Garstang Town Council

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Personnel Committee Meeting, 16th September 2026 Minutes

Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting, held at Garstang library, on 16th September 2026, 7.00pm.

Present
Chair: Councillor Hesketh
Councillors: Hesketh, Hodgson and Perkins.

Also present: Town Clerk, Edwina Parry

014(2026-27) Apologies for Absence
Councillors Hodgson and Webster.

No apologies had been received from Councillor Brooks

The Committee noted that Councillor Atkinson had resigned from the council on 14/9/2026.

The Chair thanked Councillor Pearson for attending and making the Committee quorate.

015(2026-27) Declaration of Interests and Dispensations
To receive disclosures of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests and dispensation requests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting.

016(2026-27) Minutes of the last meeting
Councillors were asked to approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 15 July 2026.

Resolved: The minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 15 July 2026 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

017(2026-27) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 - Exclusion of the Press and Public
The Committee resolved that in accordance of 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.

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018(2026-27) **Chairman's verbal report – Councillor Hesketh – for noting**

The Chair provided a verbal update following the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's appraisal discussion with the Clerk.
It was noted that the Clerk's job description has expanded significantly over the past 12 months, with numerous additional administrative tasks and new responsibilities such as team management.
Proposal discussed: creation of a part-time administrative assistant role (approx. 7–10 hours per week) to take on routine admin tasks and provide basic cover in emergencies.
Clerk and the Chair to review the Clerk's job description and identify tasks suitable for delegation.
Clerk confirmed she is preparing the Finance Committee agenda and incorporating a staff contingency earmarked reserve to cover potential assistant hours. Recruitment timeline discussed: potential start date 1 April, with recruitment beginning January–February subject to council approval.

Intention to bring a formal proposal to full council, supported by a clear breakdown of duties.

019(2026-27) **Staffing report reporting period: 15 July 2026 to present, Clerk**

i) Lengthsman team operations update – for information

- Expansion scheme now fully operational; Five partner parishes (Cabus, Claughton, Cockerham, Kirkland, Winmarleigh) continue under existing agreements; feedback remains positive.
- Further contract opportunities emerging; staff presented the scheme to Forton PC (7/9/2026).
- Amenities & Public Realm Committee approved submission of a quotation to McCarthy Stone (Stanley Place & Stanley Gardens) – first potential private-sector contract.
- Assistant Lengthsman in post (18 hrs/week).
- All equipment delivered; compact tractor completed break-in service (approx. 65 hrs).
- Earlier delays resolved; programmed work up to date with capacity for small additional tasks.
- Officers monitoring performance, workload, finances and new opportunities.
- Full service and financial review to follow after Year 1.

Operational Infrastructure

- Temporary storage arrangements remain workable; minor inefficiencies noted; no security concerns.
- Permanent storage container scheduled for delivery 19 September 2026; service will relocate.

Clerk's Hours / Appraisal

- Clerk reported her TOIL hours
- Council approved the Clerk's appraisal and understood that the Lead Lengthsman appraisal would take place in October 2026.

Training

- the Lead Lengthsman attending GroundsFest (2-day event 16-17/9/2026).
- Clerk attending virtual ClerkFest (17/9) while preparing budget figures.

Town Crier

- Update provided on the Town Crier's health;
- Item to remain on the agenda for ongoing review.

020(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.

021(2026-27) Full Council Risk register, Clerk

Resolved: Point 2 mention H&S

022(2026-27) Safeguarding policy– for information

The Chair and Clerk will provided a verbal update; which is summarised below.
Youth initiative (Natter at Navaro's) paused pending full safeguarding compliance (DBS checks, policy, procedures, designated Safeguarding Officer).
Public-body safeguarding requirements more complex than expected; Clerk lacks capacity to progress work at present.
Councillor Dickinson to be kept informed; project remains active but cannot proceed until safeguarding framework is in place.

023(2026-27) Date of next meeting

2 December 2026.

The Meeting Finished at: 7.52pm

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