

CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 01 SEPTEMBER 2025 IN CAPEL PARISH HALL

Present: Mr Salter (Chair), Mr McLachlan, Mr Ball, Mrs Schryver and the Clerk.

1. **Apologies:** Mr Ransome
2. **Declarations of Interest:** None
3. **Matters Arising:** None
4. **Questions from Members of the Public:** None
5. **Profit and Loss to 30 August 2025:**

30 August 2025	NS&I Reserve Account	£617.00
30 August 2025	NatWest Reserve Account	£93,970.00
30 August 2025	NatWest Current Account	£1,884.73

Mr Salter addressed the meeting stating that the Parish Council had to date spent £50,000 and £97,000 was remaining over all three bank accounts.

The Committee was reminded that the second half of the precept will be received this month and the low interest rate the Reserve Account is receiving. NatWest is offering a 1-year investment account with a preferred interest rate. The Committee agreed that a new account should be opened, and a practical sum invested, ensuring adequate funds remain available to cover the day to day running of the Parish Council. The account will be opened and the monies transferred once the second half of the precept has been received.

Currently there are agreed outstanding payments; St John the Baptist Church £10,000; refurbishment the telephone boxes and a grant in principle toward the refurbishment of one of the Capel Alms houses.

The Councillors were made aware that the original agreement granting right of access across Parish onto land at Breakspear, Beare Green will expire in November. There is still no approval for the development to go ahead. If and when a further application is made, the ransom strip will need to be re-valued and a price agreed before any development can take place. It was agreed that White and Sons would be approached to undertake this revaluation.¹

6. **Precept 2026/2027**

The Councillors discussed the Precept for 2026/2027 and looked at the current expenditure budget line by line. The spend to date for each budget was examined and decisions made on whether the current budget is adequate for the next financial year.

Discussion was also made regarding employing the extra member of staff. Although the new employee would start on a part-time basis there should be financial capacity to increase hours as required. It was recognised that as the new employees hours increased and that budget increased, the full-time clerks hours would decrease, thus balancing the overall budget.

After much discussion, the Finance Committee agreed the overall 2026/2027 budget should be increased to £137,010. This will be proposed at the next Full Parish Council meeting ensuring full approval when Mole Valley District Council sends out the request forms toward the end of this year.

¹ It has been established that White and Sons should not be asked as they are working on behalf of Capel House Farm, and this would invite a conflict of interest. Bray Estates have now been commissioned to undertake this revaluation.

7. Grant to Alms Houses, The Street, Capel:

A grant application toward the cost to repair one of the vacant Alms Houses has been received. The Councillors were made aware of the grant and discussed contributing. The Councillors agreed to approve a grant in principle but as no definitive amount has been specified, further information has been requested from the Trustees. The matter will be further discussed once information has been received.

8. Grant for Garden of Remembrance, St John the Baptist Church, Capel:

The Councillors agreed a grant of £10,000 which was approved by the Full Parish Council on the 19 May 2025. The grant will be paid once the work has been completed and the Church is fully satisfied with the finished project.

9. Refurbishment of Telephone Boxes, Capel and Coldharbour:

Both telephone boxes have now been fully refurbished, and the final invoice has been received. Once the invoice is paid, the boxes will be reinstated to their original places.²

10. Grounds Maintenance Contract:

The current contract is being undertaken by Clovers Grounds maintenance, and the Parish Council is satisfied with the work that is being done. The current contract expires at the end of October. All Councillors agreed that the contract should be priced for another year, and Clovers will be asked to submit a price for the year April to October 2026.

11. Tree Survey:

The current survey of trees on all Parish land is due to expire shortly. Treeline undertook the previous survey. The Clerk will ask Treeline for an estimate for the works and a decision will be made once the estimate is received.³

12. Parish Council Assets:

The Committee discussed how best to manage and maintain the assets the Parish Council owns and those they want to protect. There are three areas in Beare Green that the Parish Council would like to ensure continue to be available for all residents to enjoy.

It was agreed the Clerk would make enquiries from SALC solicitor on who best could provide advice on ensuring these assets are preserved.

It was agreed that funds should continue to be earmarked for

- Public Works Loan repayment.
- Solar panels
- Solar Activated speed limit signs
- Trig Street project
- Upgrading Children's playground
- Replacement trees on Beare Green recreation ground
- Beare Green village sign

The Committee agreed that the replacement trees and a new village sign should be actioned without delay, with funding taken from the Community Projects budget.

13. Next meeting:

Change of Date - Monday 27 October 2025 in Capel Parish Hall at 7:30 pm

² Final invoice £5,470.00

³ The estimate has been received for £720 which has been approved.