HIGHTOWN
PARISH COUNCIL

To: The Chairman and Members of Hightown Parish Council.
You are hereby summoned to attend an Ordinary Meeting of the Council which will be held on Monday 21st September 2026 at 7.00 pm at the Alt Centre for the following purposes:

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence.**

2. **Minutes.**
Members are asked to consider and approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 20th July 2026.

3. **Declarations of interest. -** Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Hightown Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

4. **To adjourn the meeting to receive public comments.**

5. **Fire safety.**
Members will receive information from a representative of the fire service regarding safety around the issue of wild fires.

6. **Remembrance wreath.**
Members are asked to note that a donation of £55 has made under the clerk's delegated authority to the Royal British Legion for a Type G poppy wreath for remembrance day and to note the details of the remembrance services taking place.

7. **Signage at Alt Centre.**
Members are to approve the cost of purchasing external signage for the Alt Centre in the sum of £54.11 including VAT and postage.

8. **Grant applications.**
Members are asked to consider the grant application received from Hightown Youth Club in the sum of £1,575.

9. **Final external auditor report.**
Members will consider the final external auditors report and consider what, if any, action is required.

10. **To receive reports of meetings.**
(For information purposes only - No decisions may be made under this item.)

11. **Correspondence.**
Members are asked to consider any correspondence which may have been received and respond.

12. **Planning Applications.**
Members are asked to consider the planning applications set out in the schedule of planning applications circulated and also available on Sefton Council's website.

13. **Accounts paid and for payment.**
Members are asked to agree the payments set out in the schedule of payments circulated.

J Farrar

Miss J Farrar
Clerk to Hightown Parish Council
14th September 2026

Item 2

HIGHTOWN
PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF

HIGHTOWN PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON 21st SEPTEMBER 2026 AT THE ALT CENTRE

Present: **Cllrs: Stobie (in the chair), Barlow, Magill, Munro, Shacklady and Williams.**

2026/57. **Apologies for absence.**
Cllr Langley.

2026/58. **Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 18th May 2026.**
RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 18th May 2026 be approved as a correct record subject to amendments.

2026/59. **Declarations of interest** - Members are requested to give notice of any interest relating to any item on the agenda.
None.

2026/60. **To adjourn the meeting to receive public comments.**
Several residents attended to express concerns about the recent fires on the dunes and it was confirmed that advice is being taken regarding this from the fire service.

2026/61. **Presentation about the Hightown sediment project.**
A representative from Sefton Council attended with a representative from the contractors that will be carrying out the work to explain the purpose and nature of the sediment project planned in the area. It was confirmed that work will start towards the end of September and it is expected to be completed at the end of November.

2026/62. **Altcar Training Camp visit dates.**
Members received details of the invitation extended by Altcar Training Camp to provide a tour of the camp for local residents on the 1st and 9th September 2026. Those wishing to attend should contact the parish clerk to book a place.

2026/63. **Alt Centre painting and cleaning.**
It was noted that cadets attended to help paint the outside of the Alt Centre and volunteers from the groups using the centre attended the week before to clean inside. Councillors sincerely thanked all those attending to help out with these tasks for giving up their time.

2026/64. **Grant applications.**
None.

2026/65. **Amendment to section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26.**
RESOLVED that the amendment to question 11 of section 2 of the annual return be approved.

2026/66. **Reports of meetings.**
None.

2026/67. **Correspondence.**
A resident had raised an issue relating to noise from the Hightown pub and Cllr Stobie agreed to pass this information along to the landlord.
Correspondence was received regarding the recent fires.
A resident advised that they had contacted Sefton asking for resident only parking to be introduced on School Road.

2026/68. **Planning applications.**
RESOLVED that the applications be noted.

2026/69. **Accounts paid and for payment.**
RESOLVED that the amounts listed on the schedule circulated be approved.

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Item 8

HIGHTOWN PARISH COUNCIL

Application for Grant for Voluntary Organisations

Please note that this application will not be considered unless it is accompanied by a copy of the latest set of annual accounts showing the organisations income, expenditure and level of balances. If the organisation does not prepare annual accounts, copies of the bank statements covering the previous six months must be enclosed.

1.	Name of Organisation	St Stephens Youth Club
2.	Name, Address and Status of Contact	Jane Bessant Youth Club Leader St Stephens Church Hightown L38 0BH
3.	Telephone Number of Contact	
4.	Is the Organisation a Registered Charity?	Yes/No
5.	Amount of grant requested	£45 per week
5.	For what purpose or project is the grant requested?	Addition leader to support the running of the Village Youth Club.
6.	What will be the total cost of the above project?	£45 ~~£50~~ per week for 35 weeks Total £1575
7.	If the total cost of the project is more than the grant, how will the residue be financed?	
8.	Have you applied for grant for the same project to another organisation? If so, which organisation and how much?	No
9.	Who will benefit from the project?	The Village youth
10.	Approximately how many of those who will benefit are parishioners?	Approximately 75%

You may use a separate sheet of paper to submit any other information which you feel will support this application.

