

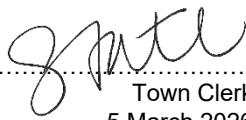


Chichester City Council

MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

AGENDA

MEMBERS ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO BE HELD AT 4.00PM ON WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH 2026 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER< THE COUNCIL HOUSE, NORTH STREET, CHICHESTER. PO19 1LQ


Town Clerk
5 March 2026

FIN2026/23.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To note apologies, receive from members of the Committee prior to the meeting.

FIN2026/24.DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest by Members of the Committee in matters on the agenda of this meeting.

FIN2026/25.MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the ordinary committee meeting held on the 4 February 2026.

[Minutes - Finance Committee - 4 February 2026](#)

FIN2026/26.UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

FIN2026/27.BUSINESS PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE

To review and approve any recommendations from the Business Plan Sub-Committee meeting held on 9 February 2026

- **Minute BP2026/5 (Community Centre) refers** - The sub-committee **RESOLVED** that the Finance Committee be authorised to approve the next phase of tendering for the design and project management of the build of the centre. The indicative cost for this work is £200K.
- **Minute BP2026/5 (E-Ink displays) refers** - The sub-committee **REQUESTED** that a project evaluation be undertaken, and a recommendation taken to the Finance Committee meeting on 11th March so that a decision can be taken on whether or not to continue the trial.
- **Minute BP2026/5 (New Staging) refers** - The sub-committee **RECOMMENDED** that additional boards and skirting be purchased at a cost of up to £1500, to be authorised at the next Finance Committee meeting.

FIN2026/28.FLORENCE PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE UPDATE

Project Manager to provide update and request funding for procurement advice.

FIN2026/29.E-INK DISPLAY PROJECT EVALUATION

Project Manager to provide update and recommendation from Business Plan Sub-Committee in relation to the future of the E-Ink displays.

FIN2026/30.STAGING PROJECT

Following the successful installation of the new staging the front of house team has been exploring different ways in which the stage can be used. They have identified that to best provide a variety of stage layouts some additional items to be purchased including shorter skirting, additional floor panels. A quote for these additional items has been sought and the cost is £ 1,511.40. This amount will be taken from the CIL fund ringfenced for Performance Staging which currently totals £10,038.66.

FIN2026/31.ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

FIN2026/32.DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next ordinary meeting: 18 March 2026

[Finance update 26.03.04](#)

FIN2026/28 - FLORENCE PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE UPDATE

Last modified: 2026-03-05

Florence Park Sea Cadet and Community Centre

Finance Committee Report

13/02/2026



Building

Update

We have submitted for pre application advice from the planning team at Chichester District Council and have an anticipated response to be delivered within 4 weeks. The documentation is appended to this update for your information.

Next steps

To maintain the momentum of this project the Business Plan Sub-Committee has recommended that the procurement of the next phase of Architectural work is overseen through the Finance Committee's Community Centre Oversight meetings.

To procure the required services for the next phase of design we will be exceeding the threshold for 3 quote tenders and will require a more robust procurement process. Since the changes in procurement regulation in 2024 we have only exceeded the threshold once to procure straightforward service contracts. Due to the complexities of procurement for developments it is recommended we seek professional procurement advice to ensure we are meeting our obligation under the UK Procurement Act 2023 and Procurement Regulation 2024.

Decision: To agree a budget of £5,000 for professional procurement advice with authorisation to spend delegated to the chair of the finance committee and the Town Clerk.

Indicative timescale

The below timetable is a new forecast draw up with the Architects. However, various risks, like the CAT, could see this timescale slip.

Milestone	Duration	Target completion
Concept	1 month	January 2026
Organisation foundation	1 month	February 2026
Pre app advice	1-2 months	May 2026
Developed Design	1 months	June 2026
Planning application	2-3 months	September 2026
Technical Design	1 month	October 2026
Mobilisation	1 month	December 2026
Construction of Phase 1	6-12 months	

[Finance report March 2026](#)

FIN2026/29 - E-INK DISPLAY PROJECT EVALUATION

Last modified: 2026-03-05



Chichester City Council

E-INK DISPLAY PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT TO FINANCE COMMITTEE FROM JAMES BRIGDEN, PROJECT MANAGER DATE: 05/03/2026

Background

As part of the City Plan 2024-2029, two objectives were identified; to improve city signage and provide public access to 'What's on' information. In March 2025, the Business Plan Sub-Committee agreed that these objectives would be explored through a trial of three digital e-paper displays.

