



Garstang Town Council

Town Clerk: Mrs E Parry
Tel: 07592 792 801
Email: clerk@garstangtowncouncil.gov.uk
Web: www.garstangtowncouncil.gov.uk

Garstang Scout and Guide
Headquarters
Kepple Lane
Garstang
PR3 1PB

Finance Committee Meeting, 29th April 2025 Minutes

Minutes of the Finance and Amenities Committee meeting, held at Garstang library, on Tuesday 29th April 2025, 7.00pm.

Present

Chairman: Councillor Atkinson

Councillors present: Allan, Atkinson, Brooks, Keyes and Pearson

Councillor Halford (ex-officio member)

Also present: Town Clerk/RFO Edwina Parry and Lengthsman

045(2024-25) Apologies for Absence

None.

The Lengthsman was welcomed to the meeting, and the Committee resolved to bring forward agenda items 9 and 10 to allow the Lengthsman to participate in the relevant discussions and leave the meeting afterwards.

046(2024-25) Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

No declarations of interest or dispensations were received.

047(2024-25) Public Participation

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

048(2024-25) Minutes of Finance Committee meeting, 28 January 2025

A copy of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 28/1/2025 had been circulated.

Resolved: The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 28/1/2025 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

049(2024-25) Receipts and payments account year end 2024/25 (Q4)

The Committee are asked to approve:

- i) year-end Q4 receipts and payment that includes a comparison with budget (assessed via Scribe and Teams) and
- ii) approve the bank reconciliation at 31 March 2025 (assessed via Scribe and Teams).

Resolved: The Committee approved year end Q4 receipts and payments and the Chair signed a copy of the approved bank reconciliation at 31 March 2025.

050(2024-25) The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25, RFO

The Clerk provided background to the AGAR.

It is made up of three parts pages 3 to 6:

a) The Annual Internal Audit Report must be completed by the authority's internal auditor. The Council's internal auditor for year end 2025 is Rachel Pearson, Account-ant Yorkshire Limited, who will undertake the internal audit on 14 & 15 May 2025.

The authority should receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.

b) Sections 1 and 2 are to be completed and approved by the authority.

c) Section 3 is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.

The RFO had circulated:

- i) draft section 2, for comment
- ii) 20250331 Receipts and Payments account (detailed above)
- iii) 31/03/2025 Reserves balance (RFO note transfers of end of year underspends not yet complete).

The Committee received the report from the RFO.

No questions were raised.

051(2024-25) 85,000 limit – Review of bank accounts (Risk no 6 on the risk register).

The RFO recommended to the Committee, that in order to adhere to the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) limit of £85,000, the Committee review the bank accounts.

The Committee noted that the Nationwide account interest rate had recently been reduced to 3.97/3.9% AER/gross p.a. (variable), paid monthly, with a Notice Period of 95 Days.

The Clerk advised that the Town Council should open an additional bank account to hold Reserves, in order to comply with the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) limit of £85,000 per institution.

The SLCC Clerk Forum, had highlighted Hinckley & Rugby Building Society's 90-Day Notice Deposit Account for Local Councils as a suitable option.

Resolved: Recommendation to Full Council.

Adhering to Financial regulations point 1.7 and the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) limit of £85,000, a Hinckley & Rugby Building Society - Local Council 90 Day Notice Deposit be opened with £75,000 amount.

052(2024-25) Full Council Risk register, quarterly review

The Clerk drew the Committee's attention to the following risks which fall under the remit of the Finance Committee and what have been addressed by staff:

Point 2, 28 and 29 Risk assessments for the Lengthsman have now been completed (Thanks to Lengthsman).

The Lengthsman is attending a Myerscough Ride on Mower course at Croxteth Park in Liverpool training 29/04/2025.

Resolved: No further action required

Point 7 Inappropriate level of insurance. The insurance was reviewed January to March 2025. New equipment of Lengthsman had been included in insurance.

Resolved: The Clerk was asked to notify the insurance company of the recent electrical power installation at the Lengthsman's container and ensure that the Risk Assessment's detailed battery operated equipment.

The Lengthsman has successfully completed the First Aid at work course valid from 04/04/2025 – 03/04/2028.

Resolved: No further action required

053(2024-25) Asset Register

Councillors were asked to approve the asset register to 31 March 2025.

Resolved: The asset register to 31 March 2025 was approved.

054(2024-25) Wyre Council precept notification, RFO

The RFO reported that Wyre Council requires the details of the precept by 8 January 2026 (outlined in their letter dated 02/04/2025).

This will require the Town Council to determine the precept figure at the Town Council meeting on Monday 15th December 2025 with the condition and assurance that the Tax base figure will be sent out to Parish & Town Council's on Friday 5th December 2025.

