



Lancashire Association of Local Councils

Affiliated to the National Association of Local Councils

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Minutes of the Finance and Management Committee meeting, held virtually at 5:30pm on 13th August 2025.

Members present:

Cllr Pat Hastings (Chair)
Cllr Keith Martin (Vice Chair)
Cllr Darren Cranshaw
Cllr Iain Hamilton
Cllr Jacqueline Hampson

Cllr Alan Neal
Cllr Phil Orme
Cllr Gordan Smith

Officers present:

Debra Platt, LALC Chief Officer
Jessica Dibble, LALC Secretary

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair, Cllr. P. Hastings, called the meeting to order at 17:32. As all members were present, no apologies were received.

2. To approve the minutes of the Finance and Committee meeting held 2nd April 2025

The minutes of the Finance and Committee meeting held on 2nd April 2025 were proposed as a true and accurate record by Cllr. Iain Hamilton and seconded by Cllr. Alan Neal. The minutes were duly approved.

3. Matters of Update

The Committee discussed the revised constitution, noting the process for appointing a Treasurer. Members considered whether the role should remain an honorary position or whether it should be compensated. Following discussion, it was agreed that clarity was required before the November AGM. The Committee resolved that the Treasurer position would be added to the AGM ballot and that a recruitment drive will commence over the coming months, with formal job descriptions to be published online in order to ensure alignment with the revised constitution.

The Chief Officer provided an update regarding recent funding developments. It was reported that both the PROW and biodiversity grants had been withdrawn by Lancashire County Council. Members expressed their disappointment at this decision, recognising the significant impact on smaller parishes that depend on this funding to maintain their public rights of way. It was agreed that parish clerks

would be encouraged to write directly to Lancashire County Council to convey their concern.

It was further resolved that a unified letter would be drafted to Councillors to advocate for the reinstatement of the grants and support would be provided to explore alternative funding opportunities in affected parishes.

Cllr. Gordon Smith gave an update on the wind farm development. He advised that the development will affect both the northern and southern areas of the Ribble. Concerns were raised about the potential visual impact on the landscape, as well as implications for local biodiversity.

Cllr. Smith agreed to prepare a detailed paper for the next meeting, setting out the current status of the development, anticipated timescales, and the likely effects on the parishes.

4. Officer updates to be received

4.1 Finance updates 30.07.2025 - Reports previously circulated

It was noted that by the end of August an update must be provided to NALC on the current membership numbers for invoicing purposes. The Committee was reminded that, under the terms and conditions set out in the constitution, Parish Councils are required to give one year's notice should they wish to terminate their subscription and as such, no Councils have given notice.

The Committee further noted that reserves currently stand at £36,000; however, these funds are earmarked for future projects. Concerns were raised regarding the variance between estimated and actual income for some of the budget lines, however, the Chief Officer confirmed that a plan has been developed to address these areas of underperformance over the coming months.

It was also noted that with the new Secretary now in post, and one of her responsibilities will be overseeing invoicing and pursuing outstanding debts.

4.2 Area Support Officer Update – Reports previously circulated

The Committee noted the latest reports as previously circulated. It was requested that the report format be reviewed, with future reports to focus solely on updates since the previous meeting rather than repeating historical achievements.

Members suggested that Area Support Officers should attend and present at area meetings on key topics, such as, Local Government reorganisation.

The issue of vacancies for Area Secretaries was also raised. It was noted that the vacancy in South Ribble may now be filled following a successful discussion with the interested applicant.

4.3 Chief Officer Report – Verbal

The Chief Officer provided an update on matters arising from the Whole Team Meeting held on 12 August 2025. Preparations are in hand to convene an Area Committee meeting in Blackburn, with the objective of appointing a Secretary and promoting local engagement. In addition, a joint meeting of the Chorley and South Ribble Area Committees is being arranged.

With regard to Newsletter and Marketing, the team will be introducing new features, a regular section highlighting new councillor and clerk training

opportunities, and spotlight articles showcasing initiatives and awards. Marketing approaches are also being developed to encourage greater participation in training activities.

On Training, it was agreed that each quarterly newsletter will feature three selected courses of particular interest.

5. Feedback and update from the Extra Ordinary meeting held on 12th August 2025 – on the adoption of the newly updated Constitution.

The Committee discussed the feedback from the Extraordinary Meeting held on 12 August 2025, regarding the adoption of the updated Constitution. Members agreed on the importance of leading by example and raising standards. It was acknowledged that future documents would benefit from a second review, and Cllr. Jacqueline Hampson kindly offered to assist with proof-reading. She emphasised that this was not intended as a criticism but rather as a means of ensuring that information is clear, accurate, and professionally presented.

The process for Presidential nominations was also debated, with emphasis placed on the need for transparency, openness, and clarity of expectations, particularly in relation to the President's role in external representation.

It was resolved that the Constitution be amended to correct grammatical errors only, without altering the meaning or intent of the text.

6. Conference Reflection

The Committee discussed the timing of future conferences, noting the potential conflict of an autumn date with AGMs, and considered the option of holding the event in spring. Members agreed on the importance of balancing speaker-led sessions with interactive workshops to enhance engagement.

It was proposed that a poll be circulated to members to seek views on preferred dates and content for the next conference. It was further agreed that a member engagement survey would also be issued.

The Committee reiterated the importance of including Local Government restructure as a central theme and noted the value of inviting national government representation, including from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

7. Any items to be discussed for future agenda or actions

7.1 Items for Executive Committee on 30th August 2025

The Committee considered matters for the agenda of the forthcoming Executive Committee meeting on 30 August 2025. It was agreed that biodiversity should be included, with a focus on whether current expectations and commitments are being met.

The Committee also agreed that James Tomlinson, the newly appointed Parish Champion, be invited to attend and address the meeting.

It was resolved: That biodiversity be added to the Executive Committee agenda and that an invitation be extended to Mr Tomlinson to speak at the meeting.

7.2 Items for AGM 1st November 2025

The Committee discussed potential agenda items for the AGM on 1 November 2025. It was agreed that the agenda should include a focus on Local Government Reorganisation, with contributions sought from MHCLG and NALC.

It was further suggested that a representative from the Cumbria Association of Local Councils be invited, together with an officer from Lancashire County Council Highways.

8. Future meetings listed below for your diary

Wednesday 25th September at 4:30pm

Wednesday 3rd December at 4:30pm

Meeting closed 19:36

Minutes drafted by: Jessica Dibble
LALC Secretary
21/08/2025

Finance & Management Wednesdays at time approx 5.30pm Virtual	Executive Saturdays at 10am virtual unless indicated
Tuesday 7 January 2025	
Wednesday 19 February 2025	
Wednesday 2 April 2025	Saturday 8 March 2025 Exec AGM
Wednesday 14 May 2025	
Wednesday 2 July 2025	Saturday 7 June 2025 Face to face also LALC Spring Conference tbc
Wednesday 13 August 2025	Tuesday 12 August 2025 Extra-Ordinary Meeting
Wednesday 24 September 2025	Saturday 30 August 2025
Wednesday 3 December 2025	Saturday 1 November 2025 AGM @ LCC conference tbc
	Saturday 13 December 2025