



Longridge Town Council

Full Council - Agenda

To the Mayor and Members of Longridge Town Council, you are summoned to attend a meeting of the Town Council on Wednesday 14 October 2026 at 18:30 in the Council Offices, Station Building, Berry Lane, Longridge.

Welcome by the Chair.

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of interests

To receive declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests for items on the agenda.

3. Public Participation

This 15-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 Town Council. Such questions may be answered after the meeting or become an agenda item at a future Town Council meeting.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meetings

- a. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 9 September 2026.
- b. To resolve that minute 260708/4 (8 July 2026) be corrected to read 'approve minutes of 10 June 2026', not '8 July 2026'.

5. Mayor's Announcements / Chair's Report

To receive an update from the Mayor on engagements since the last meeting, including the Mayoral Charity Ball held on 10 October 2026.

ITEMS for DECISION/DISCUSSION**6. Finance Report**

- a. To receive the Finance Report, including bank reconciliation and budget monitoring.
- b. To approve the schedule of payments.
- c. To confirm the virement for the unbudgeted Station Building fire alarm replacement (£2,870 ex VAT, minute 260909/7) from Code 790 to Code 630
- d. To note the decisions of the Finance Committee of 29 July 2026 for the reallocation of the £1,000 planter budget to the Community Garden budget.
- e. To note the grants approved by the Finance Committee under delegated authority on 29 July and 23 September 2026.

7. Recommendations of the Staffing Committee (16 September 2026)**a. Deputy Clerk – contracted hours.**

To consider the Committee's recommendation to increase the Deputy Clerk's contracted hours from 6 to 12 per week, on the existing permanent contract, subject to review after six months; to note the additional annual cost of £6,114.48 (before the 2026/27 pay award).

b. NJC Pay Award 2026/27.

To note and ratify implementation of the 3.3% NJC pay award, backdated to 1 April 2026, for the Town Clerk/RFO (SCP 42) and Deputy Clerk (SCP 19), and to receive the finalised cost including arrears.

c. Staffing Committee membership.

To appoint a member to the Staffing Committee following Cllr. Jameson's request to stand down.

8. Terms of Reference – Working Groups

- a. To consider and approve the Terms of Reference for the 'Town Council Does Christmas 2026' Working Group and approve its membership.
- b. To consider and approve the Terms of Reference for the 2026/27 civic year for the Social-Media Working Group and approve its membership.

9. Policy Review

To review and adopt the updated policies.

- a. Co-option Policy
- b. Vexatious or Habitual Requests Policy

ITEMS for INFORMATION and CONSIDERATION**10. Towneley Garden Event Space**

To receive an update on the contract with John Wade Construction Ltd, the RVBC licence, and progress on site.

11. Local Government Reorganisation and RVBC Matters

To receive an update on the pause in LGR, asset transfer discussions with RVBC, and the Longridge Skate Park.

12. Longridge Community Hospital

To receive an update on this standing item, in line with the Council's pledge of support.

13. Memorial Garden

To receive an update on the procurement of improvements to the Memorial Garden.

STANDARD ITEMS**14. Working Groups and Committees**

To receive verbal updates from the Chairs of Committees and Working Groups.

15. Consideration of Matters not on the Agenda

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

16. Future Meetings

To note the 2027/28 budget setting timetable:

Finance Committee 28 October and 25 November; Staffing Committee 18 November; Finance Committee (Precept) 2 December 2026.

Full Council 2026: 11 November, 9 December. 2027: 13 January, 10 February, 10 March.

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.

Note: This agenda and supporting papers are available on the Council's website and at the Council Offices. Members requiring further information on any item should contact the Town Clerk.

Mike Hill

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Longridge Town Council.

Date of issue: 08-10-2026

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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.



Longridge Town Council

Full Council – Draft Minutes

Meeting Date:	09 September 2026		
Place:	Station Buildings, Berry Lane, Longridge.		
Present:	Councillors: R. Walker, (Chair), R. Ray, L. Jameson, P. Smith, M. Gornall, N. Eccles, A. Wallbank, K. Spencer and C. Hyde		
In attendance:	Town Clerk and one member of the public from 18:30		
Meeting started:	18:34	Meeting closed:	19:33

Pre-Meeting Session with Ribble Valley Borough Council – 18:00 to 18:30

Ahead of the formal Council meeting, members met informally with Sarah Threlfall (Chief Executive, RVBC) who had been invited to answer questions relating to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and community asset transfers.

Notes from the discussion with Sarah Threlfall will be issued separately.

260909/

WELCOME BY THE CHAIR.

The Chair (Cllr. Walker), welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received Cllrs. Stubbs, Rogerson and Gee.

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

None.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

A member of the public, raised a number of issues regarding road signs and signage in general in and around Longridge. These are noted under Item 15 (Other Business and Future Agenda Items) below.

4. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF TWO PREVIOUS MEETINGS.

RESOLVED:

- The minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2026 were approved
- The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 5 August 2026 were approved

5. MAYOR ANNOUNCEMENTS/CHAIR'S REPORT

The mayor updated members on his recent activities.

6. FINANCE REPORT

The Chair of the Finance Committee, Cllr. Gornall update members on the latest financial position:

- Finances are stable and on track.
- The withdrawal to cover the playground works has been replaced by a UKSP/Jubilee Fund grant.
- The Town Council's grant budgets (£20,000) are underspent at the halfway point, leaving headroom for further applications. It was noted that a Facebook post has been published to encourage applications.
- The Solar panels installed in January 2026 have delivered bill savings of approximately £2,200 – £2,500 to date, with a projected full-year saving well in excess of £3,000 and a payback period of approximately 5.5–6 years.

RESOLVED:

That the Finance Report and the accounts to date be approved.

7. FIRE ALARM PANEL REPLACEMENT

The Clerk submitted a report informing members that the Station Building alarm panel is not functioning correctly. The report also noted that the 13 devices (smoke detectors and alarm points) installed when the building opened are now life-expired, and well beyond their 10-year guarantee.

RESOLVED:

Members:

- a. Note, that the Station Building Fire Alarm control panel is beyond economic repair and that the detection and alarm devices are beyond their manufacturer-guaranteed working life, representing a fire safety risk requiring urgent remedial action.
- b. Approve, expenditure of £2,870.00 (excluding VAT) for the replacement of the Station Building Fire Alarm panel, detection and alarm devices with a new open protocol fire alarm system, on the basis of the lowest of the two quotations received, from Maxi Fire and Security Ltd.
- c. Note, that no budget is currently allocated for this expenditure, and approve it as unbudgeted spend, with the funding source to be confirmed by way of virement or a transfer from reserves.
- d. Authorise the Town Clerk to instruct Maxi Fire and Security Ltd. to proceed with the works and to confirm and apply the appropriate funding source.

8. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Clerk submitted a report asking Members to formally approve the Terms of Reference for the Mayoral Ball Working Group, the Finance Committee, and Staffing Committee.

RESOLVED:

Members approved the Terms of Reference for the Mayoral Ball Working Group, the Finance Committee, and the Staffing Committee.

9. COMMUNITY GARDEN DRAINAGE

The Chair submitted a report requesting Members consider and approve expenditure to improve drainage at the Community Garden.

The report noted that:

- The area had been cleared and the source of the drainage issue has been identified.
- The Council had received a quotation to install a perforated land drain connected to the existing network, at an approximate cost of £2,400 plus VAT.

It was suggested that a bog or wet area be incorporated into any design, to absorb fluctuation in water levels and attract wildlife.

RESOLVED:

Members

- a. Note that drainage at the Community Garden has been a long-standing issue and that responsibility for land drainage rests with Lancashire County Council (LCC).
- b. Note that the £500 budget allocated to the Community Garden for the current financial year has been spent and that no budget remains for further works.
- c. Approve, in principle, further expenditure on drainage improvement as unbudgeted spend, with the funding to be confirmed by the RFO by way of virement or a transfer from reserves.
- d. Authorise the Town Clerk to obtain quotations for the further works and to report back to Council with costed proposals before works are instructed.

10. TRANSFER OF ASSETS FROM RVBC

The Clerk submitted a report updating members on progress with the transfer of RVBC owned parish assets to Longridge Town Council, following a meeting with RVBC on 7 September 2026.

