priority lighting columns identified in the latest inspection.</p> <p>The principle is a two-year phased approach, balancing public safety with affordability.</p> <p>3. Office Accommodation – Temporary Relocation Provision</p> <p>Members are asked to authorise the creation of an EMR to fund temporary rented accommodation for approximately six months.</p> <p>This prepares for the likely need to vacate the current premises as devolution progresses and provides flexibility and continuity while long-term accommodation is developed.</p> <p>4. CCTV – Replacement and Modernisation</p> <p>To approve an allocation within the 2026/27 budget, supplemented by any underspend transferred from 2025/26, to begin installation of a new, smaller but strategically-located CCTV system.</p> <p>The system will be scalable, allowing expansion in future years.</p> <p>5. Devolution – Establishment of a Contingency EMR</p> <p>Members are asked to agree the principle of creating an EMR to prepare for potential asset or service transfers from NNDC or NCC.</p> <p>The allocation is a prudent early provision only; actual resource requirements will depend on the final scope of devolution.</p>

	<p>6. General Reserve – Strengthening Financial Resilience Approval is sought to allocate additional funds to a General Reserve EMR to improve resilience against unforeseen expenditure. This is in addition to the amount already required from the precept to restore the General Reserve to the minimum recommended level. The aim is to ensure that emergency spending does not push the Reserve below statutory good-practice thresholds.</p> <p>7. Wayfinding Project – Initial Funding Allocation Members are asked to support creating a unified 2026/27 budget line for a comprehensive Wayfinding Project linked to NNDC’s wider programme. This will bring together signage, mapping, Heritage Trail assets and other navigational projects into one coordinated scheme, with external funding to be actively sought.</p> <p>8. Grant Match Funding – Establishing an Enabling Budget To approve a dedicated match-funding allocation to allow the Council to pursue grant opportunities throughout the year. This principle ensures the Council can unlock external funding without requiring in-year budget changes.</p> <p>9. Fakenham Recreation Ground Charity (FRGC) – Temporary Freeze on Non-Essential Activity Members are asked to agree that all work on FRGC-owned assets (Millennium Park and Aldiss Park) be limited to essential routine maintenance only, pending legal advice. All non-essential projects and improvements to be paused until governance and management responsibilities are clarified.</p> <p>Purpose of Decisions These principles will guide preparation of a balanced, legally compliant budget for 2026/27. They represent strategic choices affecting the Council’s infrastructure, asset management, financial resilience and preparedness for organisational change. Members’ decisions on each principle will determine the scope of the final draft budget presented later in the cycle.</p> <p>Public Forum Following application of the agreed budget principles, the resulting draft budget concept will be presented at a Public Forum, providing residents with an opportunity to review and comment on the proposals. Feedback received at the Forum will be considered before the final draft budget is presented to Full Council for approval in December.</p>
102/25 GF	<p>To review spending recommendations from other committees and make recommendations to Full Council where appropriate None</p>
103/25 GF	<p>To receive the Internal Controller review None</p>
104/25 GF	<p>To discuss the FLASH Project Welfare provision for the groundsmen currently offered by NNDC appears to be limited. Further clarification is required regarding which facilities they are permitted to access within Everyone Active. Depending on the outcome, the Council may need to consider allocating expenditure to ensure the groundsmen have appropriate welfare facilities available to them.</p>

