

Penistone Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance, Assets & HR Committee held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Shrewsbury Road, Penistone on Monday 09 March 2026 at 7.00pm

Present

Cllr. Jon Palmer (Chair), Cllr. Jonathan Cutts, Cllr. Hannah Kitching (Town Mayor), Cllr. James Kitching, Cllr. Mandy Lowe-Flello, Cllr. Nick Perkins, Cllr. David Walker

Nigel Bailey, Town Clerk
Alison Fleetwood – Finance Officer
Elaine Miller – Asst. Town Clerk

Not present

Cllr. Wayne Chadburn, Cllr. Anita Kimberley, Cllr. Matthew Nicholson, Cllr. Frances Nixon

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Cllr. Wayne Chadburn, Cllr. Jonathan Cutts, Cllr. Anita Kimberley (Chair), Cllr. Hannah Kitching (Town Mayor – *ex officio*), Cllr. James Kitching, Cllr. Matthew Nicholson, Cllr. Frances Nixon, Cllr. Jon Palmer (Vice-Chair), Cllr. Nick Perkins, Cllr. David Walker

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public in attendance.

FAHR 2025/2026/36 1. TO NOTE ANY APOLOGIES AND APPROVE REASONS FOR ABSENCE FROM COUNCILLORS

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note apologies and approve reasons for absence from : Cllr. Wayne Chadburn, Cllr. Anita Kimberley and Cllr. Frances Nixon.

FAHR 2025/2026/37 2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTEREST FROM COUNCILLORS

2.1 In accordance with Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 members to declare any disposable pecuniary interests in items on this agenda.

It was **NOTED** and **RECORDED** that there were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

2.2 The Town Clerk to report any written dispensations in respect of items on this agenda.

The Town Clerk reported that there were none.

FAHR 2025/2026/38 3. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC – PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS ACT 1960) Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for the other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act) 1960.

3.1 To consider and resolve to exclude the press and public from Item 4 which refers to confidential information.

It was **NOTED** that no members of the press or public were present.

FAHR 2025/2026/39 4. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER (CONFIDENTIAL)

4.1 To consider an ongoing Community Asset Transfer.

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on the latest developments in the Community Asset Transfer proposal. The Clerk advised the Committee that he has quotations for legal advice from commercial property law specialists; and that the prudent course of action would be to pursue legal advice before the matter proceeds further.

Further to discussion the Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to full Council that legal advice be taken before any decision is made.

FAHR 2025/2026/40 5. FUNDING REQUESTS

5.1 To consider Penistone Round Table's funding request of £3,000 to support the Penistone Town Bonfire 2026.

Further to discussion the Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to full Council that the request be granted, *subject to* the same conditions as last year's grant; namely that the Council's support be acknowledged on any publicity for the event.

FAHR 2025/2026/41 6. PENISTONE TOWN COUNCIL RESERVES

6.1 To consider the possible transfer of accrued funds to earmarked reserves (Finance Officer)

The Finance Officer suggested that the Committee should recommend the transfer of accrued funds into earmarked reserves for the following:

- Christmas lights infrastructure and enhancement
- Costs of the May 2026 election
- Replacement of IT equipment
- Purchase of new defibrillators for the town
- Floral displays
- Maintenance of town property (bus shelter, public toilet, Royd Moor Viewing Platform)
- Legal costs

Further to discussion the Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to full Council that accrued funds be transferred to earmarked reserves for the purposes stated above.

FAHR 2025/2026/42 7. ST JOHN'S COMMUNITY CENTRE

7.1 To consider a query raised by the Internal Auditor regarding administration of the refurbishment of St John's Community Centre.

The Mayor Cllr. Hannah Kitching informed the Committee that, as reported to her by the Clerk, the Internal Auditor raised a query in her visit to the Council offices on 24/02/2026 with regard to the payments to contractors who carried out the work on the Community Centre during 2025. In some cases the individual payments added up to sums exceeding the threshold outlined in the Council's Financial Regulations under item 5.7 which refers to the requirement to place contracts estimated to exceed the threshold on the government's Contract Finder website. This arose due to unexpected situations discovered as the work progressed, requiring additional work / costs. The Auditor suggested that PTC may wish to consult the BMBC Monitoring Officer and/or place the information on Contracts Finder retrospectively.

The Clerk confirmed he had advised the project manager in charge of the building work of the requirements under Item 5.7. The Clerk further confirmed that at the time he had sought advice from both the Yorkshire Local Councils Association and the Internal Auditor; and in both cases the response was ambivalent. The work was at a crucial stage and had to be completed to render the building compliant with fire and asbestos regulations. Several contractors were working contemporaneously and any delay of one project caused further multiple delays, incurring greater costs. The advice received at the time was that the Council should prioritise the safety of the building and avoid as far as possible any waste of public money.

The Council discussed the matter as reported by Cllr. Kitching and the Clerk. The Chair Cllr. Jon Palmer commented that the Clerk had kept the Council informed at all stages regarding unexpected work due to the age and neglected state of the building. The Council had also been mindful of causing further detriment to clients who used the Centre for business activities and were suffering loss of income during the closure.

The Council recalled that an Extraordinary Meeting was held on 05 November 2024 at which three alternative quotations for asbestos removal and boiler replacement respectively were presented to the Council; and they discussed the fact that project managers Stockarth Project Solutions had not made any clear recommendations regarding these. In order to avoid delaying the project and incurring further costs the Council had to make the decisions to award the contracts; and resolved that the Clerk was authorised to instruct the project manager accordingly (Minute no. EM/2024/4.2/4.2).

The Committee **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that the decisions taken during the building project were appropriate in the circumstances and they reiterate that their instructions to the Clerk were to complete the project and have the building re-opened at the earliest possible date.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to thank the Auditor for her advice but to take no further action.

2025/2026/43 8. HANGING BASKETS

8.1 To receive and note an update regarding the hanging baskets in 2026. To consider and resolve upon any action resulting therefrom.

The Clerks informed the Committee that the Penistone sponsored hanging basket project had been in jeopardy due to the sudden loss of the supplier/contractor and they had been concerned about the possibility of finding a financially viable replacement. However since the agenda had been circulated a replacement had been found. The new supplier has promised that the hanging baskets will be *in situ* before the Penistone Gala on 14 June 2026.

The Committee **NOTED** the update regarding the hanging basket project.

FAHR 2025/2026/44 9. FEBRUARY ACCOUNTS

9.1 The Finance Officer presented budget reports for Penistone Town Council, St John's Community Centre and the Paramount Cinema.

The Committee duly **NOTED** the accounts for February 2026.

FAHR/2025/2026/45 10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Finance, Assets & HR Committee meeting will be deferred to the new municipal year.

The meeting concluded at 7.55 pm.

Signed by.....Chair, Ordinary Town Council meeting 23 March 2026