RESOLVED:

- a. Members note the report and the verbal update.
- b. Request the Clerk to set up an Asset Transfer Working Group to prepare business cases for priority assets, including the Civic Hall and the Towneley Gardens (Berry Lane) entrance.

11. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION UPDATE (LGR)

The Clerk submitted a report updating members on LGR since the last update to Full Council on 8 July 2026, and the UK Government's announcement on 7 September 2026, to pause the review.

RESOLVED:

Members note the report and the verbal update.

12. LONGRIDGE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL – UPDATE

The Clerk submitted a report updating members on this standing agenda item in line with the Council's pledge to support the campaign. It was noted that campaign meetings are now chaired by the Whittingham vice-chair, with the Clerk attending as note-taker.

RESOLVED:

Members note the report.

13. MAYORAL CHARITY BALL

The Clerk updated members on the preparations for the charity ball.

RESOLVED:

Members note the report.

14. EVENT SPACE – TOWNELEY GARDEN

Cllr. Gornall, Chair of the Event Space Working Group updated members on the delivery of the Towneley Garden Event Space contract. It was noted that a draft contract was sent to the successful tenderer; the licence from RVBC to work on the site is outstanding, signage is to go up one week before works starts and the Working Group is now considering arrangements for the planting spaces.

RESOLVED:

Members note the update.

14a. SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

Cllr. Hyde submitted a report requesting:

- I. The Estates Committee review the decision made at its meeting on the 19 May 2026 on the use of Glyphosate on hard surfaces.
- II. A note on how the Town Council can be more pro-active in pursuing the investment the Town Council receives from RVBC.
- III. How those Town Council members who sit on the RVBC Planning Committee, ensure that RVBC officers check that commitments made by developers are actually delivered.

RESOLVED:

- a. Members agreed to support a no-glyphosate use policy in principle and that it be formally brought to the Estates Committee for adoption when the current six-month review period expires (November 2026).
- b. In regard to II. above, note the comments made by the CEO of RVBC that RVBC will work more closely with Longridge Town Council on capital spend.

15. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA.

Based on the information provided in the Public Participation session, the Clerk be requested to prepare a report to the Estates Committee including:

- Provision of a 'Welcome to Longridge Sign' on the approach from the Inglewhite/Alston Arms direction.
- Investigate the road sign opposite Longridge High School which has a fallen flap obscuring the reference to the Trough of Bowland.
- Investigate repeater 20mph signs in and around Longridge Town Centre.
- Street signs on Mersey Street and George Street which are rusty and unreadable.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

2026: 14 October, 11 November, 9 December.

2027: 13 January, 10 February, 10 March.

Note: An extraordinary meeting may be called if required.

Signed:

Date:

Chair of the Council

Cllr Robert Walker, Mayor and Chair of Council

LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Report For Decision

Meeting:	Full Council
Meeting Date:	14-Oct-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 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: Longridge Town Council is in a sound financial position. It holds £132,327 in available funds: £118,284 across its Unity Trust current and notice savings accounts (excluding the mayoral Civic Savings account) and £14,043 in NatWest reserves. Staff costs, utilities and community purse spending are all below budget.

Project expenditure: Significant spending includes £29,990 on playground/gym equipment, £21,597 on the Kestor Lane entrance project and £4,580 on the LHCT refurbishment.

Grants Approved by Finance Committee under delegated authority:

Meeting	Organisation/Group	Grant £		Purpose	Conditions/Notes
		Request	Approved		
29-07-2026	Pump Track Group.	705	705	Fund the event organisation.	Payments made against an invoice
	Goosnargh & Longridge Agricultural Society (GLAS)	1,000	1,000	Sponsorship of Community Marquee	For 2027 the Town Council to have a stand.
23-09-2026	Longridge Parkinsons' Group	2,860	1,000	To fund room hire costs.	The Council will pay the venue directly against monthly invoices.
	Longridge Veterans Club	221.98	221.98	Advertising material	The group approach RBL nationally and provide evidence that its request was declined or received no response.
	Connect to Work. <i>A voluntary, programme for people facing complex barriers to finding and keeping work</i>	250	100	Printed material	Material must mention the Longridge event. Payments made against invoices. No charge for using the Council's facilities.

LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL — Schedule of Payments

For approval at Full Council Meeting — 14 October 2026

#	Ref.	Payee	Description	Gross £	VAT £	Net £	Due Date	Date Paid
1	INV-3905	Maxi Fire & Security	Supply & Fit Control panel, smoke & heat sensors, base & wall beacons and call points.	£3,444.00	£574.00	£2,870.00	31/10/2026	
To be met via a virement from Code 790 (Electricity) which will have an underspend to Code 630 (Fire Alarm).								
2	INV-1197	Stately Lighting	10 x electrical infrastructure upgrades to lighting columns and installation of motifs brackets. 10 x storage & maintenance of Longridge Town Council owned motifs.	£4,962.00	£827.00	£4,135.00		23/09/2026
3	LA0130	PKF Littlejohn	Limited assurance review of Annual Governance & Accountability Return for year ended 31 March 2026	£756.00	£126.00	£630.00		05/10/2026
4	MF5546	Mary Francis	14 x Hi Viz Vests including white printing 'Longridge Town Council	£121.97	£20.33	£101.64		07/09/2026
TOTAL				£5,839.97	£973.33	£4,866.64		

Note: Approval is not usually sought for expenditure already approved by Full Council, the Finance Committee, Direct Debits, or where the Council has a contractual relationship.

LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL — Income including grants 2026-27

1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027 | version 05/10/2026

Code	Income Source	Actual £ (Apr–Aug)	Remaining to Receive £	Budget Income £	Notes
200	Precept	£106,410.00	£0.00	£106,410.00	Received 08-04-2026
260	Allotment Rent	£436.80	£0.00	£436.80	£72.80 received March 2026
205	RVBC and LCC Grants	£4,022.00	£0.00	£3,000.00	UKSPF grant for CCTV & RVBC Concurrent Grant
255	UK SPF Grants	£51,587.00	£0.00	£51,587.00	Kestor Lane Recreational Ground Entrance received. Playground/gym equipment received
225	Bank Interest – NatWest	£0.00	£500.00	£500.00	
290	Room Hire (Lettings)	£2,955.00	£585.00	£3,540.00	
295	Café Rent	£4,949.00	£3,535.00	£8,484.00	
296	Utilities Contributions	£5,463.00	£2,637.00	£8,100.00	£1,642.73 Jul-Sept invoice due by 31st October 2026
298	Funds transfer from NatWest reserves	£40,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	Finance Committee Minutes 22nd April 2026 Point 9c. Resolved: That the Chair and the Clerk be authorised to determine the specific sums to be transferred and to execute the transfers accordingly.
230	Unity Savings account interest	£836.11	£0.00	£0.00	
220	Overpayment	£90.00	£0.00	£0.00	SY Maint.
TOTAL		£220,394.91	£7,257.00	£182,057.80	

LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL — Expenditure 2026-27

Actual and Projected | 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027 | Version: 05/10/2026

Community Purse

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Sept)	Variance vs Budget
460	Allotments (incl. RVBC lease payment)	£100	£700	£600 ←
470	Civic Events incl. Remembrance Services	£5,500	£220	£5,280
471	Chauffeur 2026/27	£200	£0	£200
471	Chauffeur 2025/26	£0	£1,540.00	£1,540 ←
479	Mayoral Allowance 2026/27	£600	£0	£600
480	Mayoral Allowance 2025/26	£0	£90	£90
485	Mayor Fundraising	£0	£4,548.00	£4,548 ←
500	Christmas Trees and Tree Lights	£500	£0	£500
490	Community Partnership	£0	£0	£0
510	Grants and Donations	£10,000	£1,708	£8,292 ←
520	Community Sponsorship	£10,000	£1,000	£9,000 ←
Sub-Total: Community Purse		£26,900	£9,806	£17,094

£700 = new allotment fence

£1,540 relates to work undertaken in 2025-26

2025-26 £4,000 donated to RV Dementia
Not part of general budget

£750 part of £1,000 donation to Long. Food Bank from the 2025/26 grant allocation.

