Garstang Town Council

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Full Council Meeting, 19th October 2026 Minutes

Chairman; Councillor Halford
Councillors present: Allan, Brooks, Dickinson, Hesketh, Halford, Hodgson, Hesketh and Lord.

Also present: Town Clerk, Edwina Parry, Wyre Councillor Dulcie Atkins, Wyre Councillor Robert Atkins, Wyre Councillor Alice Collinson, PCSO Creighton and 2 members of the public.

The Clerk explained that both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor had submitted their apologies for the meeting; adhering to standing orders 3p *a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting*, councillors appointed Councillor Halford to chair the meeting.

100(2026-27) Apologies for absence

Councillors Kelly, Pearson and Perkins.

County Councillor Tomlinson

101(2026-27) Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

There were no Declarations of Interest declared or requests for dispensations.

The Clerk reported that dispensation requests for the budget and precept were on file for those Councillors living within the township of Garstang.

102(2026-27) Public participation

The meeting was adjourned to allow members of the public to speak.

PCSO Creighton reported that recent incidents had included nuisance e-bikes and anti-social behaviour. These issues have largely been addressed through police intervention, and there have been no reported vehicle crimes or burglaries since the last meeting. The main policing focus over the coming weeks will be anti-social behaviour associated with Halloween and Bonfire Night.

Councillors raised concerns about incidents of vandalism behind the Flower Shop on the High Street. PCSO Creighton replied that while they were aware of comments on social media, incidents need to be formally reported to ensure they are recorded and investigated appropriately.

Discussion also took place regarding road safety and inconsiderate parking. Following a recent road traffic collision at the junction of Croston Road and

Devonshire Drive with restricted visibility, councillors highlighted concerns about vehicles parked on pavements, corners and other hazardous locations. Police confirmed that obstruction offences can be addressed when observed and that reports are also shared with Lancashire Highways where appropriate.

A member of the public spoke about the parking associated with the Makers Market on Windsor Road and also vehicles parking on the footway on Lancaster Road connected to activities at the Community Sports Club.

Wyre Borough Councillor Dulcie Atkins reported that there was uncertainty about the Planning Committees going forwards; itcould become surplus to requirements, with planning decisions instead being made under delegated authority by officers.

Wyre Borough Councillor Robert Atkins reported that there remains significant uncertainty regarding the future structure of local authorities. The Town Council was advised that further clarification is expected from government and council leaders in the coming months. He encouraged the Council to consider community resilience and emergency preparedness as part of future discussions.

Wyre Borough Councillor Alice Collinson reported that she had followed up the local licensing and environmental concerns on the Eagle and Child public house. The Council said that there was concern about the majority of licensed premises with an alcohol license whereby patrons were taking drinks onto the High Street from and the impact of noise on nearby residents. Could this be followed up with officers at Wyre Council.

The meeting concluded with an update from the representative of Garstang4business, outlining forthcoming business support and networking events for local enterprises. The Town Council were invited to an event on 30/11/2026; further details would be sent to the Clerk.

103(2026-27) Announcements

This Saturday, 24/10/2026, at 7.30pm, the Mayor was holding a Mayoral fundraising event; a concert of Local Talent at St Thomas Church Hall.

104(2026-27) Minutes of the last meetings

Councillors were asked to approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 21 September 2026.

Resolved: The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 21 September 2026 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

105(2026-27) Councillor vacancy arising from the resignation of Councillor Atkinson, Clerk.

The Clerk updated the Council:

Councillor Atkinson's resignation was reported to Wyre Council in accordance with the statutory requirements. A request for a by-election was received. A by-election will be required in Garstang. The estimated total cost of the election is £14,500, of which approximately £6,000 relates to the printing and postage of polling cards.

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.15, the Clerk/RFO notified Wyre Council earlier that day that Garstang Town Council did not wish polling cards to be issued for the by-election scheduled for 12 November 2026. In the absence of both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Councillor Halford, as Deputy Chair of Finance, was kept informed of developments.

106(2026-27) Finance payments and matters, Clerk/RFO

Councillors were asked to approve the payments, detailed vouchers 133 - 146, in the Appendix. Vouchers 133,134 &141; Mileage claims and any other expenses to be processed under delegated authority.

The Clerk/RFO reported that September agenda salary figures: vouchers 108, 109 and 115 totalled £4,997.23. Mileage claims and backdated pay had been processed under delegated authority. The Clerk/RFO confirmed that total staff salaries amounted to £6,191.20, with a detailed breakdown available on Scribe.

