



# Longridge Town Council

## Staffing Committee - Agenda

Members of Longridge Town Council's Staffing Committee are summoned to attend a meeting on Wednesday 29 April 2026 at 18:30 in the Station Buildings, Berry Lane, Longridge.

**1. Welcome by the Chair**

**2. To receive apologies for absence.**

**3. Declarations of interests.**

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

**4. To consider and approve the minutes of 28 January 2026 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.

### Part 1 OPEN SESSION - ITEMS for DECISION/DISCUSSION

**6. Cover for the Caretaker and Gardener.**

Report of the Clerk (enclosed), for members to consider the appointment of a contractor to provide cover for the current Caretaker and Gardener.

**7. Working Group for the use of Social-Media.**

Report of the Clerk (enclosed), for members to consider the Terms of Reference and membership of the Working Group.

### Part 1 OPEN SESSION - ITEMS for INFORMATION

**8. Deputy Clerk Training and Development Framework.**

Report of the Clerk (enclosed), for members to note and comment on the Framework.

**9. Log of Councillors activities, training and attendance at meetings**

Demo of the Log for members to note and comment on the Log.

**10. Update on Actions from Previous Meetings.**

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

**11. 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.

**12. Future meetings in 2026.**

22 July

**13. Exclusion of press and public.**

To resolve that, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, namely staffing matters relating to a named employee.

**Part 2 - CONFIDENTIAL SESSION - ITEMS for DECISION/DISCUSSION**

**14. Performance review of the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.**

The Clerk will withdraw from the meeting for this item. The Chair will take notes of the discussion and any recommendations. The Clerk will be invited to return to the meeting to be advised of the outcome and to discuss objectives for the coming year.

*Mike Hill*

*Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Longridge Town Council.*



# Agenda Item 4

## Longridge Town Council

### Staffing Committee - Draft Minutes

<b>Date:</b>	28 January 2026		
<b>Place:</b>	Station Buildings, Berry Lane, Longridge.		
<b>Present:</b>	Councillors: Walker, Eccles, Rainford and Jackson		
<b>In attendance:</b>	Town Clerk		
<b>Meeting started:</b>	18:30	<b>Meeting closed:</b>	19:15

260128/

#### 1. WELCOME BY THE CHAIR.

Cllr. Walker welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

None.

##### **Absent**

Cllr. Spencer (no apology received).

#### 3. RESIGNATION OF CLLR. WALKER AS COMMITTEE CHAIR AND APPOINTMENT OF A NEW CHAIR.

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Walker had resigned as Chair of the Staff Committee with immediate effect.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

- a. Accept the resignation of Cllr. Walker as Chair of the Staffing Committee.
- b. Accept the nomination of Cllr. Rainford for the position of Chair. There being no other nominations.
- c. Accept the nomination of Cllr. Walker for the position of Vice Chair. There being no other nominations.
- d. Approve that both appointments take immediate effect.

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

None.

**5. CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 22 OCTOBER 2025 MEETING.**

Subject to a minor change regarding Agenda Item 7, which should read approve the Council's 'Lone Working Policy'.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Approve the minutes which were signed by the Chair.

**6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**

There was no public participation.

**7. PART 2 – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Agree that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, namely Staff Appraisal, in accordance with Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12a, as the information relates to a particular employee and publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

- a. Note the outcome of the 6-month staff appraisal.
- b. Request the Chair (Cllr. Rainford) to add specific tasks relating to each of the current objectives for the next appraisal.
- c. Approve that the meeting return to public session.

**The meeting returned to public session.****8. UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS.**

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

RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL:

- a. Note the Report.
- b. Regarding the Lone Working Policy. The Clerk to ensure regular assessments are being carried out and logged.
- c. Regarding the Lone Working Policy and the Equality Act. Consider additional safety measures for people working alone.
- d. Clerk to note conversations with potential applicants for the post of Gardener.
- e. Regarding Minute 251022/6b. Extend the Training Log to include councillor activities and attendance at meetings.

**9. CONSIDERATIONS OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA.**

- a. Request the Clerk to address concerns regarding people using the Conference Room alone.
- b. Request the Clerk to take a report the Estates Committee regarding the use of weed killer on Council land.
- c. Request the Clerk to set up a Working Group on the Council use of Social-Media.
- d. Request the Clerk to provide a training matrix for the Deputy Clerk and report to a meeting of the Staffing Committee

**10. FUTURE MEETINGS.**

2026: 22 April and 22 July.

