



Longridge Town Council

Staffing Committee - Agenda

Members of Longridge Town Council's Staffing Committee are summoned to attend a meeting on Wednesday 22 October 2025 at 18:30 in the Station Buildings, Berry Lane, Longridge.

1. Welcome by the Chair

2. To receive apologies.

3. Declarations of interests.

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

If the personal interest is a prejudicial interest or there is a disclosable pecuniary interest, then the individual member should not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter and must withdraw from the meeting and not seek to influence a decision unless a dispensation request has been submitted in writing.

4. To consider and approve the minutes of 23 July 2025 meeting.

5. Public participation.

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

ITEMS for DECISION/DISCUSSION

6. Review of the Council's Grievance Policy

For members to review and approve the Council's Grievance Policy (enclosed).

7. Review of the Council's Lone Working Policy.

For members to review and approve the Council's Lone Working Policy.

8. Staffing Budget.

For members to review and approve the Council's Staffing Budget for 2026/27.

ITEMS for INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

9. Update on Actions from Previous Meetings.

Report of the Clerk (enclosed), to update members on actions from recent Staffing Committee meetings.

10. Consideration of matters not on the agenda.

An opportunity for the Clerk and members to provide updates, raise matters and suggest items for future meetings.

11. Future meetings.

For members to consider dates for the next and future Staffing Committee meetings.

Mike Hill

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Longridge Town Council.

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Longridge
Town Council



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

Staffing Committee – Draft Minutes

Date:	23 July 2025		
Place:	Station Buildings, Berry Lane, Longridge.		
Present:	Councillors: R. Walker (Chair), D. Jackson, Rainford and Spencer		
In attendance:	Town Clerk and Cllr. Eccles		
Meeting started:	18:30	Meeting closed:	19:28

250723/

WELCOME BY THE PREVIOUS CHAIR.

Cllr. Walker welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

- Elect Cllr. Walker as Committee Chair.
- Elect Cllr. S. Rainford as Committee Vice Chair.
- Nominate Cllr. Eccles as a Committee member.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

There were no apologies for absence.

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

None.

4. CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 11 DECEMBER 2024 MEETING.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Approve the minutes which were signed by the Chair.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

There was no public participation.

6. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Clerk submitted a report requesting members to review and approve the Committee's Terms of Reference.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Approve the Staffing Committee's Terms of Reference.

7. CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER – ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

- a. Thanked the Clerk for his excellent work during the previous 12 months.
- b. Request the Chair to provide the Clerk with a set of goals and objectives.
- c. Will conduct an interim 6-month appraisal in January 2026.
- d. Will conduct the next annual appraisal as a separate meeting.
- e. Request the Clerk to add an agenda item to the next Budget Committee to consider additional remuneration for the Clerk in recognition of his efforts.

8. APPOINTMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT.

The Clerk submitted a report for members to consider the appointment of an Administrative Assistant/Deputy Clerk to support the Town Clerk and provide the Town Council with a succession path.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

- a. Subject to the salary and on-costs being presented to the Budget Committee, approve the appointment of an experienced Administrative Assistant/Deputy Clerk as set out in the report and in the job description.
- b. Request the Clerk to draft an employment contract, advertise the vacancy (not on Indeed), purchase the additional office furniture and equipment and purchase and install a shed to create additional office space.

9. CONSIDERATIONS OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA.

There were no further matters for consideration.

10. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS.

2025: 22 October. 2026: 28 January, 22 April and 22 July.

SIGNED BY CHAIR FOR THE MEETING:

DATE:

A signed copy is on file.

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Meeting:	Staffing Committee
Meeting Date:	22 October 2025
Title:	Town Council's Grievance Policy
Submitted by:	Town Clerk and RFO

1. Purpose of the report.

For members to consider the adoption of a Grievance Policy set out in Appendix 1 of the Report

2. Introduction.

Like all UK employers, the Town Council is legally required to provide a written grievance procedure to its employees, typically outlined in employment contracts or staff handbooks, in line with the ACAS Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures.

3. Summary of the benefits of adopting a Staff Grievance Policy

- **Legal Compliance and Risk Mitigation:** Meets UK employment law requirements reducing tribunal risks and potential compensation claims.
- **Improved Communication:** Encourages early, informal resolutions to workplace issues.
- **Consistent Decision-Making:** Ensures impartial handling with investigations and appeals, preventing bias in council oversight.

