



Astley Village Parish Council

Annual Meeting of the Council

4 May 2022 at 7.00pm

Present

Councillor Arnold Almond (Chair) (in the Chair); Councillor John McAndrew (Vice Chair); Councillors Keith Ashton, Emma Barraclough, Matt Lynch, Gillian Sharples and Chris Sheldon.

304.01 Election of the Chair of the Parish Council

RESOLVED – That Councillor Arnold Almond be elected Chair of the Parish Council until the next Annual Council Meeting.

Councillor Almond signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took the Chair.

Councillor Almond in the Chair

304.02 Appointment of Vice Chair of the Parish Council

RESOLVED – That Councillor John McAndrew be elected Vice Chair of the Parish Council until the next Annual Council Meeting.

304.03 Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

304.04 Declarations of Interest

Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interests they had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

Councillor John McAndrew declared a Personal and Prejudicial Interest as a Governor at Buckshaw Primary School and as a member of the Friends of Astley Park and took no part in the discussion or decision in relation to the grant applications considered under item 12 “Parish Clerk Report” (Minute 304.11).

304.05 Public Engagement

Members of the public are invited to put questions/make representations to the members of the Parish Council.

No questions/representations were made.

304.06 Borough/County Councillor Reports

Reports from Chorley North and Astley Ward Borough Councillors and County Councillor (Lancashire County Council) (copies of which had been circulated) were considered.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

304.07 Minutes

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 2 March 2022 (copies of which had been circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

304.08 Appointment of Committees, Membership, Terms of Reference

The Parish Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Parish Council to consider the Appointment of Committees, Membership, Terms of Reference.

RESOLVED - (1) That the following members be appointed to the Personnel Committee:

Councillor Chris Sheldon (Chair).
Councillor Keith Ashton
Councillor John McAndrew ((Ex-officio).
Councillor Gillian Sharples.

(2) That the following Working Parties be established and the following Councillors be appointed to them:

General Purposes Working Group

Councillor Arnold Almond.
Councillor Keith Ashton.
Councillor John McAndrew.

Village Development Working Group

Councillor Keith Ashton.
Councillor Emma Barraclough.
Councillor Gillian Sharples.
Councillor Chris Sheldon.

304.09 Review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation

The Parish Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Parish Council to consider/review:

- The Parish Council's Standing Orders.
- The revised Financial Regulations to address the need to obtain three quotations or estimates for orders for works, goods, and services.
- The draft Scheme of Delegation which enables the Parish Clerk and Committees of the Parish Council to act to avoid any undue delays in decisions being taken.

RESOLVED - That the Parish Council's Standing Orders as set out in Agenda Item 10 (a) Financial Regulations as set out in Agenda Item 10 (b) and Scheme of Delegation as set out in Agenda Item 10 (c) the report be confirmed subject to the typos being corrected as identified at the meeting.

304.10 Appointment of Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

RESOLVED – That the following Councillors be appointed to represent the Parish Council on the following Outside Bodies:

- Chorley Liaison – Councillor Arnold Almond.
- Friends of Astley Park – Councillor John McAndrew.
- Neighbourhood Area Meeting (NW Parishes and Chorley North) - Councillor Arnold Almond (Substitute Councillor John McAndrew).

304.11 Parish Clerk Report

The Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on ongoing projects, work outstanding and activities since the last meeting of the Parish Council.

Events Held at Astley Park – Parking in Astley Village

Mr Andrew Daniels Shared Service Lead - Communications and Visitor Economy (Chorley Borough Council) attended the meeting and provide an update in relation to the steps being taken to avoid the issues of cars being parked on the grass verges all along Chancery Road.

He reported that a traffic order had been approved by Lancashire County Council to make Chancery Road one way and allow parking down one side of the road for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Picnic in the Park on Sunday 5 June 2022 to trial the new arrangements. It was explained that the Order had been made but if the Parish Council did not support the proposal it would not be proceeded with.

Lancashire County Council had also been requested to approve a similar traffic order to be in place for the Chorley Flower Show at the end of July 2022 to enable restrictions to be put in place if necessary.

A letter would be sent to all residents of Astley Village informing them of the proposed arrangements for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Picnic in the Park on Sunday 5 June 2022.

The following comments were made:

- No waiting at any time restrictions should be introduced on Hallgate to enable residents to access the local businesses and provide a clearway.
- Would the proposed traffic order encourage visitors to park in the village rather than use the park and ride facilities.
- The West Way Sports Hub would provide additional parking.

