



Longridge Town Council

Finance Committee - Agenda

You are hereby summoned to attend the Finance Committee of Longridge Town Council on Wednesday 3 June 2026 at 18:30 in the Station Buildings, Berry Lane, Longridge.

1 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair.

To elect a Chair of the Finance Committee for the civic year 2026/27, elect a Vice Chair for the same period.

2 Welcome by the Chair

3 Receive Apologies

4 Declarations of interests.

Councillors are responsible for declaring any personal / prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interest pertaining to matters on this Agenda.

5 To consider and approve the minutes of the 22 April 2026 meeting.

6 Public Participation.

This 30-minute session (time limit of three minutes per item/per person) provides members of the public an opportunity to indicate interests in an agenda item and put questions to the Committee. Such questions may be answered after the meeting or become an agenda item at a future Committee meeting.

ITEMS for DECISION/DISCUSSION

7 Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee.

Report of the Clerk inviting members to review and recommend to Full Council the adoption of the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee for the civic year 2026/27, including the Committee's purpose, scope, delegated authority, membership, quorum, frequency of meetings and reporting arrangements.

8 Finance Report.

Report of the Clerk (enclosed) to approve the accounts to date.

9 Revised Grant Policy.

Report of the Clerk (enclosed) for members to consider a revised grant policy.

10 Grant Applications.

Report of the Clerk (enclosed) for members to consider a grant request from: Longridge Community Hospital Group for £1,000. The grant will be drawn-down as required and used for promoting the efforts to save Longridge Hospital from closure.

ITEMS for INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

11 Consideration of matters not on the agenda.

An opportunity for members and the Clerk to suggest items for future meetings.

12 Schedule of meetings.

For consideration

Recording of meetings:

This meeting may be recorded by Longridge Town Council to support the production of accurate minutes. Only a written transcript is generated, no voice recording is retained. The transcript is deleted once the minutes are approved.

Anyone who has concerns about being recorded should raise this with the Clerk before speaking.

Mike Hill

Clerk and Responsible Financial Office to Longridge Town Council.

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Mission Statement

Endeavour through foresight and leadership, to enhance quality of life for residents and visitors. Working to enrich and nurture opportunity to protect and improve the built and natural environment and improve community pride.



Agenda Item 5

Longridge Town Council

Finance Committee – Draft Minutes

Date:	22 April 2026		
Place:	Council Offices, Station Buildings, Berry Lane, Longridge.		
Present:	Councillors: Walker (Chair), Rogerson and Smith.		
In attendance:	Town Clerk and Cllr. L. Jameson		
Meeting started:	18:30	Meeting closed:	19:30

260304/

1. WELCOME BY THE CHAIR.

The Cllr. Walker welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs. Eccles, Rainford and Stubbs.

3. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS AND WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTEREST DISPENSATION

Cllr. Rogerson declared an interest in agenda item 8 concerning the allotment fence repair, noting that the quoted contractor is his brother's business. Cllr. Rogerson also declared an interest in Agenda Item 7 Longridge Girls Guides, and Cllr. Jameson declared an interest in Agenda Item 7 Longridge Town Football Club. No other declarations were made.

4. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 4 MARCH 2026.

The minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

There was no public participation.

6. FINANCE REPORT.

The Clerk submitted a report requesting members to approve the accounts to date.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the accounts to date are approved.
- b. That the Clerk be requested to consider the reporting of expenditure incurred in 2026/27 for work carried out in 2025/26

7. GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Committee considered three grant applications and the overarching issues with current grant practice.

a. Longridge Station Enterprise Centre (LSEC) – Thermal Curtains (£4,789)

The Committee considered an application for £4,789 towards thermal room divider curtains intended to create a smaller heated working space within the LSEC premises. It was noted that the Friends of the Civic Hall group would cover the cost of the rails and fitting.

The Committee expressed concern that the application represents a significant percentage of the Council's £20,000 annual grants budget. Members were supportive in principle but wished to see a breakdown of costs between the main divider curtain and the outer curtains before reaching a final recommendation.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the application be supported in principle and referred to Full Council for final decision, subject to the applicant providing a detailed cost breakdown distinguishing the main divider from the outer curtains.
- b. That the Clerk is requested to write to LSEC requesting itemised cost breakdown and place the item on the next Full Council agenda.

b. Longridge Football Club – Pitch Renovation (£13,062)

Note: Cllr. Jameson having declared an interest in this Item left the meeting.

The Committee considered an application for £13,062 towards pitch renovation and maintenance.

The application was discussed at length and refused on the following grounds:

- The request was for revenue expenditure rather than capital investment;
- The sum represents nearly three-quarters of the Council's annual grants budget;
- The club is located within Whittingham parish and not Longridge;
- A previous grant of £6,975 (awarded August 2024 for lawnmower repairs) remains unverified, with no invoices or evidence of expenditure having been provided to the Council; and
- There is no evidence that the club has approached its own parish council for funding.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the grant application from Longridge Football Club be refused.
- b. That the Clerk write to Longridge Football Club requiring verification of expenditure of the previous £6,975 grant, with supporting invoices, within 28 days.
- c. The Clerk to write to the applicant communicating the decision.