4. Members are recommended:

To adopt the Policy set out in Appendix 1.



For Information

Grievance Policy 2025

Adopted: February 2025

Chair: Cllr. L. Jameson

Minute Ref.:

The policy is administered by the Town Clerk and will be reviewed in October 2026.

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1. Introduction

This policy is based on the National Association of Local Councils template and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice. It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work. (See reference links below)

It aims to encourage and maintain good relationships between the Council and its employees by treating grievances seriously and resolving them as quickly as possible. It sets out the arrangements for employees to raise their concerns, problems or complaints about their employment with the Council. The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

2. Raising Problems

Many problems can be raised and settled during the course of everyday working relationships. Employees should aim to settle most grievances informally with the clerk/chairman/vice chairman.

3. This policy confirms:

- Employees have the right to be accompanied or represented at a grievance meeting or appeal by a companion who can be a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official. This includes any meeting held with them to hear about, gather facts about, discuss, consider or resolve their grievance. The companion will be permitted to address the grievance/appeal meetings, to present the employee's case for their grievance/appeal and to confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining their case.
- The Council will give employees reasonable notice of the date of the grievance/appeal meetings. Employees and their companions must make all reasonable efforts to attend. If the companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date.
- Any changes to specified time limits must be agreed by the employee and the Council.
- An employee has the right to appeal against the decision about their grievance. The appeal decision is final.
- Information about an employee's grievance will be restricted to those involved in the grievance process. A record of the reason for the grievance, its outcome and action taken is confidential to the employee. The employee's grievance records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

- Audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the grievance procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition.
- If an employee who is already subject to a disciplinary process raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after completion of the disciplinary procedure.
- If a grievance is not upheld, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee if they raised the grievance in good faith.
- The Council may consider mediation at any stage of the grievance procedure where appropriate, (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process which requires the consent of affected parties.
- Employees can use all stages of the grievance procedure If the complaint is not a code of conduct complaint about a councillor. Employees can use the informal stage of the council's grievance procedure (paragraph 4) to deal with all grievance issues, including a complaint about a councillor.
- Employees cannot use the formal stages of the council's grievance procedure for a code of conduct complaint about a councillor. If the complaint about the councillor is not resolved at the informal stage, the employee can contact the clerk/chairman/vice chairman of Longridge Town Council who will inform the employee whether or not the complaint can be dealt with under the code of conduct. If it does not concern the code of conduct, the employee can make a formal complaint under the council's grievance procedure (see paragraph 5)
- If the grievance is a code of conduct complaint against a councillor, the employee cannot proceed with it beyond the informal stage of the council's grievance procedure. However, whatever the complaint, the council has a duty of care to its employees. It must take all reasonable steps to ensure employees have a safe working environment, for example by undertaking risk assessments, by ensuring staff and councillors are properly trained and by protecting staff from bullying, harassment and all forms of discrimination.
- If an employee considers that the grievance concerns his or her safety within the working environment, whether or not it also concerns a complaint against a councillor, the employee should raise these safety concerns with the clerk/chairman/vice chairman of the council at the informal stage of the grievance procedure. The council will consider whether it should take further action in this matter in accordance with any of its employment policies (for example its health and safety policy or its dignity at work policy) and in accordance with the code of conduct regime.

4. Informal Grievance Procedure

The Council and its employees benefit if grievances are resolved informally and as quickly as possible. As soon as a problem arises, the employee should raise it with the clerk/chairman/vice chairman to see if an informal solution is possible. Both should try to resolve the matter at this stage. If the employee does not want to discuss the grievance with the clerk/chairman/vice chairman, the employee should contact another member of the council. If the employee's complaint is about a councillor, it may be appropriate to involve that councillor at the informal stage. This will require both the employee's and the councillor's consent.

5. Formal Grievance Procedure

If it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally and the employee's complaint is not one that should be dealt with as a code of conduct complaint (see above), the employee may submit a formal grievance.

It should be submitted in writing to the clerk/chairman/vice chairman of the council. The council will appoint a sub-committee of three members of the council or other suitable independent persons if it is not to have three council members to hear the grievance. The sub-committee will appoint a Chairman from one of its members. No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee.