SIGNED BY CHAIR FOR THE MEETING:



DATE:

A signed copy is on file.

---

Longridge Town Council  
Council Offices  
The Station Building  
Berry Lane  
Longridge  
PR3 3JP



 [clerk@longridge-tc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@longridge-tc.gov.uk)  
 01772 782461  
 07495 473 845  
 [www.longridge-tc.gov.uk](http://www.longridge-tc.gov.uk)

---

### Mission Statement

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

---

# Agenda Item 6

## For Decision/Discussion



Longridge  
Town Council

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Staffing Committee</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	29 April 2026
<b>Title:</b>	Cover for the Caretaker and Gardner
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Town Clerk and RFO

### 1. Purpose of the Report

To request that the Staffing Committee consider arrangements for appointing a contractor to provide cover for the Town Council's Gardener/Lengthsman when required.

### 2. Background

The Town Council currently engages a contractor to undertake gardening and Lengthsman (same person) duties across various Town Council sites.

These duties include routine maintenance such as:

- Caretaking and Mayoral services
- Grass cutting and general grounds maintenance
- Maintenance of planted areas and planters
- Minor repairs and upkeep of Town Council assets
- General environmental upkeep across Town Council locations

The role provides an important operational service which supports the appearance and upkeep of public spaces within the town.

From time to time the current contractor may be unavailable due to holidays, illness or other commitments. At present the Council does not have a formally appointed alternative contractor who can step in at short notice to undertake essential tasks.

### 3. Need for Cover Arrangements

The absence of a contingency arrangement could lead to delays in routine maintenance work, particularly during peak growing periods in spring and summer when regular grounds maintenance is required.

Establishing an approved contractor to provide cover would ensure:

- Continuity of grounds maintenance services
- Protection of Council assets and public spaces
- Flexibility in responding to operational needs
- Reduced operational risk during periods when the primary contractor is unavailable

#### 4. Proposed Arrangement

It is proposed that the Council appoint an approved contractor who could be contacted by the Town Clerk to undertake work when cover is required.

The proposed terms would be:

- **Rate:** £20 per hour
- **Engagement:** As and when required
- **Scope:** To undertake the same general duties as the current Gardener/Lengthsman contractor
- **Management:** Work to be instructed and supervised by the Town Clerk
- **Duration:** Appointment to continue until reviewed by the Council or the Staffing Committee

The proposed hourly rate is the same as that currently paid to the existing contractor and therefore maintains parity and consistency.

#### 5. Financial Implications

The proposed hourly rate of **£20 per hour** reflects the current rate paid by the Council for gardening and Lengthsman services.

Costs would only arise when the cover contractor is required to undertake work and would be met from the Council's existing budgets.

#### 6. Governance Considerations

The contractor would:

- Not be an employee of the Council
- Operate on a **self-employed contractor basis**
- Be responsible for their own tax and National Insurance arrangements
- Be required to comply with the Council's **health and safety expectations** when working on Council sites and have public liability insurance.

#### 7. Recommendation

Members are requested to consider whether the Staffing Committee wishes to recommend that the Council appoint a contractor to provide cover for the Gardener/Lengthsman role when required.

#### 8. Resolved

That the Staffing Committee recommends that Longridge Town Council approve the appointment of a contractor to provide cover for the Gardener/Lengthsman role on an as-required basis at a rate of £20 per hour, with work to be instructed by the Town Clerk.

# Agenda Item 7

## For Decision/Discussion



Longridge  
Town Council

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Staffing Committee</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	29 April 2026
<b>Title:</b>	Working Group for the Councillor use of Social-Media
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Town Clerk and RFO

### 1. Purpose of the Report

To request that members consider establishing a Working Group to review the use of social media by Town Councillors and the interaction with the Council's existing communications and governance policies.

### 2. Background

Social media is widely used by elected members to communicate with residents and engage with local issues. When used appropriately it can enhance transparency and community engagement.

However, social media can also present governance challenges for local authorities, particularly where:

- Council decisions are discussed online
- Councillors engage in public debate regarding Council matters
- Confidential information may inadvertently be disclosed
- The distinction between personal and official communication becomes unclear

National guidance emphasises that councillors remain subject to their **Code of Conduct when communicating online**, including when using personal accounts where their role as a councillor is identifiable.