£1,000 sponsorship of GLAS comm. marquee

Amenity and Asset Maintenance

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Sept)	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	£1,235	£1,165
410	Tree Works	£0	£0	£0
440	Caretaker/Lengthsman Services (labour)	£6,240	£2,069	£4,171
550	Play Area and Skatepark	£750	£360	£390
570	Litter and Waste Disposal – RVBC	£6,500	£1,123	£5,377
390	Asset Purchase	£0	£0	£0
395	Asset Replace and Refurbish	£100	£219	£119 ←
540	Maintenance of Open Space and Misc.	£0	£0	£0
560	Station Buildings (Maintenance Purchases)	£500	£194	£306 ←
580	Defibrillators and Bleed Kits	£130	£0	£130 ←
Sub-Total: Amenity and Asset Maintenance		£16,620	£5,200	£11,420

Tiles and adhesive for staff toilets

Virement from code 580 to code 560

Insurance, Banking and Professional Services

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Sept)	Variance vs Budget
350	Insurance	£3,300	£3,323	£23
355	Bank Charges	£160	£96	£64
590	Memberships and Subscriptions	£1,425	£1,146	£279
600	Professional Services	£250	£120	£130
365	Auditor	£250	£250	£0
Sub-Total: Insurance, Banking & Prof. Services		£5,385	£4,935	£450

Station Building Maintenance and Cleaning

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Sept)	Variance vs Budget
610/615	Hygiene and Cleaning	£5,000	£3,940	£1,060
620	Security Alarm System	£380	£0	£380
630	Fire Alarm	£100	£145	£45
640	General Maintenance – External Contractors	£1,000	£737	£263
650	CCTV	£0	£1,200	£1,200
660	IT Support	£200	£192	£8
Sub-Total: Station Building Maint. and Cleaning		£6,680	£6,214	£466

Some 2025/26 prior-year costs were paid in 2026/27

Supply + fit replacement call points.

£1,000 claimed back from RVBC grant
Receipts line 205

Miscellaneous Expenses

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Sept)	Variance vs Budget
670	Post, Stationery and Print Consumables etc	£300	£102	£198
680	Attendance at Conferences	£50	£0	£50
690	Councillor Expenses	£100	£44	£56
Sub-Total: Miscellaneous Expenses		£450	£146	£304

Office

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Sept)	Variance vs Budget
700	Furniture	£100	£320	£220
710	Equipment	£100	£0	£100
Sub-Total: Office		£200	£320	£120

Specific Projects

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Sept)	Variance vs Budget
720	Longridge in Bloom	£1,500	£1,068	£432
730	Rental – Festive Lights	£3,960	£4,135	£175
740	Community Garden	£1,500	£553	£947
745	LHCT Refurbishment	£6,000	£4,580	£1,420
746	Commando Sockets	£3,850	£0	£3,850
747	Planters - Longridge in Bloom	£0	£0	£0
850	Playground/Gym Equipment Grant	£0	£29,990	£29,990
860	Kestor Lane Entrance UKSPF Grant	£40,000	£21,597	£18,403
870	Longridge Loop (s106)	£3,536	£1,472	£2,064
Sub-Total: Specific Projects		£60,346	£63,395	£3,049

£1000 Virement from code 747 to code 740

Earmarked Reserves

747: Fin. Comm. 29 July 2026: reallocate the £1,000 planter budget to 740 Community Garden

Grant recieved

Grant recieved

870: Grants/S106 funds available but not

Staff Costs

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual (Apr–Sept)	Variance vs Budget
300	Clerk Salary (gross)	£39,314	£21,450	£17,864
301	Deputy Clerk Salary (gross)	£4,314	£2,593	£1,721
315	Staff Training	£600	£300	£300
310	Expenses and Additional Remunerations	£0	£0	£0
305	Payroll Costs	£560	£0	£560
Sub-Total: Staff Costs		£44,788	£24,343	£20,445

£300 = Cllr. Eccles GDPR £20.
Depty Clerk ILCA Training £140
Depty Clerk FILCA Training £140

Telephone and Internet

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual £ (Apr–Sept)	Variance vs Budget
750	Telephone – Landline	£700	£631.00	£69
760	Telephone – Mobile	£450	£199.00	£251
770	Website, Web and Email Services	£1,251	£539.00	£712
780	IT and Wi-Fi Equipment	£100	£434	£334
Sub-Total: Telephone and Internet		£2,501	£1,803	£698

£148. Security cameras in Clerk's Office. Includes

Utilities

Code	Description	2026/27 Budget	2026/27 Actual £ (Apr–Sept)	Variance vs Budget
790	Electricity	£12,000	£3,135	£8,865
800	Gas	£1,500	£721	£779
810	Water and Waste	£3,000	£1,699	£1,301
Sub-Total: Utilities		£16,500	£5,555	£10,945

Budget TOTAL		£136,834	£121,717.00	£58,653
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Total with approved grants and S106 funds included:	£180,370.18
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Note:

The 10 December 2025 Full Council Meeting agreed a budget of £133,556 for 2026/27 and identified £10,850 as Earmarked Reserves (£6,000 for LHCT refurbish, £3,850 for Commando Sockets and £1,000 for planters).

LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL — Bank Summary

Summary as at 05-10-2026

Accounting System (Unity Trust Current Accounts)

Balance carried forward 1 April 2026:	£25,584.51
Add: Total receipts to date:	£307,147.70
Less: Total gross payments to date.	£213,031.46
Accounting System balance at 4 October 2026:	£119,700.75

Total receipts also includes:
£70,000 transferred from Unity Current to Unity Savings accounts.
£40,000 transferred from NatWest to Unity Trust Current Account.

Unity Trust Bank at 4 October 2026

Current Account - Balance	£48,864.64
32 Day Notice Savings Account - Balance	£70,836.11
Total	£119,700.75
Civic Savings Account - Balance	£1,416.92
Unity balance (excl. Civic Account) at 04 10 2026:	£118,283.83

NatWest Accounts

NatWest Reserve balance at 28 Aug 2026 (latest statements):	£14,043.37
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Total Available Funds

Total Available Funds (Unity excl. Mayoral + NatWest):	£132,327.20
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LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL — NatWest Accounts

Account Balances — 2026/27

NatWest Account No. 1

Balance carried forward 1 April 2025:	£88,202.46	
Balance 1 May 2026:	£49,006.55	
Balance 28 August 2026:	£9,043.37	<i>Latest Bank Statement</i>

Since 30 April, £40,000 has been withdrawn from NatWest and deposited into the Unity Trust Current Account

NatWest Account No. 2

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

Combined NatWest Reserve Total

Combined NatWest balance (latest statements):	£14,043.37	
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Meeting:	Full Council
Meeting Date:	14 October 2026
Title:	Recommendations of the Staffing Committee (16 September 2026)
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Appendices:	None (Staffing Committee papers of 16 September 2026 are published on the Council's website)

1. Purpose of Report

To present to Full Council three matters arising from the Staffing Committee meeting of 16 September 2026, which require a decision or ratification by Full Council:

- an increase in the Deputy Clerk's contracted hours from 6 to 12 hours per week;
- implementation of the 2026/27 NJC pay award for the Town Clerk/RFO and the Deputy Clerk; and
- the appointment of a member to the Staffing Committee.

2. Item 7(a) – Deputy Clerk: Contracted Hours

Background

- At its meeting on 22 July 2026 (minute 260722/10), the Staffing Committee supported in principle an increase in the Deputy Clerk's contracted hours from six to 10–12 hours per week, to support succession and continuity planning and to allow administrative and meeting-related duties to be redistributed. The Clerk was asked to obtain full costings from the Council's payroll provider.
- The Committee noted that the Town Clerk is contracted for 30 hours per week but regularly works additional unpaid hours, and that improved cover would also help the Town Clerk take his annual leave entitlement, in line with the Council's duty of care (also minute 260722/10).
- At its meeting on 16 September 2026, the Committee considered the payroll provider's costings and agreed to recommend an increase to 12 hours per week, on the Deputy Clerk's existing permanent contract, to be reviewed after six months. The Deputy Clerk has confirmed that she wishes to take on the additional hours and is available on Mondays and Thursdays.
- The increase is intended to improve resilience and redistribute work. It does not reduce the Town Clerk's contracted hours or salary.