6. Investigation

If the sub-committee decides that it is appropriate, (e.g. if the grievance is complex), it may appoint a suitable independent investigator to carry out an investigation before the grievance meeting to establish the facts of the case.

The investigation may include interviews (e.g. the employee submitting the grievance, other employees, councillors or members of the public). The investigator will summarise their findings (usually within an investigation report) and present their findings to the sub-committee.

7. Notification

Within 10 working days of the Council receiving the employee's grievance (this may be longer if there is an investigation), the employee will normally be asked, in writing, to attend a grievance meeting. The written notification will include the following:

- The names of its chairman and other members.
- The date, time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the meeting which will normally be within 25 working days of when the Council received the grievance.
- The employee's right to be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.
- A copy of the Council's grievance policy.

- Confirmation that, if necessary, witnesses may attend (or submit witness statements) on the employee's behalf and that the employee should provide the names of his/her witnesses as soon as possible before the meeting.
- Confirmation that the employee will provide the Council with any supporting evidence in advance of the meeting, usually with at least two days' notice.
- Findings of the investigation if there has been an investigation.
- An invitation for the employee to request any adjustments to be made for the hearing (for example where a person has a health condition).

8. At the Grievance Meeting

- The Chairman will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee.
- The employee (or companion) will set out the grievance and present the evidence.
- The Chairman will ask the employee questions about the information presented and will want to understand what action does they want the Council to take.
- Any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question any witness.
- The employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up the case.
- A grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be investigated by the sub-committee.

9. Decisions

The Chairman will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision, in writing, usually within five working days of the meeting. The letter will notify the employee of the action, if any, that the Council will take and of the employee's right to appeal.

10. An Appeal

- If an employee decides that their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved by the sub-committee, they may submit a written appeal to the council.
- An appeal must be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving the sub-committee's decision and must specify the grounds of appeal.

10.1 Grounds for Appeal

- A failure by the Council to follow its Grievance Policy.
- The decision was not supported by the evidence.
- The action proposed by the sub-committee was inadequate/inappropriate.
- New evidence has come to light since the grievance meeting.

The appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the council who have not previously been involved in the case. There may be insufficient members of the council who have not previously been involved. If so, the appeal panel will be a committee of all council members. The appeal panel will appoint a Chairman from one of its members.

10.2 Appeal Notification

The employee will be notified, in writing, usually within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting.

The meeting will normally take place within 25 working days of the Council's receipt of the appeal. The employee will be advised that they may be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.

10.3 Appeal Meeting

At the appeal meeting, the Chairman will:

- Introduce the panel members to the employee.
- Explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision of the sub-committee.
- Explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
 - a. The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds of appeal.
 - b. The Chairman will inform the employee that they will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal meeting.
 - c. The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision of the sub-committee committee or substitute its own decision.
 - d. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

11. References:

[Discipline and Grievances at work](#)

[Acas Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures | Acas](#)



Meeting:	Staffing Committee
Meeting Date:	22 October 2025
Title:	Lone Working Policy
Submitted by:	Town Clerk and RFO

1. Purpose of the report.

For members to consider the re-adoption of a Lone Working Policy set out in Appendix 1 of the Report

2. Introduction.

Members last reviewed their Lone Working Policy in August 2022.

3. Summary of the benefits of re-adopting a Lone Working Policy

Re-adopting the Lone Working Policy aligns with UK Health and Safety Executive requirements under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, enabling the council to protect its small staff team during isolated tasks like community site visits, or being in the office alone.

4. Members are recommended:

To adopt the Policy set out in Appendix 1.



For Information

Lone Working Policy 2025

Adopted: February 2025

Chair: Cllr. L. Jameson

Minute Ref.:

The policy is administered by the Town Clerk and will be reviewed in October 2026.

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1. Introduction

Longridge Town Council recognises that some employees may be required to work alone in the course of their duties. This policy outlines the Council's commitment to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of lone workers, in line with standard UK health and safety practices. It aims to identify risks associated with lone working, assign responsibilities, and establish procedures to minimise those risks.

The Council acknowledges that lone working is not inherently illegal but must be managed to comply with legal duties. This policy applies to all Council employees, contractors, and volunteers who may work alone, whether in Council premises, remotely, at home, or in the community.

