



Longridge Town Council

Staffing Committee - Agenda

Members of Longridge Town Council's Staffing Committee are summoned to attend a meeting on Wednesday 16 September 2026 at 18:30 in the Station Buildings, Berry Lane, Longridge.

Welcome by the Chair

1. Apologies for absence.

To receive and approve apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of interests.

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

3. To consider and approve the minutes of 22 July 2026 meeting.

4. 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 Committee. Such questions may be answered after the meeting or become an agenda item at future Committee meetings.

ITEMS for DECISION/DISCUSSION

5. Deputy Clerk — Proposed Increase in Contracted Hours

To consider a proposal to increase the contracted weekly hours of the Deputy Clerk.

6. Performance Review Criteria — Clerk/RFO

To receive and consider a report from Cllr. Eccles setting out proposed performance review criteria for the Clerk/RFO.

ITEMS for INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

7. NJC Pay Award — Clerk/RFO and Deputy Clerk.

To consider and determine implementation of the NJC national pay award recommendations in respect of the salaries of the Clerk/RFO and Deputy Clerk.

8. Update on Actions from Previous Meetings

To receive a report from the Clerk updating members on actions arising from recent Staffing Committee meetings.

9. 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.

10. Future meetings in 2026.

18 November

Mike Hill

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Longridge Town Council.

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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

Staffing Committee – Draft Minutes

Date:	22 July 2026		
Place:	Station Buildings, Berry Lane, Longridge.		
Present:	Councillors: Eccles, and Walbank		
In Attendance:	Town Clerk, Cllr. Stubbs, Cllr. Walker		
Meeting Started:	18.32	Meeting Closed	19.45

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR 2026/27

Cllr. Natalie Eccles was nominated and accepted the role of Chair of the Staffing Committee for the 2026/27 civic year.

RESOLVED:

Cllr. Natalie Eccles be elected Chair of the Staffing Committee for 2026/27.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR FOR 2026/27

Cllr. Andrew Wallbank was nominated and accepted the role of Vice-Chair of the Staffing Committee for 2026/27 civic year.

RESOLVED:

Cllr. Andrew Wallbank be elected Vice-Chair of the Staffing Committee for 2026/27.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr. Lee Jameson and Cllr. Mark Gornall.

No apologies were received from Cllr. Keiran Spencer.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in relation to items on the agenda.

5. CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2026 were approved and signed by the Chair.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

There was no public participation.

Part 1 OPEN SESSION – ITEMS for DECISION/DISCUSSION

7. APPROVE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE.

RESOLVED

The Terms of Reference for the 2026/27 civic year be approved.

8. COVER FOR THE CARETAKER AND GARDENER

The Committee considered the recruitment of an individual to provide ad hoc cover for the caretaker/gardener.

The vacancy had been advertised through the Council's Facebook page, website and Notice Board. Three people had expressed an interest and one application had been received, from Andrew Leonard.

Members noted that Mr Leonard already provided services to the Council and was known to members. The proposed arrangement would be for Mr Leonard to act as a preferred contractor providing ad hoc cover rather than as an employee. The previously agreed rate was £20 per hour.

The Committee discussed the pre-engagement checks that might be appropriate, including whether a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check was required. It was noted that the work would not normally involve regulated activity or direct contact with children or vulnerable adults. Nevertheless, the Clerk was asked to confirm the applicable requirements before the arrangement commenced.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the appointment of Andrew Leonard as the Council's preferred contractor for ad hoc caretaker and gardener cover be approved in principle at the agreed rate of £20 per hour.
- b. That the appointment be subject to satisfactory completion of all relevant checks and contractual arrangements.
- c. That the Clerk confirm whether a DBS check is appropriate or legally available for the duties concerned before the appointment proceeds.

Part 1 OPEN SESSION – ITEMS for INFORMATION

9. UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That the Report be noted.

10. CONSIDERATIONS OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

DEPUTY CLERK'S CONTRACTED HOURS.

The Committee considered increasing the Deputy Clerk's contracted hours to support succession and continuity planning and to enable administrative and meeting-related duties to be redistributed.

It was noted that:

- The Town Clerk was contracted to work 30 hours per week but regularly worked additional unpaid hours.
- The Deputy Clerk was contracted to work six hours per week and worked those hours.
- Increasing the Deputy Clerk's hours would assist her development in agenda preparation, minute-taking and basic financial administration.
- Thursday would be a suitable additional working day because the Town Clerk was not normally in the office that day.