Note: Cllr. Jameson returned to the meeting.

c. Longridge Girl Guides – Roof Repair (£5,000)

Note: that Cllr. Rogerson having declared an interest in this Item left the meeting.

The Committee considered an application for £5,000 towards replacement roof sheets at the Guide Hut. It was noted that the applicant has already secured a £1,000 grant from another organisation, with an estimated total project cost of £4,000 to £5,000 assuming volunteer labour.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the application be deferred pending completion of the Grant Policy review (see 7.1).
- b. The Clerk to notify the applicant of the deferral and expected timeframe.

Note: Cllr. Rogerson returned to the meeting.

7.1 Grant Policy Review (subset of Agenda Item 7)

The Committee discussed concerns with the current grant framework, noting that a small number of organisations receive repeated and substantial awards, and that applications received early in the financial year can consume the entire annual budget before the wider community is aware of the scheme's availability.

Members agreed that a revised policy is required, with the following principles to be incorporated into a draft for consideration:

- Introduction of a maximum grant amount per applicant per financial year;
- A stated preference for smaller awards (in the region of £200 to £500) to support a broader range of community groups;
- Clearer eligibility criteria, including a requirement that applicants first approach their own parish or town council where the applicant is based outside Longridge;
- Improved community outreach and promotion of grant availability; and
- Stricter verification and monitoring of grant expenditure, including a requirement for invoices and receipts to be submitted within a defined period.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the Clerk draft a revised Grant Policy incorporating the principles set out above, for consideration at the next Finance Committee meeting and subsequent recommendation to Full Council.
- b. That all major grant decisions (other than those already resolved at this meeting) be deferred until the revised policy has been adopted by Full Council.

8. CCTV UPGRADE AND NEW ALLOTMENT FENCE

The Committee considered a quotation for the extension of the Council's existing CCTV system to cover the Berry Lane entrance to Towneley Garden. A quote had been received from LenTech Northwest Limited (Contractor A). The full cost is covered by a £1,000 grant from RVBC.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the quotation from LenTech Northwest Limited in the sum of £960 be accepted, funded in full by the RVBC grant.
- b. That the Clerk instruct LenTech Limited of the Council's decision and arrange installation.

The Committee considered a single quotation received for the repair of the allotment fence following vehicle damage.

Note: Cllr Rogerson, having declared a pecuniary interest left the meeting for this item and took no part in the discussion or decision.

RESOLVED:

That the single quotation received be accepted, the damage being of a nature requiring timely repair and further quotations being impractical in the circumstances.

Note: Cllr. Rogerson returned to the meeting.

9. FINANCIAL TRANSFERS AND INVESTMENT OF RESERVES

The Committee considered the management of the Council's reserves in light of current interest rates.

RESOLVED:

- a. That funds held in the NatWest account and the Unity Trust daily account be transferred, in part, to the Unity Trust 32-day notice saver account (currently 4.25% interest).
- b. That a sum equivalent to approximately two months' operating expenditure be retained in the Unity Trust daily account for working capital purposes.
- c. That the Chair and the Clerk be authorised to determine the specific sums to be transferred and to execute the transfers accordingly.

10. UPDATES ON ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Clerk submitted a report updating members on actions from recent meetings.

RESOLVED:

Council note the Report

11. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

No other matters.

12. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

June 3 2026

PART 2 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of this item on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of particular persons (including the authority holding that information), and that such exclusion is necessary to avoid the disclosure of that information. The resolution was proposed by Cllr. Walker and seconded by Cllr. Smith.

13. PLAY EQUIPMENT AND ENTRANCE TO THE RECREATIONS GROUND

The Committee considered quotations received for the new play equipment and for the entrance to the Recreation Ground from Kestor Lane. Funding for both projects is made available through the RVBC UKSP and Jubilee Funds.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the lowest compliant quotation for each of the play equipment and garden entrance works be accepted.
- b. That the Clerk issue instructions to the successful contractors and to report progress to the next meeting.

SIGNEDBY CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

DATE

A 'wet' copy is on file.

Agenda Item 7

For Decision/Discussion



Longridge
Town Council

Meeting:	Finance Committee
Meeting Date:	03 June 2026
Title:	Finance Committee – Terms of Reference
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

1. Purpose of the report.

Report of the Clerk (enclosed) to present the Finance Committee’s Terms of Reference for review and adoption for the 2026/27 municipal year and to recommend their submission to Full Council for Formal Adoption and inclusion within the Council’s Standing Orders.

2. Background

The Council’s Standing Orders require each standing committee to review its Terms of Reference annually following the Annual Meeting. The Finance Committee’s Terms of Reference set out the Committee’s composition, quorum, delegated functions, meeting frequency, and the financial limits within which it may act without further reference to Full Council.

3. Review Outcome

The Terms of Reference have been reviewed by the Town Clerk and are presented to the Committee unchanged from those adopted in 2025/26.

4. Matter for Members’ Consideration — Delegated Financial Authority

Whilst no changes are proposed by officers, Members are invited to give specific consideration to the delegated financial authority threshold of £1,000, above which expenditure decisions must be referred to Full Council for approval. This figure has remained unchanged for several years and has not been up-rated to reflect inflation or the increased scale of the Council’s operations since it was first set.