Benefits

- Resilience and continuity: a second officer able to prepare agendas, take minutes and carry out basic financial administration.
- Capacity: frees Town Clerk time for grant bids, project management (Towneley Garden, Memorial Garden, asset transfer) and governance work.
- Cover: allows the office to operate during the Town Clerk's leave or absence.
- Development: builds on the Deputy Clerk's training and development framework, under which she has completed the ILCA and the FiLCA.

Financial implications

The payroll provider has confirmed the following costs. At six hours per week, the Deputy Clerk's earnings are below the National Insurance Lower Earnings Limit and the pension auto-enrolment threshold, so no employer contributions are currently payable. At 12 hours per week, both become payable.

Cost element	Current (6 hrs/wk)	Proposed (12 hrs/wk)	Increase
Gross pay (monthly)	£432.12	£864.24	£432.12
Employer's National Insurance (monthly)	£0.00	£67.09	£67.09
Employer's pension (monthly)	£0.00	£10.33	£10.33
Total employment cost (monthly)	£432.12	£941.66	£509.54
Total employment cost (annual)	£5,185.44	£11,299.92	£6,114.48

- These figures are based on pay rates before the 2026/27 pay award (item 7(b)). Once the 3.3% award is applied, the annual increase will be slightly higher, at approximately £6,300. The payroll provider will confirm the exact figure.
- The 2026/27 budget for the Deputy Clerk's salary (budget code 301) is £5,200. If the increase takes effect from 1 November 2026, the additional cost in the current financial year is approximately £2,550 (five months at about £510 per month). This cost is not currently budgeted and requires Full Council to approve a funding source. The options are:

Option A: a virement from budget lines that are forecast to be underspent at year end, to be identified in the quarterly statement to 30 September 2026 (item 6); or

Option B: a transfer from the Council's general reserve.

- The full-year cost at 12 hours per week will be built into the 2027/28 staffing budget, which the Staffing Committee will consider on 18 November 2026 ahead of the precept meeting.

3. Item 7(b) – NJC Pay Award 2026/27

The National Joint Council for Local Government Services pay agreement for 2026/27 provides a 3.3% increase to all pay points and allowances, backdated to 1 April 2026. The National Employers published the signed pay circular on 24 August 2026, and NALC has advised local councils to implement the award as quickly as possible, paying arrears from 1 April 2026.

The award is a national uplift to the pay spine. It is not an individual performance increment, and it applies to both of the Council's employees under their contracts of employment.

Post	Spine point	FTE salary 2026/27	Pro-rata annual salary	Approx. monthly increase
Town Clerk & RFO (30 hrs/week)	SCP 42	£55,224	£44,776.22	£119.20
Deputy Clerk (6 hrs/week)	SCP 19	£33,119	£5,370.65	£14.30

The combined increase across both posts is approximately £133.50 per month (£1,602 per year) before employer's National Insurance and pension contributions. Arrears are payable from April 2026 to the month in which the new rates are first paid.

On 16 September 2026, the Staffing Committee noted the pay agreement and agreed that the award be applied retrospectively, with the Clerk to notify the payroll provider. On 23 September 2026, the Finance Committee noted the award and was advised that the wages budget includes provision for a pay rise. The RFO will report the finalised cost, including arrears and employer contributions, to the Finance Committee once the payroll reconciliation is complete.

Full Council is asked to note and ratify implementation of the award so that the decision is formally recorded.

4. Item 7(c) – Staffing Committee Membership

Cllr. Jameson has asked to stand down from the Staffing Committee. Under Standing Order 4(d)(iv), Full Council appoints the members of its committees.

The current members of the Committee are Cllrs. Eccles (Chair), Wallbank (Vice-Chair), Gornall, Jameson and Spencer. At its meeting on 16 September 2026, the Committee suggested inviting one of the Councillors who do not currently sit on a committee: Cllr. Ray, Cllr. Gee or Cllr. Hyde.

Council is asked to accept Cllr. Jameson's resignation from the Committee, thank him for his service, and appoint a replacement member for the remainder of the 2026/27 civic year.

5. Legal and Governance Implications

Changes to an employee's contracted hours are a variation to their contract of employment and must be confirmed to the employee in writing. The six-month review will be reported to the Staffing Committee.

Unbudgeted expenditure must be approved by Full Council, or by a committee with delegated authority, under the Council's Financial Regulations (adopted 8 July 2026).

The Town Clerk has a personal interest in item 7(b) as a beneficiary of the pay award. He may present the factual report but should take no part in the discussion beyond answering questions of fact.

6. Recommendations

Full Council is recommended to:

Item 7(a) – Deputy Clerk: contracted hours:

- a. Approve an increase in the Deputy Clerk's contracted hours from 6 to 12 hours per week, on her existing permanent contract, with effect from Monday 19 October 2026, subject to a review by the Staffing Committee after six months;
- b. Note the additional employment cost of approximately £6,114.48 per year (before the 2026/27 pay award), of which approximately £2,550 falls in 2026/27;
- c. Approve the funding of the 2026/27 cost by [Option A: virement from underspent budget lines / Option B: transfer from the general reserve]; and
- d. Authorise the Town Clerk to issue a written variation to the Deputy Clerk's contract and to notify the payroll provider.

Item 7(b) – NJC pay award 2026/27

- a. Note and ratify implementation of the 2026/27 NJC pay award of 3.3%, backdated to 1 April 2026, for the Town Clerk/RFO (SCP 42) and the Deputy Clerk (SCP 19); and
- b. Note that the RFO will report the finalised cost, including arrears, to the Finance Committee.

Item 7(c) – Staffing Committee membership

- a. Accept Cllr. Jameson's resignation from the Staffing Committee and thank him for his service; and
- b. Appoint Cllr. [name] to the Staffing Committee for the remainder of the 2026/27 civic year.



Meeting:	Full Council
Meeting Date:	14 October 2026
Title:	Terms of Reference: The Town Council Does Christmas Working Group
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Appendices:	Appendix A – Draft Terms of Reference, as agreed by the Working Group

1. Purpose of Report

To ask Full Council to consider and approve the Terms of Reference of The Town Council Does Christmas Working Group, as agreed by the Working Group at its first meeting on 02-10-2026, and to note the Group's officers and membership.

2. Background

The Working Group has been formed to plan and coordinate the Town Council's Christmas activities in Longridge for 2026. On 29 July 2026, the Finance Committee asked the Clerk to find out who would be organising 'Longridge Loves Christmas' this year (minute 260729/9).

3. First Meeting

The Working Group held its first meeting on 02-10-2026. The purpose of the meeting was to consider draft Terms of Reference for recommendation to Full Council, to elect the Group's officers and initial actions.

Terms of Reference. The Working Group considered and agreed the draft Terms of Reference at Appendix A and recommends them to Full Council for approval.

Officers. The Working Group elected:

- Cllr. Gornall as Chair; and
- Cllr. Walker as Deputy Chair.

Attendance. Those present included two co-opted (non-councillor) members, Emma Baines and Andre Leonard. Apologies were received from Cllr. Jameson, Cllr. Wallbank and Cllr. Eccles

4. Membership and Status

Working groups have no delegated powers. They plan and make recommendations to Full Council or the relevant committee, which takes any decision on spending. Non-councillors may be members of a working group but do not vote at Full Council or committee meetings.

Based on the first meeting, the Working Group's membership is:

Member	Role
Cllr. Gornall	Chair
Cllr. Walker	Deputy Chair
Cllr. Jameson	Member
Cllr. Wallbank	Member
Cllr. Eccles	Member
Emma Baines	Co-opted member
Andre Leonard	Co-opted member

Co-opted members will be asked to observe the Council's Code of Conduct and to declare any relevant interests, for example where they or a connected business may supply goods or services for the Council's Christmas events.

5. Terms Reference

The draft Terms of Reference at Appendix A set out the Working Group's purpose, membership, officers, quorum, meeting arrangements and reporting arrangements. In line with all LTC working groups, the Group has no delegated authority to commit expenditure; any spending proposals will be brought to the Finance Committee or Full Council for approval.

