

Barkway Parish Council

Appendix A - To the Parish Council Meeting

held on Tuesday 13th January 2026

Notes from the meeting of the Finance Working Group

Held in the Community Room on Monday 12th January 2026 at 7.30pm

1. Present:

Cllr. Peter Baker

Cllr. Nick Stuart

Clerk/RFO Catharine Toms

2. Apologies:

Cllr. Bill Dennis

3. To check and agree bank balances – cash book reconciliation to bank statements:

The Clerk/RFO provided members of the Group present with copies of the Sage reports for the Parish Council accounts and bank account statements. These were crossed checked and verified by Cllrs. as correct.

4. To examine 2025/26 costs for the Pavilion and Recreation Ground

The net cost of the Pavilion to 31st December was £8,096.44 and a total forecast cost of £8,721.44 to 31.03.2026. This was slightly higher than the budget at £8,500. Costs would be monitored.

5. To examine actual finances to 31st December 2025, consider the forecast for 2025/26, produce draft budget for 2026/27, including proposal for Precept application

These figures were examined carefully. This gave a projected carry forward balance as at 31.03.2026 of £31,004 a decrease of £5,294 from 31.03.2025. However, this was £22,889 higher than the budget for the year. This was mainly attributed to £10,000 as yet unspent on the Carriage Wash Project and £5,000 on play equipment.

A draft budget was produced which showed an overspend for the year of £19,508 reducing reserves down from £31,004 to £11,496. There was still the potential of large expenditure needed for the Wagon Wash project and £5,000 was budgeted for this purpose. Grants would be sought in addition. There was also play equipment needing to be renewed at a budget of £5,000.

Having examined the financial position to 31.12.25 and the total forecast expenditure to 31.03.26, it was recommended to increase the Precept in total by £2,778 to £46,500. This would maintain a moderate level of Parish Council reserve funds, as required by good practice. It would represent an increase in the Parish Council element of the North Herts Council Tax bill to householders of +6.18%

in a Band D property. As there had been no increase in the Parish Council category of the Council Tax bill for the last two years, it was considered that this would be an acceptable increase and would contribute towards the higher costs being now experienced by the Parish Council due to inflation.

6. Any other business

It was considered that some of the Push Energy Community Contribution Fund (£26,453) could be spent on the Carriage Wash restoration or on new play equipment.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm