



Longridge Town Council

Finance Committee – 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

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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.

SIGNED BY CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

DATE

A 'wet' copy is on file.