### 3. Existing Council Policies

The Town Council already maintains several relevant documents including:

- Social Media Policy
- Media Policy
- Social Media Moderation Policy
- GDPR Statement

Members may wish to consider whether these documents provide sufficient guidance for councillors or whether additional clarification would be beneficial.

### 4. Proposal

It is proposed that a **social media Working Group** be established to:

- Review the Council's existing policies
- Consider whether additional guidance for councillors is required
- Report back with recommendations.

## **5. Membership**

It is proposed that the Working Group comprise:

- Cllr Rainford
- Cllr Smith
- Cllr Jameson

The Town Clerk would provide administrative and governance support.

## **6. Recommendation**

Members are requested to consider the draft Terms of Reference (Appendix 1) and decide whether to establish the Working Group

## **7. Resolved**

That the Staffing Committee establish a Social-Media Working Group in accordance with the Terms of Reference (Appendix 1) comprising Cllr Rainford, Cllr Smith and Cllr Jameson.



# Draft Terms of Reference

---

## **Social Media - Working Group**

---

Adopted:

Chair:

Minute Ref:

---

## 1. Status

The Social Media Working Group (“the Working Group”) is established by the Staffing Committee of Longridge Town Council.

The Working Group is **advisory only** and does not have decision-making powers. Any recommendations must be referred to the Staffing Committee or Full Council for approval.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of the Working Group is to review and make recommendations regarding the use of social media by Town Councillors in order to ensure that communication with the public is constructive, responsible and consistent with the Council’s governance framework.

## 3. Objectives

The Working Group will:

1. Review the current use of social media by Town Councillors in relation to Council business.
2. Consider how existing Council policies apply to councillors’ online conduct.
3. Review and assess the following existing Council documents:
  - Social Media Policy
  - Media Policy
  - Social Media Moderation Policy
  - GDPR Statement
4. Consider whether additional guidance or protocols should be introduced for councillors.
5. Promote respectful and constructive engagement with residents online.
6. Ensure that councillors are aware of the interaction between:
  - Social media use
  - The Members’ Code of Conduct
  - Data protection requirements
  - Council communications procedures.
7. Consider whether training or guidance should be provided to councillors regarding the responsible use of social media.

#### 4. Scope

The Working Group may consider:

- Councillors' use of personal social media accounts when referring to Council business
- How Council decisions and information are communicated online
- Managing misinformation and public criticism online
- Appropriate standards of conduct when councillors engage with residents
- Ensuring that confidential information is not disclosed through social media.

The Working Group will **not** investigate individual complaints about councillors.

#### 5. Membership

The Working Group shall consist of:

- Cllr Rainford
- Cllr Smith
- Cllr Jameson

The Town Clerk may attend meetings to provide governance and procedural advice.

Additional councillors may be invited to attend where appropriate.

#### 6. Chair

The Chair shall be appointed by the Working Group at its first meeting.

#### 7. Meetings

The Working Group shall meet as required.

Notes of meetings shall be prepared and circulated to members of the Staffing Committee.

#### 8. Reporting

The Working Group will report its findings and recommendations to the **Staffing Committee**, which may then refer matters to **Full Council** if required.

#### 9. Duration

The Working Group will operate until its review is complete and recommendations have been considered by the Council.

# Agenda Item 8 For Information/Discussion



Longridge  
Town Council

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Staffing Committee</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	29 April 2026
<b>Title:</b>	Deputy Clerk Training and Development Framework
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Town Clerk and RFO

## 1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to present to members a **structured training and development framework for the Deputy Clerk**, attached as **Appendix 1**, and to seek the Committee's endorsement of the approach to professional development.

## 2. Background

The Deputy Clerk has been in post for approximately **five months** and joined the Council without previous experience of working within parish or town council administration.

The role of Deputy Clerk in a town council involves supporting the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer in delivering a wide range of statutory, administrative and financial responsibilities including:

- Council governance and legal compliance
- Meeting administration and minute preparation
- Financial administration and support to the Responsible Finance Officer
- Compliance with audit requirements including the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)
- Managing information governance including Freedom of Information and data protection
- Supporting council communications and community engagement
- Administration of council assets, contractors and projects.

Given the breadth of these responsibilities, it is considered **good practice** for councils to implement a **structured training and mentoring programme** for new officers.

The training framework will also support succession planning within the Council, ensuring that the Deputy Clerk develops sufficient knowledge and experience over time to maintain continuity of administration should the Town Clerk reduce their workload or step down from the role in the future.

