

GREAT SANKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Finance Committee

Minutes of meeting: Tuesday 3rd February 2026
Whittle Hall Community Centre

Chair: Cllr S Pennington
Present: Cllr P Watson
Cllr B Simpson
Cllr N Catlow

In Attendance: K Carter (Clerk)

1. To elect a Chair.

Cllr Williams was thanked for his tenure as Chair of the Finance Committee over the last 18 months. Cllr Pennington was nominated and approved as the Chair for this meeting.

FINANCE/2026/02/6: Recommended to appoint Cllr Pennington as Chair of the Finance Committee.

2. To receive and approve any apologies for unavoidable absence.

All members present.

3. To approve the minutes of previous meeting 6/1/26.

The draft minutes were moved and accepted as a true record of the meeting and signed as such.

FINANCE/2026/02/7: Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6th January 2026 as a true record.

4. To review the WBC contract for wildflower planting at sites across Great Sankey.

The Parish Council contracts WBC to plant wildflowers on a number of verges and roundabouts throughout Great Sankey and has been doing so for around 10 years. WBC are to be contacted to query one location where wildflowers have not been evident this year (Twenty Acre Road) and to request whether an additional site can be added (land opposite Ventnor Close). The council's Head Gardener advised that the costs (95p per m²) are great value which WBC can achieve with its machinery and economies of scale. Residents are always appreciative of the displays and the planting both improves biodiversity and reduces mowing regimes, thus reducing carbon footprint.

FINANCE/2026/02/8: Recommended to continue the contract with WBC to plant wildflowers through the Parish (Open Spaces Act 1906 s10).

5. To consider request from the Community Projects Committee to move funds from the Community Fund into earmarked reserves for the Heritage Board project.

The project to research the history of Great Sankey and produce and install information boards at 6 locations in the parish has been ongoing for a couple of years. It is now nearing completion, and quotes have been obtained for their production & installation, but this is unlikely to happen until the new financial year. There are sufficient monies remaining in the Community Fund to pay for the boards and it has been requested that these are set aside in an Earmarked Reserve for this purpose, which was agreed.

FINANCE/2026/02/9: Resolved to set aside £6,000 from the Community Fund in an Earmarked Reserve for the purpose of producing and installing 6nr Heritage Boards within Great Sankey (LGA 1972 s144).

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6. To review the hire of community centres for private functions.

A recent private function which overran by over 2 hours had highlighted issues with adult functions and the difficulties for caretakers as lone workers to safely enforce departure from the community centres. There was also a significant amount of cleaning required that meant that the booking was a financial loss for the council. These issues have been experienced before but only when the function has been an evening adult only event. Such bookings only account for around 5% of private functions as the majority are children's birthday parties taking place during the day. Members did not wish to prohibit adult functions entirely but accepted that more stringent conditions need to be put in place. Several options were discussed including deposits, additional staffing and councillor backup. A revised policy will be drafted and brought back for further discussion and approval.

7. To be advised of H&S audit.

The council's Health & Safety consultants attended the Parish Office to conduct a periodic review prior to a full safety compliance audit later in the year. Several areas have been highlighted that need implementing/improvement, including

- Uploading all documents to the Peninsula Brightsafe management system
- All staff to undertake relevant e-learning modules
- Upgrading the Go Audits system to include maintenance records
- Review of fire risk assessments and documentation
- Review of working practices in relation to hazardous substances.

During the meeting, the changes coming into play throughout 2026 as a result of the Employment rights Act 2025 were touched upon. It is recommended that the council review staff contracts and working practices to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and it would be prudent to engage the services of an HR specialist for this. Peninsula offer this in addition to the Health and Safety service, and it was agreed to obtain quotes for the Finance Committee's consideration.

FINANCE/2026/02/10: Recommended to implement the work required as identified by the Health & Safety review (Health & Safety at Work Act 1974).

8. To scrutinise financial expenditure arising since the last meeting, including payments by Direct Debit.

A list of payments to be made had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following payments were considered and approved.

Presented By	Description	Amount, £
Canda Copying Ltd	Office Copier	£94.80
Greater Manchester Doors	Fire Shutter repair – TP	£330.00
Toilets on the Go Ltd	Porta Loos – Fun Day 26	£264.00
Firecheck	Fire alarm service test – HL	£162.00
Amy Doyle	Circus skills workshop – 50% deposit	£200.00
Brentwood Moss Nurseries	Winter planting – all sites	£168.16
Ross Safety	Staff safety gloves	£19.44
Trade UK	Centre Repairs – TP	£13.56