Resolved: The Committee approved the proposed timeline and schedule of meetings as outlined below.

Town Council notify Wyre Council of precept figure	16 December 2025
Town Council meeting to recommend precept figure & recommend budget	15 December 2025
Tax base figure received from Wyre Council	5 December 2025
Full Council consider recommended 2 nd draft budget figure & precept from Finance & Amenities Committee	17 November 2025
Finance & Amenities Committee 2 nd meeting to consider feedback from Full Council meeting 20/10/25	Tuesday 28 October 2025
Full Council consider 1 st draft of budget	20 October 2025
Finance & Amenities Committee meet to consider budget	Tuesday 7 October 2025
Full Council to consider objectives for the year ahead (2026/2027) to enable budget preparations to be made.	16 September 2025

055(2024-25) Assistance of Lengthsman to neighbouring parishes

Leading on from Mr Mayor, Councillor Halford visiting neighbouring parish councils and advocating the following (received from Cabus Parish Council Clerk).

Below is an extract from the Cabus Parish Council meeting held on Monday 6 January 2025:

2449. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Mike Halford, Mayor of Garstang, said that he was visiting all neighbouring Parish Councils to promote the value of working more closely, particularly on matters such as information sharing, collective initiatives, providing cover for Parish Clerks and Lengthsman.

The RFO asked if the Committee wished to pursue this proposal and ask staff to produce a business report?

Resolved: That a business report, be prepared by staff, and tabled at July's Finance & Amenities Committee meeting.

The Clerk thanked the Lengthsman for attending the meeting, particularly in light of him having completed training earlier that day at Croxteth Park, Liverpool. It was noted that this resulted in the Lengthsman working an extended number of hours, and she expressed her appreciation for his commitment and dedication.

056(2024-25) Outstanding and new tasks of Finance and Amenities Committee, RFO

The Committee updated the action points detailed in the Appendix.

057(2024-25) Date of next meeting

To be determined at the Annual Town Council Meeting on 22/05/2025.

The meeting finished at 8.18pm

Councillor Pearson gave apologies for being late.

For Information Only

058(2024-25) Clerk's Report

a) Lancashire County Pension Employer Rates 2025/26

The future service rate effective from 1 April 2025 – 31st March 2026, is 25.5%.

Appendix

	Task (In Progress and Outstanding)	Reference	Last Committee Action 28/01/2025	Update/Discussion at Committee 29/04/2025	Action
1	Allotments	Ongoing	<p>Lengthsman to put a proposal together to clear the site. The task was delegated to the Clerk to implement, including any hire of tools. Costs to be met from the Allotment EMR and adhering to Financial Regulations.</p> <p>Councillor Pearson to make contact with Probation Service, to see if he can seek a response.</p>	<p>The Community Payback team finished on site on 19/03/2025. 8 plots to be made available – being marked out by Lengthsman. Expression of interest form live, closing date 30/4/25. New tenant meeting on site 7 May 2025. Seek quote for contractor to lay paving slabs for pathway.</p>	Residents not living in township of Garstang to be advised to contact the parish council where they reside. Clerk to collate draft agreements. (Councillor Brooks arrived).
2	Butchers Court storage	.	<p>i) Councillor Pearson stated that to the best of his knowledge the storage is secure and dry.</p> <p>ii) The Committee noted that Councillors Pearson & Allan have keys for storage unit. Councillor Halford to ask for 4 sets of keys for the passageway Gate (staff and Councillors Allan & Pearson).</p> <p>iii) Councillor Pearson offered to undertake a 'stock take' with the Lengthsman and note against the asset register.</p> <p>iv) Agree that the Chair should be continued to be held at Booths.</p>	<p>i) No further action ii) Staff now have keys iii) Lengthsman reported visit made – stock take? iv) No further action.</p>	iii) Councillor Atkinson & Lengthsman to action.(Councillor Pearson arrived).
3	Financial Regulations 7.5. In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator an authorised	Allows a signatory Councillor to place payments if the	The Clerk to set up Councillors Atkinson and Pearson with immediate effect.	Clerk/RFO to action	

