

**Polegate Town Council, Council Office, 49 High Street,
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Minutes of Meeting of the **Finance and Policy Committee** held on **19th September 2025 in Council Chamber, 49 High Street, Polegate, BN26 6AL at 09:30.**

PRESENT: Councillors J Keen, G Archer, M Cunningham, D Dunbar, J Keen, M Piper, A Wood, S Shing **(8)**

NOT PRESENT: Councillor D Watts **(1)**

MINUTES

Cllr J Keen was voted in as Chair

13848 Item 1: Opportunity for Public Comment for items on the agenda

None

S Shing and M Piper arrived at 9:33am

13849 Item 2: Apologies for absence

Apologies from Cllr D Watts

No other apologies received

D Murray arrived at 9:38am

13850 Item 3: Declarations of interest

Cllr J Keen in Item 7 – Non - prejudicial

Library CIC Directors – M Cunningham, S Shing, D Murray in Item 8 – Non-prejudicial.

13851 Item 4: Minutes of the Meeting dated 14th February 2025

It was resolved that the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee Meeting 14th February 2025 as circulated on the agenda be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the chair. VOTE all in favour.

13852 Item 5: Payments of accounts as presented

- a. It was resolved to accept the Payments of accounts (July 2025) as presented for £21,043.39. VOTE all in favour.
- b. It was resolved to accept the Payments of accounts (August 2025) as presented for £33,789.28. VOTE all in favour.

13853 Item 6: Christmas Lights Testing

It was resolved to go forward with the RCD Testing for the Christmas Lights and use £1318.95 from General Reserves. VOTE all in favour.

19850 Item 7: Football Pitch

a. Grounds Maintenance Association Subscription for £93

Motion to have a subscription for the Grounds Maintenance Association of £93 per year in order to receive discounted fees for the upcoming works at Brightling (Football pitch) from general reserves.

It was resolved to go through with the Grounds Maintenance Association Subscription for £93 from General Reserves. VOTE all in favour.

b. Pitch Assessment Works

Motion to go ahead with pitch assessment works: specification works following report and project management of works: costs as per table from general reserves – Total Cost circa £10,000

It was resolved to go ahead with Pitch Assessment Works from General Reserves in circa for £10,000. VOTE all in favour.

18498 Item 8: Lease and Licenses for Polegate Community Library

- a. **Motion to approve service level agreement for Council to provide a service to the Library CIC as presented.**

It was decided to defer this item until a further date,
VOTE all in favour.

- b. **Motion to approve the license for the Library CIC to use 51 for the use of a library as presented**

It was agreed in principle to approve the License for the Library CIC to use 51 for the use of the library.

VOTE 4 for and 3 Abstentions from S Shing, D Murray, M Cunningham

The meeting closed at 09:40pm

Signed Chair of Meeting _____ Date _____

List of Payments made between 01/11/2025 and 30/11/2025

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Authorized Ref	Transaction Detail
03/11/2025	Business Stream	DIRECT DEB	41.07		49/51 High St Water
03/11/2025	Barclays Bank	DIRECT DEB	55.70		Bank Charges
03/11/2025	Business Stream	DIRECT DEB	151.00		Cophall Water
07/11/2025	Nest Pension Scheme	DIRECT DEB	843.51		Nest Pension October 25
10/11/2025	BrightHR	DIRECT DEB	201.82		Provision of HR Services
12/11/2025	IDVerde	BX958560	2,614.32		Urban Grass cut Oct 25
12/11/2025	Ace Landscapes	BX976054	208.80		Plot C39 Triangle Area
12/11/2025	Ace Landscapes	BX976153	198.00		Walnut Tree removal Plot C15
12/11/2025		BX977739	9.25		NatWest form next day
12/11/2025	Mulberry Local Authority Servi	BX966002	1,296.00		Professional Services
12/11/2025	Cuckmere Community buses	BX952746	350.00		New Year Day bus service
12/11/2025	PCA Drama Group	BX975506	372.20		Civic Event
12/11/2025	Booker & Best	BX977999	210.00		Supply & Fit brackets for CCTV
12/11/2025	Ace Landscapes	BX974194	307.20		Strim Allotment at Cophall
12/11/2025	Mr Dan Dunbar	BX970094	3.15		Radio DGH
12/11/2025	IDVerde	BX960003	480.00		Playground Inspections
12/11/2025	Mr Dan Dunbar	BX970213	13.90		High Sheriffs Judges Services
12/11/2025	Newtimber Ltd	BX971888	360.00		Lime trees at Wannock
12/11/2025	IDVerde	BX962222	1,716.12		Grounds Mait Sept 25
12/11/2025	Mr Dan Dunbar	BX967982	10.80		Wealden Forum Heathfield
12/11/2025	IDVerde	BX959680	1,716.12		Grounds Maint Oct 25
12/11/2025	Blue Frog Cleaning Services Lt	BX974146	456.65		Cleaning Services
12/11/2025	HEALTHMATIC	BX972410	26.88		1 Deadlock for toilet
12/11/2025	SME IT Solutions Ltd	BX954796	13.50		Website Support
12/11/2025	Mr Dan Dunbar	BX970571	24.02		Civic reception refreshments
12/11/2025	Mr Dan Dunbar	BX966853	51.45		Supplies for Civic Event
12/11/2025		BX977726	50.00		Return of Deposit
12/11/2025	SME IT Solutions Ltd	BX955592	150.37		IT Telephone Costs
12/11/2025	SME IT Solutions Ltd	BX954626	268.18		IT Office Costs
12/11/2025	Mr Dan Dunbar	BX970518	18.40		WDC Parish Conference Uckfield
12/11/2025	Mr Dan Dunbar	BX967616	5.40		Cuckmere Buses Stakeholders
12/11/2025	Streetlights	BX973321	6,443.58		Maintenance Contract Part 2
12/11/2025	SME IT Solutions Ltd	BX958922	323.09		IT Office Costs
12/11/2025	Echo Cleaning	BNX963382	150.00		Office & Window Cleaning
12/11/2025	Mr Dan Dunbar	BX966698	222.67		Supplies for Christmas Party
12/11/2025	Pyrotec Fire Protection Ltd	BX954149	394.66		Annual Fire Safety Check
12/11/2025	Europlants Ltd	BX963908	57.58		Monthly maintenance
14/11/2025	Advo Group	DIRECT DEB	154.99		Payroll Services
15/11/2025	Wealden District Council	Std Ord	749.00		NNDR Payment
15/11/2025	Staff Salaries Cash Book	Nov Sals	12,113.49		November 25 Salary
18/11/2025	Drax Energy	DIRECT DEB	1,480.33		Supply of street lighting
18/11/2025	EDF Energy	DIRECT DEB	258.03		49 High St Electric
18/11/2025	EDF Energy	DIRECT DEB	27.47		51 High St Electric
21/11/2025	Inland Revenue	DIRECT DEB	4,228.02		Tax & NI for Oct 25
27/11/2025	BarclayCard	DIRECT DEB	832.54		Misc Spend
Total Payments			39,659.26		



