Yateley Town Council

Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee on
Monday, 19 October 2026, 7pm at The Oak Room, Reading Road, Yateley

Present – Councillors (committee members):
Cllr Greg Easterbrook (Chairman)
Cllr Stuart Bailey
Cllr Graham Cockarill
Cllr Alex Drage
Cllr Mark Higgins
Cllr Mark Vernon

Absent - Councillors (committee members)
Cllr Bob Harward

In attendance – Non-Committee Members, Public & Officers:
Julie Routley - Town Clerk

2212 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Easterbrook opened the meeting.
Apologies had been received from Cllr Harward.

2213 Declarations of Interests

Cllr Bailey declared an interest in Item 2213(i), grant request for *Yateley Industries for the Disabled Ltd*, as he is acquainted with the individuals involved in organising the Community Christmas Lunch.

2213 Minutes of the Last Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes and the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 6 July. The minutes were signed by the Committee Chairman.

2214 Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

2213 Grant Funding Requests

The Committee considered grant applications from Yateley Industries for the Disabled Ltd and Frogmore Juniors PTA.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

i) A grant of £750 be awarded to Yateley Industries for the Disabled Ltd towards the cost of the Community Christmas Lunch, subject to acknowledgement of Yateley Town Council's support in any publicity. The Committee requested that, following the event, a breakdown be provided showing the number of attendees residing outside Yateley. The grant payment was authorised for immediate release.

ii) A grant of £750 be awarded to Frogmore Juniors PTA towards the accessibility and safety elements of its Inclusive Fireworks & Laser Show, subject to acknowledgement

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of Yateley Town Council's support in any publicity. The grant payment was authorised for immediate release.

The Committee also requested that both events be promoted through the Town Council's social media channels. The Town Clerk confirmed that this is undertaken as a matter of course for supported community events.

2214 Capital Projects and Budget Considerations 2027/28

Members reviewed the proposed capital expenditure priorities for 2027/28 in line with the Strategic Council Plan 2024-2028. The list had previously been considered by the Environment Committee on 28 September 2026, which had supported progressing the projects identified within the 'Essential' category.

During discussion, Members highlighted a number of projects requiring further investigation and cost appraisal before priorities could be finalised.
It was agreed that the Town Clerk obtain indicative quotations and cost information relating to:

- the installation of electric vehicle charging points within Town Council car parks;
- potential redesign and resurfacing works at The Tythings car park; and
- renovation and improvement works to the Darby Green Centre.

Members recognised that a range of options should be explored for the future of the Darby Green Centre site and agreed that initial proposals and associated cost estimates be developed for consideration. It was suggested that additional Members of the Finance Committee join the existing Darby Green Working Group to assist in evaluating potential options and progressing the project.

Members also discussed the continuing demand for allotment provision within the town and noted the need for additional allotment space. It was noted that the Town Council remains alert to opportunities to acquire suitable land for allotment use and had recently considered two parcels of land that became available for sale. However, these opportunities had not been pursued due to access constraints and the prohibitive purchase costs involved.

The schedule of proposed capital projects will be further refined as part of the 2027/28 budget-setting process.

It was resolved that Items 2223 and 2224 be considered next. Following consideration of those items, the Committee returned to the remaining business in the order set out on the agenda.

Following the resolution of these items Cllr Bailey left the meeting at 8pm.

2215 Council Fees & Charges 2027/28

i) Members reviewed the proposed fees and charges for 2027/28, as detailed in the table below. In general, charges had been increased in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation rate of 3.1% for the 12 months to August 2026. Where appropriate, figures had been rounded to the nearest whole pound, resulting in minor variations to the percentage increase applied. All fees include VAT where applicable.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the fee changes, effective from 1st April 2027 (unless otherwise stated), as detailed in the table below.

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Fees & charges	Agreed for 2027/28
Halls	
Main Halls - casual	£34.00
main halls - regular	£19.00
Main Halls - charity	£19.00
Main halls - charity regular	£11.00
Monteagle Committee room	£10.00
Oak Room	
-charity community partners	£10.00
Commercial rate	£34.00
Tythings food van special rate (per month)	£480.00
mobile fish & chips/pizza/kebab (per hour)	£8.50
Swan Lake fishing Licence	covered by licence agreement
Tennis/Basketball Courts (per hour)	£7.00
Tennis/Basketball Court floodlights additional cost (per hour)	4.00
Coaching Tennis/Basketball (per hour)	6.00
Annual season ticket tennis	43.00
Annual season ticket basketball	82.00
Football Pitches (per match)	
football - adult without showers	82.00
football - junior	45.00
mini pitch	11.00
Allotment - large	92.04
allotment - medium	65.28
allotment - small	47.09
allotment - mini	28.90
All from 1st Jan-31st Dec	
Cemetery	
Adult new full burial (Interment and Exclusive Right)	1,748.00
Exclusive Right of Burial	1,164.00
second interment - adult (Interment and Exclusive Right) [1]	584.00
ashes into burial plot with ER [1]	391.00
child interment (24weeks to 18yrs)[2]	1,748.00

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Scattered ashes	146.00
GOR	
Ashes plot (Interment and Exclusive Right)	1,072.00
ER	681.00
ashes second interment [1]	391.00
Memorials	
For a permit to place:	
headstone in main section	291.00
slab type memorial in G of R	291.00
Headstone in baby section	291.00
additional inscription/replacement memorial	146.00
Plaque: on wall of remembrance/on bench	146.00
Transfer of an exclusive right	146.00
exhumation	146.00
PLEASE NOTE: [1]Non-parishioners interred into an existing grave with an Exclusive Right of Burial will be charged triple fees. [2]Fees for the burial (including ashes) of a child 24 weeks gestation to under 18 yrs old will be claimed from The Children's Funeral Fund (CFF) and families will not be charged. This includes the Interment Fee, Exclusive Right of Burial and Memorial Application.	
Site rental Circus/Funfair	
Open day	336.00
Closed day	168.00
Red Cross Garage	covered by licence agreement
Market	N/A
Picnic tables sited on YTC land (per table, per annum)	56.00
Banner Request Fee	16.00

ii) Hall Hire Damage Deposits

Members reviewed the current hall hire damage deposit arrangements and considered whether the existing levels remained appropriate. It was noted that the purpose of the damage deposit is to protect the Council against costs arising from damage to Council property, excessive cleaning requirements, breaches of hire conditions and any other costs incurred as a result of a booking.

Members considered information on refundable damage deposits charged by a number of comparable local venues and noted that regular hirers generally present a lower level of risk due to their familiarity with the facilities and conditions of hire. Casual and one-off bookings, particularly private functions and parties, were recognised as presenting a greater risk of damage, additional cleaning requirements and breaches of hire conditions.

Following discussion, Members agreed that increasing the refundable damage deposit for casual and one-off bookings would provide additional protection for the Council whilst remaining proportionate and broadly in line with arrangements operated by similar local venues.

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It was **RESOLVED** that from 1 April 2027:

- the refundable hall hire damage deposit for regular hirers remain at £100; and
- the refundable damage deposit for casual, one-off and private function bookings be increased to £200.

2216 Poppy Appeal Donation

It was **RESOLVED** to agree £350 for wreath purchase and donation to the Royal British Legion Poppy appeal

2217 Investments Update

Members received an update on the following Council investments of SANG funds:

St James's Place Wealth Management

Investment Performance

- Year to date (21.09.25-29.09.26), the SJP investment had increased in value by £7,232 and was now valued at £122,596.
- The attached report detailed the investment position as at 29 September 2026.

CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund

Investment Performance

- Year to date (27.09.25-28.09.26), the CCLA investment had decreased in value by £1,486.30 and was now valued at £88,250.50.
- Year to date (01.04.26-31.08.26), dividends of £2,103 had been received.
- The attached statement detailed the investment position as at 30 June 2026.

It was **RESOLVED** that the investment update be received and noted.

Members noted the Internal Auditor's advice that interest earned on SANG funds is not required to be ring-fenced for SANG purposes and may be treated as general investment income.

Members supported the principle of crediting future interest earned on SANG investments to the Investment Income budget rather than the SANG Earmarked Reserve, subject to approval by Full Council.

ACTION: Town Clerk to seek further advice regarding the treatment of historic interest previously transferred to the SANG Earmarked Reserve and report back to Members.

Members thanked the Town Clerk for the update.

2218 Financial Statements, Bank Reconciliation & Overdue Account

i) Members received the financial report, statements and overdue accounts for the period ending 31st July 2026 which were **NOTED**.
ii) Cllr Easterbrook signed off the bank reconciliations against the bank statements for June, July, August and September 2026.The statements were **NOTED.**

2219 Council Policy Reviews

Members reviewed the Council policies (all attached):

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a) Complaints Policy – no changes
b) Information Technology (IT) – no changes
c) Mayoral Protocol – no changes
d) Safeguarding – no changes but a typo was noted

It was **RESOLVED** that the above policies be approved as presented.

2220 Hampshire Association of Local Councils (Halc) Village of The Year Competition

Members considered the allocation of prize money awarded to Yateley following its success in the HALC Hampshire Village of the Year Competition. It was noted that Yateley had received £250 for winning the overall Village of the Year Award and £100 for winning the Youth Initiative of the Year Award.

Members noted that the Community & Environment Committee had previously supported the use of the Village of the Year prize money towards the proposed tree carving project at Forge Court. Members also recognised the contribution made by Vision 4 Youth to the Council's award submission and presentation and their ongoing support for young people within the town.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

i) the £250 Village of the Year prize money be allocated towards the Forge Court tree carving project; and
ii) the £100 Youth Initiative of the Year prize money be awarded to Vision 4 Youth in recognition of its contribution to the award submission and its continued delivery of youth services within Yateley.

2221 Cemetery Grounds Maintenance

Members considered a report regarding the extension of the additional grounds maintenance resource currently provided by the Council's grounds maintenance contractor at Yateley Cemetery.

It was noted that the Council currently commissions an additional day per week of grounds maintenance support during the period April to September and that this enhanced provision had contributed significantly to the high standards of maintenance and presentation within the cemetery. Members further noted that Yateley Cemetery had achieved a South & South East in Bloom Gold Award for the previous two consecutive years and continued to receive positive feedback regarding its appearance and upkeep.

Members supported the continuation of the enhanced maintenance arrangements and agreed that provision should be made to maintain the additional resource throughout the year.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

i) the additional grounds maintenance resource provided through the Council's grounds maintenance contractor at Yateley Cemetery be continued for the period November 2026 to March 2027 at a cost of £4,189.68, to be funded from General Reserves; and

ii) a sum of £5,023.00 be included within the 2027/28 Cemetery Grounds Maintenance budget to enable the continuation of the enhanced grounds maintenance provision throughout the year.

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2222 Information Items

i) Interim Internal Audit 2026-27 – This was completed on 18th September with no issues and will be formally reported to Full Council on 3rd November.
ii) Pay agreement To note that the Local Government Association (LGA) has come to an agreement on the 2026/27 pay offer. With effect from 1 April 2026, an increase of 3.3% to be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition on all NJC pay points. There has also been a 3.3% increase on Councillor allowances in line with Hart District Council.
iii) Outturn – This report will be brought to the next meeting on 17th November.
iv) Budget Timetable The budget timetable for 2027/28 budget is as follows:
- First meeting with accountant 11th September 2026
- Review of staff costs Personnel Committee – 21st September
- Review of draft capital projects by Environment Committee – 28th September
- Review of draft capital projects by Finance & Policy Committee – 19th October
- Second meeting with Accountant w/c 19th Oct (11am)
- 1st draft of budget to be prepared by 26th October
- Review by Finance & Policy Committee – 16th November
- Review by Environment Committee – 30th November
- Final draft review by Finance & Policy – 11th January
- Full Council approval – 18th January
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2223 Exclusion of The Press and Public

It was **RESOLVED** that, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial and business affairs of a particular organisation and the Council, as defined in Schedule 12A, Paragraph 3 of the Local Government Act 1972.

2224 Lease Negotiations

Members considered confidential reports relating to the lease negotiations for two Council properties and agreed the Council's position on the proposed terms and associated actions.

It was **RESOLVED** that the proposed lease terms be approved and that draft leases be prepared for submission to Full Council for consideration and final approval.
The detailed discussion and agreed terms are recorded in the confidential minutes.

Date of next meeting: 16 November, 7pm in the Oak Room, Council Offices, GU46 7RP

Meeting closed at 8.35pm

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