2. Definition of Lone Working

A lone worker is defined as an employee who works by themselves without close or direct supervision. This includes:

- Staff working alone in Council offices or facilities (e.g., outside normal hours).
- Mobile workers, such as those conducting site visits, maintenance, or community engagement.
- Homeworkers or those isolated from colleagues, even if not physically alone (e.g., the only Council employee in a group setting).

Lone working can increase risks, such as lack of immediate assistance in emergencies, accidents, illness, or incidents of violence.

3. Legislation and Responsibilities

3.1 Relevant Legislation

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council has a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of employees, including lone workers. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires risk assessments for all activities, including lone working. There is no specific lone working legislation, but the Council must assess and mitigate risks accordingly.

3.2 Responsibilities of the Council/Town Clerk

- Identify all roles involving lone working.
- Conduct and regularly review risk assessments for lone working activities.
- Implement control measures to reduce risks to as low a level as reasonably practicable.
- Provide necessary training, equipment, and support (e.g., communication devices).
- Ensure lone workers have no medical conditions that make them unsuitable for such work.
- Monitor compliance and review the policy annually or after incidents.

- Report significant risks to the relevant committee (e.g., Staffing or Estate Committee).
- Ensure staff are aware of this policy and local procedures.
- Oversee risk assessments and safe systems of work.
- Provide debriefs after incidents and update assessments as needed.
- Arrange training on personal safety and emergency procedures.

3.4 Responsibilities of Employees

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others affected by their work.
- Comply with this policy, risk assessments, and training.
- Report hazards, incidents, near-misses, or concerns to the appropriate Council member.
- Use provided equipment correctly and not misuse it.
- Inform Council of any medical conditions that may affect lone working suitability.

4. Risk Assessment

Risk assessments must be conducted for all lone working activities by competent persons, involving the employee where possible. Assessments should consider:

- The environment (e.g., location, access, security, lighting).
- The task (e.g., nature, duration, potential for violence or emergencies).
- The individual (e.g., experience, medical fitness, vulnerability).
- Historical incidents or special circumstances.

Key questions include:

- Is the workplace safe for one person (e.g., safe entry/exit, risk of violence)?
- Can emergencies (e.g., fire, illness, accident) be handled alone?
- Is there access to first aid, communication, and emergency services?
- Are transport and parking arrangements adequate?

Assessments should be documented, reviewed regularly (at least annually), and updated after incidents. If risks cannot be adequately controlled, lone working should not proceed—alternative arrangements (e.g., buddy system) must be made.

5. Control Measures and Procedures

5.1 General Procedures

- Maintain access to a working telephone, first aid kit, and alarm systems.
- Avoid high-risk activities alone (e.g., handling hazardous substances, operating dangerous machinery).

5.2 Personal Safety

- Be aware of surroundings: Know exits, alarms, and potential hazards.
- Use body language and communication to de-escalate situations.
- For home working: Ensure a safe setup, maintain confidentiality of personal details, and report in regularly.

5.3 Emergency Procedures

- In an emergency, prioritise personal safety: Leave the area if possible and contact emergency services (999).
- Report incidents immediately using the Council's incident reporting procedure.
- Debrief with Clerk/Chair of the Staffing Committee after any incident to review and improve measures.

5.4 Special Considerations

- Pregnant workers or those with medical conditions: Additional assessments and adjustments.
- Young or inexperienced workers: Enhanced supervision or restrictions.
- High-risk areas (e.g., isolated or high-crime locations): Use paired working or avoid if possible.

6. Training and Support

Employees working for the Council should know that their safety comes first. Staff should be aware of how to deal with situations where they feel they are at risk, or unsafe. Staff should also be able to recognise how their own actions could influence or even trigger an aggressive response. The Clerk will ensure that all lone workers training needs are assessed and that they receive appropriate training.

The Council will provide training to lone workers on:

- Risk awareness and personal safety techniques.
- Emergency response and de-escalation.
- Use of safety equipment (e.g., lone worker devices or apps, if provided).
- Training needs will be identified via risk assessments and reviewed periodically. Staff can request debriefs after challenging incidents.

7. Monitoring and Review

- Incidents will be recorded, investigated, and used to improve the policy.
- The policy will be reviewed annually, after legislative changes, or following incidents.
- Compliance will be monitored through audits and staff feedback.

