

HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Finance Report

Meeting Date: Monday 16 March 2026

Contact Officer: Responsible Financial Officer

Should Members have any queries about this report advance notice would be appreciated, in writing, by 12 noon on Friday 13 March to allow for a full response at the meeting.

Background

Detailed income and expenditure statements for budgets which are the responsibility of this committee are enclosed. The period to which this report relates is 1 April 2025 to 31 December 2025.

Current Situation

Management accounts

The Council has appointed five standing committees which have delegated powers to make decisions, including financial decisions, regarding the services which are included within their terms of reference, subject to the committee having the necessary budget. The Council's coding system and management accounts reflect the committee structure.

Within each committee, there are individual **cost centres**, comprising three digits, typically representing a discrete service entity, to which income and expenditure is allocated against previously agreed revenue budgets.

The cost centres for which this committee has **responsibility** are:

agreed revenue budgets.

Cost centre	Service
103	Bars
104	Corn Exchange
105	Burwell Hall
106	Madley Park Community Centre
301	Tower Hill Cemetery
302	Windrush Cemetery
303	Closed churchyards – St Mary's/ Holy Trinity
305	Allotments

Within each cost centre income and expenditure is then allocated to a four-digit nominal ledger code; these codes are common across the cost centres. Nominal ledger codes further define the costs associated with the cost centre and correspond to a specific type of account, such as materials or staffing costs. Codes commencing with “1” are income codes; codes commencing with “3” or “4” are expenditure codes.

The format of this report is straightforward; the first two columns relate to the original budget from 2024/25 against the actual figures for last year. The middle columns relate to the current year’s original budget, actual expenditure year to date, the projected budget to 31 March 2026, based on the estimates agreed during the budget cycle. The right-hand columns relate to the agreed estimates for 2026/27.

A full review of the budgetary position was undertaken during the budget cycle. This received detailed consideration at the last meeting of this committee and the subsequent Policy Governance and Finance Committee and full Council meetings. The RFO would refer members to the finance/ budget reports which were approved at those meetings for further information.

Members may wish to note the following:

1. There will be some codes where the year-to-date figure now exceeds the projected for the whole year. This is to be expected as the projections were the best estimates made in September/ October and clearly matters move on. Equally there will be other codes where not all the projected budgets will be required. Virements (transfers) between budgets will be made where these can be justified but overall there are no budget lines which cause concern.
2. In relation to the 1863 Café/bar sales were revised upwards from £182,638 to £210,900 during the budget cycle, with sales to 31 December 2025 at £164,874 (90% of original budget and 78% of revised budget). At the same time the net cost of the facility was revised downwards from £28,556 to £24,047. This now looks rather cautious as the position to 31 December 2025 was more favourable at £11,296 net cost. Note also that no in-year adjustment has been made for stock and this should further improve the position.
3. The Council has agreed a delegation to the Town Clerk/CEO to opt-to-tax the Burwell Hall (cost centre 105) if it was considered necessary in terms of input VAT recovery. However following further review this is not considered necessary at this point in relation to current capital works. The position is due for review early in the new financial year and will consider planned projects in relation to the Burwell Hall. Members will also recall that if an option-to-tax is made then it was agreed that the output tax would be absorbed by the Council so that the additional 20% cost would not be passed on to customers, the vast majority of which are not VAT-registered organisations.

4. Members are reminded of the change in relation to the treatment of property budgets. Previously where a property was leased out this was represented in the accounts against the site where the property was located.

For this Committee this impacts on the Cemetery Lodge rent and insurance recharge, previously shown under the Tower Hill cemetery budget (301). The rationale for the change is that the previous treatment inadvertently had the impact of distorting revenue budgets such as cc301 because in this case none of the expenditure in this cost centre related to this property. In governance terms it should also be noted that whilst clearly spending committees have an interest, property matters in relation to leases etc are primarily a matter for the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee (PGF). Consequently a new cost centre – 501 was created under PGF and this will consolidate all rented property income and expenditure.

The Langdale Hall (cc102) and Madley Park Hall (cc106) are in a very similar position and have also been transferred to cc501.

Current year budgets were vired from the old budget lines to the new cost centre 501 which has the impact of ensuring that like for like comparisons may more readily be made between 2025-26 and 2026-27.

5. Energy costs are significant part of this Committee's expenditure. These are likely to rise as a result of the war in the Middle East. However there will be no adverse impact on the Council's energy budgets for 2026-27 insofar as this Committee's services are concerned as your officers placed a contract with the Council's current energy providers on 2 March 2026 based on contract sums offered prior to the start of the war. However the volatility of another major war will likely cause significant inflationary pressures as the situation unfolds.
6. The Committee's services are operating within agreed budgets – the original budget for 2025/26 was revised down from £515,765 to £449,348 during the budget cycle and net expenditure to 31 December 2025 was £300,771 (58% of original and 67% of revised budget).

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – no implications directly resulting from this report.
- b) Biodiversity - no implications directly resulting from this report.
- c) Crime & Disorder - no implications directly resulting from this report.

d) Environment & Climate Emergency - no implications directly resulting from this report.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should consider any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

The provision of regular financial reports is part of the Council's risk management system.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. Social value is not quantified in the financial reports but clearly the creation of social value is dependent on setting adequate budgets to meet the Council's objectives.

Financial implications

This report forms part of the Council's due diligence and a process in line with its Financial Regulations. The financial implications are detailed above and also in the attached appendices.

This report forms part of the Council's mechanisms for budgetary control, as it enables income and expenditure incurred to be reviewed and to be compared with the Council's budgets.

Recommendations

Members are invited to approve the report and the management accounts of the Committee's services to 31 December 2025.