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Trade UK	Centre Repairs – TP	£11.28
B&B Hygiene Ltd	Cleaning Supplies	£513.81
Trade UK	Centre repairs – HL	£21.98
Amazon	Floor cleaning detergent – Centres	£48.07
Amazon	Magic Eraser Sponge – Centre	£14.98
MKM	Plywood – Grounds	£23.52
Landscape Academy	Chainsaw lantra course	£486.00
Tudor Environment	Platipus tree system	£760.38
Tudor Environment	Round Lifting Sling	£38.64
Tudor Environment	PPE – Grounds	£381.66
Trade UK	Key safe lock box – WH	£52.97
Trade UK	Centre Maintenance	£14.25
Amazon UK	Seeds and plants – Grounds	£5.38
Amazon UK	Seeds and plants – Grounds	£8.08
MKM	Cable locator hire	£42.30
MKM	Radio Detection hire	£296.10
Viking Office UK	Office Stationery	£185.03
MKM	Flat Head screws – Grounds	£93.61
MKM	Paving Flags – Grounds	£110.05
Trade UK	Centre Maintenance – TP	£24.49
C.J Lyon	Clear drains at TP	£360.00
Tudor Environmental	PPE Grounds	£352.92
Amazon Business	Plants	£15.99
T&O Harrison	Greenwaste	£60.00
Smiths Training	Ladder user & inspection training – x 3 staff	£468.00
Smiths Training	Pasma Training course – x 3 staff	£540.00
B&T Skip Hire	Skip hire – TP	£230.00
J Riley	Set up Email Accounts – Caretakers	£120.00
360 Landscape	Top soil – TP Grounds	£135.00
360 Landscape	Top soil – TP Grounds	£135.00
360 Landscape	Sleepers - TP Grounds	£520.00
Equals Card	Petty Cash top up	£843.81
	TOTAL	£8,165.26

FINANCE/2026/02/11: Resolved to authorise all payments listed (under LGA 1976 s19 or LGA 1972 s15(5), s101, 111, 112, 133, 142 or 137).

The following direct debits on the Council's account during December were also noted:

Novuna	01/12/2025	Electric Van	Lease	456.20
WBC	01/12/2025	September Business Rates	TP	235.00
WBC	01/12/2025	September Business Rates	HM	147.00
WBC	01/12/2025	September Business Rates	WH	156.00
WBC	01/12/2025	September Business Rates	BB	125.00

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Lex Autolease	01/12/2025	Council Electric Van	Lease	851.98
Water Plus	01/12/2025	Water charges	HM	40.68
Water Plus	01/12/2025	Water charges	WH	74.96
Water Plus	01/12/2025	Water charges	BB	79.90
BT	04/12/2025	WIFI/Telephone	HL/TP/BB/HM	456.64
Peninsula	11/12/2025	H&S Service	H&S	200.93
Smart Pension Ltd	11/12/2025	Pension payment October	Wages	1503.94
Global 4 Comm	15/12/2025	Office 365/email	Office	122.04
SSE Energy	15/12/2025	Gas	HL	100.84
SSE Energy	15/12/2025	Gas	HM	125.49
BT	29/12/2025	WIFI/Telephone	WH	261.92
WBC	30/12/2025	October Business Rates	TP	235.00
WBC	30/12/2025	October Business Rates	HM	147.00
WBC	30/12/2025	October Business Rates	WH	156.00
WBC	30/12/2025	October Business Rates	BB	125.00
Utility Warehouse	31/12/2025	Mobile phones	Office	56.38
Water Plus	31/10/2025	Water charges	HM	45.60
Water Plus	31/10/2025	Water charges	WH	74.96
Water Plus	31/10/2025	Water charges	TP	67.39
Service Fee Charge	31/12/2025	Service Charge	Office	21.90
Unity Trust Bank	31/12/2025	Manual Handling Charges	Office	4.50
			TOTAL	£5872.25

9. To consider any quotes received and authorise or make recommendations to full Council where appropriate.

Quote to supply a summer playscheme - £700 per week for 6 weeks, with a fee to parents of £4 per child. Agreed that this is a great service that the council offers and the committee would like it to continue. Provider to be asked if increasing the cost per child would impact negatively on numbers, and if not, whether doing so could reduce the cost to the council. Response to be brought to next meeting for decision.

10. To consider requests for financial assistance

Request from Westbrook Library Friends CIC for help towards internal improvements to the layout of the library. This request follows on from the presentation at the January Parish Council meeting. The library is now community led and it is hoped that it will become self-funding within the next 2 years. To achieve this and bring in sufficient income, the group is increasing the number and range of activities on offer in the community space and installing an acoustic partition is a key part of the improvements. It was proposed that the council offers a £5,000 donation on condition that the monies are paid direct to the CIC specifically for the improvements, i.e. not for general running costs, to facilitate the continuation of a dedicated library. The committee also proposed requesting confirmation of the expenditure (invoice/receipt) and an update on progress later in the year.

FINANCE/2026/02/12: Recommended that the council gives a donation of £5,000 to Westbrook Library Friends CIC for the sole purpose of internal improvements to the library space to enhance the community provision and enable the continuation of a dedicated library offer. Confirmation of expenditure and an update on progress to be requested (LGA 1972 s137).

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11. Budget 2025-26: to scrutinise documentation and when satisfied as to correctness to sign off financial reports and bank reconciliations for December.

The bank reconciliation and budget monitoring pages for December were considered and accepted. Checks on financial transactions were carried out prior to the meeting by Cllrs Catlow and Simpson.

FINANCE/2026/02/13: Resolved to accept the bank reconciliation and budget monitoring pages for December 2025 (Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 reg 4).

12. To authorise payment of wages, tax and ERNIC for January.

The list of wages to be paid was considered and authorised. Total Employment Costs (including salaries, pensions & HMRC) were £24,013.63.

FINANCE/2026/02/14: Resolved to authorise payment of wages and HMRC costs (£24,013.63 total) for January 2026 (LGA 1972 s112).