SALTASH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee held at the Guildhall on Tuesday 7th July 2026 at 6.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors: R Bullock, S Miller, P Nowlan, B Samuels, P Samuels (Chairman), B Stoyel and J Suter (Vice-Chairman).

ALSO PRESENT: 1 Members of the Public, S Burrows (Town Clerk / RFO), D Joyce (Office Manager / Assistant to the Town Clerk) and W Peters (Finance Officer).

APOLOGIES: A Ashburn, R Bickford, S Gillies, M Johns, S Martin, L Mortimore and J Peggs.

31/26/27 CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE REMINDER.

The Chairman reminded Members that the Town Council has adopted the Civility and Respect Pledge.

Members were reminded of their obligations under the Code of Conduct. Debate is to be respectful, focused on the issues, and conducted in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

32/26/27 HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Chairman informed those present of the actions required in the event of a fire or emergency.

33/26/27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

a. To receive any declarations from Members of any registerable (5A of the Code of Conduct) and/or non-registerable (5B) interests in matters to be considered at this meeting.

   None received.

b. The Town Clerk to receive written requests for dispensations prior to the start of the meeting for consideration.

   None received.

34/26/27 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS - A 15-MINUTE PERIOD WHEN MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY ASK QUESTIONS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL.**

None received.

35/26/27 **TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 MAY 2026 AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD.**

Please see a copy of the minutes on the STC website or request to see a copy at the Guildhall.

Following a unanimous vote, it was proposed by Councillor P Samuels, seconded by Councillor Stoyel and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on 12 May 2026 were confirmed as a true and correct record.

36/26/27 **TO REVIEW THE POLICY AND FINANCE BUSINESS PLAN DELIVERABLES AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE;**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

37/26/27 **TO NOTE THAT ALL ACCOUNTS AND BANK ACCOUNTS ARE RECONCILED UP TO MAY 2026.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

38/26/27 **TO NOTE THAT PETTY CASH IS RECONCILED UP TO JUNE 2026.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

39/26/27 **TO RECEIVE AND NOTE A REPORT ON VAT.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

40/26/27 **TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON INVESTMENTS AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

41/26/27 **TO NOTE THAT AN AUDIT ON RECENT SUPPLIER PAYMENTS WAS CONDUCTED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF POLICY & FINANCE IN LINE WITH THE COUNCILS FINANCIAL REGULATIONS. THERE ARE NO DISCREPANCIES TO REPORT.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

42/26/27 **TO RECEIVE THE CURRENT STC COMMITTEE BUDGET STATEMENTS AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

43/26/27 **TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE FINANCE OFFICER AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

Members considered the report and recommendations from the Finance Officer contained within the circulated reports pack.

Following a unanimous vote, it was proposed by Councillor P Samuels, seconded by Councillor Stoyel and **RESOLVED** to note the report and updated HMRC standard mileage reimbursement rate and approve an increase in the Town Council mileage rate from 45 pence to 55 pence per mile, in accordance with NALC guidance.

44/26/27 **TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON INSURANCE CLAIMS AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

45/26/27 **TO CONSIDER RISK MANAGEMENT REPORTS AS MAY BE RECEIVED.**

Nothing to report.

46/26/27 **TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON BREAKTHROUGH COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

The Town Clerk updated Members on the contents of the report, highlighting savings achieved through the early renewal of the Breakthrough Communications subscription, which resulted in a £500 saving.

Members were also advised that, upon annual renewal, Breakthrough Communications had offered a three-year price lock, generating a further saving of almost £1,000 in addition to the £500 already secured.

The service, which has been in place since August 2019, provides support and training on data protection, communications and social media management.

Members noted that the service has established a strong reputation amongst town and parish councils and continues to provide reliable and trusted support.

Following a unanimous vote, it was proposed by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Nowlan and **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the contents of the report and approve a three-year price-lock agreement with Breakthrough Communications at a total cost of £4,990, extending the contract term to January 2030;

2. To note that £1,995 has already been paid for the initial 12-month subscription period, leaving a balance of £2,995 plus VAT to secure the three-year extension, to be funded from budget code 6208 Subscriptions.