The project has suffered several delays, and 2 of the 3 screens were finally installed on the high street on 13th January 2026. The 3rd screen was delayed due to the absence of a mobile phone antenna. Over the following weekend one of the screens was vandalised and replaced with the 3rd screen.

Over the next couple of weeks the screens saw over 2000 button presses likely to represent approximately 500 individual engagements. During this time the Chichester Observer reported on the screens, and they also gain some social media engagement which overall was negative.

We had 2 surveys completed which, whilst noting the progressive nature of the project, identified that the screens were not delivering due to the lack of functioning lighting and the speed of screen transition.

On the 9th February, the Business Plan Sub-Committee recommended the trial be ended as a failed initiative and defer final decision to the Finance Committee. Following this recommendation the screens were removed from the street scene awaiting the final decision.

Screen Usage

During their short time installed the screens saw good usage the table below show the engagement over a 2-week period.

Digital Screen Statistics for the 2 weeks in January

North Street, outside "Purchases"

Button presses	917
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East Street, outside "M&S"

Button presses	1304
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QR code scans (all screens)

Chichester Living	3
Wayfinding	10

Social media response

We only received 2 formal responses to our feedback survey. We have also picked up on Social Media interest. However, a lot of this interest has been negative due to significant levels of misinformation about the project. Key themes raised:

Perceived waste of money – Many commenters view the project as an unnecessary or “gimmicky” use of public funds, particularly given the incorrectly quoted cost of around £20,000. Several feel the money should instead be spent on visible, practical improvements such as potholes, pavements, planting, seating, shelters, lighting, or road safety measures.

Technology and connectivity concerns – A common concern is poor mobile and cellular signal in the city centre. Commenters question how the devices will function without reliable connectivity, raise doubts about battery life, and suggest most people already use smartphones for information.

Priorities and council remit – There is frustration that smaller, aesthetic or digital projects are progressing while larger issues like traffic, parking costs, road conditions, and empty shops remain unresolved. Some respondents misunderstand which council is responsible, while others point out that highways, traffic, and potholes sit outside the City Council's remit.

Risk of vandalism and durability – Several comments predict the units will be vandalised or damaged quickly, citing early signs of removal or damage as evidence.

Support for trialling and regeneration – A minority support the idea in principle, arguing that trialling new initiatives is reasonable, costs are relatively modest, and the devices could help promote events, support local businesses, reduce flyposting, and encourage evening footfall.

Alternative suggestions – Repeated alternatives include more planting and greening, improved gateways into the city, reduced parking charges, better traffic management, more seating and shelter, and general maintenance before introducing new digital features.

Whilst these comments do not shine a favourable light on this scheme, a lot of them stem from misconceptions surrounding the remit of the City Council.

Discussion with supplier

Noticeable issue that we have been working on with the supplier are:

- The lighting on the screens is not working at the specified times making the screen inaccessible at night.
- Slow transition between the pages. This is resultant to the significantly poor mobile reception in the city.

What's On guide

The 'What's On' guide for the signage project has utilised the support of Chichester Living to provide the feed. We would like to improve this partnership and provide the What's On guide through our website and social feeds. It has been proposed that we enter a Service Level Agreement with Chichester Living to deliver an What's On service through our internet channels.

If it is decided that the E-paper signage trial is ended the partnership that has been formed with Chichester Living will be transferred to the Community Affairs Committee to adopt the 'What's On' guide for our internet channels.

Decision

Option 1

Work with the supplier to explore options to rectify the issues and restart the trial to allow the full three months to run its course and gather further statistics and feedback from a wider group of users.

Option 2 (Recommendation from the Business Plan Sub-committee)

Discontinue the project and reevaluate how we can meet the objectives of the City Plan. The work carried out with Chichester Living to be passed to the Community Affairs Committee to explore how we can deliver 'What's On' information through different channels.