Under the Council's resolution of 10 June 2026 (minute 260610/14b), the draft Terms of Reference are circulated to all Councillors with this agenda.

6. Financial Implications

The 2026/27 budget includes £500 for Christmas trees and tree lights (budget code 500), £3,960 for festive lights rental (budget code 730) and £5,500 for Civic events (budget code 470). Any spending above these budgets, or on new activities, will need approval by the Finance Committee or Full Council.

7. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- Approve the Terms of Reference of The Town Council Does Christmas Working Group at Appendix A;
- Note the first meeting of The Town Council Does Christmas Working Group and the election of Cllr. Gornall as Chair and Cllr. Walker as Deputy Chair;
- Confirm the membership of the Working Group as set out in paragraph 4.2, including Emma Baines and Andrew Leonard as co-opted members; and
- Ask the Working Group to report its plans and any spending proposals to the [Finance Committee on 28 October 2026 / Full Council on 11 November 2026].



Status:	Approved by the Working Group at its meeting on 02-10-2026 and to be recommended to Full Council.	
Parent body:	Longridge Town Council	
Duration	From appointment until a final report after Christmas 2026 (or such later date as Full Council determines)	
Adopted:	Chair: Cllr. M. Gornall	Minute ref: 2026-10-02/3

1. Background and purpose

1.1 Longridge Town Council (“the Council”) wishes to plan early and coherently for Christmas 2026.

Festive activity in the town has for several years been delivered in partnership with Love Longridge, the group that organises Longridge Does Christmas, with the Council supporting lighting, the town tree, civic presence and community entertainment.

1.2 Christmas 2026 may be different from previous years. The Towneley Garden Event Space — being created on the former bowling green at Towneley Gardens — is intended to provide a dedicated outdoor venue for markets, performance and community gathering. If available as planned, it opens options that did not exist when festive activity was confined to Berry Lane, the Old Station Buildings, school sites and the Civic Hall.

1.3 The Working Group is established to consider preparations for Christmas 2026; to coordinate the Council’s own contribution; to work constructively with Love Longridge and other community partners; and to make recommendations to Full Council.

2. Aims

The Working Group shall aim to:

- Deliver a safe, welcoming and well-publicised Christmas in Longridge that supports residents, families, local businesses and community groups.
- Make good use of the Towneley Garden Event Space if it is available, without diminishing the established festive character of Berry Lane and the Old Station Buildings.
- Align Council activity with Love Longridge’s programme so that dates, locations and offers are complementary.
- Secure in good time the practical elements of a town Christmas: trees, festoon and column lighting, band, choir, Father Christmas, nativity and market traders.
- Operate within the Council’s budget, Financial Regulations and insurance arrangements, and leave a written record that can inform Christmas 2027.

3. Scope

3.1 The Working Group is authorised to consider, plan and oversee the following, and to make recommendations to Full Council:

- a) Programme and dates — the Council's festive calendar for November and December 2026, including lights switch-on and any activity through to Christmas Eve.
- b) Love Longridge liaison — dates, shared publicity, division of roles, and any Council support for Longridge Does Christmas.
- c) Towneley Garden Event Space — festive uses of the space, layout, power, access, stewarding and weather contingency, subject to the space being ready and to any conditions set by the Event Space project.
- d) Christmas trees — number, locations (including the principal tree at the Old Station Buildings, Berry Lane, and any tree at Towneley Gardens), specification, contractor, dressing, switch-on and removal.
- e) Festoon lighting and illuminations — review of Berry Lane and Derby Road displays; any extension of festoon lighting to Towneley Gardens; contractors; column sockets; installation and removal windows.
- f) Band — invitations to Longridge Band (and any other ensemble) for switch-on, Event Space performances and Christmas Eve carols at the tree.
- g) Choir — invitations to school, church and community choirs, including performance slots and PA.
- h) Father Christmas — grotto location and operating model, arrival / switch-on, safeguarding and insurance.
- i) Nativity — whether and where a live nativity or tableau is staged, and liaison with churches and schools.
- j) Market traders — festive markets and food / craft pitches, including any market on the Event Space, and the split of responsibility with Love Longridge.
- k) Budget, risk, licences and communications — a single costed plan, risk assessment, permissions schedule and public communications plan.

3.2 The Working Group may not commit the Council to expenditure, enter contracts, or make public announcements that bind the Council, except where Full Council has already delegated that authority or has approved a specific recommendation.

4. Out of scope

Unless Full Council directs otherwise, the following remain outside this Group:

- a) Design, construction and capital delivery of the Towneley Garden Event Space itself (which sits with the existing Event Space Working Group).
- b) The commercial programme of individual shops, pubs and restaurants, except where coordination with Love Longridge is required.
- c) Civic Hall hirings that are not part of the Council's own festive programme.
- d) Matters of general town-centre policy that are not specific to Christmas 2026.

5. Membership

5.1 Composition. The Working Group shall comprise:

- a) Councillor members appointed (number to be determined on appointment; a working number of three to five is recommended).
- b) The Town Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer, who shall provide administration and financial advice and shall not vote.
- c) Up to three co-opted, non-voting members who can contribute practical knowledge — for example a Love Longridge representative, a market organiser, and a representative of Longridge Band, a choir, a church or a school.

5.2 Chair and Vice-Chair. A Chair and Vice-Chair shall be appointed from among the Councillor members at the first meeting, and reported to Full Council.

5.3 Substitutes. A Councillor member unable to attend may send another Member of the Council, with prior notice to the Clerk.

5.4 Interests. Members shall declare any pecuniary or other interest in traders, contractors or performers under discussion, in line with the Council's Code of Conduct.

6. Roles

- a) All members are expected to attend, prepare, contribute constructively and act in the interests of the town as a whole.
- b) The Chair shall convene and lead meetings, keep the Group within these Terms of Reference, and present reports to Full Council.
- c) The Vice-Chair shall deputise for the Chair.
- d) The Town Clerk shall issue agendas (at least three clear days before each meeting), keep notes, hold the action log and budget monitor, and implement decisions that fall within existing delegated authority and Financial Regulations.
- e) Lead members may be appointed for trees, lighting, entertainment, Event Space use, Love Longridge liaison, and communications.

7. Decision-making and reporting

7.1 The Working Group shall seek consensus. Where a vote is needed, only Councillor members may vote. The Chair shall have a casting vote.

7.2 The following must be recommended to Full Council for decision:

- a) These Terms of Reference and any later amendment.
- b) The overall Christmas 2026 programme and principal dates.
- c) Any new or increased budget provision.
- d) Award of contracts above the Clerk's delegated limit.
- e) Any proposal that would restrict ordinary public use of Towneley Gardens or require a road closure.

7.3 The Chair shall provide a short-written progress report to each ordinary meeting of Full Council from appointment until the Group is discharged.

7.4 After Christmas 2026 the Group shall submit a short review (what worked, costs, partner feedback, recommendations for 2027) and shall then stand down unless Full Council extends its life.

8. Meetings

- a) Frequency. Monthly from establishment until October 2026, then as often as the programme requires through November and December. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair.
- b) Quorum. One half of the appointed Councillor members, subject to a minimum of three.
- c) Venue. Council Offices, Station Buildings, or such other place (including the Event Space for a site meeting) as the Chair shall notify.
- d) Notes. The Clerk shall circulate draft notes with the next agenda. Notes are a working record, not formal minutes of the Council.
- e) Openness. Meetings of the Working Group are not meetings of the Full Council. The Chair may invite named partners. The Group shall not exclude the public from any session at which a decision reserved to Full Council is merely being prepared, but it may hold a closed discussion on contractor prices or personal information.

9. Resources and budget

- 9.1 The Group shall work to the Christmas / festive events budget approved by Full Council, together with any earmarked reserve or grant specifically allocated for this purpose.
- 9.2 All spending shall comply with the Council's Financial Regulations and procurement rules. No member other than the Clerk (within delegated authority) may place an order.
- 9.3 A simple budget monitor — committed, spent, forecast — shall be a standing item from the second meeting onwards.

