Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC)

Lancashire Association of Local Councils

Minutes of the 438th meeting of the County Executive Committee of Lancashire Association of Local Councils held virtually on 13th June 2026 at 10am.

Members present:

Pat Hastings, Broughton Parish Council
Keith Martin, Penwortham Town Council
Phil Orme, Preesall Town Council
Alan Neal, Whitworth Town Council
Darren Cranshaw, Brindle Parish Council
Gordon Smith, Treales, Roseacre & Wharles Parish Council
Stephen Houghton, Wiswell Parish Council
Eunice Houghton, Much Hoole Parish Council
Maggy Howells, Salesbury Parish Council
Jack Speight, Westhoughton Town Council
Jacqueline Hampson, Simonstone Parish Council
Peter Collins, Newton with Clifton Parish Council
Glyn Stead, Little Eccleston with Larbreck Parish Council
John Gordon, Rufford and Holmeswood Parish Council
Mark Jinkinson, Worsthorne and Hurstwood Parish Council

NB: Cllr. A Neal was in attendance in his capacity as President and Cllr. Phil Orme attended in his capacity as a Wyre representative.

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair, Cllr Pat Hastings, welcomed members to the meeting.

The Chair reminded members that staffing matters should not be discussed in open session and stated that any such issues would be dealt with by the Personnel Committee and reported to the Executive Committee in closed business.

Apologies were received from:

Cllr Jan Finch, Catterall Parish Council
Cllr Alan Yates, Great Eccleston Parish Council
County Cllr, James Tomlinson
Debra Platt, Chief Officer

2. **Minutes of the 438th Executive Committee meeting held on 28th February 2026 circulated to approve**

The minutes were circulated prior to the meeting.

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 28th February be approved as a correct record.

Proposed: Cllr. P Orme
Seconded: Cllr. E Houghton

3. **Minutes of the Finance and Management Committee held on 13th May 2026**

The Finance and Management Committee minutes were received and noted for information.

4. **Comments on reports received**

4.1 Presidents Report – Cllr. A Neal

Members received the President's report and noted the extensive work undertaken to represent and promote LALC across the county. Members noted the report.

4.2 Lancashire Offshore Wind Energy Update - Cllr G. Smith

Members received and noted the report.

It was noted that:

- Work is continuing with CPRE and other organisations.
- Andrew Snowden MP had highlighted the issue publicly.
- Care should be taken to ensure LALC remains politically neutral.
- The report and supporting information will be published on the website and included within the news section.

Members recorded their thanks to Gordon Smith and Peter Collins for the work undertaken.

5. Matters of update

No matters of update were raised.

6. Officer updates

6.1 Finance Report – Budget update from Chair

The Chair presented a paper outlining proposals aimed at reducing the current budget deficit and invited members to submit further suggestions for consideration. It was noted that the current financial year represented an investment period intended to support future growth and development.

Members discussed the scale of the deficit and acknowledged the need to continue monitoring expenditure carefully. It was reported that income from training activities had increased significantly compared with the previous year and that additional membership growth had also contributed positively to projected income.

Members recognised that although reserves would continue to support current expenditure in the short term, the longer-term objective remained to reduce reliance on reserves and return to a more sustainable financial position. The report was received and noted.

6.2 Financial Position

Members noted the Finance report submitted by the secretary. It was requested that the variance information previously presented by the Chief Officer as a one page summary be included in reports in the future.

6.3 Area Support Officer Report

Members received the Area Support Officer's report and noted the work undertaken since the previous meeting. The report highlighted support provided to area committees, including assistance to South Ribble Area Committee and the continuing promotion of LALC training opportunities.

Members noted that one of the achievements identified within the report was the development of a list of potential speakers. It was requested that this list be circulated to Area Committees to assist with future meeting planning and programme development.

Members also discussed the ongoing challenges facing some Area Committees and considered the benefits of hybrid meetings in improving accessibility and participation. The report was received and noted.

6.4 Secretary & Chief Officer Report on CRM

Members reviewed the quotations obtained and noted that Zoho appeared to offer the most suitable and cost-effective option.

It was recognised that, whilst the preferred system would require a significant amount of initial configuration and data input, it would provide a robust and bespoke solution for the organisation in the longer term. Members discussed the need to ensure that the implementation process was properly planned and adequately resourced.

It was agreed that further demonstrations should be arranged for officers who had not yet viewed the system and that authority should be delegated to the Chief Officer to progress the project within the agreed budget. Members also acknowledged that additional support may be required during the implementation phase to assist with system design and data migration.