Members may wish to consider whether the current threshold remains appropriate, or whether an increase would improve operational efficiency without undermining Full Council oversight. Any proposed change would require corresponding amendment of the Terms of Reference and the Council’s Financial Regulations, and would need to be recommended to Full Council for approval.

5. Recommendations

That the Finance Committee:

- a. approves and adopts the Finance Committee Terms of Reference 2026/27 as appended to this report; subject to such amendments as the Committee may agree at the meeting; and
- b. submits the adopted Terms of Reference to Full Council for formal approval and inclusion within the Council’s Standing Orders.



For Information

Finance Committee Terms of Reference

Adopted: 03 June 2026





Chair: Cllr.

Minute Ref.: 26/06/03/7

The policy is administered by the Town Clerk and will be reviewed annually.

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Mission Statement

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OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee is constituted as a Standing Committee of the Full Council and is appointed to consider and make decisions on matters relating to grants, the Council's annual budget and other financial matters.

1. The Committee is appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council each May.
2. The Committee has 5 (five) Councillors plus Mayor and Deputy Mayor (if required) plus Town Clerk to the Council.
3. The Committee will elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman at its first meeting.
4. The quorum for a meeting will be a minimum of 3 (three) Councillors.
5. The Committee may, if it wishes co-opt councillors from other committees to attend meetings for quorum requirements.
6. The Committee will meet monthly (or as required), with a minimum of three days clear notice given.
7. The Town Clerk will produce an agenda and minutes for each meeting.
8. All correspondence should be conducted through the Town Clerk.
9. **Rights, Powers and Responsibilities:**
 - The Committee will authorise grants up to the value of £1,000 each.
 - Assess and recommend to the Full Council grant applications over the value of £1,000
 - Assess the financial needs of the Council in relation to Budget setting and the Council's Annual Precept.
 - Oversee financial audits.
 - Approve Finance Reports.
 - Authorise certain matters relating the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).
10. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually.

Agenda Item 8

LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Report For Decision

Meeting:	Finance Committee
Meeting Date:	03-Jun-26
Report Title:	Finance Report
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Purpose of Report

To update members on the Council's financial position and to seek approval of the accounts to date and agree any payments to be made.

Recommendations

1. Approve the Finance Report and the accounts to date.
2. Approve the Schedule of Payments if any.

Workbook Contents

Payments	Schedule of payments if any, that require Council approval
Receipts	Income for 2026-27
Expenditure	Net Expenditure by category 2026-27
Bank Summary	Banking summary – Unity Trust and NatWest accounts
NatWest Accounts	NatWest reserve account balances

Summary:

The Council remains in a strong financial position with total available funds of £161,103.79. Income is broadly on profile, with the precept received in full. Expenditure is currently below profile across most categories, with some prior-year costs (chauffeur and mayoral allowance) paid in 2025/26. Project expenditure will increase later in the year as works progress on the Heritage Centre and Kestor Lane UKSPF scheme. Bank reconciliation has been completed to 30 May 2026 with no discrepancies.

LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL — Income 2026-27

1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027 | Presented to Finance Committee 03-06-2026

Code	Income Source	Actual £ (Apr–Mar)	Remaining to Receive £	Budget Income £	Notes
200	Precept	£106,410.00	£0.00	£106,410.00	Received 08-04-2026
260	Allotment Rent	£364.00	£73.00	£437.00	£72.8 received March 2026
205	RVBC and LCC Grants	£0.00	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	
255	UK SPF Grants	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
003	Bank Interest – NatWest and Unity	£0.00	£500.00	£500.00	
220	Petty Cash	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
290	Room Hire (Lettings)	£1,120.00	£0.00	£1,120.00	
295	Café Rent	£1,414.00	£7,070.00	£8,484.00	
296	Utilities Contributions	£4,150.44	£3,949.56	£8,100.00	£2,244.16 for 2025/26
486	Mayoral Fundraising (inc. Bingo)	£590.45	£0.00	£0.00	Not part of the general budget
220	Overpayment	£90.00	-£90.00	£0.00	SY Maint.
TOTAL		£114,138.89	£14,502.56	£128,051.00	

LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL — Expenditure 2026-27

Actual and Projected | 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027 | Version: 30/05/26

Community Purse

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Mar)	Variance vs Budget	
450	Youth Council	£0	£0	£0	
460	Allotments (incl. RVBC lease payment)	£100	£840	£740	£740 = new allotment fence
470	Civic Events incl. Remembrance Services	£5,500	£451	£5,049	
471	Chauffeur 2026/27	£200	£0	£200	
471	Chauffeur 2025/26	£0	£711.70	£712	Payment relates to 2025/26 work
479	Mayoral Allowance 2026/27	£600	£0	£600	
480	Mayoral Allowance 2025/26	£0	£0	£0	
485	Mayor Fundraising	£0	£402.21	£402	£402. 2025/26. Not part of general budget
500	Christmas Trees and Tree Lights	£500	£0	£500	
490	Community Partnership	£0	£0	£0	
510	Grants and Donations	£10,000	£750	£9,250	
520	Community Sponsorship	£10,000	£0	£10,000	
Sub-Total: Community Purse		£26,900	£3,155	£23,745	£750 part of £1,000 donation to Longridge Food Bank from 2025/26 grant allocation.

Amenity and Asset Maintenance

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Mar)	Variance vs Budget	
530	Public Toilets (Towneley Gardens)	£0	£0	£0	
415	Plants and Planters (purchases)	£0	£0	£0	
420	Gardening Services (labour)	£2,400	£210	£2,190	
410	Tree Works	£0	£0	£0	
440	Caretaker/Lengthsman Services (labour)	£6,240	£700	£5,540	
550	Play Area and Skatepark	£750	£0	£750	
570	Litter and Waste Disposal – RVBC	£6,500	£1,027.40	£5,473	
390	Asset Purchase	£0	£0	£0	
395	Asset Replace and Refurbish	£100	£0	£100	
540	Maintenance of Open Space and Misc.	£0	£23	£23	Toilet Rolls
560	Station Buildings (Maintenance Purchases)	£0	£0	£0	
580	Defibrillators and Bleed Kits	£630	£0	£630	
Sub-Total: Amenity and Asset Maintenance		£16,620	£1,960	£14,660	

Insurance, Banking and Professional Services

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Mar)	Variance vs Budget
350	Insurance	£3,300	£1,480	£1,820
355	Bank Charges	£160	£14	£146
590	Memberships and Subscriptions	£1,425	£1,184	£241
600	Professional Services	£250	£0	£250
365	Auditor	£250	£250	£0
Sub-Total: Insurance, Banking & Prof. Services		£5,385	£2,928	£2,457

Station Building Maintenance and Cleaning

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Mar)	Variance vs Budget
610/615	Hygiene and Cleaning	£5,000	£1,034	£3,966
620	Security Alarm System	£380	£0	£380
630	Fire Alarm	£100	£40	£60
640	General Maintenance – External Contractors	£1,000	£0	£1,000
650	Internal CCTV	£0	£0	£0
660	IT Support	£200	£0	£200
Sub-Total: Station Building Maint. and Cleaning		£6,680	£1,074	£5,606

Miscellaneous Expenses

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr-Mar)	Variance vs Budget
670	Post, Stationery and Print Consumables	£300	£0	£300
680	Attendance at Conferences	£50	£0	£50
690	Councillor Expenses	£100	£0	£100
Sub-Total: Miscellaneous Expenses		£450	£0	£450

Office

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr-Mar)	Variance vs Budget
700	Furniture	£100	£0	£100
710	Equipment	£100	£0	£100
Sub-Total: Office		£200	£0	£200

Specific Projects

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr-Mar)	Variance vs Budget
720	Longridge in Bloom	£1,500	£0	£1,500
730	Rental – Festive Lights	£3,960	£0	£3,960
740	Community Well-Being Garden	£500	£0	£500
745	Heritage Centre Refurbishment (Earmarked)	£6,000	£3,968	£2,032
746	Kestor Lane Entrance UKSPFGrant	£40,000	£2,907	£37,093
Sub-Total: Specific Projects		£51,960	£6,875	£45,085

Staff Costs

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr-Mar)	Variance vs Budget
300	Clerk Salary (Gross)	£46,000	£7,150	£38,850
301	Deputy Clerk Salary (Gross)	£5,200	£864	£4,336
302	HMRC Payments for Previous Clerk	£0	£0	£0
315	Staff Training	£600	£20	£580
310	Expenses and Additional Remunerations	£0	£0	£0
305	Payroll Costs	£560	£0	£560
Sub-Total: Staff Costs		£52,360	£8,034	£44,326

Cllr. Eccles GDPR

Telephone and Internet				
Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual £ (Apr–Mar)	Variance vs Budget
750	Telephone – Landline	£700	£300.70	£399
760	Telephone – Mobile	£450	£76.67	£373
770	Website, Web and Email Services	£1,251	£219.12	£1,032
780	IT and Wi-Fi Equipment	£100	£178	£78
Sub-Total: Telephone and Internet		£2,501	£774	£1,727

Utilities				
Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Mar)	Variance vs Budget
790	Electricity	£12,000	£1,101	£10,899
800	Gas	£1,500	£129	£1,371
810	Water and Waste	£3,000	£330	£2,670
Sub-Total: Utilities		£16,500	£1,560	£14,940
TOTAL		£179,556	£26,360.21	£153,196



Note: The £133,556 budget for 2026/27 was agreed at Full Council on 10 December 2025, based on the recommendations of the Budget Committee of 2 December 2025.

LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL — Bank Summary

Summary as at 30 May 2026

Unity Trust Bank at 30 May 2026

Current Account - Balance	£37,792.73
32 Day Notice Savings Account - Balance	£70,000.00
Total	£107,792.73
Less: Mayoral Bingo Funds:	£590.45
Unity balance (excl. Mayoral Funds) at 15 04 2026:	£107,202.28

NatWest Reserve Accounts

NatWest Reserve balance at 27 February 2026 (latest statements):	£53,901.51
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Total Available Funds

Total Available Funds (Unity excl. Mayoral + NatWest):	£161,103.79
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LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL — NatWest Reserve Accounts

Reserve Account Balances — 2025/26

NatWest Account No. 1

Balance carried forward 1 April 2025:	£88,202.46	
Balance 31 October 2025:	£68,684.92	
Balance 27 February 2026:	£48,901.51	<i>Latest Bank Statement</i>

NatWest Account No. 2

Balance carried forward 1 April 2025:	£5,000.00	
Balance 30 January 2026:	£5,000.00	<i>Latest Bank Statement</i>

Combined NatWest Reserve Total

Combined NatWest balance (latest statements):	£53,901.51	
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Agenda Item 9

For Decision/Discussion



Longridge
Town Council

Meeting:	Finance Committee
Meeting Date:	03 June 2026
Title:	Revised Grant Policy
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

1. Purpose of the Report

To present a revised Grant Policy for adoption by the Finance Committee, and to recommend its onward submission to Full Council for formal approval.

2. Background

At its meeting on 22 April 2026, the Finance Committee considered the Council's existing grant arrangements and resolved that they required revision. Members noted that a small number of organisations had received repeated large awards in successive years; that early-year applications had at times exhausted the annual grant budget before the wider community was aware that funds were available; and that post-award monitoring of grant expenditure had been inconsistent.

The Committee agreed five guiding principles to underpin a revised policy:

- a. Maximum grant per applicant per financial year;
- b. Stated preference for smaller awards in the range of £200–£500 to enable funds to reach a wider range of community groups;
- c. Clearer eligibility criteria, including a requirement that applicants based outside the Parish of Longridge first approach their own parish or town council;
- d. Improved community outreach and active promotion of the scheme; and
- e. Stricter verification and monitoring arrangements, with invoices or receipts required within a defined period after grant award.

Minute 7.1 of that meeting resolved that the Town Clerk would prepare a revised Grant Policy incorporating these principles, for consideration at the next meeting of the Finance Committee and onward recommendation to Full Council. The associated resolution at Minute 7.2 deferred all major grant decisions, save those already determined on 22 April, until such time as the revised policy is adopted by Full Council.

3. The Draft Policy

The revised Grant Policy is appended to this report. It gives effect to the five principles set out at Section 2 above.

Members are invited to consider the draft in detail, to propose any amendments they consider necessary, and to adopt the policy in such final form as the Committee determines.

4. Consequences for Outstanding Applications

Adoption of the revised policy will release the standstill imposed by Minute 7.2 of 22 April 2026. The deferred application from Longridge Girl Guides will return to the Committee for determination under the new framework at the next available opportunity, together with any further applications received in the interim.

5. Financial Implications

The revised policy does not, of itself, alter the Council's overall grant budget, which is set annually as part of the precept-setting process. The policy governs the distribution of the budget rather than its size. The smaller-grants preference and per-applicant maximum are expected to spread the budget across a greater number of beneficiaries within the same total cash envelope.

6. Recommendations

That the Finance Committee:

- a. Adopts the revised Grant Policy appended to this report, subject to such amendments as the Committee may agree at the meeting; and
- b. Recommends the revised Grant Policy to Full Council for formal approval and adoption, in accordance with the resolution recorded at Minute 7.1 of the Finance Committee meeting held on 22 April 2026.
- c. If the Policy is approved, request the Clerk to prepare revised grant application forms to reflect the new policy.



For Information

Grant Awarding Policy 2026

Adopted: 3 June 2026





Chair: Cllr.

Minute Ref.: 260603/

This revised policy strengthens support for community organisations through a simplified process for grants up to £250, clearer funding ranges with preference for smaller grants (£250–£500), improved outreach provisions, and stronger verification and evidence requirements for expenditure. It continues to ensure openness, transparency and fairness. The policy is administered by the Town Clerk and will be reviewed in February 2027.

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Mission Statement

Endeavour through foresight and leadership, to enhance quality of life for residents and visitors. Working to enrich and nurture opportunity to protect and improve the built and natural environment and improve community pride.

1. WHO CAN APPLY FOR A GRANT, SPONSORSHIP OR PATRON FEE

Grant applications will be considered from charitable, voluntary, non-profit making organisations, community groups, clubs and societies that work for the benefit of the local community within Longridge. This includes both formally constituted organisations and less formal or newly formed groups, subject to appropriate governance standards proportionate to the scale of funding requested. The Council actively encourages applications from a wide range of community organisations, including those supporting vulnerable residents, cultural activities, environmental initiatives, youth and older people's groups, and sports/recreational clubs.

2. CONDITIONS FOR AWARDING A GRANT

2.1 General Conditions

- a. An organisation can make one application for a grant in any one financial year (April to March). In exceptional circumstances the Council may consider additional grant requests.
- b. Applications will be considered for individual projects or activities only.
- c. The organisation must have clearly stated aims and objectives.
- d. The organisation must provide a written constitution that has been formally adopted by the membership, or in the event of a less formal organisation a similar document or signed governance statement (requirements are reduced for grants ≤ £250 – see below).
- e. The organisation must demonstrate that the grant would provide an activity or service that is clearly needed by the local community or by a particular group of people who either reside, work or visit Longridge.
- f. Organisations that receive a grant are required to acknowledge the contribution from the Council on publicity, printed material, social media and websites, using the Council logo where appropriate.
- g. Applicants based outside the Parish of Longridge must have approached their own parish or town council first.

