Longridge
Town Council

Full Council – Draft Minutes

Meeting Date:	**08 July 2026**		
Place:	Station Buildings, Berry Lane, Longridge.		
Present:	Councillors: R. Walker, (Chair), L. Jameson, P. Smith, J. Rogerson, M. Gornall, N. Eccles, N. Stubbs, A. Wallbank, K. Spencer and M. Gee		
In attendance:	Town Clerk, and one member of the public.		
Meeting started:	18:30	**Meeting closed:**	19:40

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WELCOME BY THE CHAIR.

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

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**
   Apologies were received Cllrs. Ray and Hyde.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS AND WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTEREST DISPENSATION.**
   None.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**
   No members of the public were present.

4. **APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 JUNE 2026.**
   RESOLVED:
   The minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2026 were approved with 2 minor amendments:
   - Agenda Item 1. Members agreed that first names **could** (not should) be used in the conduct of meetings.
   - Agenda Item 2. A conflict of interest was noted in relation to Agenda Item 13 where it was reported that a Councillor's spouse had submitted a quotation, this quotation was for printing (not installation).

5. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS / CHAIR'S REPORT**
   The Chair reported on events attended since the last Full Council meeting which included attending:
   - Long Field Day - (13 June)
   - Ribble Valley Solemn Mass at Stonyhurst College - (14 June)
   - Raising of the Armed Forces flag at Clitheroe Castle - (22 June)
   - Longridge Band Summer Proms – (4 July)
   - Berry Lane Primary School with the Clerk. (8 July)

6. FINANCE REPORT

The Clerk and Cllr. Gornall (Chair of the Finance Committee) presented the Finance Report.

Two budget coding queries were noted:

- Plants purchased to fill the planters located on Stone Bridge (£231) had been coded to a line with no allocated budget rather than to line items with a budget allocated for example Longridge in Bloom (budget code 720) and the Longridge Loop (budget code 870); the Clerk was asked to reallocate this expenditure.
- Spend against the Hygiene and Cleaning budget (code 615) stood at nearly 50% of the £5,000 annual budget after two months, explained as a carryover of invoices from the previous year rather than overspend.

RESOLVED:

a. Members agreed both that the above matters were coding/tidying exercises rather than budgetary concerns.
b. That the Finance Report and the accounts to date be approved.

7. POLICY ON THE PLACING OF PLAQUES ON COUNCIL-OWNED BENCHES.

Members considered the revised policy, renamed to reflect its focus on plaques rather than benches. The following amendments were agreed:

- A cap of three plaques per bench was set (a cap of two would have placed two existing benches immediately in breach).
- No adornments of any kind are to be permitted on or around benches; the plaque is the only permitted addition.
- The Council reserves the right to remove any unauthorised item left on or around a bench without notice.
- The section on purchasing additional benches was amended so that the Council will review requests, rather than committing to purchase.
- The clause permitting a £100 charge for plaque replacement where damage is not attributable to the Council was removed in full; the Council will meet replacement costs and rely on insurance in cases of vandalism.

RESOLVED:

That the amended policy for placing memorial plaques on Council owned benches be adopted, published, and that affected families be notified of the changes.

8. STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members considered adoption of the latest NALC (2026) model Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Key changes from the Council's current provisions were noted:

- Speeches limited to 5 minutes (previously 10 minutes)
- Public participation session capped at 15 minutes (previously 30 minutes)
- Meeting duration capped at 2 hours (previously 2.5 hours), though a vote to extend remains available.
- Members agreed these limits should be treated as guidelines, with the Chair retaining discretion to extend in all cases. The Council's existing constitutional limit of one nominated speaker per group per item remains unchanged.

RESOLVED:

That the 2026 NALC model Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be adopted.

9. RIBBLE VALLEY ASSET TRANSFER

The Clerk set out the once-in-a-generation opportunity, ahead of local government reorganisation, to express interest in assets currently held by RVBC. The deadline to express interest falls at the end of July, and with no Full Council meeting in August, a decision was required at this meeting.

Members discussed the following points:

- A future Council will inherit whatever assets are taken on; the current Council should not seek to limit the options available to it.
- The precept would likely need to increase significantly should all assets transfer.
- Managing the full range of assets with current staffing levels would be a challenge; a future extraordinary meeting could be called if required.

RESOLVED:

That the Council express interest in all assets currently held by RVBC, including car parks, the youth club, the over-60s club, and any other revenue-generating assets, and that the Clerk write to Ribble Valley Borough Council to this effect by the end of July.

10. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION AND OTHER UPDATES

The Clerk reported that nothing had yet been confirmed on **LGR**, with an announcement expected around Tuesday 16 July. Ribble Valley's eventual grouping (likely with Preston/Lancaster) is expected to be confirmed, but no further detail is yet available.

On the **Longridge Community Hospital campaign**, concern was raised that the £8m refurbishment estimate may be inflated. A further meeting with the ICB has been arranged for 4 August in the Council's Conference Room.

Members noted that Ribble Valley's five-year housing land supply is estimated at approximately 3.47 years, potentially below the 3.5-year threshold. Falling below this threshold gives developers greater precedence over council planning decisions and increases the risk of large, non-affordable housing developments being approved on appeal. Members were urged to bear this in mind when any Longridge planning applications come forward.

RESOLVED:

The updates were noted by members.

11. WORKING GROUPS, COMMUNITY EVENTS, AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- **Community garden:** clearance work from the Community Payback Group resumes this Sunday.
- **Longridge Loop**: wording being finalised for the Interpretation Boards. All other street furniture has been delivered
- **Longridge Show (Saturday):** the Council will have a stall and a rota was agreed in outline.

  The Clerk to confirm volunteer numbers with show organisers for wristbands.
- **Code of Conduct training:** the Clerk to check the date of the next RVBC session and circulate details.
- **Mayoral Charity Event**: to be held on 10 October; the Chair is coordinating a Working Group and invited volunteers to email him directly.

The dates of future meetings were confirmed as follows:

2026: 9 September, 14 October, 11 November, 9 December.

2027: 13 January, 10 February, 10 March.

Note: An extraordinary meeting may be called if required by the asset transfer process or to confirm appointment of contractor for Towneley Garden.

Signed: Chair of the Council

Date:

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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.