Applications for Funding

Friends of Astley Park

It was reported that in collaboration with the Chorley Borough Council and Lancashire Environmental Fund(LEF), the Friends of Astley Park had completed a project to create a 2.05-mile-long perimeter footpath around Astley Park now known as Astley Park Trail. There were two flights of steps on the trail which were not usable by people in wheelchairs and difficult for those with children in pushchairs or with impaired mobility. It was proposed to create two short paths, so anyone needed to bypass those steps could do so. Chorley Borough Council had agreed to create one of the paths and the Friends of Astley Park were seeking funding to create the other (a 108-metre length skirting the edge of Dog Trap Wood).

The total cost of completing the project was £3,464 and it was hoped that Lancashire Environmental Fund would make a grant of £2,400 and the balance of £1,064.00 would be met by Chorley Borough Council and the Friends of Astley Park. The application was for the Friends of Astley Park's contribution of £264.

Buckshaw Primary School Art/History Project

It was reported that Buckshaw Primary School were hoping to start a whole school project in April on local history including Astley Hall. It would involve the children researching an aspect of our local history and producing four pieces of artwork that would be displayed on the outside walls around school. This would be a great way to engage the children in History, Geography and Art giving them an opportunity to learn about their local area.

The total cost of materials was approximately £410 which included eight wooden boards, paint, and varnish. In addition, the school had made enquiries regarding an artist to assist the school with the design and were requesting support with the funding of their travel costs to school. The application was for £500.

Remembrance Community Garden in Astley Village

Following site meeting on Friday 22 April 2022 with the Borough Ward Councillors and officers from Chorley Borough Council, an article for the Spring Newsletter to enable residents to be consulted on the proposed scheme. The Queens Platinum Jubilee tree with Queen's Green Canopy Plaque and two benches with jubilee plaques on them would be incorporated into the overall scheme.

Wildflower Meadow Programme 2022

It was reported that that preparation had not been undertaken in line with what was agreed between Chorley Borough Council and the Parish Council.

It was noted that there was a need to avoid areas that had bulbs in them as the preparation would remove/kill the bulbs but Chorley Borough Council would address the following:

- The Farthings to Long Copse: The areas shaded by tree canopies would be seed back to grass by Chorley Borough Council.
- Long Copse to Merefield: Chorley Borough Council would reattend to prepare areas that had sufficient light.
- Merefield to Hall Gate: Chorley Borough Council would reattend to prepare areas that had sufficient light avoiding areas that had been planted with bulbs but if possible would get the meadow in behind/around the bulbs.
- Deerfold to Studfold: The areas shaded by tree canopies would be seed back to grass by Chorley Borough Council.
- Studfold to Long Croft Meadow: The areas would be reseeded back to grass by Chorley Borough Council.
- Buckshaw Hall close entrance: Chorley Borough Council would reattend to prepare areas that had sufficient light.

In addition, it had been suggested by Chorley Borough Council that following the removal of trees along Chancery Road it was possible that some of the failed areas from last year would now have enough light to be successful this year. Given that the preparation that had been done, it was worth sowing wildflower seeds.

Nature Reserve and Wildlife Educational Project

It was reported that a meeting had been arranged with the Outdoor Play Co-ordinator and Forrest School Co-ordinator at Buckshaw Primary School on Wednesday 11 May 2022 at 1.30pm to discuss working in partnership with Chorley Borough Council and the Parish Council to refurbish the Nature Reserve.

Trees

An update was provided in relation to the trees previously planted Council in front of the shops/flats and along Chancery Road. Lancashire County Council had confirmed the following:-

- The remedial work to the existing trees identified by the County Council Arboricultural Officer should be completed within one month of 21 April 2022 and once completed the Parish Council would need to supply a plan of the locations of the trees, to enable the County Council Arboricultural Officer to approve works. Everglades Nurseries had been requested to undertake this work.
- The Parish Council would undertake the entire responsibility, financial or otherwise, for the planting and subsequent maintenance of the planting would rest with the Parish Council in perpetuity and in this respect the Parish Council's attention was drawn to the obligations placed upon it by sub-sections 1,6 and Section 96 of the Highways Act 1980.
- Once the recommended works had been completed, the County Council Arboricultural Officer would inspect the work, and if this was approved Lancashire County Council would send the Parish Council a Section 96(4) of the Highways Act 1980, license which may incur a financial charge.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the expenditure approved by the Parish Clerk, Adlington Electrical Ltd - Christmas Lights £294.00 (including VAT), ICO - Annual Registration £40.00 (including VAT), Zurich Municipal - Insurance Premium 2021/22 £449.54 (including VAT), Displays UK - Display Stands £372.00 (including VAT), VistaPrint - Table Runners £41.08 (including VAT), Hotline Branded Products - Chorley Flower Promotional items £480.36 (including VAT) and Microsoft 365 Personal - £59.99 in accordance with Standing Order 16.2 be noted.