2.2 Simplified Process for Small Grants (up to £250)

To reduce barriers, encourage wider participation and support more community organisations, the Council operates a simplified fast-track process for grants of £250 or less:

- Reduced documentation: Short application form, brief project description and community benefit statement, simple budget breakdown.
- For informal or new groups: A signed declaration of purpose and key contacts may replace a formal constitution.
- No requirement for audited accounts or full annual returns.

- **Faster processing:** Applications may be considered under delegated authority by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Finance Committee Chair, aiming for quicker decisions.
- **Lighter reporting:** Within 3 months of completion, provide simple confirmation of spend supported by at least one piece of evidence (receipt, invoice, photo of activity/equipment purchased). A short outcomes summary is encouraged but not mandatory for micro-grants.

2.3 Verification and Evidence Requirements (All Grants)

Longridge Town Council reserves the right to:

- a. Request evidence that a grant has been spent as specified on the Application, including original receipts, invoices, bank statements highlighting the relevant transactions, and where relevant photographs or other proof of delivery.
- b. Request a written report within 12 months (or within 3 months of project completion for grants ≤£500) stating how the money had been spent and what outcomes were achieved.
- c. Reclaim the grant in the event of it not being used for the purpose specified on the Application Form or if satisfactory evidence of expenditure is not provided.
- d. Request feedback, receipts and visual evidence to demonstrate how the grant had been spent and to inspect the outcome of the expenditure.
- e. For grants over £500, require a more detailed monitoring report and/or a short meeting with Council representatives to discuss outcomes.
- f. Request copies of the organisation's audited accounts, or in the case of a charity, their annual return (waived or simplified for grants ≤£250).
- g. Purchase items for the applicant and donate them to the applicant so the Council can reclaim any VAT.

Note: Failure to provide satisfactory evidence of expenditure may result in the organisation being asked to return the grant and/or affect future funding decisions.

3. WHO CANNOT APPLY FOR A GRANT

The Town Council will not consider grant applications from:

- a. Individuals.
- b. Commercial enterprises set up to generate profit.
- c. Health, education or welfare organisations whose services should be provided by statutory funding.
- d. Organisations intending to support or oppose any particular political party.
- e. Organisations that breach legislation relating to discrimination on grounds of protected characteristic as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- f. Private organisations that operate as a business to make profit or surplus.

- g. National organisations or local groups with access to funds from national 'umbrella' or 'parent' organisations, unless funds are not available from their national bodies, or the funds available are inadequate for a specified project.

4. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- a. Grants will not be awarded on a retrospective basis and only awarded for funding future projects and initiatives.
- b. Grant applicants can choose to address the Council meeting(s) at which their grant is being considered.
- c. Applications from education, health or social service establishments will be considered only where the organisation can demonstrate that it is working in partnership with other groups and where there are benefits to the wider Longridge community.
- d. Any grant must only be used for the purpose for which it was awarded unless the written approval of the Town Council has been obtained.
- e. Any unspent portion of the grant must be returned to the Town Council by the end of the financial year following the year in which it was awarded.
- f. Applications from religious groups will be considered.
- g. The Council will also consider giving grants under Section 137 to religious groups, churches and other organisations, where a clear benefit to the wider community can be demonstrated, irrespective of their religious beliefs, so long as a benefit is demonstrated to some part of the community. Compliance with this requirement must be demonstrated throughout the project.
- h. Requests for funds in appreciation of activities carried out on behalf of the Town Council will also be considered.
- i. **Preference for Smaller Grants (£250–£500):** The Council has a clear preference for supporting a larger number of smaller grants, particularly in the £250–£500 range. This approach maximises community reach, enables more organisations to benefit, and aligns with the goal of widening support. Larger grants (above £1,000) will be considered only where exceptional community impact, strategic alignment and value for money are clearly demonstrated.

5. SECTION 137

Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives town councils the ability to spend a limited amount of money on projects they believe will benefit some or all of their residents. The amount of money that can be spent under Section 137 is capped and is usually set annually in line with inflation. The 2026/27 limit is £11.60 per electorate. Under Section 137, expenses that may be incurred by a town council include, but are not limited to:

- **Donations to Charities:** A council might decide to make a donation to a local charity that provides services benefiting the local community.
- **Grants for Local Clubs:** Supporting local youth clubs, senior citizen clubs, or other community groups that offer beneficial services or activities to residents.
- **Awards and Prizes:** For local competitions, perhaps to encourage community spirit, art, or environmental awareness.

When Section 137 is used as the spending power the Town Council is required by law to have sight of a report as to how the grant had been spent. In addition, where assistance worth £2,000 or more is given to a voluntary body, the body must give a written report to a Council within 12 months stating how the money had been used.

6. PROVIDING ANNUAL SPONSORSHIP AND PATRON FEES

The Town Council will not provide an ongoing commitment to the award of grants, sponsorship or patron fees to any group or organisation. A new application will be required each year, and will be considered on its merits and must meet the requirements of the Council's Grant Awarding Policy (this Policy). Repeat applicants are welcome but must demonstrate continued need and outcomes from previous funding.