8. Immediate Support Following a Violent Incident

In the event of a violent incident involving a lone worker, the Clerk will immediately ensure that the employee receives any necessary medical treatment and/or advice. If an incident occurs out of office hours the Council Chairman should be contacted. The Clerk will also consider whether the employee needs specific information or assistance relating to legal or insurance aspects. The Clerk will also ensure appropriate written and verbal reporting of any violent incident.

9. Lone Working for the Clerk

Where the items above relate directly to the Clerk as a staff member the appropriate controls will be exercised by the Staffing Committee or, in emergency situations, by the Chair of the Staffing Committee.

10. Contacting or Involving the Police

The Council is committed to protecting staff from violence and assault and will support criminal proceedings against those who carry out assault. All staff are encouraged to report violent incidents to the police and will be supported by the Council throughout the process. Except in cases of emergency, employees should inform the Clerk of any incident immediately. The Clerk will thereafter take responsibility for contacting the police to report the details of the incident.

Agenda Item 8

For Decision/Discussion



Longridge
Town Council

Meeting:	Staffing Committee
Meeting Date:	22 October 2025
Title:	Staffing Budget
Submitted by:	Town Clerk and RFO

1. Purpose of the report.

For members to consider a draft Staffing Budget shown in Appendix 1 of the report.

2. Comparisons.

Specific breakdowns of staff costs across all councils are not centrally published in a standardised format. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) requires councils to report "staff costs" as a line item, but aggregated sector-wide analysis is limited. From available statistics the table below shows the variations for 2024/25.

Council Type	Precept £	Spend £	Staff Costs £	Staff costs as a % of Spend
Small	<10,000	n/a	n/a	20-40%
Medium	10,000 - 200,000	n/a	n/a	40-50%
Longridge TC:	94,077	125,747	31,468	25%
Clitheroe TC:	144,868	122,959	51,247	42%
Large	>200,000	n/a	n/a	50-60%

Note: Staff costs as % of expenditure will increase for 2025/26 as the Clerk has had a pay rise and a new member of staff will have been in post for several months.

3. Members are recommended:

- To approve the draft Staffing Budget as set out in Appendix 1.
- If approved, request the Clerk to submit the draft Budget to the next Full Council meeting for ratification.

Appendix 1



Longridge
Town Council

Meeting Date: 22 October 2025

Title: Draft Staffing Budget 2026-27

Submitted by: Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Purpose of the report: Approve the Staffing Budget for 2026-27

Actual and Estimated Staff Expenditure - 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. v 18/10/25

Cost Elements		2025-26 Budget £	2025-26 Apr-Sept Actual £	Estimated Expenditure £						2025-26 Spend £ Projected	Variance: Projected vs Budget	2026-27 Proposed Budget £
				Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
60	Salary: Town Clerk	30,000	17,472	2,860	2,860	2,860	2,860	2,860	2,860	34,632	4,632	35,000
61	HMRC: Town Clerk and Admin. Assistant	7,500	9,022	1,189	1,189	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	16,200	8,700	15,000
62	Salary: Admin. Assistant	0	0	0	435	435	435	435	435	2,175	2,175	5,300
63	Pension costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
65	Staff Training	0	0	0	150	0	0	0	0	150	150	150
66	Expenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	150
67	Payroll costs	0	0	0	0	600	0	0	0	600	600	750
Total:		37,500	26,495	4,049	4,634	5,095	4,495	4,495	4,495	53,757	16,257	56,350

Agenda Item 9

For Information



Longridge
Town Council

Meeting:	Full Council
Meeting Date:	22 October 2025
Title:	Update on Actions from Recent Meetings.
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

1. Purpose of the report.

To update members on actions from recent meetings.

2. Update on Actions from 23/07/2025.

Minute 250723/	Action	Who	Update
7b.	Provide the Clerk with a set of goals and objectives.	Cllr. Walker	Noted
7e.	Add an agenda item to the next Budget Committee to consider additional remuneration for the Clerk.	Clerk	Complete
8b.	Draft an employment contract, advertise the vacancy, purchase the additional office furniture and equipment.	Clerk	Complete
	Purchase and install a shed to create additional office space.		Ongoing

3. Members are recommended:

To note the report, the ongoing actions and actions not yet completed.