



Minutes

Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on Friday 19th December 2025 at 2pm in The Village Barn, Eastern Way, Heath & Reach.

1. **Meeting attendees:** *Cllrs. Inns (AI), Bevan (JB) & Ellis (TE).*
2. **Apologies for absence:** *Cllrs. Reading, Smith, White & Webb.*
3. **Absentees:** *None.*

4. **Declaration of interest:** *None.*

5. **Review of income & expenditure against budget up to and including 30th November 2025.**

Income: £51,429.54

Expenditure: £38,375.12

6. **Matter for discussion and resolution:**

a) **Review future project suggestions to include in budget for 2026/2027.**

- **Increase Cremation area in Cemetery:**

The cemetery's cremation plot is almost at capacity. New area quotes range from £9,100 to £9,940. This project will be scheduled for 2026/27, but if funding becomes available sooner, the work will proceed due to the clear need - IT WAS AGREED.

- **Replace village sign:**

It was felt that the Heath & Reach sign on the Village Green is in need of replacement. Expected cost circa £2,000. This project will be scheduled for 2026/27 – IT WAS AGREED.

- **Improvements to Copthill field (cutting twice a year):**

Recent maintenance on the field has been completed. The annual trimming organised by the allotment trustees is considered adequate; therefore, PC consider it unnecessary to plan another cut – IT WAS AGREED.

- **Cutting of hedge along allotment on Linslade Road:**

Allotment trustees responsible for this hedge cut it once a year. It was discussed that it would be of benefit for a second cut. AI to raise it at the next trustees meeting and will report back to PC.

- **Consider installing Wi-Fi in The Barn:**

Clerk reported treasurer of The Barn trustees has confirmed it would be of no benefit. PC also considered it an unsuitable project – IT WAS AGREED.

b) **Speed watch signs.**

To consider the purchase of permanent fixed signs to all 4 entry points into the village:

PC considered the proposal to purchase permanent fixed Speed Watch signs for all four entry points into the village, which would allow the existing mobile sign to be disabled. After discussion, PC expressed their support for funding this initiative. Clerk to obtain permission from Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) prior to placing any orders for the signs.

c) Reynolds Landscaping:

Consider revised quote for 2026/27 year.

The Parish Council considered the quotation for the village grass cutting contract for the forthcoming year. Reynolds Landscaping, the current contractor, submitted a revised quotation for the continuation of their services, which reflected only a minimal increase in prices compared to the previous year. Clerk provided a second quote for comparison. After reviewing both quotations, the PC expressed satisfaction with the services and pricing offered by Reynolds Landscaping. Consequently, it was agreed that Reynolds Landscaping would continue as the main contractor for grass cutting in the village for the next year. The Council also noted that while they are content to proceed with the existing arrangement, they may consider the option of changing contractors next year, should it prove beneficial.

d) Agree draft budget:

PC conducted a thorough review of the draft budget for the upcoming year. Precept will go up by 3% inline with growing costs. Clerk to make minor amendments and present to full Council in January for final approval.

7. Review of projects and money in reserve:

- a) Hedge cutting at side & back of cemetery, (£1,500.00 accumulated over 3yr period)*
- b) Traffic calming: £100, 066.00*
- c) Elections:*
- d) Precept:*
- e) Millenium Gardens:*

Currently holding:

£ 0
£100,066.00
£ 3,500.00
£ 11,689.00
£ 350.00

8. Items for next agenda:

None.

9. Date of next meeting:

27th March 2026.

Meeting closed at: 3pm.