7. FUNDING CATEGORIES AND MAXIMUM GRANT LEVELS

The Town Council will provide funds to the following types of projects and initiatives. **The overall maximum grant per application is normally £5,500.** Grants above this level will only be considered in exceptional circumstances with robust justification. The Council strongly prefers to fund a greater number of smaller awards (especially £250–£500) to broaden community benefit.

Category	Description	Indicative Range	Max
Small / Micro Grants (Simplified Process)	Short-term initiatives, small equipment, one-off events or activities. Ideal for new or smaller groups.	Up to £250	£250
Community Projects	Short term initiatives (e.g. events, workshops, small-scale improvements).	£251 – £500	£500
Event Support	Festivals, cultural activities, seasonal events and community celebrations.	£501 – £2,500	£5,000
Capital Improvements	Equipment, repairs, facility upgrades and physical improvements to community assets.	£1,001 – £5,500	£5,500
Age-Specific & Vulnerable Groups	Programmes, projects and initiatives for young people, older residents, disabled people or low-income families.	Up to £2,000	£2,000

Note: The 'Small / Micro Grants' category uses the simplified process. All ranges are indicative; final awards depend on available budget, merit and alignment with priorities. The Council reserves the right to part-fund applications.

8. PROMOTION, OUTREACH AND APPLICANT SUPPORT

The Council is committed to improved outreach so that a wide range of community organisations, including smaller, newer and underrepresented groups, are aware of and able to access funding opportunities:

- Grant opportunities, deadlines and this Policy will be publicised widely via the Council website, social media, local press, noticeboards, community newsletters and partner networks.
- The Council will hold at least one Grant Information Workshop per year (in-person or online) to explain the application process, eligibility, priorities and tips for strong applications. These sessions will particularly welcome smaller and newer groups.
- Pre-application advice and support is freely available from the Town Clerk. Potential applicants are encouraged to contact the Clerk early to discuss their ideas, check eligibility and receive guidance on completing the form.
- Application forms and guidance notes will be written in clear, plain English. The Council will offer reasonable assistance to groups with limited administrative capacity to help them submit applications.
- The Council will monitor which groups apply and actively reach out to underrepresented sections of the community or geographic areas to encourage applications.

9. APPLICATION PROCESS

Key steps:

Pre-Application: Review this Policy carefully. Contact the Town Clerk for guidance, to discuss whether the simplified small grant route applies, and to obtain the correct application form. Early discussion is strongly recommended.

Submission: Complete the appropriate Grant Application Form (Short Form for ≤£250 or Full Form for larger requests).

Required Documents – Simplified Route (Grants up to £250):

- Short application form with project description and how it benefits Longridge community.
- Simple itemised budget or quotes.
- Bank account details (grant paid only to organisation account, not personal).
- For informal groups: signed statement of aims or list of organising group members.

Note: Many requirements are waived or reduced for small grants to encourage participation. For example, payments made directly to a supplier based on an invoice received for work undertaken maybe considered. Also allows VAT to be recovered.

Required Documents – Standard Route (Grants over £250):

Note: *Some requirements may be waived or simplified at the Clerk's discretion for grants between £251 and £500, or for recently formed organisations.*

- Clearly written aims and objectives and a written constitution (or equivalent governance document) formally adopted by the membership.
- Supporting information demonstrating how the grant will benefit the community of Longridge and meet identified need.
- Estimates or quotes for work, equipment or services (preferably two quotes for items over £500).
- A copy of the organisation's latest audited accounts or, for a charity, their annual return. For newly formed organisations: a detailed budget, business plan or projected income/expenditure.
- A copy of the organisation's latest bank statement (grant will be paid into this account only).
- Evidence of any additional secured funding or applications for match/other funding.

10. ASSESSMENT AND APPROVALS

Stage 1. The Town Clerk will verify eligibility, completeness and whether the simplified or standard route applies.

Stage 2. Each application will be assessed on its own merit and considered alongside others at a Finance Committee meeting (or under delegated powers for qualifying small grants). The Committee (or Clerk for small grants) will consider:

- Alignment with the Council's funding priorities and Mission Statement.
- Community impact and number of residents who will benefit.
- Financial necessity and value for money.
- Feasibility and sustainability of the project.
- For small grants: simplicity and speed of delivery.
- The Council's overall budget position and the aim of supporting as many worthwhile smaller projects as possible.

The amount and frequency of previous awards to the same applicant or project will also be taken into account to ensure fair.

Stage 3. If the application exceeds £1,000, it will be assessed at a subsequent Full Council meeting which will be open to the public and will acknowledge the recommendations from the Finance Committee. Small grants (≤£250) may be approved more rapidly under delegated authority to enable timely delivery of community activities.

11. IF A GRANT, SPONSORSHIP OR PATRON FEE IS APPROVED

The funds will be paid directly into the organisation's bank account. The organisation has a responsibility to acknowledge the funds promptly in writing, stating the amount granted and outlining next steps for the project.

Post-project requirements: Within three months of project completion (or by the end of the financial year, whichever is sooner), the organisation must provide:

- A short-written report on what was delivered and the community outcomes achieved.
- Full evidence of expenditure (receipts, invoices, bank statement extracts) accounting for the grant.
- At least one clear photograph or other visual record of the activity/equipment (with permission for the Council to use in its own publicity).
- Details of how the Council's support was publicly acknowledged (social media post, newsletter mention, signage, verbal thanks at event, etc.).