An initial increase to 10 or 12 hours per week was discussed initially on a trial or fixed-term basis.

The Committee noted that the full financial implications required confirmation, including salary, employer's National Insurance contributions, pension auto-enrolment and payroll costs. The indicative annual cost was approximately £6,000. Potential funding sources included underspends and relevant reserves, subject to Full Council approval.

Members emphasised that the proposal was intended to improve resilience, provide cover and redistribute work. It was not intended to reduce the Town Clerk's contracted hours or salary.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the Committee support, in principle, increasing the Deputy Clerk's contracted hours from six to 10/12 hours per week on an initial trial or fixed-term basis.
- b. That the Deputy Clerk's willingness and availability to work the proposed additional hours be confirmed.
- c. That the Clerk consult the Council's payroll provider and prepare a detailed report setting out the salary, National Insurance, pension and payroll implications.
- d. That the proposal and identified funding source be referred to a meeting of the Staffing Committee in September 2026.

TOWN CLERK ANNUAL LEAVE AND DUTY OF CARE

The Committee noted that the Town Clerk had taken approximately two and a half weeks of annual leave and discussed the Council's duty of care to ensure that employees took appropriate rest and annual leave.

The Town Clerk acknowledged the Committee's concerns and advised that he was likely to take leave during September/October 2026. Members noted that increasing the Deputy Clerk's hours and improving cover arrangements would make it easier for the Town Clerk to take annual leave.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the Committee's concerns regarding the need for the Town Clerk to take appropriate annual leave be noted.
- b. That suitable cover arrangements be developed to enable the Town Clerk to take his remaining leave entitlement.

CCTV, SIGNAGE AND DATA PROTECTION

The Committee discussed the cameras installed within the Council office. The cameras had been installed primarily for staff safety because the Town Clerk frequently worked alone.

Members noted that the existing signage might not satisfy current data protection requirements. Members considered that any replacement signage should be clear without appearing unnecessarily intimidating.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the adequacy of the Council's CCTV signage be reviewed and if required compliant replacement signage obtained.
- b. That the Council's CCTV policy, retention arrangements, access procedures and recording log be reviewed.
- c. That the matter be referred to the Estates Committee for further consideration.

WATER BOWSER

The Committee noted the urgent need for a water bowser to fill planter tanks at locations without access to a tap.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk contact RVBC regarding the possibility of borrowing or hiring a water bowser, with the aim of securing one for the following weekend if practicable.

11. FUTUTURE MEETINGS

16 September 2026

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolution to Exclude Press and Public

In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, being personnel matters relating to identifiable individuals, it was proposed that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the agenda, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (Schedule 12A, paragraphs 1 and 2).

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the business, as the items to be discussed involve exempt information relating to individuals.

13. PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF THE TOWN CLERK/RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

RESOLVED:

That this item be deferred to the next Staffing Committee meeting



Meeting:	Staffing Committee
Meeting Date:	16 September 2026
Title:	Deputy Clerk's Contracted Hours
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

1. Purpose of Report

To present the Staffing Committee with the financial implications of increasing the Deputy Clerk's contracted hours from six to 12 hours per week, following the Committee's resolution of 22 July 2026 (Minute reference: Agenda Item 10 — Consideration of Matters Not on the Agenda), and to seek a decision on whether to proceed.

2. Background

At its meeting on 22 July 2026, the Committee resolved to support, in principle, an increase in the Deputy Clerk's contracted hours from six to 10/12 hours per week, on an initial trial or fixed-term basis, to support succession planning, continuity, and the redistribution of administrative and meeting-related duties.

The Committee further resolved that the Clerk consult the Council's payroll provider and prepare a detailed report setting out the salary, National Insurance, pension, and payroll implications, for referral to the Staffing Committee meeting in September 2026.

This report responds to that instruction, using the upper end of the proposed range (12 hours per week) to provide the Committee with the maximum indicative cost.

3. Financial Implications

The Council's payroll provider has confirmed the following costs, comparing the Deputy Clerk's current contracted hours (six per week) with the proposed increase to 12 hours per week:

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 contribution (monthly)	0.00	10.33	10.33
Total employment cost (monthly)	432.12	941.66	509.54
Total employment cost (annualised)	5,185.44	11,299.92	6,114.48

At the current six hours per week, earnings fall below the Lower Earnings Limit and the automatic enrolment earnings threshold, so no employer's National Insurance or pension contribution is currently payable. At 12 hours per week, both would become payable, as set out above.

