LathomSouthParishCouncil
serving our local community

Clerk: Mrs Jane Smith
07353074691
clerk@lathomsouthparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of the meeting of Lathom South Parish Council held at the Cricket Club, Blaguegate Lane, Lathom, WN8 8TY at 7:30 pm on Wednesday 02 September 2026.

Councillors in attendance: Cllr Andrew Chanter, Cllr Karen Fairhurst, Cllr Ernie Pallas, Cllr Jacqueline Raeburn, Cllr Darren Steele (Chairman) and Cllr Andy Taylor

Apologies received: County Cllr Adrian Owens.

In attendance: Jane Smith (Clerk), Ward Cllr Linda Webster and one member of the public

MINUTES

1 To record apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Cllr Adrian Owens.

2 To receive declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2026

The minutes of the meeting of 15 July 2026 were accepted as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

4 Public Participation

No matters were raised by the public under this item.

5 To ratify and authorise payment of accounts presented

Lloyds Bank	160726	Corporate Card payment	d.d	£3.00
LCC Finance	170726	Firswood Bridge 1st	b.t	£140,000.00
LCC Finance	200726	Firswood Bridge 2nd	b.t	£51,917.00
HMRC	230726	Employers NI	d.d	£188.61
OPSTA	270726	Annual subscription	b.t	£10.00
Unity Trust	310726	Service charge	Fee	£7.00
N B Maintenance	060826	Bench maintenance	b.t	£650.00
J Smith	060826	Travel expenses	b.t	£44.00
Lloyds Bank	160826	Corporate Card payment	d.d	£3.00
Parish Online	280826	1year website hosting	b.t	£420.00
Unity Trust	310826	Service charge	Fee	£7.00
Cricket Club	090926	Room hire 020926	s.o	£50.00
Talk Mobile	100926	Mobile phone bill	d.d	£5.95

Resolved: The accounts listed above be ratified and authorised for payment.

6 To note the NJC agreed pay award for 2026/27

Details of National Joint Council for Local Government Services agreed pay award for 2026/27 had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The Clerk's contract of employment states the Clerk's salary is in line with NJC pay. A 3.6% increase was budgeted for, which was in line with the rate of inflation at the time of budget setting. Therefore, the NJC 3.3% award fell within budget plans.

It was noted that the new hourly pay scale for the Clerk would be back dated from 1 April 2026. The backpay will be made in the Clerk's September salary payment.

7 To receive closure of audit documentation and External Auditor's Report

This item was deferred until October as the external auditor's report had not been received. However, an email had been received advising that, subject to sign-off by an engagement lead, the audit was expected to be approved with one 'except for' matter.

8 To approve the appointment of an internal auditor for the 2026/27 audit

Resolved: to appoint Julie Buttle as internal auditor for 2026/27.

9 To discuss any planning issues

There were no applications for discussion.

10 To review / adopt the following policies

a. Adopt External Complaints Policy
Resolved: that the External Complaints Policy be adopted.

b. Review Recruitment Policy adopted September 2025
Resolved: that no amendments were required to the Recruitment Policy adopted in September 2025.

c. Review Appraisal Policy adopted September 2025
Resolved: that no amendments were required to the Appraisal Policy adopted in September 2025.

11 To agree on a maintenance plan for the Parish Council noticeboards

Members were asked to consider bringing forward the planned maintenance of the noticeboards to the current year.

Resolved: To request a quotation for sanding and oiling the noticeboards before the onset of winter.

12 To agree articles for inclusion in the winter newsletter and set dates for completion

The following articles and authors were agreed:

Wain Homes discussion – Cllrs Pallas and Taylor
Bridge update : Clerk
Asbestos update : Clerk
Hedge cutting – Cllrs Fairhurst and Raeburn
e-Bikers – Cllr Steele
Historic piece – Cllr Steele
Elections : Clerk

Articles to be sent to the Clerk by 23 October. The approved newsletter to be sent to the printer by mid-November to allow distribution in early December.

13 To review the temporary fencing in Swells Wood and agree any further actions

The temporary fencing, restricting access to the area containing asbestos, had been cut and pushed down on several occasions.

Resolved: To obtain a quotation from Working Woodlands to upgrade the two temporary fences facing the dismantled railway. The specification would include heavy-duty fence posts, a framework of fence rails secured with plain wire and staples to prevent their removal, with the existing chestnut fencing nailed over the framework.

Councillors were asked to approve the quotation of £700 for Working Woodlands to complete a day of work to remove dead trees and freshen up the footpath with woodchip as part of the previously approved woodland maintenance programme.

Resolved: That expenditure of £700 be approved for Working Woodlands to remove dead trees and freshen the footpath with woodchip as part of the previously approved woodland maintenance programme.

The Clerk advised that the litter bin at Jacobs wood had been pulled out of the ground and tipped over. The bin had been re-erected but required securing back in place. Two Councillors offered to make the necessary repairs.

14 **To receive an update on the Firswood Road Bridge Project**

Payment to Lancashire County Council (LCC) for the Firswood Road Bridge Project was completed on 17 July 2026. The contract states that within 12 weeks of payment the design and tender will be prepared in consultation with the Parish Council ie by 4 October 2026.

A resident enquired if residents living by the bridge would be consulted on the location of the traffic lights. The Clerk will forward the question to LCC.

15 Exchanges of information. For information only (no discussion)

The following information was noted:

- Notification had been received that the diversion works of footpath 24 had been completed and signed off by WLBC and LCC. As no objections had been made the new route is now confirmed.
- The Clerk would be attending the SLCC branch on 3 September. Items on the agenda include:
    - Update and information regarding the digitalisation of the AGAR.
    - Update on Local Government Reorganisation.

  Feedback would be provided to Councillors in the weekly bulletin.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

Cllr Darren Steele
Chairman **14 October 2026**