Organisations that do not provide satisfactory evidence may be required to repay the grant and may be deprioritised for future funding.

12. APPEALS PROCESS

Applicants may appeal decisions within 21 days of notification if they believe there has been a procedural error in the assessment process.

Appeals must:

- a. Be submitted in writing to the Town Clerk.
- b. Include specific grounds for appeal (e.g. evidence that correct procedure was not followed).
- c. Not re-argue the merits of the application itself.

Appeals will be reviewed by an independent councillor panel (not involved in the original Budget Committee decision) within 30 days. The panel's decision is final.

13. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Additional information and pre-application advice is available from the Town Clerk, including signposting to other organisations that may be able to provide grants or support.

Application forms and guidance can be downloaded from the Council's website: www.longridge-tc.gov.uk or obtained by contacting the Clerk.

Agenda Item 10

For Decision/Discussion



Longridge
Town Council

Meeting:	Finance Committee
Meeting Date:	3 June 2026
Title:	Grant Request
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

1. Purpose.

To consider a grant application from the Longridge Community Hospital Group in the sum of £1,000, in respect of the cost of printing campaign material to support the Group's communications with the public. (See Appendix 1)

2. Background.

Members will recall that at the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 13 May 2026, the Council formally pledged its support to the Longridge Community Hospital Campaign.

3. Proposed Payment Mechanism

It is proposed that, in the event the Committee resolves to support the application, no cash sum should be paid directly to the Group. Instead, the grant would be applied by way of payment of invoices rendered by suppliers, on production of those invoices to the Town Clerk, up to the aggregate sum approved.

This arrangement:

- a. Ensures the funds are applied exclusively to the purpose for which the grant is awarded;
- b. Removes the need for retrospective verification of expenditure against grant award, as no funds leave the Council other than against an evidenced invoice;
- c. Preserves a clear audit trail in the Council's accounting records.

4. Policy Position

At its meeting on 22 April 2026, the Committee resolved that all major grant decisions, save those already determined at that meeting, should be deferred pending adoption of a revised Grant Policy by Full Council (Agenda Item 9 this meeting).

Members are invited to consider this application against the principles agreed at Minute 7.1 of 22 April 2026, namely (a) a maximum grant per applicant per financial year; (b) a stated preference for smaller awards in the range of £200–£500; (c) clearer eligibility criteria; (d) improved community outreach; and (e) stricter verification and monitoring.

The sum requested (£1,000) exceeds the preferred range of £200–£500, but the proposed invoice-based payment mechanism provides a higher standard of verification than has historically been applied. Members may wish to consider whether to award the full sum requested, a reduced sum more closely aligned with the preferred range, or to defer consideration pending formal adoption of the revised policy.

5. Financial Implications

The grant, if approved, would be met from the Council's grants budget for 2026/27 (£20,000). The sum of £1,000 sits at the upper limit of the Finance Committee's delegated financial authority as set out in its Terms of Reference. A decision to approve a grant of £1,000 or less is within the Committee's delegated authority; a decision to approve any higher sum would require onward recommendation to Full Council.

6. Recommendation

That the Finance Committee considers the application and resolves either:

- a. To approve a grant to the Longridge Community Hospital Group in the sum of £1,000, to be applied solely by way of payment by the Council of invoices rendered by suppliers of print material on production of those invoices to the Town Clerk, up to the aggregate sum approved; or
- b. To defer the application for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee following adoption of the revised Grant Policy by Full Council; or
- c. Such other resolution as the Committee may determine.

Appendix 1

Longridge Community Hospital Group

1. Name of Group or Organisation *

Longridge Community Hospital Group

2. Name of contact. *

Denise Wolsteholme

3. Contact email address *

jdsworld@hotmail.co.uk

4. Contact phone number.

07506713539

5. Please provide a brief description of your group/organisation. *

We are a small group set up to save Longridge Community Hospital. We are looking for help by means of a grant to help with printing and promoting for our protest days.

6. Is your group a charity? *

Yes

No

7. Purpose of the grant application *

Please describe the project or activity for which you are seeking funds.

We are looking for help by means of a grant to help with printing and promoting for our protest days.

8. Amount of grant requested (£). If the Grant request is over £250 you will need to provide a recent bank statement and a copy of your Constitution *

£1000

9. How will the grant be used? *

Please provide a breakdown of how the funds will be spent.

Printing/Promting

10. Have you applied for funding from other councils or organisations *

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

11. Have you previously received funding from Longridge Town Council? *

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

12. We agree to payback the grant if the project/activity for which the grant was awarded does not proceed. *

- We agree to repay the grant.
- We do not agree to repay the grant.

13. Have you provided recent bank statements for all the accounts you hold. *

- Yes
- No
- Not required

14. Have you provided a copy of your Constitution/Terms of Reference *

- Yes
- No
- Not required

15. If applicable please provide a reason for not providing a recent bank statement or Constitution/Terms of Reference

LTC to be invoice as agreed

16. Please provide bank details to which any grant will be paid. Account Name - Sort Code - Account Number *

LTC re Barton Printers