



WHITTINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held on 9th April 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllr Dave Hall – Chairman

Cllr Martin Carefoot

Cllr Barbara Clarke

Cllr Anthony Eccles

Cllr Dave Price

Cllr Michelle Woodburn

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Three officers from Whittingham & Goosnargh Sports and Social Club

Mr Mike Thorpe – Parish Clerk

Mrs Julie Buttle - Parish Clerk

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Lauren Chattein and City Cllr Steve Whittam.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING.

MIN 25/26.160 It was resolved that the Chair sign the minutes of a meeting held on 12 March 2026 as a true record.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND TO CONSIDER ANY WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

MIN 25/26.161 It was resolved to adjourn the meeting for public participation.

The Council received an update on the new Whittingham & Goosnargh Sports and Social Club from its Committee Chair, Tony Dixon who was accompanied by the Committee Secretary and Treasurer. He explained that whilst Homes England is providing the clubhouse, football pitch and multi-use games area and associated infrastructure he explained that there was a considerable cost to be met by members for fixtures, fittings and equipment for the new premises.

The Council acknowledged the Club as an important community asset for the Parish and its officers were provided with advice in respect of future funding requests.

REPLACEMENT CLERK

Under MIN 25/26.156 of the meeting held on 12 March 2026 Members confirmed the appointment of Mr Thorpe to replace Mrs Buttle as Parish Clerk. Induction training delivered by Mrs Buttle commenced on 23 March 2026.

MIN 25/26.162 It was resolved to approve the appointment and that Mr Thorpe and the Chair sign the Employment Contract.

It was noted that Mrs Buttle will receive her final salary on 17 April 2026 when she will receive her P45.

It was noted that Mr Thorpe shall receive his April salary and payment for the hours worked in March 2026, on 30 April 2026 in accordance with his Contract of Employment.

As previously agreed, under MIN 25/26.132 d) iii, Mrs Buttle will complete the 2025/26 Audit and invoice the Council separately for any hours worked at her existing rate of pay.

STANDING ORDERS

Following the publication of new version of model standing orders by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in 2025, the Council considered a draft version of its own standing orders for approval.

Members raised several queries for clarification, particularly in respect to references to:

- policies that had not been adopted by the Council.
- the rules regarding public participation.
- consideration of planning applications when deadline prior to the next Council meeting.

MIN 25/26.163 It was resolved to adopt the updated version as amended.

MIN 25/26.164 It was resolved to consider a working plan for the adoption of new policies and review of existing policies.

SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS (SLCC)

Mrs Buttle informed the Council that she had used delegated authority to enrol Mr Thorpe as a member of the SLCC and in accordance with financial regulation 5.15 had paid the SLCC invoice totalling £268 for a subscription that ends on 31 March 2027.

The Council were reminded that Mr Thorpe's contract of employment including a conditional requirement that he attains the Certificate in Local Council Administration. SLCC recommends that new parish clerks experience 12 months in their role before starting the course but once started participants are expected to complete the course within 12 months.

In the meantime, it was proposed that Mr Thorpe should undertake the Introduction to Local Council Administration Course, Three LALC Data Protection and GDPR courses and appropriate webinars to assist him in his role.

Members were reminded that Preston City Council had made available its Boxphish training programme to Parish Councillors.

Cllr Eccles provided feedback and recommended a LALC planning course that he had recently undertaken.

MIN 25/26.165 It was resolved to approve Mr Thorpe's SLCC membership, noting that the invoice had been paid in accordance with Financial Regulation 5.15.

MIN 25/26.166 It was resolved to approve Mr Thorpe's enrolment on the Introduction to Local Council Administration Course at a cost of £140 (plus VAT).

MIN 25/26.167 It was resolved to approve Mr Thorpe's enrolment on the LALC Data Protection and GDPR courses at a cost of £20 each.

PURCHASE OF COUNCIL EQUIPMENT

Mrs Buttle informed Members of action taken and proposed action to provide equipment for Mr Thorpe, the new parish clerk.

MIN 25/26.168 It was resolved that approval be granted for the cost of purchasing the laptop and accessories noting that the Clerk had been reimbursed for the purchase.

MIN 25/26.169 It was resolved to approve the upgrade the Microsoft 365 account and finance the additional cost.

MIN 25/26.170 It was resolved to purchase a mobile phone for use by the Clerk including a monthly data SIM.

REVIEW OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY

MIN 25/26.171 It was resolved to defer consideration until a future meeting of the Council.

REVIEW OF RISK PROCEDURES

Members were asked to consider their risk register following the loss of an experienced CILCA qualified Clerk and the purchase of Council owned equipment and the use of a Corporate Debit Card.

MIN 25/26.172 It was resolved that a review be undertaken in 2026/27 of the Council's approach to risk.

APPROVAL OF INVOICES

MIN 25/26.173 It was resolved to note and approve the following payments made since the last meeting.

Balance of the Church CIL Payment	Trinity Methodist Church	£24014.00	REF 154
Tree Maintenance at Beacon Drive	Greenbanks	£948.00	REF 155
Lengthsman – March 2026	Mark Cornforth	£486.00	REF 156
SLCC Membership	SLCC	£268.00	REF 157
Purchase of Council Laptop	Mike Thorpe	£742.34	REF 158

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1st – 31st March 2026

The Chair verified that the monthly finance statement and accounts had been reconciled.

MIN 25/26.174 It was resolved to approve the End of Year Finance Statement.

Cllr Price asked that his abstention in respect of this decision be noted in the minutes.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) - END OF YEAR SUMMARY

MIN 25/26.175 It was resolved to approve the 2025/26 End of Year CIL Finance Report.