10. Working with others

- 10.1 Love Longridge. The Group shall treat Love Longridge as the Council's principal business partner for Longridge Does Christmas. Dates, lighting switch-on, late-night shopping, market traders and shared publicity should be agreed early and recorded in writing (an exchange of emails is sufficient).
- 10.2 Event Space Working Group. Use of Towneley Gardens for Christmas shall be agreed with the Event Space Working Group / Town Clerk so that festive plans do not cut across remaining works, maintenance or grant conditions.
- 10.3 Other partners. The Group may liaise with Longridge Band, local choirs, churches, schools, Ribble Valley Borough Council, Lancashire County Council (highways / lighting columns), the Civic Hall, and emergency services as required.

11. Safety, safeguarding and inclusion

- a) No Council-led element of Christmas 2026 shall be publicised until a written risk assessment has been prepared and the Council's insurer has been notified of any material change from previous years (including first use of the Event Space).
- b) Father Christmas, grotto helpers and any activity involving children shall follow the Council's safeguarding policy. Appropriate DBS checks and a chaperone arrangement shall be confirmed before the event.
- c) Plans shall consider accessibility of trees, grotto, nativity and market pitches, including step-free routes into Towneley Gardens.
- d) The Group shall plan for adverse weather, particularly if the Event Space is used for traders or performance.

12. Indicative timetable

When	Focus
First meeting 02-10-2026	Establish Group; agree Terms of Reference; map Love Longridge dates; first view of trees, lighting, band, choir, Father Christmas, nativity, traders and Event Space use.
Autumn 2026 (by end Oct)	Confirm programme and dates with Full Council; place orders for trees and lighting; issue invitations to band, choirs and Father Christmas; agree market layout with Love Longridge.
November 2026	Installation of trees and festoon lighting; licences and risk assessments complete; joint publicity with Love Longridge; lights switch-on and Longridge Does Christmas.
December 2026	Ongoing displays; any Event Space activity; Christmas Eve carols at the tree; monitoring and issue log.
January 2027	Removal of trees and lighting; budget outturn; review report to Full Council; Group discharged unless extended.

13. Review

These Terms of Reference may be amended only by resolution of Full Council. The Working Group may recommend changes at any time. They shall be reviewed as part of the January 2027 report.



Meeting:	Full Council
Meeting Date:	14 October 2026
Title:	Social Media Working Group
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Appendices:	Appendix A – Draft Terms of Reference: Social Media Working Group

1. Purpose of Report

To ask Full Council to approve the Terms of Reference for the Social-Media Working Group and to appoint its members.

2. Background

At its meeting on 11 February 2026 (minute 260211/10), Full Council adopted three social media policies, together with a GDPR Social Media Statement:

- Social Media Policy;
- Councillor Use of Social Media Policy;
- Moderation Policy; and
- GDPR Social Media Statement.

At the same meeting, Council asked the Clerk to publish the policies on the Council's website, to review them periodically in line with good governance practice, and to set up a Working Group to look at all aspects of the Council's use of social and mainstream media (minute 260211/10d).

The Staffing Committee has also considered the establishment of a social media working group (minutes 260128/9c and 260429/7). Bringing the Terms of Reference to Full Council allows the Group to be formally established with an agreed remit and membership.

3. Purpose of the Working Group

The Working Group will support the Council's use of social and mainstream media. Subject to the Terms of Reference at Appendix A, it is expected to:

- a. oversee how the Council's adopted social media policies are put into practice, and recommend any updates when they are reviewed;
- b. consider how the Council communicates with residents, including through its website, Facebook, X, noticeboards and local press;
- c. help promote Council services, events, grants and decisions; and
- d. advise on good practice for councillors' use of social media, in line with the Councillor Use of Social Media Policy and the Code of Conduct.

4. Membership

The following Councillors have expressed an interest in joining the Working Group:

Councillor	Expressed interest
Cllr. Walker	Yes
Cllr. Spencer	Yes
Cllr. Smith	Yes
Cllr. Stubbs	Yes
Cllr. Ray	Yes

It is proposed that the Working Group elects its Chair and Vice-Chair at its first meeting, and reports this to the next meeting of Full Council.

5. Status of the Working Group

Working groups have no delegated powers. The Working Group will make recommendations to Full Council or the relevant committee, which will take any decision. It will not post or publish on behalf of the Council, and will not commit expenditure.

Under the Council's resolution of 10 June 2026 (minute 260610/14b), the draft Terms of Reference are circulated to all Councillors with this agenda.

6. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications. Any proposals involving cost will be brought to the Finance Committee or Full Council for approval.

7. Recommendations

Full Council is recommended to:

- Note the social media policies adopted on 11 February 2026 and the resolution to set up a Working Group (minute 260211/10d);
- Approve the Terms of Reference of the Social Media Working Group at Appendix A;
- Appoint Cllrs. Walker, Spencer, Smith, Stubbs and Ray as members of the Working Group;
- Note that the Working Group will elect its Chair and Vice-Chair at its first meeting and report this to Full Council.



Reference:	LTC/TOR/2026/SMWG-01
Body:	Social Media Working Group
Reports to:	Full Council
Prepared by:	Michael Hill, Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Status:	Draft for approval by Full Council
Approved:	[Date and minute reference]

1. Purpose

The Working Group will review how Longridge Town Council uses social media. It will recommend to Full Council a policy and working arrangements that are lawful, consistent and effective in communicating with residents.

The Working Group is advisory. It has no delegated powers to make decisions or spend money on behalf of the Council.

2. Objectives and scope

The Working Group will:

1. Review the Council's current social media accounts, who manages them and how they are used.
2. Recommend which platforms the Council should use, and for what purpose.
3. Draft a Social Media Policy for adoption by Full Council, covering:
 - a. who may post on the Council's behalf and how content is approved
 - b. the tone and type of content, including events, consultations and service updates
 - c. responding to comments, complaints and enquiries, and when to direct them to formal channels
 - d. moderation, including removing abusive or unlawful content and blocking accounts
 - e. use of images, including consent and safeguarding where children appear
 - f. data protection, record keeping and Freedom of Information
 - g. publicity restrictions during pre-election periods
 - h. accessibility of content
4. Recommend guidance for councillors on their own social media use, consistent with the Code of Conduct.
5. Identify any training, software or resources needed, with estimated costs.

The Working Group will have regard to the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, the Equality Act 2010 and the Council's Code of Conduct.

Out of scope: the Council's website and email hosting arrangements, and operational posting, which remains the responsibility of officers.

3. Membership, officers and quorum

3.1 The Working Group will have up to 5 [five] councillors, appointed by Full Council.

3.2 The Working Group may invite up to 2 [two] co-opted members with relevant experience, for example in communications or community groups. Co-opted members advise but do not vote.

3.3 The Working Group will elect a Chair and Deputy Chair from its councillor members at its first meeting.

3.4 The Town Clerk or Deputy Clerk will attend to advise the Working Group and keep notes of meetings.

3.5 The quorum is 3 [three] councillor members.

3.6 Members must declare any interests at the start of each meeting, in line with the Code of Conduct.

4. Meetings, authority and reporting

4.1 The Working Group will meet as needed to complete its objectives, expected to be [monthly]. Meetings are not public meetings, but notes will be kept.

4.2 The Working Group has no delegated authority. It may not make decisions, enter commitments, post on the Council's accounts or speak on behalf of the Council.

4.3 Notes of each meeting and any recommendations will be reported to the next available meeting of Full Council. Any proposal with a cost will go to the Finance Committee first.

5. Budget, duration and review

5.1 The Working Group has no budget. Any spending it recommends requires approval in line with the Council's Financial Regulations.

5.2 The Working Group aims to present a draft Social Media Policy to Full Council by [month and year].

5.3 The Working Group will be dissolved once Full Council adopts the policy, unless Council decides otherwise.

5.4 Full Council may amend these Terms of Reference at any time.



Meeting:	Full Council
Meeting Date:	14 October 2026
Title:	Policy Review
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Appendices:	Appendix A – Co-option Policy 2026–27 (draft) Appendix B – Vexatious or Habitual Requests Policy 2026–27 (draft)

1. Purpose of Report

To present updated versions of the Council's Co-option Policy and Vexatious or Habitual Requests Policy, both of which are due for review, and to ask Full Council to adopt them.

