

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL
Governance, Finance and Resources Committee

2 June 2026

Town Clerk's Open Report

FINANCE

1) Draft Year-End Management Accounts for the period 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026

- **To receive the draft year-end management accounts.**

Appendix 'A' shows the draft management accounts for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 (Q1-Q4). Members should note these are the pre year-end figures, before any reserve transfers (see item 3 below), virements or year-end adjustments have been made. Areas of concern will be discussed in the meeting.

Members are requested to note the report.

2) Debt Write Offs

- **To consider and approve any proposed debt write offs.**

Appendix 'B' contains the list of proposed debt write offs for 2025-26.

1p is owed from a wedding, and £70 for historic incorrect allotment fees where the tenant no longer used the plot.

Members are requested to consider and approve the debt write offs.

3) Designated Reserves and Virements

- **To review and recommend adjustments to designated reserves and any virements.**

Appendix 'C' shows the balances of designated and restricted reserves at the end of Q4, before any year-end adjustments.

It also shows the proposed transfers to/from these reserves and any recommended virements.

Members are asked to approve the reserve transfers and virements for recommendation to Council.

4) Council's Reserves Policy

- **To consider the annual review.**

Members are asked to consider the current Reserves Policy (**Appendix 'D'**) and make any necessary recommendations for change, along with those of the RFO.

5) Professional Fees Additional Expenditure

- **To review and recommend the additional expenditure.**

The Town Council's insurance policy renewal for 2026-27 is the last year under the current contract. A full review is required for the new policy. The RFO has been advised that insurance reinstatement valuations should be carried out every 3 years for buildings, monuments and civic regalia due to the rapidly changing costs, and every 5-10 years for other valuable items.

As the policy has to be in place by 1st April 2027, it is necessary for these valuations to be completed during the 2026-27 financial year. These were not included in the budget calculations and the valuations have a direct impact on the insurance premium.

Quotes have been sought, which have come back as:-

- Buildings & monuments: £3,150 (awaiting further quotes)
- Artwork, Civic Regalia & other valuables: £1,000

Members are asked to consider the additional expenditure for recommendation to Council.

6) Asset Register Review Group

- **To agree next meeting date(s).**

The Asset Register Review Group is required to meet periodically to review the Council's Asset Register and ensure it remains accurate, up to date and compliant with audit and governance requirements. The Group provides oversight of the recording, valuation, maintenance and disposal of Council assets, helping to ensure transparency, accountability and effective asset management. Regular review also assists the Council in identifying risks, maintenance priorities and opportunities for future planning and investment.

Councillors appointed: Coles, Hunter, Lee (Chair) and MacDonald

Whilst the RFO has had communication with the Chair of the group since returning from maternity leave, formal meetings are required with the group as a whole.

7) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Working Group

- **To adopt responsibility.**

The Town Clerk and RFO have previously requested for members to join a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) working group. Not enough members came forward to be quorate, and so responsibility will now be adopted by this Committee.

Members will be asked to put forward CIL project suggestions and consider those which are submitted by applicants outside the Committee for recommendation to Council.

GOVERNANCE

8) Document Retention Policy

- **To recommend the adoption**

A Document Retention Policy is required in order to ensure that records are managed consistently, securely, and in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. As a public authority, the Council is responsible for maintaining accurate records to support transparency, accountability, decision-making, and historical reference, whilst also ensuring that information is not retained longer than necessary under data protection legislation. A clear retention policy helps officers and Members understand what records must be kept, for how long, and when they should be securely disposed of, reducing both organisational risk and unnecessary storage costs.

The Committee can choose to amend or adopt. See **Appendix 'E'**.

9) Flexible Working Policy

- **To recommend the adoption**

A Flexible Working Policy is important to ensure the Council has a clear, fair, and consistent approach when considering requests from employees to vary their working arrangements. The policy supports the Council in meeting its statutory obligations, promotes staff wellbeing and retention, and helps provide a modern and supportive working environment whilst ensuring that service delivery and operational requirements continue to be met.

Key Points for Councillors

Councillors should be aware that all employees have a statutory right to request flexible working from the first day of employment, with up to two requests permitted within a 12-month period. Whilst the Council is required to properly consider all requests, there is no automatic obligation to approve them where there may be an adverse impact on service delivery or operational effectiveness.

Each request must be considered on its own merits and decisions must be made fairly and consistently. Approval of one request does not automatically set a precedent for another similar request. In some cases, particularly where a request relates to a disability or health condition, the Council may also have legal duties under equality legislation to consider reasonable adjustments.

The policy also allows for trial periods where appropriate, enabling proposed arrangements to be tested before any permanent decision is made. Any agreed changes to working arrangements must be confirmed formally in writing and retained on the employee's HR record.

See **Appendix 'F'**.

The Committee can choose to amend or adopt.

RESOURCES

10) **Organisational Review**

- **To note the update**

Since the last meeting in May, further progress has been made on the Council's Organisational Review. All office-based staff job descriptions have now been revised and updated into a consistent house style. Staff have been consulted throughout the process.

In addition, the new job descriptions for the Democratic Services Officer and the Deputy Town Clerk / Chief Officer roles have now been finalised. All revised and newly developed job descriptions are due to be subject to formal job evaluation imminently.

Working in association with HR Governance and Support, recruitment packs have also been prepared and it is anticipated that the new positions will be advertised during June.

Town Clerk