Report to Finance and Policy Committee

Subject: Allotment Rates

Background:

At the Full Council meeting on 24th November 2025, there was a discussion regarding allotment rates and how they compare to other councils and societies. This report provides an overview of current charges, financial position, and potential options for fee adjustments.

Current Position: Cophall Allotments

- Current Fee: £7.70 per rod
- Number of Plots: 71 (ranging from 3 to 10 rods)
- Total Rods: Approximately 354
- Current Income: £2,706
- Current Expenditure: £3,986
- Current Deficit: £1,274 (excluding capital costs, deficit is approx. £920)

Key Points:

- Current fees do not cover capital works now included in the budget.
- General maintenance costs (skip hire, grounds maintenance, water) could be covered by a modest increase in fees.
- Increasing fees by £1 per rod this year and £1 next year would help reduce the deficit.
- CPI/RPI increases alone would not cover costs, though this may be an option longer term.

Increase per Rod	New Fee per Rod	Estimated Income	Estimated deficit
£1.00	£8.70	£3,064	£922
£1.50	£9.20	£3,258	£728
£2.00	£9.70	£3,452	£534
£3.60	£11.30	£3,986	£0 (break-even)

Calculations based on 354 rods total

Gosford Allotments

- Current Fee: £5 per rod
- Proposed Fee: £6 per rod
- Reason for Lower Rate: Gosford allotments do not have direct water access on-site. Tenants use a hosepipe connected to the Council office building, which limits convenience compared to Cophall.

Comparison with other Councils/ Societies:

Town Council/ Society	3 rods fees/ year	5 rod fees/ year	Fees per rod	Deposits	Extras
Crowborough			£25.63	£50	
Eastbourne		£75.60	£15	£70	
Hailsham	£23.10	£39.60	£7.92	£50	
Lewes	£18.72	£31.12	£6.24	£50	
Seaford					
Uckfield			£4.02	£52	£15 admin fee Water charges per usage*

*Uckfield uses an external company to estimate water bills based on previous usage, which is then divided among the plots. Charges vary depending on actual usage.

Recommendation:

The Committee is asked to consider the following options:

1. Cophall Allotments:
 - Option A: Increase by £1 per rod in 2026/27, and a further £1 per rod in 2027/28
 - Option B: Increase by £2 per rod in 2026/27
 - Option C: Increase by £3.60 per rod to achieve break-even immediately.
 - Option D: Apply CPI. RPI increases only (inflation-based adjustment)
 - CPI (Consumer Prices Index) measures the average change in price of goods and services purchased by households.
 - RPI (Retail Prices Index) is an older measure that includes housing costs.
 - These increases are typically small (e.g. 3-4%), so they would not cover the current deficit but may be suitable for long-term stability.
2. Gosford Allotments:
 - Option A: Increase from £5 to £6 per rod from April 2026
 - Maintain the current rate for another year, then review

The Committee is invited to discuss these options and recommend to Full Council to review and agree a preferred approach for inclusion in the 2026/27 budget.

POLEGATE



Report to Finance Committee: Request for Funding from General Reserves

Subject: Archaeological Work – Brightling Road Leisure Ground Project

Background:

As part of the approved development at Brightling Road Leisure Ground, planning conditions require archaeological investigation prior to commencement of construction. This is a statutory requirement to ensure compliance with local planning authority conditions and heritage regulations.

Requirement:

The archaeological work must be carried out by a qualified contractor and completed before groundworks begin. The estimated cost for this work is £12,000, based on quotations received from our accredited provider, who carried out the work required for the planning application.

Funding Proposal:

There is currently no allocated budget for this specific requirement within the project's approved financial plan. To avoid delays and ensure compliance, it is proposed that £12,000 be drawn from General Reserves to cover the cost of the archaeological investigation.

Recommendation:

That the Finance Committee approves the transfer of £12,000 from General Reserves to fund the archaeological work required to satisfy planning conditions for the Brightling Road Leisure Ground project. As this is a specialist service, finance committee is also requested to waive financial regulations and apply 11.1.a.ii extract below and appoint Chris Butler from CBASLTD to carry out the works as per estimate/quotation.

11. Contracts

11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:

ii. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services; ii. for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes;