



Garstang Town Council

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Amenities & Public Realm Committee Meeting, 10th February 2025 Minutes

Present

Chairman; Councillor Pearson
Councillors present: Allan, Hesketh and Pearson.

Also present: Town Clerk and Lengthsman, 2 Officers from United Utilities.

037(2025-26) Apologies for Absence

Councillor Halford.
Councillors Perkins and Webster (ex-officio Councillors).

038(2025-26) Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

None.

039(2025-26) Public Participation

There were no Councillors of the public present.

040(2025-26) Minutes of the last meeting

A copy of the minutes of the Amenities & Public Realm Committee meeting held on 8 December 2026 had been circulated.

Resolved: The minutes of the of the Amenities & Public Realm Committee meeting held on 8 December 2026, were confirmed and signed as a true record.

041(2025-26) United Utilities will attend the meeting, to update Councillors at the Garstang River Wyre Pumping Station.

United Utilities are attending to attend to discuss their plans.
Fencing and signs
Social media
Implement next couple of weeks before Easter
Swimming groups
Social media

The Officers explained that work is due to start in the next few weeks at the bridge over the River Wyre. By the River Wyre Pumping Station (used for drinking water supplies).
UU will be raising the height of sections of the existing fence to improve safety and help deter anti-social behaviour in the area.

The Committee suggested that schools and swimming groups be contacted to let them know about imitative along with a communications post on Your Garstang Facebook page.

042(2025-26) Chairman's report

The Chair reported that he had attended machinery demonstrations, with the Lengthsman, in readiness for the Lengthsman Expansion scheme.

043(2025-26) Friends of Kepple Lane Park Working Group

Resolved: Councillor Hesketh was appointed to the Kepple Lane Park Working Group to enable it to resume activity.

044(2025-26) Kepple Lane Park – Goal Posts

Councillors considered a report outlining options to replace the existing goal posts at Kepple Lane Park with a wildlife-friendly alternative that would meet hedgehog release site certification requirements.

It was noted that the current goal posts are in a rusty condition, and that users of the park have installed nets themselves, indicating both demand for and regular use of the facility. The need to balance recreational provision with appropriate measures for hedgehog conservation was also discussed.

Resolved: That officers circulate a questionnaire to local primary schools and the high school to seek views on desired facilities for the playing field. Following this consultation, officers will prepare costed options and report back to the Committee for further consideration.

045(2025-26) Kepple Lane Park – Outdoor Stage

Councillors noted a report from the Lengthsman advising that, during ongoing works to the outdoor stage at Kepple Lane Park, the contractor had identified that the underlying timber structure is rotten. While the contractor could complete the works to the original specification, this would result in a cosmetically acceptable finish only, with limited structural integrity and a risk of failure in the near future.

As an alternative, the contractor proposed removal of the existing base materials and construction of a new timber truss structure. The existing edging sleepers (already owned by the Council) would then be fixed in place, followed by infilling and resurfacing to provide a more durable, long-term solution.

Councillors discussed the potential need and demand for a stage facility, including its possible use by community groups.

Resolved:

a) That officers include questions relating to the need for and potential use of a stage within the playing field questionnaire being circulated to local schools. That the Friends of Kepple Lane Park, along with other park users and local drama/musical groups, be consulted for their views.

b) That, subject to receipt of a formal quotation, a long-term structural solution be progressed (Option B). Councillor Allan suggested that any long term solution should include a canopy over the stage.

046(2025-26) Kepple Lane Park A6 Entrance

Councillors noted a report from the Lengthsman that an informal access point to Kepple Lane Park has developed from the A6 as a result of repeated use by residents, likely increased by recent housing development in the area. The route currently comprises a narrow gap between a garage fence and a hedge, followed by a steep descent onto boggy ground. Increased footfall has exposed tree roots, creating trip hazards, and the surface becomes particularly slippery in wet conditions.

Councillors considered whether the informal access should be closed or formalised to provide a safe entrance.

Resolved:

a) That officers obtain quotations for both options: making the informal access from the A6 impassable, and creating a formal, safe entrance to Kepple Lane Park.

b) That the Clerk seek advice from Wyre Council regarding the potential availability of Section 106 funding associated with the nearby development.

047(2025-26) Allotments – Ash Tree Removal

Councillors considered a report regarding an ash tree located on Council-owned land at the allotments, which had been raised by a plot holder due to significant shading affecting plot productivity. It was noted that the plot holder had consulted with the adjoining property owner, who had confirmed their consent to the tree's removal.

Councillors were advised that quotations had been obtained by the plot holder, with the lowest quote of £325 being significantly below typical market rates. The tree is also suspected to be affected by ash dieback.

Resolved: That authority be delegated to the Clerk, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, to arrange for the removal of the ash tree, subject to final checks on contractor competence and appropriate insurance.