47/26/27 **<u>TO RECEIVE AN UPDATED REPORT ON TOWN COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCESSES AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.</u>**

The Town Clerk provided a verbal update on the policy review process detailed within the circulated reports pack. Members were advised that the second phase of the two-stage review being undertaken with CALC had been completed, with approximately 8–10 policies remaining to be finalised.

It was noted that, once the review is complete, the policies will be formatted and presented to Members for consideration. An Extraordinary Policy and Finance meeting is proposed for September to review, comment on and approve the full suite of policies.

The Chairman encouraged Members to review the policies in advance of the meeting to ensure they align with the Council's objectives and vision.

The Town Clerk highlighted the importance of a robust governance framework in promoting accountability and transparency, and emphasised the need for consistent and harmonised policies to support effective operations for both Members and staff.

Members were encouraged to actively participate in the review process to ensure the policies reflect the Council's objectives and the needs of the community.

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

48/26/27 **<u>TO CONSIDER COMMUNITY CHEST APPLICATIONS:</u>**

a. CC293 Gleaning Cornwall;

The applicant, who was in attendance, was invited by the Chairman to address Members. The applicant outlined the work of the charity, which focuses on reducing food waste by collecting surplus produce from farms across Cornwall and distributing it to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity.

Members were advised that the grant application of £250 would contribute towards the purchase of a laptop to support the charity's administrative activities.

It was noted that several volunteers are residents of Saltash and that the laptop would be used by the Saltash volunteer team in delivering the charity's services.

Members also noted that food collected by the charity is distributed within Saltash through local organisations, including food larders and community kitchens.

Following a unanimous vote, it was proposed by Councillor Bullock, seconded by Councillor Miller and **RESOLVED** to award the full amount of £250.00.

b. CC294 Saltash Music, Speech and Drama Festival;

Members discussed the application and noted concerns regarding the level of participation from the local community, despite efforts by the festival organisers to encourage involvement.

Members also recognised that the festival attracts visitors from outside the area, contributing positively to community engagement, cultural enrichment and the local economy.

Following a unanimous vote, it was proposed by Councillor Stoyel, seconded by Councillor B Samuels and **RESOLVED** to award the full amount of £1,000.

c. CC295 Saltash United Football Club.

Members discussed the application and noted that it had been submitted by the Adult Team, whereas the application considered in May had been submitted by the Junior Club.

Members acknowledged that the two organisations operate separately. It was further noted that the Adult Team is a well-established community club with a substantial membership, providing opportunities for participation in sport, promoting physical wellbeing, and encouraging community engagement among local residents.
Following a unanimous vote, it was proposed by Councillor B Samuels, seconded by Councillor Stoyel and **RESOLVED** to award the full amount of £989.89.

49/26/27 **TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON AUDIO VISUAL, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES, TELEPHONY AND INTERNET AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.**

The Chairman invited Councillor Nowlan to present an update on the technology and infrastructure improvements being explored across the Council's systems and services.

Councillor Nowlan thanked the Mayor's Secretary and the Office Manager for their comprehensive report covering audio visual equipment, telephony, internet connectivity and democratic services software.

Members noted the phased implementation plan proposed within the report, which aims to improve connectivity, communications, administrative efficiency and public engagement through a programme of technology upgrades.

Members discussed the importance of future-proofing the Council's technology infrastructure, particularly in light of ongoing connectivity issues and the increasing reliance on cloud-based services. It was noted that poor internet performance currently impacts productivity and operational efficiency.

Members noted that Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) was identified as the preferred connectivity solution. However, officers advised that availability at the Guildhall could not be confirmed until a formal application had been submitted.

Members agreed that, should FTTP not be available, alternative dedicated internet solutions should be explored to provide improved reliability and speed.

During the discussion of the meeting Councillor Stoyel gave his apologies and left the meeting.

Members reviewed the recommendations for each proposed company appointment and discussed the associated costs, benefits and service provisions.

The Town Clerk advised that funding for audio visual and PA equipment falls within the remit of the Services Committee. Members considered a recommendation to utilise funding from the EMF Website Budget Code to enable priority technology improvements to proceed without delay, with a report to be submitted to the next Services Committee meeting seeking the necessary budget virement.

The Town Clerk further recommended that the Office Manager, in consultation with Councillors Nowlan and Bickford, be authorised to undertake a full tender process for improvements to the acoustics within the Long Room, should this be required.

Members noted that a further report and recommendation would be presented to the Policy and Finance Committee in September.

Following a unanimous vote, it was proposed by Councillor B Samuels, seconded by Councillor Nowlan and **RESOLVED**;

1. To delegate authority to the Office Manager/Assistant to the Town Clerk to implement the phased technology improvements identified within the report;

2. To award the contract for the Long Room audio-visual solution to Company C at a capital cost of £8,946.79;

3. To award the contract for the portable PA systems to Company B at a capital cost of £2,158.21;

4. To award the contract for the telephone system to Company C at a capital cost of £3,230.00 and an annual cost of £2,081.28;

5. To award the contract for internet provision to Company C at a capital cost of £125.00 and an annual revenue cost of £3,300.00, subject to the availability of Fibre to the Premises (FTTP);

6. To award the contract for Democratic Services Software to Company B, with implementation to commence in January 2027 to facilitate a managed transition, at a capital cost of £2,995.00 and annual cost of £3,395.00;

7. To allocate the associated costs across budget codes 6208 PF Subscriptions, 6287 PF EMF Website (interim budget code), 6300 PF Telephone, Internet and Mobile;

8. To **RECOMMEND** to the September Services Committee to vire associated costs from budget code 6414 GH Equipment Guildhall to 6287 EMF Website to support the various upgrades;

9. To provide delegated authority to the Officer Manager / Assistant to the Town Clerk, working with Councillors Bickford and Nowlan, to develop the Long Room acoustic specification and obtain quotations or undertake a full formal tender process, where required under the Town Council’s Financial Regulations, reporting back at a future meeting with recommendations.

50/26/27 **<u>TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN WORKING GROUP AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE.</u>**

Members received an update from the Emergency Plan Working Group and noted that a vacancy exists on the Group for any Member who wishes to participate.

Members requested that the Office Manager/Assistant to the Town Clerk circulate details of the vacancy and invite expressions of interest from Members wishing to join the Group.

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

51/26/27 **<u>TO RECEIVE AND NOTE QUARTERLY REPORTS FOR THE COMMISSIONING OF PROFESSIONAL YOUTH WORK IN SALTASH:</u>**

a. Livewire;

Members welcomed the professional and comprehensive report received from Livewire and discussed the valuable work undertaken by the organisation in supporting local young people. Members recognised the importance of the Town Council's annual funding contribution in helping to sustain these services.

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

b. The Core.

Members received the report from The Core and commended the organisation for its continued work and positive contribution to the local community.

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

52/26/27 **TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS AND OUTSIDE BODIES:**

a. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group;

Members received an update on the recent meeting and noted the forthcoming engagement session with the consultants, scheduled for 13 July, which Members were invited to attend.

Members were advised that further stakeholder engagement and Member input would be required in September. It was noted that additional information would be circulated once the Working Group and consultants had agreed a timeline for the preparation of both the Settlement Spatial Plan and the Neighbourhood Priority Statement.

It was **RESOLVED** to note.

b. Saltash Team for Youth;

Nothing to report.

c. Section 106 Panel.

Nothing to report.

53/26/27 **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960:**

To resolve that pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press leave the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

54/26/27 **TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE MAIN PART OF THE AGENDA.**

None.

55/26/27 **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960:**

To resolve that the public and press be re-admitted to the meeting.

56/26/27 **TO CONFIRM ANY PRESS AND SOCIAL MEDIA RELEASES ASSOCIATED WITH ANY AGREED ACTIONS AND EXPENDITURE OF THE MEETING.**

Following a unanimous vote, it was proposed by Councillor P Samuels, seconded by Councillor Nowlan and **RESOLVED** to issue the following Press and Social Media releases:

1. The award of Community Chest funding;

2. An update on the Neighbourhood Plan review, including progress to date and forthcoming community engagement opportunities.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 22 September 2026 at 6.30 pm

Rising at: 7.41 pm

Signed: ________________________________
Chairman

Dated: ________________________________