2. Background

Standing Order 5(j) requires the Council to review its policies and procedures regularly. The internal auditor also expects policies to be reviewed by the dates stated in each document. A review of the Council's policy register in August 2026 found that both policies had passed their review dates:

Policy	Last adopted	Status
Co-option Policy	2023	Overdue for review
Vexatious or Habitual Requests Policy	September 2023	Overdue for review

Updated 2026–27 drafts have been prepared. They carry forward the substance of the existing policies and update them for current officer titles, legislation, and the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted on 8 July 2026.

In line with the Council's resolution of 10 June 2026 (minute 260610/14b), both draft policies are circulated to all Councillors with this agenda.

Other policies identified in the August review as overdue are being considered separately and will be brought to Full Council in due course.

3. Co-option Policy (Appendix A)

The Co-option Policy sets out how the Council fills a casual vacancy where no poll has been called following public notice of the vacancy. It covers eligibility, how the vacancy is advertised, how candidates apply and are considered, and how the Council votes.

The main changes in the 2026–27 draft are:

- Alignment with the 2026 Standing Orders, including Standing Order 3(s), which allows voting by paper ballot where a majority of councillors present consider it appropriate, for example for co-option.
- Updated references to current legislation and officer titles.

Although the Council currently has a full complement of councillors, having an up-to-date policy means any future vacancy can be filled promptly and fairly.

4. Vexatious or Habitual Requests Policy (Appendix B)

The Vexatious or Habitual Requests Policy sets out how the Council identifies and responds to requests, complaints or correspondence that are vexatious or repeated, so that officer time is protected while the public's right to raise legitimate matters is respected.

The main changes in the 2026–27 draft are:

- Updated officer titles and responsibilities.
- Updated references to current legislation, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and data protection law.
- Alignment with the Council's complaints procedure.

5. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from adopting these policies.

6. Legal Implications

The Co-option Policy must operate within the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006. The Vexatious or Habitual Requests Policy must operate within the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and data protection legislation. Both drafts are consistent with that legislation.

7. Recommendations

Full Council is recommended to:

- a. Adopt the Co-option Policy 2026–27 at Appendix A;
- b. Adopt the Vexatious or Habitual Requests Policy 2026–27 at Appendix B; and
- c. Authorise the Town Clerk to record the adoption date and minute reference on each policy and publish them on the Council's website.



Policy

Co-option of Members Policy

Adopted: 14-10-2026

Chairman: Cllr. R. Walker

Minute Ref.: 261014/9

Full Council

Administered by Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Longridge Town Council. To be reviewed every three years or sooner if circumstance's chance.

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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. Introduction

This policy sets out the procedure to ensure compliance with legislation and continuity of procedures in the co-option of members to the Town Council. The co-option procedure is entirely managed by the Town Council, and this policy ensures a fair and equitable process.

2. Co-option

Co-option of a Town Councillor occurs when a casual vacancy has arisen and no poll (by-election) has been called. A casual vacancy occurs when: a councillor fails to make their declaration of acceptance of office at the proper time; a councillor resigns; a councillor dies; a councillor becomes disqualified; or a councillor fails for six months to attend meetings of a council committee or subcommittee, or to attend as a Council representative a meeting of an outside body.

Town Councils may exercise the power to co-opt a person to fill a casual vacancy when the requirements to hold an election have not been met — that is, the vacancy has been the subject of a public notice and fewer than ten registered electors have requested an election by the deadline specified by the Borough Returning Officer.

If a by-election is called, a polling station will be set up by the Borough Council and residents will be asked to vote for nominated candidates; the Town Council may have to pay the costs of the election. Residents have fourteen days (excluding weekends and bank holidays) to claim the by-election, and the electoral officer will advise the Clerk of the closing date. If more than one candidate is nominated, a by-election takes place; if only one, they are duly elected without a ballot. If ten residents do not request a ballot within fourteen days of the vacancy notice being posted, the Town Council may co-opt a volunteer.

3. Confirmation of Co-option

On receipt of written confirmation from the Electoral Services Office that no by-election has been claimed, the Town Clerk will: advertise the vacancy for 21 days on the Council's notice boards and website (excluding the date of the notice, and excluding Saturdays and Sundays); and advise the Council that the Co-option Policy has been instigated.

The Town Council is not obliged to fill any vacancy, nor to select anyone from applicants who apply. However, it is not desirable for electors to be left under-represented for a significant length of time, nor does it support effective and efficient working if there are insufficient councillors to share the workload, provide a broad cross-section of skills, or achieve meeting quorums without difficulty. Councillors elected by co-option are full members of Longridge Town Council.

4. Eligibility of Candidates

The Town Council may consider any person to fill a vacancy provided they are an elector for the Town; or have resided in the Town for the past twelve months, or rented/tenanted land in the parish; or have had their principal place of work in the parish; or have lived within three miles (direct) of the parish.

Disqualifications for election include (see Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972): holding a paid office under the local authority; bankruptcy; having been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of not less than three months (whether suspended or not, without the option of a fine) within the preceding five years; and disqualification under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal practices.

5. Applications

Members may point out vacancies and the process to qualifying candidates. Although there is no statutory requirement, candidates will be asked to submit an application form and confirm their eligibility.

Following receipt of applications, the next suitable Council meeting will include an agenda item to receive written applications and co-opt a candidate. Copies of applications will be circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk at least three clear days before the meeting; all such documents are treated as strictly private and confidential by the Clerk and all Councillors.

6. At the Co-option Meeting

Candidates will be given up to five minutes to introduce themselves, give background and experience, and explain why they wish to become a Member. The process is carried out in public session, with no private discussion between Members before the vote — though where the Council is discussing candidates' personal attributes, this may be prejudicial and the Council should resolve to exclude the press and public for that part.

After submissions, the Council will vote on each candidate's acceptability against the person specification, each candidate being proposed and seconded, by a show of hands (LGA 1972 Sch. 12, Para 39); a recorded vote may be requested under Standing Orders. A candidate needs an absolute majority (50% + 1 of votes cast) to be elected. Where there are more than two candidates and no overall majority in the first round, the candidate with the fewest votes drops out and further rounds take place until a majority is reached. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting has a second or casting vote.

Once elected, the successful candidate signs their declaration of acceptance of office and may take their seat immediately. The Clerk will notify Electoral Services of the appointment. The successful candidate must complete their registration of interests within 28 days, handed to the Clerk for forwarding to the Monitoring Officer. If insufficient candidates come forward, the vacancy will be re-advertised.



Policy

Vexatious or Habitual Requests and Complaints Policy

Adopted: 14-10-2026

Chairman: Cllr. R. Walker

Minute Ref.: 261014/9

Full Council

Administered by Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Longridge Town Council. To be reviewed every three years or sooner if circumstance's chance.

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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.

Purpose

A policy for the management of abusive, unreasonably persistent/habitual, or vexatious requests and requesters. This policy can also be used for the management of abusive, persistent or vexatious complaints and complainants, substituting “request” and “requester” with “complaint” and “complainant” where appropriate.

1. Introduction

This policy identifies situations where a person making a request, individually or as part of a group, might be considered habitual or vexatious, and forms the Town Council's policy for responding to these situations.

- 1.1 Habitual means ‘done repeatedly or as a habit’. Vexatious is recognised in law and means ‘denoting an action or the bringer of an action that is brought purely to cause annoyance to the defendant’.
- 1.2 Indicators that a request (verbal, written, in person, by telephone or IT) is vexatious include: abusive or aggressive language; a personal grudge or completely unsubstantiated accusations against the Council, individual Councillors or specific employees; unreasonably persistent, frequent or overlapping requests; or where the effort required would be so grossly oppressive or a strain on time and resources that the Council cannot reasonably be expected to comply, regardless of the legitimacy of the underlying matter.
- 1.3 This policy is intended to assist in identifying and managing persons who seek to be disruptive through an unreasonable course of conduct.
- 1.4 The term “request” includes requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018, and any subsequent modification of this legislation.
- 1.5 Habitual or vexatious requests are time-consuming and wasteful of Clerk and Councillor resources. While the Council endeavours to respond with patience and sympathy, there are times when nothing further can reasonably be done.
- 1.6 When dealing with any request the Council will consider: the burden compliance would bring; the motive of the requester; the value or serious purpose of the request; and whether dealing with it would cause harassment or distress to employees.
- 1.7 Raising legitimate queries or criticising the progress of a request (e.g. missed timescales) should not in itself lead to someone being regarded as vexatious or unreasonably persistent — nor should mere dissatisfaction with an outcome.
- 1.8 The aim of this policy is to deal with all requests consistently, fairly and reasonably, while ensuring staff, Councillors and the Council as a whole suffer no detriment.

