



Garstang Town Council

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Personnel Committee Meeting, 15th July 2026 Minutes

Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting, held at Garstang library, on 15th July 2026, 7.00pm.

Present

Chair: Councillor Hesketh

Councillors: Hesketh, Hodgson and Perkins.

Also present: Town Clerk, Edwina Parry

001(2026-27) Appointment of Chair

Resolved: Councillor Hesketh was appointed Chairman

002(2026-27) Appointment of Deputy Chair

Resolved: Councillor Perkins was appointed Deputy Chairman.

003(2026-27) Apologies for Absence

Councillors Atkinson, Brooks and Webster.

Councillor Pearson (ex-officio member)

004(2026-27) Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

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

005(2026-27) Minutes of the last meeting

Councillors were asked to approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2025.

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2025 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

006(2026-27) Reference material

The Committee noted the circulated reference material.

- a) [Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation](#) for the Personnel Committee.
- b) [The Good Councillor's guide to employment](#) gives practical guidance on recruiting and managing employees effectively and in compliance with employment legislation up to the publication date.
- c) Building an effective Personnel Committee; SLCC advice – which was detailed in the Agenda Appendix.

d) [Society Local Council Clerk \(SLCC\) Clerk's calendar year](#)

e) [Acronyms](#)

007(2026-27) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 - Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Committee resolved that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and by reason of the confidential nature of the remainder of the business, the press and public be excluded from the meeting.

008(2026-27) Chairman's verbal report – Councillor Perkins

The outgoing Chairman reported that the Committee had sought to make arrangements as straightforward as possible for the Clerk. The new Assistant Lengthsman was commended for doing an excellent job. The Committee noted the action taken to support staff during the recent hot weather conditions.

It was noted that this had been a positive year for personnel matters, with a focus on streamlining processes and ensuring staff felt listened to and supported.

The Chairman emphasised the importance of the Clerk being able to raise matters informally and discuss any concerns as they arise.

The Committee thanked the Mayor for her work during the year and for supporting a positive working environment for the team.

009(2026-27) Staffing report - Clerk

i) Lengthsman team operations update – for information

The expanded Lengthsman service is now operational, with delivery underway in Cabus, Cloughton, Cockerham, Kirkland and Winmarleigh. A request from Bonds and Barnacre Parish Council is being assessed.

An Assistant Lengthsman is in post. Most equipment has been procured, and the new compact tractor is already providing operational benefits.

Officers will continue monitoring performance and provide a fuller update after the first operational quarter.

Secure storage demand has increased following the Lengthsman service expansion. Temporary arrangements remain workable. Staff continue to develop a permanent solution.

The Committee commented that support is available for the Lead Lengthsman position, from Councillors and recognised the importance of maintaining adequate support to ensure the role can be carried out effectively.

ii) Support team for Clerk

Resolved: Councillor Hesketh was appointed to join Councillor Perkins onto the management support team for the Clerk.

iii) Clerk TOIL in exchange for A/L

The Clerk reported that the current arrangement for managing the Clerk's TOIL in exchange for annual leave is working well.

The Committee noted that the Clerk's TOIL reached a high peak during April 2026, primarily due to additional administration and RFO duties arising from the expansion of the Lengthsman team. Members recognised this was a particularly demanding period and noted that the Clerk was well supported by the Committee Chair, Councillor Perkins, who monitored workload and wellbeing.

iv) Cloudy IT update

The Clerk has attended two Cloudy IT training sessions to date; SharePoint File Freedom Essentials and Outlook for Email Efficiency & Time Management. The training has been invaluable in supporting more efficient file management, email handling and day-to-day working practices.

v) Clerk's Appraisal

The Committee noted the appraisal arrangements set out in Standing Orders and agreed that the Clerk's annual appraisal should be carried out in late July/August 2026, led by the Chair of Personnel. The outcome of the appraisal will be reported to a future meeting of the Personnel Committee for approval.

vi) Town Crier

The Clerk continues to be in contact with the Town Crier.

010(2026-27) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 - Re-admission of the Press and Public

The Committee resolved that, the confidential business having been concluded, the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

011(2026-27) Full Council Risk register, Clerk

The [risk register](#) had been circulated.

Resolved:

Point 1 Business Loss of key staff results in disruption to business.

The Committee noted the risk that the loss of key staff could cause disruption to council business and agreed that adherence to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations is essential to support business continuity and reduce reliance on any single individual.

Action: Clerk

Point 3 Delivery Lack of officer capacity

The Committee noted that Regular reviews with staff were in place to assess stress in system including annual appraisals.

Points 8 Legal Failure to comply with HR law and 9 Failure in legal

compliance were noted; the Committee noted the importance of the membership of LALC (who also provide support for councillors, not just the Clerk), NALC and SLCC to provide advice on technical matters.

012(2026-27) Safeguarding policy

The Clerk reported that the internal audit report year end 31/3/2026 detailed:

27.13 Is there a Safeguarding Policy in place?

Clerk: No, Policy lapsed since the Youth Council was disbanded.

Internal Auditor: Not mandatory but considered best practice. Often a requirement from grant Funders.

The Committee reviewed the circulated Safeguarding Policy. The policy includes procedures for DBS clearance.

Resolved: The Committee approved the policy and will recommend to Full Council, on 17 August, that the Safeguarding Policy be adopted and reviewed annually.

013(2026-27) Date of next meeting

16 September 2026.

The Meeting Finished at: 7.35pm