Signed J Bessant..........................Date.................27th August 2026

Additional information to support Grant Application

St Stephen's Youth club is currently attended weekly by between 15 to 25 young people, aged 7-15, predominantly from Hightown. We meet on a Friday evening at St Stephen's Church Hall. We use the great outdoor space whenever the weather permits, you may have seen or heard us if passing by on a Friday evening.

I have been the leader of the Youth Club for the past four years and given my time weekly unpaid. Rev. Keith now leads the Youth Club once a month, also voluntarily. We have support each week from a parent (mums) on a rota basis, all volunteers. We employ a Sports Coach (local young person who is 16) each week to lead games. We also have a craft activity each week, snacks, drinks and reflection time when the children share good news and bad.

We have tried in vain to find more volunteer leaders as having an additional safeguarding and first aid trained leader would be ideal. We have obtained quotes which were £75 per week for an Experience Youth Worker/Session Lead and £45 per week for a Youth Support worker. I have attached the Youth Club accounts for the past three years. All income comes from weekly subs paid by parents (£2 per session). Any shortfall is covered by St Stephens church. We currently do not have the funds to pay for a leader and we are seeking Parish Council support with this to prevent the Youth Club from closing down.

We believe the Youth Club is vital as it is an opportunity for young people to meet with their peers and socialise safely. It strengthens their sense of belonging to the village and supports their mental wellbeing. In a village with no school, there are limited chances for the children and teenagers to come together. The Youth club has supported children through challenging situations and helped those transitioning to secondary school feel less anxious knowing they will see friendly faces from Youth club.

Thank you for considering our request for funding.

Kind regards

Jane (St Stephen Youth Club leader)

Item 9

Hightown Parish Council

Notice of conclusion of audit

Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2026

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Section 16 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

	Notes
1. The audit of accounts for **Hightown Parish Council** for the year ended 31 March 2026 has been completed and the accounts have been published.	This notice and Sections 1, 2 & 3 of the AGAR must be published by 30 September. **This must include publication on the smaller authority's website.** The smaller authority must decide how long to publish the Notice for; the AGAR and external auditor report must be publicly available for 5 years.
2. The Annual Governance & Accountability Return including the auditor's certificate and opinion is available for inspection and copying by any local government elector of the area of **Hightown Parish Council** on application to:	
(a) JENNY FARRAR, PARISH CLERK HIGHTOWN PARISH COUNCIL, ALT CENTRE, 23 LOWER ALT ROAD HIGHTOWN, L38 0BA	(a) Insert the name, position and address of the person to whom local government electors should apply to inspect the AGAR
(b) BY ARRANGEMENT	(b) Insert the hours during which inspection rights may be exercised
3. Copies will be provided to any local government electors of the area on payment of £0.60 (c) for each copy of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.	(c) Insert a reasonable sum for copying costs
Announcement made by: (d) JENNY FARRAR	(d) Insert the name and position of person placing the notice
Date of announcement: (e) 26/8/26	(e) Insert the date of placing of the notice

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

HIGHTOWN PARISH COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026, that:

	Agreed Yes	Agreed No*	'Yes' means that this authority:
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We have assured ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A ✓ — has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.
10. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.		✓	has made suitable arrangements for its IT and data management and has complied with proper practices in doing so.

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

18/05/2026

and recorded as minute reference:

2026/44

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair [redacted]

Clerk [redacted]

WWW. HIGHTOWNPARISHCOUNCIL.UK

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

HIGHTOWN PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures **must** agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	34348	35285	*Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value **must** agree to Box 7 of previous year.*
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	25000	27500	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	3106	3103	*Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.*
4. (-) Staff costs	13078	13522	*Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.*
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	NIL	NIL	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	14091	10165	*Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).*
7. (=) Balances carried forward	35285	42201	*Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. **must** equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).*
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	35285	42201	*The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March –* ***To agree with bank reconciliation.***
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	NIL	NIL	*The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.*
10. Total borrowings	NIL	NIL	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	
11 Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactio[redacted]	[redacted]	✓	*For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.*

I certify that for the year e[redacted] 2026 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval.

[redacted]

Date 18/05/2026

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

18/05/2026

as recorded in minute reference:

2026/44

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

[redacted]

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2025/26

In respect of **Hightown Parish Coucil-LA0106**

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2026; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2025/26

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

The smaller authority has confirmed that it has not complied with the governance Assertion 10 in Section 1, but it has provided the appointed auditor with an adequate explanation for non-compliance and details of the actions necessary to address weaknesses identified. This is consistent with the internal auditor's response to internal control objective O on the Annual Internal Audit Report.

The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. The AGAR has been amended.

3 External auditor certificate 2025/26

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2026.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date **17/08/2026**

Item 12

21st September 2026

Planning Applications

Single story rear extension to existing dwelling.

Juandra Blundell Road Hightown L38 9EE

Ref. No: DC/2026/01455 · Validated: Fri 28 Aug 2026

Erection of a single-storey extension to the rear of the dwelling house and a detached brick built storage shed with two additional AC condensers at the rear of the garden.

38 Blundell Road Hightown L38 9EQ

Ref. No: DC/2026/01235 · Validated: Tue 21 Jul 2026