

**DRAFT MINUTES FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF
PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL**
held in Room 1, Spetchells Centre, Front Street, Prudhoe
on WEDNESDAY 14TH JANUARY 2026 at 7:00PM

Present:

Cllr Holly Waddell (Chair), Cllr Jane Johnson, Cllr Ignasious Varghese, Cllr Jonathan Wheeler (Ex Officio).

Shirley Ann Gaut Hall (Clerk)
Stephanie Kirby (Deputy Clerk)

FIN2526/023 Welcome from Chair

Cllr Holly Waddell to welcome everyone to the meeting.

FIN2526/024 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Bryan Futers, Cllr Dot Dickinson, Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Angie Scott.

FIN2526/025 Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of interest.

FIN2526/026 Dispensations

To receive and agree.

FIN2526/027 Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting, held on 20th November 2025

It was **AGREED** to receive the minutes agree as a true record.

FIN2526/028 Draft Budget 2026-2027

To consider and agree a draft budget and precept demand for the year 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027 in order to present and recommended budget to Full Council

- a) To consider any projects and requests for inclusion in the draft Budget.

Heritage Trail with a budget of £10,000 was discussed, it was noted the Clerk raised the importance of transparency in relation to budget setting and emphasised that the budget is formally agreed by all members during the Ordinary Meeting scheduled for Thursday, 22 January 2026. It is essential that all members are fully informed of both the rationale behind the budget and the amounts involved, to ensure clarity and collective understanding.

Following the discussion a vote was cast to agree should the project remain:-

For: 2 Abstained: 1 Against: 1

It was **AGREED** that the project would remain within the draft budget.

- b) To consider and agree the Town Council Expenditure Budget for 2026/27

It was **AGREED** the following be recommended to full council:-

MANAGEMENT & SUPPORT	BUDGET 2025/2026	EXPECTED OUT TURN 2025/26	2026/27 GENERAL EXPENDITURE	2026/27 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE
Employment Costs	£90,000	£96,323	£100,000	
Office Rent, Service and Facility Costs (PCP)	£9,000	£6,220	£9,270	
Meeting Hire (PCP)	£1,000	£1,300	£1,030	

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Stationery Costs (inc. copier)	£2,000	£2,170	£4,000
Audit Fee	£2,000	£1,310	£2,060
Insurance PTC	£6,700	£6,180	£7,000
Subscriptions	£3,000	£2,923	£3,090
Travel - councillors & staff (domestic)	£200	£0	£200
Bank Charges/Loyalty Income	£200	£118	£200
Professional Services	£1,000	£0	£1,000
RECREATION & LEISURE SERVICES			
Prudhoe in Bloom			£1,030
Play Areas	£12,000	£5,769	£10,000
Allotments General	£10,000	£9,105	£10,000
Highfield	£60,000	£43,831	£40,000
Castle Dene			£50,000
The GLADE (power supply)	£800	£668	£800
CIVIC EVENTS			
Highfield Fest	£8,000	£7,650	£10,000
Christmas Events	£25,000	£10,715	£15,000
Prudhoe Town Show			£6,000
Town Twinning	£300	£531	£4,000
Other Civic Events	£4,000	£7,116	£15,000
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES			
Bedding, Planters & Hanging Baskets	£32,500	£32,901	£32,500
Roundabouts & Shrubbery, Grass cutting	£13,219	£14,321	£13,219
Environmental Improvements	£15,000	£3,328	£20,000
Bus Shelters	£15,000	£11,493	£15,000
Seats	£5,000	£350	£5,000
South Road Public Toilets	£35,000	£17,670	£25,000
JOINT PROJECTS			
Glade	£35,000	£4,450	£10,550
Front Street	£2,000	£0	£2,000
East Centre	£15,000	£0	£15,000
Heritage Trail			£10,000
CEMETERY			
<i>Edgewell Cemetery Contract & Running Costs</i>	£30,000	£26,951	£30,000
Edgewell Cemetery Repairs & Development	£40,000	£13,368	£40,000
GRANTS & SUBSIDIES			
Mayoral Fund	£1,000	£0	£1,030

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Grant Aid	£65,000	£64,986	£65,000	
Youth Provision	£20,000	£20,000	£30,000	
OTHER SERVICES				
Remembrance (incl Poppy Wreath)	£600	£432	£600	
War Memorial (Lych Gate) also Veterans Seat c/f	£700	£0	£700	
Town Council Development	£4,000	£5,301	£15,150	
Training & Development	£3,000	£1,122	£3,000	
Elections	£5,000	£3,387	£5,000	
TOTAL	£583,219	£430,822		
			£629,429	

- c) To consider and agree the Budget allocation to General Reserves and Contingency, review sub-headings, and to consider any contingency to be directed elsewhere.

It was AGREED to recommend to hold £85,000 allocation in General Reserves & Contingency and £222,139 allocated to Earmarked Reserves, towards longer term asset management and replacement.

- d) Employment costs for 2026/27 - Northumberland County Council to advise. The Clerk updated members on the revised figures.

- e) To consider the 2026/27 precept demand to be submitted to Northumberland County Council.

It was AGREED to recommend the draft budget to Full Council at the Ordinary Meeting scheduled 22nd January 2026, noting that these are recommendations only and remain subject to change.

FIN2526/029 Scribe 2025/26 Year End Health Check

It was AGREED to arrange a Scribe Year End Health Check. This will provide a remote review of our Scribe data carried out by the Support Team, followed by a clear and detailed report outlining the checks completed and any amendments required.

FIN2526/030 Date of Next Meeting

It was AGREED that the meeting would be scheduled in April to allow for the review of Grant Aid Applications in advance of the Full Council meeting. The date and time will be circulated in due course.

Meeting ended 8.30pm