WHPC Meeting 3rd November 2026

Agenda Item 26/280

Finance Working Group: Half Year Financial Report @ 30th September 2026

Approved WHPC Meeting 3rd November 2026 Min 26/280

1. Purpose

This paper is a short report on the financial position of WHPC at the end of **1st Half 2026-2027**. The report is based on actual income/expenditure to date at the time of review (23rd October 2026) and known committed expenditure.

The Finance Working Group met on 26th October 2026 to review the accounts for the council year to date. Cllrs were satisfied that (a) the monthly reconciliations were complete and accurate and (b) the accounts software was up to date and the entries verified as correct. The Working Group then reviewed (a) actual receipts/payments against budget and (b) balance of reserves. Cllrs were satisfied that the appropriate controls were in place on invoices, payments and bank transfers.

The paper summarises the group's findings and recommendations.

2. Summary

Total funds held @ 31st March 2026*	**£97,052.72**
1st April to 30th September 2026:	
Receipts	£60,192.54
Expenditure	£31,471.68
Total funds held @ 30th September 2026	**£125,773.58**

* Includes general and earmarked reserves, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies etc

Key points of receipts, payments and reserves are detailed below.

3. Receipts

WHPC received receipts totalling **£60,192.54** during the first six months of 2026-27. The full year Precept **£56,875** has been received plus additional receipts of £3,317.54.

2026-2027 Precept	£56,875.00	
S278 Refund of remaining cash deposit	£2,461.52	(a)
Grant Funding Received	£660.63	(b)
Interest received	£195.39	
Total receipts Apr-Sep 2026	**£60,192.54**	

a. Devon County Council The remainder, £2,462.52, of the s278 security deposit, refunded to WHPC by Devon County Council following the adoption of the WHPC works on West Hill Road.
b. WHPC also received a grant of £660.63 from Devon Communities Resilience Forum as contribution towards the purchase of two-way radios to be used by the Village Responders in an emergency situation.

Looking ahead, further receipts expected include: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Monies distributed by EDDC in October, interest on funds held and VAT reclaim.

4. Payments

During the first six months of the Council's year payments were made against budget and as planned, against reserves earmarked for Council Projects.

Expenditure April-Sep 2026:

Payments against Precept	£26,977
Payments from Earmarked Reserves	£ 2,432
	£29,409
VAT (to be reclaimed)	£ 2,062
Total payments	**£31,471.68**

Key points of expenditure are detailed below.

4.1. Payments against Precept

Payments made against Precept/Budget during the first six months of the Council years are summarised below:

Payments £	2026-27 Full year Budget	YTD Expenditure April-Sep 2026	Budget remaining
Operational Expenses incl staff costs	47,326	20,645	57%
Playpark	2,350	1,280	46%
Public Spaces	7,050	3,290	54%
WHPC Grant Awards/ provisions	3,000	525	83%
Contingency	2,500	1,238	51%
	£62,226*	£26,978*	57%

Note * WHPC set a budget for 2026-27 at £62,226 but held the annual Precept at £56,875 by seeking to make savings during the year. * Excludes VAT payments to be reclaimed.

The overall financial position, for payments against the phased budget, at half year is as expected. Whilst there have been some unbudgeted approved costs these have been offset by savings or grants received:

Savings include:

- Office costs below budget
- Insurance costs are below budget as a new 3year Long Term Agreement is in place. Other additional insurance costs are yet to be decided.
- Chairmans Allowance not taken.
- Grass cutting costs reduce due to pro-longed hot weather.

Items of unbudgeted expenditure have been approved by Council, including:

- Purchase of two-way radios to be used by the Emergency Plan Village responders. The purchase of the radios, £730.22+VAT was largely offset by a successful grant application (£660.63) to the Devon Resilience Forum.

- Publicity - WHPC branded flags purchased for use on public occasions (£364.95+VAT).
- Summer Fete – crazy golf event to promote engagement with the community. Some of these materials can be used for subsequent events (£142.16+VAT).

4.2. Payments from Earmarked Reserves

As planned, during the first six months of the Council year, the Council has made payments from reserves earmarked for the development of a new Neighbourhood Plan Project: Consultants Place Studious were engaged to support the development of Design Codes for West Hill.

In summary,

Earmarked Reserves (£)	**@ 01.04.26**	Apr-Sep Expenditure	**@ 30.09.26**
Replacement Playpark Equipment	12,741.00		12,741.00
Open Spaces	12,000.00		12,000.00
CIL Monies	1,167.38		1,167.38
Neighbourhood Plan Project	12,107.64	2,431.83	9,675.81
Election Expenses By-Election	6,000.00		6,000.00
Contingency	9,705.00		9,705.00
Road Safety Projects	13,331.41		13,331.41
Total	**£67,052.43**		**£64,620.60**

5. **Forecast for Full Year 2026-27**

The Finance Working Group has carried out a detailed assessment of all areas of expenditure, taking into account expenditure to date and known commitments.

WHPC set a budget for 2026-27 at £62,226 but held the annual Precept at £56,875 by seeking to make savings during the year.

Overall, the Finance Working Group considers the Parish Council to be in a sound and stable position. Expenditure against budget has been monitored closely such that the Council is expected to achieve its goal of managing costs within the received Precept, £56.875.

- The Finance Working Group forecasts an underspend of £5,835 against the full year budget of £62,226.
- However, as the Parish Council decided to leave the annual Precept unchanged at £56,875 the forecast represents an underspend of £484.

The Finance Working Group will continue to monitor expenditure closely.

Looking ahead, the Finance Working Group has identified a number of threats to maintain costs within the 2026-27 budget or may impact on the 2027-2028 budget:

a. WHPC has established a budget of £5,000.00 Min for possible legal fees in relation to a Solicitor's letter requesting Voluntary Pre-Action Disclosure Min 26/176. Should these costs arise, they will be funded from Contingency Reserves held (currently £9,705.00).

b. Retained Solicitor arrangements changed to a discounted fee basis rather than fixed annual subscription.

c. WHPC will incur additional **External Audit fees** due to an Objector's challenge to the Council's Annual Return for 2025/6. The scale and timing of these costs are outside the control of the Council. The costs relate to the Auditor's time spent processing the challenge. (Ref Min 26/253).

d. **Public Spaces:** The Lengthsman contract for 2027/28 is yet to be agreed but is expected to increased costs Apr-27 onwards.

During, 2nd half 2026-27 the Council expects expenditure from earmarked reserves:

- The Neighbourhood Plan WG may incur further expenditure for specialist planning consultancy support as the project continues.
- The Playpark Working are seeking to install new equipment in the playpark following a community consultation in Autumn 2026. Subject to Parish Council approval this will be funded from s106 monies and earmarked reserves.

6. Recommendations

Councillors are asked to

a. accept this report, and
b. publish this report on the WHPC website.

Finance Working Group 26th October 2026