2026/27 ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

Members were asked to consider a change to the way in which the Council's accounts are managed following information that the Annual Governance and Accounting Reports (AGAR) is moving to a fully digital platform for receiving statutory financial returns in 2027.

Mr Thorpe provided feedback on a demonstration of the Scribe software accounts package with full accounting support.

MIN 25/26.176 It was resolved to approve the purchase of the Scribe software and support including configuration and set up costs totalling £418 and then a monthly subscription of £35.

MIN 25/26.177 It was resolved to approve and sign the change of the Clerk's correspondence details for both the CCLA account and the Unity Trust account.

CORPORATE DEBIT CARD

Members considered a proposal to purchase a corporate debit card for its Unity Trust bank account. This would replace the current process whereby staff make personal payments for petty purchases and then reimbursed by the Council.

MIN 25/25.178 It was resolved to purchase a debit card be obtained for the Unity Trust bank account at a cost of £50 and monthly fee of £3.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS

Members were informed that staff costs for 2026/27 cannot be updated until 6 April 2026 (after the agenda was printed)

MIN 26/27.179 It was resolved to approve the following payments.

Grounds Maintenance - March	Millars	£840.00
Mowing football pitch - March	Millars	£204.00

GOOSNARGH & WHITTINGHAM WHITSUNTIDE FESTIVAL

Members considered a request from Goosnargh and Whittingham Whitsuntide Festival Committee for a grant of £500 towards the costs of public liability insurance and the road closure order at the 2026 Festival.

MIN2025/25.180 It was resolved to grant the sum of £500 to Goosnargh and Whittingham Whitsuntide Festival Committee. It was noted that this regular donation is included in the 2026/27 budget.

PLANNING MATTERS

It was noted that no comments were submitted to Preston City Council in respect of planning application number 16/2026/0204 – Land opposite Almonds Farm, Pudding Pie Nook Lane, PR3 2JL – change of use from agricultural building to one dwelling.

Members considered a revised submission of planning application number LCC/2025/0019 – proposed primary school on land situated off Henry Litler Way/Whittingham Lane. The resubmission proposes a larger car park to accommodate parents and removes the parking layby previously included in the scheme. The application still includes a multi-use game area (MUGA) but it remains unclear if this facility is solely for school use or for the public outside school hours.

MIN 2025/26.181 It was agreed to reiterate the Council's concerns that the car park remains inadequate particularly taking into account that the catchment area includes Grimsargh and Longridge.

Members were informed that Cllr Woodburn and the Parish Clerk met with the Site Contracts Manager for the Barratts housing development of 477 homes south of the new school proposed site (application number 06/2025/0008). It was confirmed that construction had started which means the Council should receive the first CIL payment by the end of April 2026. Whilst there has been no commitment to include heritage links on the site the Manager confirmed they would be prepared to work with the Council to create a heritage trail if funded from CIL. There was also no commitment for incorporation of original stonework in public spaces. Discussions also included litter bins, street furniture and the condition of some of the trees. Details of the CIL demand notice has been obtained which is four payments of £148,308.00 in June 2026, March 2027, September 2027 and March 2028.

Members were informed that following the recent hearing sessions for the Central Lancashire Local Plan the Planning Inspectorate raised several concerns and recommended measures and the need for an immediate review.

CIL BUSINESS PLAN

Members received updates on the following CIL Business Plan projects:

- **Trinity Church** – Balance now paid and project completed.
- **Woodland Path** – Discussions with Homes England (MIN 25/26. 152 refers).
- **Teens Play Area** – On 15 April 2026 Preston City Council will ask its Cabinet to approve a fully funded addition to its capital programme (MIN 25/26.134 refers)
- **Beacon Drive memorial area & Christmas tree** – Proposal to redesign the Memorial Area (MIN 25/26.38 refers) to include the Tommy statues. Consideration of an increase in costs of providing of Christmas tree at this locations and whether Christmas Trees should be sited at additional locations .
- **Playground Equipment** – Preston City Council to provide quotes to replace the equipment (MIN 25/25.134 refers).
- **Parish Walks** – Cllr Eccles and the Lengthsman to assess the published walks.
- **Clock Repair** – Members noted that the clock was now working.
- **Cumeragh drainage/play tower** – drainage investigations continue and funds available for new surface (MIN 25/26.153 refers)

ST JOHN'S CHURCH COMMUNITY PROJECT

Members noted that they had received access to the Feasibility Study report for St John's Church from Buttress.

MIN 2025/26.182 It was resolved that Cllr Price arrange for Buttress to present the Feasibility Study report to Members.

MIN 2025/26.183 It was resolved to defer payment of £42,582.00 to Buttress until several concerns raised by Members have been addressed.

LONGRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL -TRAFFIC SPEED

Members considered a request from Longridge Town Council to support to request speed limits between the end of Four Acre Lane and Alston Arms public house.

MIN 2025/26.184 It was resolved to agree to the request.

SPRING NEWSLETTER

MIN 2025/26.185 It was resolved to produce the Spring Newsletter in its current format.

CORRESPONDENCE

Nothing to report that has not already been considered at this meeting.

PARISH LENGTHSMAN CONTRACT

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 section 1, members of the public may be requested to leave the meeting at this point as the following item relates to the terms and conditions of the Parish Lengthsman's contract.

Members considered a proposal to amend the contract for the Parish Lengthsman.

MIN 2025.186 It was resolved to add weekly inspections and increase the hourly rate of pay.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members considered a proposal to hold the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Council meeting

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on separate dates.

MIN 2025.187 It was resolved that both meetings be held on 14 May 2026 with the Annual Parish Meeting commencing at 6.30pm.