048(2025-26) Memorial plaques and trees, Clerk

Councillors considered a report from the Clerk regarding requests received in relation to memorial items.

i) A request had been received to place a memorial plaque on a bench owned by the Town Council.

ii) a request regarding the installation of a memorial bench or the planting of a memorial tree in Garstang in memory of a resident's late father.

Councillors discussed how such requests should be managed in a consistent and sensitive manner and the need for a clear policy framework, as well as the potential to identify suitable locations and options for commemorative items.

Resolved:

a) That the Clerk develop a policy on memorial plaques and commemorative

items, to be reviewed with the Chair, Councillor Pearson and the Lengthsman, and subsequently submitted to Full Council for approval.

b) That a list of potential locations and options for memorial benches, trees and plaques be compiled.

c) That a response be issued to the applicant advising that the Council is in the process of developing a policy and will consider the request further once this has been approved.

049(2025-26) Memorial Bench for AFVBC Councillors, Councillors Allan and Pearson

Councillors considered a request from the Garstang Armed Forces and Veterans Breakfast Club (AFVBC) to install a commemorative bench at the War Memorial, including memorial name plaques for members who have passed away. It was noted that the bench and plaques would be fully funded by the Club, with no cost to the Town Council.

Resolved:

a) That the Council's forthcoming Memorial Plaques and Trees policy, to be considered by Full Council on 20th April, will provide the framework for such requests.

b) That the Amenities & Public Realm Committee recognises the service of Garstang AFVBC members and will recommend to Full Council the installation of a bench in a suitable location.

c) That the request from the Club be followed up once the policy has been approved.

050(2025-26) Date of next meeting

Tuesday 7th April 2026, Tuesday 7.00pm

The Meeting Finished at: 6.38pm

Amenities and Public Realm Committee – Officer Project Update (For information)

i. Moss Lane Park – Church Street Entrance (Accessibility)

Accessibility concerns raised by residents have been formally progressed with Lancashire Highways. The constraint created by a highway chicane approximately 900 mm from the park boundary fence has been assessed against statutory and best-practice accessibility standards.

Current position:

The issue was logged via the Love Clean Streets system. An initial rejection was challenged and re-submitted, referencing the legal minimum access width of 1000 mm and the preferred accessible width of 1500 mm.

What's next: A response from Highways is awaited.

ii. Kepple Lane Park – Working Group

The Kepple Lane Park Working Group was established as an officer-supported advisory sub-group of the Amenities Committee.

Current position:

The group is temporarily non-operational following the resignation of a councillor member.

What's next: Appointment of a replacement councillor will allow the group to resume activity.

iii. Friends of Kepple Lane Park

Following the park's Silver Gilt award in Britain in Bloom, an officer-led initiative successfully re-established structured community involvement. Eight stakeholders were identified through advertising in The Green Book, and a well-attended first meeting was held in January.

Current position:

The group is now established with £500 start-up funding allocated.

What's next: A February meeting will include a site survey and leaflet campaign aligned with the hedgehog highways initiative.

iv. War Memorial

Visual investigation suspects subsidence affecting the rear wall. Early engagement with the War Memorials Trust has clarified funding routes.

Current position:

The memorial remains open. The Trust typically funds up to 50% of eligible repair costs.

What's next: A grant pre-application will be prepared before works proceed.

v. Biodiversity – Hedgehog Habitat (Kepple Lane Park)

This project has been refocused toward certification of Kepple Lane Park as a hedgehog release site. Blackpool Hedgehog Rescue has confirmed this is achievable.

Current position:

Certification requirements have been issued, and the Friends group is engaged.

What's next: Operational changes will be implemented with the aim of achieving certification by June.

vi. Park Hill Road Rain Garden

A multi-agency flood mitigation project has moved from concept to delivery, replacing grass verges with a planted wet garden.

Current position:

United Utilities funding is available, and Lancashire County Council has agreed to act as lead applicant. A Highways meeting was held in January with positive feedback.

What's next: The proposal is progressing through Highways approval prior to implementation planning.

vii. Parish Maintenance Expansion / SLAs

An officer-led expansion of the Lengthsman service generated expressions of interest from eight neighbouring parishes. Site meetings, pricing, and supplier engagement (including three product demos) have been completed.

Current position:

Four parishes have confirmed proceeding, with two continuing discussions.

What's next: Plans of work and SLAs will be finalised before equipment procurement and recruitment.

viii. Completed and Closing Projects

Allotments – Composting system installed and project closed in January.

Moss Lane Playground – Resurfacing completed.

Kepple Lane Park – Furniture replacement completed.

Pat Seed Garden – Resurfacing expected February.

Moss Lane – Fence replacement expected February.