Report following Finance Working Group Meeting 9 June 2026 2pm Yarpole Parish Hall.

1. **Bank.**

Remain with Nat West or move to Unity Trust Bank.
Pros and cons of moving to Unity Trust (preferred by the clerk) were considered.

Pros – simpler actions: adding/removing signatories, setting up payments, payment templates, internal transfers, logging in.

Cons – fees £7 per month, not a clearing bank; payments are released three times a day, no banking APP, potentially lose access to Nat West credit card.

Projected interest. Difficult to calculate due to reducing balances AI estimated that moving to Unity Trust and holding all but £100 (or similar) in an interest-bearing account would increase annual interest.

Recommendation: The Parish Council moves its accounts to Unity Trust Bank *and* ensures a Council credit card is available to the clerk.

2. **Reserves.**

Whether reserves held are too high was discussed. General Reserve £24,142.58 and Projects £14,427.82. The first draft of the 2027/28 budget was viewed and the balance between raising the precept or utilising reserves discussed.

Recommendation: Re-assess balances when considering the budget in October.

3. **Mileage Rate**

Government announced increase, from 45p to 55p per mile from 6 April 2026. Mileage at rate set by HMRC not included in the clerk's contract.

Recommendation: The Parish Council agrees to the new rate.

4. **Membership of Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) / Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).**

As YGPC is no longer a member of HALC, the clerk asked if funding a higher percentage of SLCC costs would be acceptable. Advice from HALC is received via another council.

Recommendation: Acceptable in principle, to be agreed on case-by-case basis.

5. **Payroll – payslip calculation.**

Noted: pay rate for 2026-27 has not been agreed yet. Each year back pay is agreed when the rate is announced.

Recommendation: Note that payroll calculation has been checked and is correct.

6. **Installation of slabs at Community Meadow**.

Whether to allocate to maintenance or community project was raised by the clerk. Agreed: to allocate to community projects. Action carried out.

7. **Grants from the Parish Council.**

Discussion held on grants to bodies in the Group Parish. No action required.

8. **Potential projects**

    a. Defibrillators at the church and parish hall. Both will need replacing in about 2028. Agreed: to consider when setting the 2027/28 budget. Clerk to note. No action required.
    b. New notice board in Yarpole. Noted: new boards at Bircher do not have enough space. **Recommendation**: The Parish Council considers replacing the board ensuring a suitable size is provided.

9. **Any other business.**

    Cllr Cadwallader confirmed that a defibrillator for Bircher (in this year's budget) is no longer required as one has been installed in the vicinity.

Meeting closed 14:57

Maggie Brown, Clerk. 10 June 2026