The net additional cost to the Council of increasing the Deputy Clerk's hours from six to 12 per week is approximately £509.54 per month, or £6,114.48 per annum. The table below compares this against the indicative estimate previously reported to the Committee:

	Annual Cost (£)
Indicative estimate reported to Committee, 22 July 2026	£6,000 (approx.)
Net incremental cost confirmed by payroll provider (this report)	£6,114.48
Variance	£114.48

These figures do not include any allowance for annual leave accrual, statutory sick pay exposure, or incidental costs, which would apply pro-rata to the increased hours.

4. Pay Award

Members are asked to note that a national pay award for local council employees is pending. Should the award be agreed and backdated or applied within the current financial year, the gross pay, National Insurance, and pension figures set out in Section 3 would increase accordingly.

5. Funding

As previously reported, potential funding sources include budget underspends and relevant reserves, subject to approval by Full Council.

6. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- a. Note the financial implications set out in Section 3 of this report;
- b. Confirm whether it wishes to proceed with an increase to 12 hours per week, or an alternative figure within the 10–12 hour range previously discussed;
- c. Note that the figures may be revised once the pending pay award is confirmed.
- d. Confirm the funding source and trial/fixed-term period for the increase, for onward referral to Full Council as required.



Meeting:	Staffing Committee
Meeting Date:	16 September 2026
Title:	NJC Pay Award 2026/27
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

1. Purpose of Report

To inform the Committee of the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services pay agreement for 2026/27, and to note its effect on the salaries of the Town Clerk and the Deputy Clerk with effect from 1 April 2026.

2. Background

The NJC for Local Government Services negotiates annual pay rates and allowances on the national pay spine (SCP 3 to SCP 43) applicable to Green Book employees, including local council clerks and staff employed under NALC/SLCC model terms. The 2026/27 pay round proved protracted: a 3.3% offer made by the National Employers on 24 March 2026 was rejected by all three recognised trade unions, and industrial action ballots followed over the summer. UNISON's ballot did not meet the required turnout threshold in enough large employers, and its NJC Committee accepted the offer on 11 August 2026; GMB accepted on 21 August 2026, which under NJC rules was sufficient for the agreement to proceed.

The National Employers published the signed 2026/27 pay agreement circular on 24 August 2026, confirming a 3.3% increase in pay rates and allowances across the pay spine, backdated to 1 April 2026. The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) issued an updated advice note on 25 August 2026 setting out the revised annual salaries and hourly rates, and has encouraged parish and town councils to implement the pay award as swiftly as possible, applying the new rates retrospectively from 1 April 2026.

3. Revised Pay Scales — Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk

The table below sets out the spine points on which the Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk are engaged, and the revised full-time-equivalent (FTE) annual salary and hourly rate applicable under the 2026/27 agreement.

Post	NJC Spine Point	Annual Salary (FTE)	Hourly Rate	Effective From
Town Clerk & RFO	SCP 42	£55,224	£28.62	1 April 2026
Deputy Clerk	SCP 19	£33,119	£17.17	1 April 2026

Guidance note: figures above are full-time-equivalent (FTE) rates drawn from the published 2026/27 NJC pay spine (Annex 1 to the National Employers' circular of 24 August 2026, 3.3% uplift, effective 1 April 2026). Both posts are part-time; pro-rata figures based on actual contracted hours are set out in Section 4 below.

4. Financial Implications

The Town Clerk is contracted for 30 hours per week and the Deputy Clerk for 6 hours per week. Pro-rata to the standard 37-hour NJC working week, the revised 2026/27 rates produce the following salary costs:

Post	Contracted Hours	Pro-rata Annual Salary	Pro-rata Monthly Salary	Estimated Monthly Increase
Town Clerk & RFO	30 hrs/week	£44,776.22	£3,731.35	approx. £119.20
Deputy Clerk	6 hrs/week	£5,370.65	£447.55	approx. £14.30

The 3.3% increase applies with effect from 1 April 2026 and is backdated. This will generate a period of arrears covering April 2026 to the month in which the revised rates are first applied through payroll, in addition to the ongoing increase to monthly salary costs for the remainder of the 2026/27 financial year. Based on the indicative figures above, the combined increase across both posts is approximately £133.50 per month (£1,602 per year), before any employer's National Insurance and pension contributions (Deputy Clerk only).

As the pay award is a nationally negotiated cost pressure, affecting the staffing establishment, it is properly treated as a budgeted (though not separately itemised) staffing cost, consistent with the Council's approved 2026/27 budget provision for staff salaries. Members should note that, because the final settlement (3.3%) was not confirmed until August 2026, the precise arrears figure could not be built into the original budget calculation and may therefore require in-year monitoring by the Finance Committee.

A precise cost calculation, incorporating employer's National Insurance and employer's pension contributions, will be brought to the Finance Committee once the Clerk has finalised the payroll reconciliation.

5. Recommendation

- That the Committee notes the NJC pay agreement for 2026/27 (3.3% increase, effective and backdated to 1 April 2026).
- That the Committee notes the revised spine point rates applicable to the Town Clerk (SCP 42) and Deputy Clerk (SCP 19).
- That the Committee notes the advice from NALC that councils should implement the pay award as swiftly as possible, with arrears paid from 1 April 2026.
- That authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to implement the revised pay scales through payroll and to report the finalised cost, including arrears, to the Finance Committee.

Sources: National Employers' Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2026/27, signed circular dated 24 August 2026 (Annex 1); NALC advice note published 25 August 2026. Members and officers are advised to verify current spine point values against the NALC members' advice note or the signed NJC circular before finalising payroll.

Agenda Item 8

For Information



Longridge
Town Council

Meeting:	Staffing Committee
Meeting Date:	16 September 2026
Title:	Update on Actions from Recent Meetings.
Submitted by:	Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

1. Purpose of the report.

To update members on actions arising from recent Staffing Committee meetings and other meetings with actions relating to staff and contractor matters.

A. ACTIONS FROM 22 JULY 2026

Minutes of the 22 July 2026 meeting have not yet been formally approved. The items below reflect the recommendations put to that meeting and are shown as pending confirmation.

Minute Ref.	Action	Lead	Status
260722/10	Confirm whether a DBS check is appropriate or legally available for the duties concerned before the appointment proceeds.	Clerk	Complete. Not required, but Andrew Leonard is DBS checked.
260722/10	Prepare a detailed report setting out the salary, National Insurance, pension and payroll implications of increasing the number of hours the Deputy Clerk works.	Clerk	Complete. Meeting 16-07-26
260722/10	Contact RVBC regarding the possibility of borrowing or hiring a water bowser, with the aim of securing one for the following weekend if practicable.	Clerk	Complete. RVBC made one available to LTC
260722/10	That the matter regarding CCTV signage and data protection be referred to the Estates Committee for further consideration.	Clerk	On going. New CCTV signage in place.
260722/13	Draft the criteria for reviewing the performance of the Town Clerk/RFO	Cllr. Eccles	

B. ACTIONS FROM 29 APRIL 2026

Minute Ref.	Action	Lead	Status
260429/6	Appoint a contractor to provide cover for the Caretaker/Gardener role, as-required, at £20 per hour (Clerk to instruct work).	Clerk	Complete
260429/7	Establish a Social-Media Working Group (Cllrs. Spencer and Ray) in accordance with draft Terms of Reference.	Clerk	To be re-assessed
260429/8	Endorse the Deputy Clerk Training and Development Framework, including support for the ILCA qualification within 12 months, subject to budget.	Clerk	Passed ILCA Application for FILCA made.
260429/9	Note the Log of Councillor activities, training and attendance at meetings.	Clerk	On-going
260429/14	Confidential: outcome of the performance review of the Town Clerk and RFO — objectives to be confirmed.	Chair	Cancelled

C. ACTIONS FROM 28 JANUARY 2026

Minute Ref.	Action	Lead	Status
260128/7b	Add specific tasks relating to each of the Clerk's current appraisal objectives.	Chair	Meeting 16 September 2026
260128/8b	Lone Working Policy: ensure regular assessments are carried out and logged.	Clerk	Ongoing
260128/8c	Lone Working Policy/Equality Act: consider additional safety measures for people working alone.	Clerk	Complete
260128/9a	Address concerns regarding people using the Conf. Room alone.	Clerk	Complete
260128/9b	Report to Estates Committee on the use of weed killer on Council land.	Clerk	Complete
260128/9c	Set up a Working Group on councillor use of social media.	Clerk	Complete
260128/9d	Provide a training matrix for the Deputy Clerk.	Clerk	Complete

D. ACTIONS FROM 26 NOVEMBER 2025 — BUDGET COMMITTEE

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

E. ACTIONS FROM 22 OCTOBER 2025

Minute Ref.	Action	Lead	Status
251022/6b	Set up a training log for councillors, extended to include councillor activities and attendance at meetings.	Clerk	Complete

F. ACTIONS FROM 23 JULY 2025

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

Recommendations

Members are recommended to note the report.