	Task (In Progress and Outstanding)	Reference	Last Committee Action 28/01/2025	Update/Discussion at Committee 29/04/2025	Action
	signatory shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.	Clerk were ill/on long term leave. Enables business continuity.			
	Kepple Lane Park				
4	Scout hut car park - vehicle parking by non-users of the park and Scout Hut	Witnessed by staff, conversations had with Councillors and users of the Scout Hut	The Committee agreed that an overall plan was required to address the parking and accessibility of the car park. Councillors Keyes and Pearson to assist the Clerk and Lengthsman. Parking areas that needed to be addressed included in front of fire exits, storage units, garage doors and in front of footpath. A report to be back to the next available Committee/Full council meeting.	Lengthsman proactive & arranged for hire of power brush from Wyre Council to sweep & clean car park. Next action hatching.	Power brush – Thanks to Lengthsman
5	Grass cutting contract not formalised with Wyre Council	168(2023-24) Full Council 20/11/2023 - Kepple Lane Park	If information (how many cuts took place in 2024) is still not forthcoming from Wyre officers, the Clerk was asked to contact Wyre Councillors for support. The Check to check when payment was due.	Clerk/RFO to action	See what invoice states, find out terms, Terms & Conditions to present to council.
6	Power supply for new Electrical equipment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Clerk has received permission from Scouts & Guides to use electricity, as long as used on separate meter. ii) Staff seeking meeting with electricians for quotes. iii) PAT requirements 	i and ii completed iii) Clerk/RFO & Lengthsman to action	
7	Title deeds do not show up on land registry website		Councillors Keyes and Pearson to assist the Clerk with review of Scout Hut Lease to come into effect May 2025.	Clerk/RFO to action	To move forward in June
8	Tenancy Agreement requires alteration due to incorrect		Councillors Keyes and Pearson to assist the Clerk.	As above	To move forward in June

	Task (In Progress and Outstanding)	Reference	Last Committee Action 28/01/2025	Update/Discussion at Committee 29/04/2025	Action
	boundary being detailed				
9	Tree surveys		The Clerk was asked to respond back to the Tree Officer and ask what standards/specification Wyre Council use. The Clerk was advised to network with other Clerks for other specifications.	Clerk/RFO to action	To move forward in June
10	Goal mouth on Kepple Lane Park		Agreed. Also agree that a Facebook 'loan of metal detector' request be posted for the Lengthsman to try and locate the goal mouth sockets.	Lengthsman in conversation with Wyre Council has ascertained that there is just 1 goal mouth socket - not 2. No metal detector required.	East, west, 3 rd one installed but not 4 th . Reduce to single goal mouth, to allow ground to recover. Councillors Atkinson & Keyes to assist in taking in a goal post. Storage is an issue. Grass replaced - Lengthsman to reseed
11	Storage units require painting due to ASB		Councillor Allan reported that this should take place early February (weather dependent).	Task completed.	Give donation for carrying out work.
12	Removal of old plastic planters (transferred to the Town Council)		The Clerk was advised of people who could possibly assist.	To be removed when skip is hired to clear allotment site.	To be addressed with allotments.
13.	Boundary with Elite motors.				Councillors Keyes & Pearson & Lengthsman for July's meeting. Dead hedge impeded throughfare with clippings. Work

	Task (In Progress and Outstanding)	Reference	Last Committee Action 28/01/2025	Update/Discussion at Committee 29/04/2025	Action
					take place in Autumn.
	Vandalism on Kepple Lane Park				July's meeting
	Moss Lane Park				
14	Damage to fence around play area caused by strimming of grass		Lengthsman to review and address with Councillor Pearson.	Inspection report submitted by Lengthsman	Question about drainage funding GGPB. Lengthsman reported that wood rot is not all damage from strimmer's. Rehire power brush. Wooden fence with iron frame? Clerk to seek quotes to replace fencing.
15	Gate entrance	Finance Committee minute 012(2024-25) Councillor Atkinson		The exit from Moss lane park onto Church street is too narrow. I have struggled to get our wheelchair through there and I have also witnessed other people (on mobility scooters) struggle to navigate through it. As it is next to Abbeyfield House (people on said scooters), this exit either needs to be made bigger or the barrier removed entirely Gates on parks, gates should be pull, because a child will naturally lean/push and open them. Gates need to be heavier as the gates on MLP Children's park are too light and they have no lock on them. Doesn't feel safe having kids in the park	

	Task (In Progress and Outstanding)	Reference	Last Committee Action 28/01/2025	Update/Discussion at Committee 29/04/2025	Action
				especially when it is so near to Kepple lane.	
	Pat Seed Garden				
16	Long term plan for repaving		Lengthsman to provide a visual inspection report, on the surface, as the first step.	Inspection report submitted by Lengthsman	Do short term works. Contracting works for September.
	War Memorial				
17	Requires areas of re-pointing and inspection		A monthly visual check of War Memorial to be carried out by the Lengthsman. The Clerk to seek a professional inspection of War Memorial to assess what work is required.	Inspection report submitted by Lengthsman	Pavers are in good condition. Back and front walls need attention. Contracting works for September. Visit by Councillor Allan & take photos.
18	No disabled access			The Clerk to seek advice from the War Memorial Trust.	July