2. Habitual or Vexatious Requesters

- 2.1 Definition used for this policy: “The repeated and/or obsessive pursuit of unreasonable requests and/or unrealistic outcomes and/or reasonable requests in an unreasonable manner.”
- 2.2 Prior to implementation, the Clerk will send a copy of this policy to the requester as prior notification of its possible use.
- 2.3 Where requests continue and meet the Section 3 criteria, the Clerk will seek Councillors' agreement to treat the requester as habitual or vexatious and determine the appropriate action under Section 4.
- 2.4 The Clerk (or Chairman, if appropriate) will notify requesters in writing of the reasons for this determination and the action to be taken.
- 2.5 A requester's status, including compliance with any restrictions, will be kept under review; if they demonstrate a more reasonable approach, their status will be reviewed (see 6.1).

3. Definitions

- 3.1 The Council defines unreasonably persistent and vexatious requesters as those whose frequency or nature of contact hinders the Council's consideration of their or others' requests. The terms may apply separately or jointly.
- 3.2 Examples include: insufficient grounds for a complaint made purely to annoy; refusing to specify grounds despite offers of assistance; refusing to cooperate with the investigation process; refusing to accept matters are outside the policy's remit or the Council's power to influence; insisting on incompatible handling; making unjustified complaints about staff; changing the basis of a complaint mid-investigation; denying or changing earlier statements; introducing trivial or irrelevant information late; raising excessive detailed questions and insisting on answers; submitting falsified documents; a ‘scattergun’ approach across multiple staff or bodies; excessive demands on staff time; repeat complaints with minor variations presented as new; refusing to accept a decision and repeatedly arguing without new evidence; challenging historic or irreversible decisions; derogatory or abusive language; threatening language or behaviour; and repeatedly contacting staff on an already-addressed matter.

4. Imposing Restrictions

- 4.1 The Clerk will confirm the request has been or is being addressed in accordance with policy and relevant regulations.
- 4.2 In the first instance, the Clerk will consult the Council before issuing a warning; the Clerk or Chairman will write to the requester (signed-for delivery or email), enclosing this policy and explaining the concern.
- 4.3 If disruptive behaviour continues, a further letter will advise of restrictions on future contact, agreed in consultation with the Council, stating: why the decision was taken; what action has been taken; its duration; and how to appeal.
- 4.4 Restrictions will be appropriate and proportionate, typically for three to six months (reviewed quarterly in exceptional cases of extension).

- 4.5 Restrictions may include: banning telephone contact except via a third party (solicitor, Councillor, or friend); banning emails to individual or all staff/Councillors, requiring correspondence by letter only; requiring contact through one named officer or Councillor (with a named deputy); restricting call times/duration; requiring personal contact to take place with a witness present; or notifying the requester that the Council will not respond further on that specific topic.
- 4.6 Where unacceptable behaviour continues, the Clerk, in consultation with the Council, may refuse all further contact and stop any investigation.
- 4.7 Where behaviour is extreme or threatens the immediate safety of employees or Councillors, other options — including reporting to police or legal action — will be considered, and prior warning may not be given.

5. New Requests from Requesters Treated as Abusive, Vexatious or Persistent

- 5.1 New requests will be treated on their merits; the Clerk and Council will decide whether previous restrictions remain appropriate. A blanket policy is not supported, nor is ignoring genuine, well-founded requests.
- 5.2 A requester's vexatious/persistent status and any restrictions will be recorded and notified within the Council at the Clerk's or Chairman's discretion.

6. Review

- 6.1 Status will be reviewed by the Clerk and Council after three months and every subsequent three months during the policy's application.
- 6.2 The requester will be informed of the outcome if the decision is changed or extended.

7. Record Keeping

- 7.1 The Clerk will retain adequate records of each case and action taken, including: the name and address of the person treated as abusive, vexatious or persistent (or anyone so aiding them); when restrictions came into force and end; what the restrictions are; and when the person was advised.
- 7.2 The Council will receive a regular, confidential report on those treated as vexatious/persistent under this policy.

8. Appeals

- 8.1 Appeals may be made in writing within 5 working days of receiving the decision. The Council will review the decision and address the points raised; the outcome is final.

Agenda Items: 10, 11,12 and 13.

For Information



Longridge
Town Council

Meeting:	Full Council
Meeting Date:	14 October 2026
Title:	Agenda Items 10,11, 12 and 13 - Updates
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Appendices:	None.

1. Item 10 – Towneley Garden Event Space

Construction of the Towneley Garden Event Space started on site on Monday 28 September 2026. The works are due to finish by the end of October 2026. Members are aware that the contractor is John Wade Construction Ltd.

Additional quotes are being sought for plants and planting of the green areas. These will be brought to Council for a decision once received.

2. Item 11 – Local Government Reorganisation

There has been no substantial change to the Government's decision since the last report to Council on 9 September 2026.

Members will be aware that on 7 September 2026, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government announced in the House of Commons that LGR in Lancashire, and most other reorganisations under way in England, would be halted while the Government carries out a rapid review of the whole programme.

As a result, the shadow elections planned for May 2027 will not take place; RVBC and the other district councils due for election in 2027 will hold their ordinary elections in May 2027 as normal, as will parish and town councils, including Longridge Town Council.

The timetable for any new councils has slipped by at least a year; RVBC has advised that the earliest possible date for any new authority to take over is now 1 April 2029; and

RVBC has withdrawn LGR-specific reports from its committees and is planning as a standalone borough, including a savings target of more than £900,000 for 2027/28.

On 5 October 2026, LCC's Cabinet agreed to take precautionary legal steps, which could include lodging a protective judicial review claim before a deadline of 16 October 2026. The County Council has said legal action is a last resort, and that it has asked the Government to confirm whether the July 2026 Lancashire decision has been withdrawn.

2.1 Implications for Longridge Town Council

Asset transfer:

With LGR halted, a Section 24 direction, which would have restricted RVBC's ability to dispose of assets ahead of reorganisation, is no longer imminent. The time pressure on asset transfer has therefore eased. RVBC has confirmed that work on which organisation should hold each asset will continue.

The Council's expression of interest in RVBC-held assets (minute 260708/9) stands, and members can prepare business cases for priority assets, including the Civic Hall and the Towneley Gardens (Berry Lane) entrance, without a fixed deadline.

RVBC's savings target may make it more willing to transfer assets that cost it money to run. Business cases should therefore be clear about running costs, any transitional funding RVBC may offer, and the effect on the precept.

Elections:

Town Council elections will take place in May 2027 on the normal four-year cycle. The pre-election period will apply from around late March 2027.

The Clerk will continue to monitor the Government's review and any legal action by Lancashire County Council, and will report developments to Full Council.

3. Item 12 – Longridge Community Hospital

The inpatient ward remains temporarily relocated to Chorley Hospital as Longridge@Cuerden, which opened with 15 beds on 28 December 2025. Longridge Community Hospital itself remains open for outpatient services.

The Integrated Care Board (ICB) has stated that any decision on the hospital's future will follow a full engagement process with the community, patients and staff.

The Council continues to take part in the Community Action Board. The Clerk represents the Council on its Consultation Working Group, and the Mayor continues to represent the Council at public meetings and campaign events.

4. Item 13 – Memorial Garden

Invitations to tender for improvements to the Memorial Garden off Berry Lane were issued on 30 September 2026. The deadline for tender returns is 12 October 2026. Tenders will be evaluated and a recommendation brought to Council for a decision on the contract award.

5. Recommendation

That Council notes the updates on Agenda items 10, 11, 12 and 13.