Members should note that the Deputy Clerk is employed for six hours per week, and therefore training and development opportunities will necessarily be limited by available working hours. Progress against the training matrix will therefore be incremental and delivered over a longer period through mentoring by the Town Clerk, practical experience and external training where appropriate.

### 3. Training and Development Framework

A Deputy Clerk Training Matrix and Appraisal Framework has therefore been prepared and is attached as Appendix 1.

The matrix identifies:

- The key competencies required of a parish or town council officer
- The Deputy Clerk's current level of knowledge
- The target level of competency
- Training methods and supervision arrangements.

The framework also incorporates an appraisal element which will allow progress to be monitored and reported to the Staffing Committee.

Training will be delivered through:

- Ongoing mentoring by the Town Clerk / RFO
- Practical experience through council administration
- External training opportunities including courses provided by the Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC)
- Professional guidance from NALC and SLCC resources.

### 4. Professional Development

As part of the development programme, it is proposed that the Deputy Clerk works towards completing the **Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA)** qualification within the next 12 months, subject to member approval and budget availability.

This qualification is widely recognised within the parish and town council sector and provides officers with a foundation in local council law, governance and finance.

### 5. Monitoring and Review

The Town Clerk will provide ongoing supervision and mentoring and will review the Deputy Clerk's progress periodically.

Progress against the training matrix will be reviewed:

- informally through regular supervision meetings; and
- formally as part of the Council's **staff appraisal process**.

Where appropriate, progress updates may be reported to the Staffing Committee.

### 6. Financial Implications

Training costs will depend on the number of external courses attended. Typical LALC courses are modest in cost and can normally be accommodated within the Council's staff training budget (£600 for 2026/27).

Should the Committee support the ILCA qualification, a further report may be brought forward confirming the cost and proposed timetable.

## **7. Recommendation**

Members are requested to:

- a. Note the Deputy Clerk Training and Development Framework attached as Appendix 1.
- b. Endorse the proposed structured training approach to support the Deputy Clerk in developing the knowledge and skills required for the role.
- c. Support the Deputy Clerk working towards the Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA) qualification, subject to budget provision.

## **8. Appendix**

Appendix 1 – Deputy Clerk Training Matrix and Appraisal Framework



## Deputy Clerk Training and Development Matrix

**Prepared by:** Town Clerk / Responsible Finance Officer

**For:** Staffing Committee

**Date:** April 2026

### Context

The Deputy Clerk has been in post for approximately five months and has no previous experience in parish or town council administration. The purpose of this training framework is to ensure the Deputy Clerk develops the necessary knowledge and skills to support the statutory responsibilities of the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO).

Training will be delivered through:

- Structured mentoring by the Town Clerk
- External training via Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC)
- Guidance issued by NALC and SLCC
- Practical experience through council operations.

#### Level Description

A Awareness – understands the concept but requires supervision

W Working Knowledge – able to assist with task

C Competent – able to complete task independently

S Supervisory – able to guide others

## 1. Local Government Framework and Governance

Competency	Current	Target	Training Method
Structure of UK local government	A	W	Clerk mentoring
Legal status of parish/town councils	A	W	LALC training
General Power of Competence	A	W	Governance training
Council powers vs duties	A	W	Clerk guidance
Standing Orders interpretation	W	C	Practical experience
Financial Regulations compliance	W	C	Clerk supervision
Code of Conduct and interests	W	C	Case studies
Role of Monitoring Officer	A	W	RVBC guidance
Parish council statutory responsibilities	A	W	Clerk mentoring

## 2. Democratic Administration

Competency	Current	Target	Training Method
Agenda preparation	W	C	Supervised practice
Agenda publication requirements	W	C	Legal guidance
Preparing council reports	A	W	Clerk mentoring
Minute taking and drafting	W	C	Practical experience
Managing amendments during meetings	A	W	Observation
Recording resolutions correctly	W	C	Clerk review
Action tracking and follow-up	A	W	Workflow training
Managing confidential agenda items	A	W	Governance guidance
Public participation procedures	A	W	Meeting observation

## 3. Financial Administration (Supporting the RFO)

Competency	Current	Target	Training Method
Understanding council budgets	W	C	Clerk mentoring
Processing invoices	W	C	Accounting software training
Issuing council invoices	W	C	Practical experience
VAT treatment for councils	A	W	Finance training
Preparing payment schedules	W	C	Clerk supervision
Bank reconciliation	W	C	Finance mentoring
Financial record keeping	W	C	Accounting procedures
Monitoring expenditure against budget	W	C	Clerk guidance
Grant administration	A	W	Policy training