6.5 Training Coordinator Report

Members received the Training Coordinator's report and welcomed the increased focus on training provision.

Members discussed the need to reinstate introductory training for new councillors and clerks and recognised the importance of improving the promotion and marketing of training opportunities. Consideration was also given to seeking further feedback from member councils regarding future training requirements.

Members acknowledged the work being undertaken to promote courses and agreed that training provision should continue to develop with the aim of increasing participation and supporting financial sustainability. The report was received and noted.

7. Development of a Lancashire Points of Light Report – Showcasing Parish Council Contributions and Good Practice

Members considered the proposal to develop a Lancashire Points of Light Report to showcase the work and achievements of parish and town councils across the county. The example documents circulated with the agenda were welcomed and members recognised the value of promoting good practice and highlighting the contribution made by local councils.

Members felt that a report of this nature could become a useful resource in supporting Local Government Reorganisation and promoting the work of councils to wider audiences.

Concerns were raised regarding officer capacity and it was agreed that the proposal should be revisited at a later stage when additional resources become available.

8. LALC Entity

Members considered the legal advice received, the supporting documentation provided and the recommendation of the Task and Finish Group.

It was recognised that the current arrangements exposed Executive Committee members to unnecessary personal liability and that moving to a formal legal structure would provide greater protection for both members and staff, improve governance arrangements and enhance opportunities for funding and contractual arrangements.

Members noted that a significant proportion of county associations had already adopted legal entity status and acknowledged the importance of ensuring that LALC was appropriately structured to support future developments, including Local Government Reorganisation.

Following discussion, members unanimously agreed the recommendation of the Task and Finish Group that LALC should move towards becoming a Company Limited by Guarantee. The Task and Finish Group was asked to continue progressing the detailed work required to implement the change. Members also requested that existing insurance arrangements be reviewed.

Proposer: Cllr D. Cranshaw
Seconder: Cllr J. Hampson
Vote: Unanimous – all members present voted in favour.

9. LALC Executive Information Required

9.1 Presidents Email

Members considered the request for the President to be provided with a LALC email account. It was agreed that the use of personal or parish council email addresses for LALC business created governance and GDPR concerns and that dedicated LALC email addresses provided greater protection for office holders.

Members agreed that a LALC email account should be established for the President and recognised that this approach should be extended to other office holders where appropriate.

9.2 Website Profile

Members were asked to complete a ‘LALC Bio’ for the website and to ensure that officers had the correct corresponding information on file. The Secretary will circulate the request again for members who were not present.

10. NALC

10.1 Chairs Report

The LALC Chair reported that the next NALC Assembly meeting would take place on 30 June 2026 and advised members that representation would be arranged.

Members were encouraged to register for the NALC website and to subscribe to the Chief Executive's weekly updates, which provide access to committee reports, minutes and current developments. Members were also encouraged to register for the LALC members' area.

10.2 Key Stone Survey

Members noted the recent Keystone Survey. It was reported that the survey period had recently closed and that future workshops with county associations were expected to follow.

Members acknowledged the significance of the exercise and agreed to monitor developments and consider any future proposals arising from the survey.

11. Reports from representatives on outside bodies

Cllr. S Houghton provided an update from the Forest of Bowland Partnership. Members were advised that an Extraordinary Meeting would be held later in June to finalise the Partnership's Strategic Plan for the next five years. It was noted that the full document was extensive and that a summary would be presented to the Executive Committee at its September meeting.

Members were encouraged to subscribe to the Forest of Bowland Partnership newsletter to keep informed of future activities and events.

Members also received an update regarding the Haweswater Project. It was reported that a Community Fund was being established by the contractors to support environmental improvements and mitigate the impact of the project. Further information had been requested regarding the level of funding available, the application process for parish councils and local organisations, and the arrangements for determining successful applications.

12. Future Meeting Arrangements

Members were asked to diarise future meting dates (below).

Cllr. A Neal (President) gave his apologies for the Executive meeting on 5th September and asked Cllr. Phil Orme (Vice President) to provide a report in his place.

Finance & Management Committee Wednesdays at 5pm. (Virtual)	LALC Executive Committee Saturday at 10am Virtual unless indicated
Wednesday 19th August 2026	Saturday 13th June 2026
Wednesday 25th November 2026	Saturday 5th September 2026
	Saturday 7th November 2026 – AGM & LCC Conference
	Saturday 12th December 2026

13. Close

The meeting closed at 11:30 and the Secretary left the meeting to allow the Executive Committee to consider the Private and Confidential Item in relation to personnel.

Minutes drafted by: Jessica Dibble
LALC Secretary
15/06/2026