Council approved the additional payment voucher 147 to CTRL ALT DEL IT £614.00 (net £511.66) as per Full council minute 085(2026-27) iii) funded from the EMR IT Maintenance Reserve.

107(2026-27) Recommendations from the Finance and Governance Committee meeting held on 23/09/2026, RFO

Council noted the draft minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting held on 23/9/2026.

Resolved: Full Council endorsed the recommendations put forward by the Committee.

Review of income streams as per financial regulations, RFO

a) Allotments rent

Resolved: The £1.00 annual increase making a total of £248

b) Scout Hut rent

Resolved: The Council approved that the rent remains at £60 and that the next review of the lease takes place in May 2029.

108(2026-27) Precept/Budget 2027/2028, RFO

The Clerk/RFO reported that the Finance Committee met on 23/9/2026 to discuss the budget for 2027/2028.The RFO had circulated the following reports:

i. Draft budget V0.2, 2027/28
ii. Budget notes
iii. Current Earmarked Reserves balances

Councillors were asked to consider:

i. the draft minutes of the meeting,
ii. review budget sheet (V0.2) and respond to the points raised by the Finance Committee
iii. make any recommendations for the Finance Committee meeting on Tuesday 27/10/2026.The final precept figure will be reviewed at the Full Council meeting on 21/12/2026.

Summary of budget to date.

	19 October 2026
Receipts	£43,474.12
Payments	£204,480.69
Precept Value	£161,006.57

The Clerk/RFO reported that since the Finance Committee met on 23/9/2026, the subsequent request for a by-election, would have a financial impact on the Council's reserves. The Reserves policy stated

Elections Reserve This earmarked reserve is to cover the cost of by-elections. The current expected costs, of a by-election is £9,241.07 (Reference Wyre council 05/02/2024). If a by election were to be called, the costs would be met from the EMR general reserves. The Council would commit to replenish the EMR general reserves over a 4 year period following the election.

The Council noted that the RFO is meeting the Lead Lengthsman on 15/10/2026 to discuss 2027/28 budget for the Parish Maintenance Scheme.

Resolved:

The Council reviewed V0.2 budget and approved:

a) Create a new EMR for Christmas lights of £3,000, recognising that the Council is in year 4 of a 5-year contract.
b) the Clerk/RFO should consider establishing an earmarked reserve to provide for future by-election costs. Members noted that estimated costs had increased significantly, from approximately £9,200 in 2024 to around £14,500.

109(2026-27) Appointment of Internal Auditor, Clerk/RFO

In accordance with Financial Regulation 3.7, the Council is required to appoint an Internal Auditor to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's risk management, control and governance arrangements in line with the proper practices set out in the Practitioners' Guide.
The Finance Committee, at its meeting held on 23/09/2026, recommended the reappointment of Atteco as Internal Auditor for the 2027/28 financial year. Prior to confirming the appointment, the Clerk has requested written confirmation from Atteco regarding their independence from the Council.
The request follows the recommendation in the Practitioners' Guide (paragraph 4.11), which states that it is best practice for the Council to review and consider the independence of its Internal Auditor annually and record this consideration at a Full Council meeting.

Resolved: That Atteco be reappointed as Internal Auditor for 2027/28, subject to receipt of satisfactory written confirmation of its independence from the Council.

110(2026-27) Completion of the limited assurance review for the year ended 31 March 2026, RFO.

Council noted that PKF Littlejohn LLP had completed its review of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31 March 2026.
The External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2025/26, detailed:

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Except for the matters reported below, on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review:
The smaller authority has confirmed that the response to Section 2, Box 11 is incorrect and should be 'yes', as it is not a sole managing trustee.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:
The smaller authority has not been able to provide evidence of the consideration of the independence of the internal auditor upon appointment. In accordance with the Practitioner's Guide Paragraph 4.11 it is considered best practice to review the independence of the internal auditor on an annual basis and at a full council meeting.

Resolved: To note the External Auditor's Limited Assurance Review for the year ended 31 March 2026 and refer the matters raised to the Finance Committee for consideration and action as appropriate.

111(2026-27) **Wyre Council Planning, Clerk**
Application Number: 26/00852/FUL
Proposal: Alterations to shopfront and installation of 8 AC condenser units to rear wall.
Location: District Bank House 23 Market Place Garstang

Resolved: No objections

112(2026-27) **IT support for Town Council**
Council considered the quotation received from Plexio for the provision of IT support services and to determine whether to proceed, and if so, on which basis. Secondly to consider the purchase of Microsoft Copilot.

Resolved: The Council accepted the Managed IT Support Contract at £30 for 1 user, per month. This service includes Unlimited remote support, Day-to-day IT assistance. The cost to be met from EMR IT support for the 2026-27 financial year the ongoing cost to be included in the budget for 2027-28. The Council **further resolved** to purchase Microsoft Copilot; AI assistant designed to enhance productivity within Microsoft 365, streamline processes, and support administrative workloads. Cost: £24–£30 per user/month.

113(2026-27) **PA system, Clerk**
The Clerk sought Council's decision on the purchase of a public address (PA) system for Town Council use, primarily for the Remembrance Sunday service. A report comparing a number of suitable systems had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Councillor Allan raised concerns regarding the recommended PA system, particularly its suitability for outdoor use and its level of weather resistance, given the likelihood of use during adverse weather conditions at civic events.

Resolved: That Darrell Edwards Event Support be appointed to provide a PA system for Remembrance Sunday at a cost of £200, together with the purchase of a power bank at a cost of £75. Existing equipment shall be repaired where practicable and alternative long-term options for the provision of a PA system shall be explored.

114(2026-27) Wyre Council Consultations

a) **Notification - Public Space Protection Order - Alcohol Related Anti-Social Behaviour– for decision**

Resolved: The Council noted the consultation.

b) **Wyre Conservation Areas - Re-Consultation**

Resolved: That the Council should make representations to retain the Council Offices and car park within the Conservation Area as they form an important part of the character of the area. (The Clerk to confirm which version of the plan is the most up-to-date, as Councillors had reviewed different versions of the document).

115(2026-27) Quotation tree works – Clerk

Ash Tree Works - Complete removal or substantial arboriculture reduction at the allotments site. The Clerk reported that 2 quotations had been sought; 1 had been received which had been circulated, a second is expected imminently.

Resolved: That authority be delegated to the RFO to appoint a suitably qualified contractor and arrange payment from the Allotments EMR, having considered any further quotation received.

116(2026-27) Greater Garstang Partnership Board, Councillor Pearson/Allan

An opportunity for Councillors to ask any questions and discuss issues relating to the GGPB. 15 September minutes. Next meeting is 17 November 2026 at 3pm.

No questions were asked of Councillor Allan.

117(2026-27) Items for next Council monthly agenda

Councillors were asked to raise matters to be included on the agenda and 'Report of other representatives and projects' for the meeting of the Town Council on **16 November 2026** by notifying the Clerk by **8 November 2026**. The item should specify the business which it is proposed to transact in such a way that the member who receives it can identify the matters which he will be expected to discuss i.e. it needs to specify either what the proposal is and that a decision is required or whether the item is for information only.

The Clerk has produced an agenda item template to assist Councillors collate their agenda item. The template can be found on Teams – Full Council.

The Meeting Finished at: 8.40pm

For Information Only

118(2026-27) **Clerk's Report**

a) Environment Agency, 6/10/2026

Following careful consideration, we have taken the decision to pause works to reinstall the east gate at Garstang. The remaining construction activities require a dry working area and recent river levels have consistently overtopped the downstream stop log, resulting in flooding of the site and preventing these activities from being carried out safely and effectively.

While in-channel works are paused, we will continue refurbishing the gate that has been removed from the channel, along with other preparatory activities to ensure the project can restart as soon as conditions allow. We expect this to be early summer 2027.

The stop logs will remain in place over the winter period. This will enable the flood storage basin to continue operating effectively while maintaining the current standard of flood protection for downstream homes and businesses.

We remain committed to completing the project and will resume in-channel works when river conditions make it safe and practical to do so.

If you have any questions then please let me know.

b) LCC - Town and Parish Council Newsletter 2026

Please see below the link to the Autumn edition of our Town and Parish Council Newsletter 2026.
Town and Parish Council Autumn Newsletter 2026
The link should take you through to a sway version of the newsletter, which allows us to track how many people are engaging with the newsletter and therefore, increase our understanding of how useful the content is. There is no sensitive information in there and we are happy for you to share the newsletter with your colleagues. There is a helpful contents box in the bottom left so you can even skip to the content that's most relevant for you, and keep an eye out for our survey at the end of the newsletter, where you can let us know your thoughts about the new style.
We hope you find the content interesting and useful. If you have any queries or requests, or have any difficult accessing the newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact us at parishcouncils@lancashire.gov.uk

c) Planning Policy Newsletter, October 2026

Hillhouse Enterprise Zone Masterplan Consultation
Residents, businesses and stakeholders are being invited to have their say on the future of Hillhouse Enterprise Zone as Wyre Council launches a public consultation on the draft review of the site's masterplan.

Located in Thornton, Hillhouse Enterprise Zone was designated as a government-approved Enterprise Zone in 2016 and is a strategically important location for economic growth, investment, innovation and employment within Wyre. The current masterplan was consulted on in 2018 and subsequently

adopted by Wyre Council. Since then, changes to the site, business environment and wider economic landscape have highlighted the need for a review of the masterplan.
The draft review of the masterplan is available to view online and sets out the proposed vision, priorities and development opportunities for the Enterprise Zone.

Feedback gathered through the consultation will help inform future decisions relating to the Enterprise Zone before recommendations are finalised. The review aims to build upon the existing masterplan while reflecting changes to the site and the wider business environment.

The consultation is open until Friday 6 November.

To read the draft review and take part in the consultation, visit www.wyre.gov.uk/haveyoursay.

Housing Monitoring Report 2026
The council has produced a Housing Monitoring Report (HMR) 2026. This HMR sets out the council's position on housing land supply in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and supports the Wyre Local Plan 2011-2031 (incorporating partial update of 2022).
This HMR has a base date of 1 April 2026, it takes account of all available information up to and including 31 March 2026.
The council's HMR demonstrates a deliverable housing land supply position of **8.36 years**. This is based upon a backdated housing requirement of 479 dwellings per annum between 2011 and 2018/19 and the standard method requirement figure of 296 dwellings per annum between 2019/20 and 2025/26 as set out in the adopted Wyre Local Plan 2011-2031 (incorporating partial update of 2022).

119(2026-27) Councillor Report
None.

120(2026-27) Outside body representatives
None.

121(2026-27) Mayor's engagements

Date	Event
14 September	Local author Kate Simpson
15 September	Men's Shed
17 September	Booths Christmas Event
22 September	St Mary & St Michael's School
23 September	Veterans Afternoon Tea at Blackpool Tower
1 October	Nateby School
3 October	Fairtrade Coffee Morning

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Appendix

1) Item 8: Finance payments

Voucher No	Date	Net	VAT	Total	Description	Supplier	Bank
146	19/10/2026	£100.00	£20.00	£120.00	Electrical works	LJ Electrical (North West) Ltd	Unity Trust Bank
145	19/10/2026	£420.00	£84.00	£504.00	Annual Governance & Accountability Return	PKF Littlejohn LLP	Unity Trust Bank
144	19/10/2026	£78.64	£15.73	£94.37	Fuel & Sundries	Houghtons	Unity Trust Bank
143	19/10/2026	£5.77	£1.16	£6.93	Mobile phone	TalkMobile	Unity Trust Bank
142	19/10/2026	£6.67	£1.33	£8.00	Office Remote Wi-Fi	ID mobile	Unity Trust Bank
140	19/10/2026	£25.30	£5.06	£30.36	Monthly Management Fee	Easy Web Sites Ltd	Unity Trust Bank
139	19/10/2026	£175.88	£35.18	£211.06	Repair Lengthsman machines	MOWERPOWER LTD	Unity Trust Bank
138	19/10/2026	£1,408.99	£-	£1,408.99	Pension	Lancashire County Council	Royal Bank of Scotland
137	19/10/2026	£31.83	£6.37	£38.20	Mobile phone	Vodaphone	Unity Trust Bank
136	19/10/2026	£5,291.05	£-	£5,291.05	P30	HM Revenue & Customs	Unity Trust Bank
135	19/10/2026	£100.47	£20.10	£120.57	Materials	C&C Supplies Collinson Ltd	Unity Trust Bank
133,134 &141	19/10/2026	£4966.62		£4966.62	Staff salaries	Salaries to be paid electronically on 26/10/2026. Clerk: LC2 range SCP 19- 32, 'National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of service of Local Council Clerks Wales 2004.Lengthsman NJC salary range 19-23. Assistant Lengthsman SCP 4	Unity Trust Bank

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