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Minutes of the **Finance & Policy Committee** of Haydon Wick Parish Council held on **Tuesday 14th July** at 7.30pm at Parish Council Offices, Thames Avenue, Swindon, SN25 1QQ.

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS: Councillors A Roupelis (Chair), V Manro (Vice Chair), N Bradley, R Hailstone, S Heyes, A John, B Patrick-Okoh and C Skinner

OFFICERS: Georgina Morgan-Denn, Chief Officer/Clerk & RFO
Laura Cutter, Deputy Clerk/RFO, Services & HR Manager
Kendel Pyne, Finance Assistant
Julie McMorrow, Meetings and HR Administrator

FP 001 APOLOGIES

No apologies were received from Councillor A Jimmy.

FP 002 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

FP 003 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was one member of the public who is currently on work experience with the Council. They are studying history and politics and were keen to gain a better understanding of what the Parish Council does and observe the democratic process in action.

FP 004 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nothing to report.

FP 005 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Members reviewed the minutes of Finance and Policy Committee held on Tuesday 17th March 2026 and agreed they were a true record.

Proposed: Councillor A John Seconded: Councillor R Hailstone

Vote: Agreed with three (3) Abstentions.

RESOLVED: To accept and sign the minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee to be held on Tuesday 17th March 2026.

FP 006 COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor R Hailstone – Attended the Greenmeadow shops litter pick and Chairs and Strategic Sub Committee.

Councillor B Patrick-Okoh – Nothing to report.

Councillor S Heyes – Attended Chairs and Strategic Sub Committee and Internal Audit Working Party.

Councillor C Skinner – Nothing to report.

Councillor N Bradley – Attended the Greenmeadow shops litter pick and picking up various case work.

Councillor A John – Attended the Chairs and Strategic Sub Committee and Internal Audit Working Party.

Councillor V Manro – Attended The Haven, the Chairs and Strategic Sub Committee and Internal Audit Working Party.

Councillor A Roupelis – Attended the Internal Audit Working Party and the Chairs and Strategic Sub Committee.

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FP 007

Chief Officer's Report

After consultation at the Chairs and Strategic Sub Committee, the Parish Council will be flying the England Flag on the 15th July 2026 to support the evening's World Cup match.

FP 008

ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

Actions are ongoing and are being actioned as promptly as possible but dependent upon with third parties.

FP 009

HEALTH & SAFETY

Committee noted the Health and Safety report and recommendations are:

1. To note the H&S Audit conducted by H&S Lead Operative in July 2026
2. To note the Legal Building Compliance.
3. To note the Regulatory and Welfare Compliance.
4. To note a budget aspiration for increasing the H&S budget in 2027/2028.
5. To note the continued services of a retained H&S Consultant – annual cost £1,273.00 exc VAT.
6. To agree the membership of a new Health & Safety Working Party.

The purpose of this is to review the Health & Safety arrangements and identify where any improvements are needed. A lot of issues raised are legacy concerns over years. It was identified and agreed that a new working party will be implemented. Along with the four Councillors who have put themselves forward for this new working party two further Councillors requested to be members.

Proposed: Councillor V Manro

Seconded: Councillor N Bradley

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the H&S Audit.
2. To note the Legal Building Compliance.
3. To note the Regulatory and Welfare Compliance.
4. To note a budget aspiration for increasing the H&S budget in 2027/2028.
5. To note the continued services of a retained H&S Consultant – annual cost £1,273.00 exc VAT.
6. To agree the membership of a new Health & Safety Working Party with the following Councillors:

L Jackson
J Jackson
S Nukana
A Roupelis
A John
R Hailstone
N Bradley

Deputy Clerk left the meeting at 7.55pm

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- FP 010** **CCTV SERVICES**
This has been deferred to a future Full Council meeting when the prices for this service have been received from Swindon Borough Council.
- FP 011** **FINANCIAL REPORTS**
- FP 011A** Members received and noted the Bank Statements and Bank Reconciliations for June 2026.
- FP 011B** Members received and noted the Bank Statements and Bank Reconciliations for June 2026.
- FP 011C** Members noted the Investments and retrospectively approved the Account Transfers for June 2026.
Proposed: Councillor A John **Seconded: Councillor N Bradley**
Vote: Agreed Unanimously.
RESOLVED: To retrospectively approve CCLA Account Transfers for June 2026.
- FP 011D** Members received and approved expenditure under purchase daybook references 5262 and 5312. The total payment is £18,891.82 for June 2026 and July 2026.
Proposed: Councillor C Skinner **Seconded: Councillor B Patrick-Okoh**
Vote: Agreed Unanimously
RESOLVED: To approve expenditure under purchase daybook references 5262 and 5312. The total payment is £18,891.82 for June 2026 and July 2026.
- FP 011E** Members retrospectively approved the payments made using the credit card for payments made in April and May 2026.
Proposed: Councillor R Hailstone **Seconded: Councillor S Heyes**
Vote: Agreed Unanimously.
RESOLVED: To retrospectively approve expenditure using the credit card for payments made in April and May 2026. The total payment was £2,924.38.
- FP 012** **INTERNAL AUDIT WORKING PARTY**
A verbal update was given by the Chair, following a Working Party held prior to the Committee meeting:
- Members undertook a successful spot check of four payments; no errors or concerns were identified.
 - The Financial Risk Assessment was reviewed and updated to reflect the remedial actions arising from the final Internal Auditor's report.
 - Consultant Accountant will be conducting monthly checks and any tweaks to the Risk Assessment policy will be applied and brought back to a meeting before 31 March 2027.
 - The Working Party considered the call for quotations for a new Internal Auditor as the current contract needs reviewing. They reviewed the request for quotations, the auditors who had been approached to date.
 - It was acknowledged that, due to the increased testing required for the revised Annual Return process and inclusion of Assertion 10, that involve data checks and IT compliance, Auditors will need more testing time to prepare their audits than in previous years. Council will see an increased cost as a result.
 - A report and recommendation regarding appointment of the new Internal Auditor will be presented to Full Council in August.
- FP 031** **Room Hire**
Members noted the report and analysis from April – June 2026. Room hire income remains strong and is currently slightly above budget for 2026/27. Booking levels are broadly stable, but the Council still has unused capacity in the afternoons and