## 4. AGAR and Audit Compliance

Competency	Current	Target	Training Method
Understanding AGAR framework	A	W	External course
Maintaining accounting records	W	C	Practical training
Asset register maintenance	W	C	Clerk mentoring
Preparing audit documentation	A	W	Supervised preparation
Internal audit requirements	A	W	Audit guidance
Public rights inspection period	A	W	Governance training
Transparency Code compliance	A	W	NALC guidance

## 5. Information Governance

Competency	Current	Target	Training Method
Data Protection Act compliance	W	C	ICO guidance
Handling FOI requests	A	W	Governance training
Managing council records	W	C	Records management guidance
Retention schedules	A	W	Policy review
Email management and archives	W	C	Administrative training
Confidential information handling	W	C	Governance training

## 6. Council Communications

Competency	Current	Target	Training Method
Website management	W	C	Practical training
Social media administration	W	C	Policy training
Drafting council communications	A	W	Clerk mentoring
Responding to public enquiries	W	C	Experience

## 7. Assets, Facilities and Contracts

Competency	Current	Target	Training Method
Asset register updates	A	W	Finance mentoring
Contractor liaison	A	W	Clerk mentoring
Procurement procedures	A	W	Financial regulations training
Risk assessments	A	W	Policy guidance
Managing council facilities	A	W	Practical experience
Monitoring projects	A	W	Clerk supervision

## 8. Planning and Statutory Consultation

Competency	Current	Target	Training Method
Understanding planning consultation	A	W	Clerk mentoring
Preparing planning summaries	A	W	Practical experience
Liaison with planning authorities	A	W	Observation
Recording planning decisions	W	C	Clerk review

## 9. Elections and Democratic Processes

Competency	Current	Target	Training Method
Election procedures	A	W	RVBC guidance
Co-option process	W	C	Practical experience
Councillor declarations of interest	W	C	Governance training
Councillor induction support	A	W	Clerk mentoring

## 10. Civic Administration

Competency	Current	Target	Training Method
Supporting mayoral events	W	C	Practical experience
Event organisation	W	C	Clerk guidance
Civic protocol	A	W	Clerk mentoring
Community event administration	A	W	Experience

### Professional Development Plan

#### Training

Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA)

LALC governance training

Finance and audit training

Data protection training

#### Target Timeframe

Within 12 months

Within 6 months

Within 12 months

Within 6 months

### Supervision Arrangements

The Deputy Clerk will:

- Work under the supervision of the Town Clerk / RFO
- Receive regular mentoring sessions
- Have progress reviewed quarterly

### Review Schedule

Review Period	Purpose
6 months	Skills review
12 months	Training evaluation
Annual	Staffing Committee report

# Agenda Item 10

## For Information



<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Staffing Committee</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	29 April 2026
<b>Title:</b>	Update on Actions from Recent Meetings.
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

### 1. Purpose of the report.

To update members on actions from recent Staffing Committee meetings.

### 2. Update on Actions from 28/01/2026

Minute 260128/	Action	Lead	Status
7b.	Add specific tasks relating to each of the current Clerk's objectives for the next appraisal.	Cllr. Rainford	

### 3. Update on Actions from 26/11/2025 - Budget Committee.

Minute 251126/	Action	Lead	Status
7c.	Review contracts of the Caretaker and Gardener in regard to re-advertising the positions.	Clerk	Complete

### 4. Update on Actions from 22/10/2025.

Minute 251022/	Action	Lead	Status
6b.	Set up a training log for councillors.	Clerk	29-04-26

### 5. Update on Actions from 23/07/2025.

Minute 250723/	Action	Lead	Status
7b.	Provide Clerk with a set of goals and objectives.	Cllr. Walker	Complete
7c.	Conduct an interim 6-month appraisal in January 2026 as a separate meeting.	Cllr. Walker	Complete
7e.	Add agenda item to the next Budget Committee to consider additional remuneration for the Clerk.	Clerk	Complete
8b.	Draft employment contract, advertise vacancy, purchase additional furniture and equipment.	Clerk	Complete
	Install a shed to create additional office space.		Complete

### 6. Members are recommended:

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

# Part 2 Item - Exclusion of Press and Public