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on some Fridays and Saturdays. The current pricing remains supported by benchmarking. A small, focused promotional effort may help to increase income further without undermining existing regular hire users. It was asked to have the costs split to reflect the income of the small meeting room compared to the large meeting room. *Action Chief Officer to look at obtaining this information for the small meeting room.*

FP 014

THERMAL IMAGING CAMERA

Members noted the report. This service has now launched with a slow response thus far. It was recommended to increase awareness and promotion of the scheme to encourage greater uptake and increase the number of hires. The Parish Council does not currently charge for this service but other parishes do. It was acknowledged that, if uptake became more intensive, an administrative charge might need to be applied. Councillors also suggested that a campaign is run in the warmer as well as the cooler seasons to monitor heat in households. *Action: Chief Officer to liaise with Office & Community Administrator to introduce on their Camera's campaign throughout the year.*

FP 015

FP 015A

FP 015B

POLICY UPDATES

Members received and noted the Policy Update Table.

Members noted the revised Data Retention & Disposal policy. The purpose of this policy is to detail how the Parish Council manages its retention, review, archive and dispose of all records created as part of statutory and business activities. Compliance is needed to support the Council's Data Protection and in particular with:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation.
- Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
- Employment Rights.
- Pensions, audit, finance, health & safety and local government legislation.

For Councillors holding sensitive data on their devices, a sensible approach needs to be in place, for example don't share passwords, update and change on a regular basis.

Action Chief Officer – To produce a briefing document to explain to Full Council what this means for Councillors.

Proposed: Councillor C Skinner

Seconded: Councillor N Bradley

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council adopting the revised Data Retention & Disposal Policy 2026.

FP 016

ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

To be submitted in advance of September 2026.

FP 017

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS

RESOLVED: In accordance with Standing Order 3(d) that 'in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted and in the public interest, that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they be instructed to withdraw'. **Reasons: Contractual and Sensitive.**

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FP 018

INSURANCE MATTERS

Three live insurance matters were reported.

1. Current Position: The requested information has been provided to Zurich, and the claim remains under consideration by the insurer.
2. Current Position: The matter has been referred to Zurich as a potential claim. The Council's initial investigation found no evidence that its maintenance activities caused the reported damage, and the claim is awaiting any further correspondence from the insurer.
3. Current Position: Zurich has acknowledged receipt of the final evidence and is reviewing the file. At the time of reporting, the Council is awaiting Zurich's final confirmation that the matter has concluded. This case has generated over 70 emails and has been ongoing for more than 14 months.

Members noted the outstanding issues, and further information will be given as and when the files close or if further action is taken.

FP 019

IT SUPPORT SERVICES CONTRACT

Members noted the report and agreed to the recommendations in the report.

Namely:

1. To give the Chief Officer delegated authority to procure the IT Support Services up to £9,000.00 per year to include additional security monitoring using budgeted funds from 101 / 4024.
2. To note a budget aspiration will be included, as part of the 2027/28 budget-setting process, to enable Members to consider whether further investment in bespoke Parish and Town IT services would be appropriate.
3. To provide a steer on the broadband issues experienced at the Parish Office to provide resilience for future digital working.

Action: Chief Officer to procure the IT Support service contract and work on a future budget aspiration for enhanced IT services for the Council. Members were asked to provide a steer on improving the broadband resilience in the office.

Proposed: Councillor C Skinner Seconded: Councillor B Patrick-Okoh

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED:

1. To give the Chief Officer delegated authority to procure the IT Support Services up to £9,000.00 per year to include additional security monitoring using budgeted funds from 101 / 4024.
2. To note a budget aspiration will be included, as part of the 2027/28 budget-setting process, to enable Members to consider whether further investment in bespoke Parish and Town IT services would be appropriate.
3. To note the broadband issues experienced at the Parish Office and Members to provide resilience for future digital working.

Meeting Closed at: 8.33 pm. Chairman Signed: _____

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