(3) That the Parish Council support the experimental traffic order to make Chancery Road one way and allow parking down one side of the road for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Picnic in the Park on Sunday 5 June 2022.

(4) That the success of the experimental traffic order be reviewed by Chorley Borough Council and the Parish Council prior to the Chorley Flower Show at the end of July 2022.

(5) If successful, Lancashire County Council be requested to approve a similar traffic order to be in place for the Annual Bonfire and Fireworks.

(6) It was essential that there were sufficient, well-trained stewards in place at the entrance to Chancery Road and the Park and Ride facilities should continue to be promoted as the preferred way to travel to the events.

(7) Enforcement arrangements should be in place in relation to drivers who fail to park were directed by Stewards along Chancery Road.

(8) The Shared Service Lead - Communications and Visitor Economy (Chorley Borough Council) be requested to include with the letter to residents of Astley Village a permit to allow them to access the area around Hallgate to ensure there is no detrimental effect on the businesses in this area.

(9) The Parish Clerk be requested to seek the support of Chorley Borough Council to the introduction of no waiting at any time restrictions on Hallgate.

(10) To make a grant of £264 to Friends of Astley Park to create a path skirting the edge of Dog Trap Wood as described in the application.

(11) To make a grant of £500 to the Buckshaw Primary School Art/History Project as described in the application.

304.12 Statutory Business

(i) Co-option to the Parish Council Vacancy

No applications had been received for the three vacancies on the Parish Council.

RESOLVED –The Parish Clerk be requested to extend the deadline for expressions of interest in relation to the current vacancies to Sunday 26 June 2022 to enable any applications to be considered at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

(ii) Planning Issues Relevant to the Village

The Parish Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing details of planning issues relevant to the village. The Parish Council had been consulted on the following planning application received by Chorley Borough Council:

- Single Storey Side Extension at 67 Deerfold, Astley Village, Chorley. PR7 1UD (Reference: 22/00225/FULHH). The deadline for any representations was 7 April 2022.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

304.13 Financial Matters

(i) Financial Position

The Responsible Financial Officer submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) showing the financial position as at 25 April 2022.

RESOLVED – (1) That the financial position be noted.

(2) That the details of the previous Parish Clerk (Ms Debra Platt) be removed from the Unify Credit Union Limited Deposit Account and replaced with the present Parish Clerk and Financial Responsible Officer (Mr Craig Ainsworth).

(ii) Payments to be Approved

The Responsible Financial Officer submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) recommending a list of invoices to be paid between 1 May 2022 and 30 June 2022 as follows:

Date	Creditor	Description	Cheque No	Total	Vat	Net
06/05/22	Employee 4	Reimbursements (March 2022)	EB	44.20		44.20
06/05/22	Employee 4	Reimbursements (April 2022)	EB	27.10		27.10
01/05/22	Easy Web Sites	Monthly rental	DD	62.40	10.40	52.00
23/05/22	Zoom	Zoom Subscription (May 2022)	EB	14.39	2.40	11.99
13/05/22	Employee 2	Salary (May 2022)	EB	82.33		82.33
13/05/22	Employee 4	Salary (May 2022)	EB	309.96		309.96
13/05/22	HMRC	Tax (May 2022)	EB	77.40		77.40
01/06/22	Easy Web Sites	Monthly rental	DD	62.40	10.40	52.00
23/06/22	Zoom	Zoom Subscription (June 2022)	EB	14.39	2.40	11.99

15/06/22	Employee 2	Salary (June 2022)	EB	82.33		82.33
15/06/22	Employee 4	Salary (June 2022)	EB	309.96		309.96
15/06/22	HMRC	Tax (June 2022)	EB	77.40		77.40
				1,164.26	25.60	1,138.66

RESOLVED – That approval be given to the payments as detailed above.

(iii) Spend Against Budget Headings

The Responsible Financial Officer submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Parish Council to review the spend against budget headings.

It was suggested that as part of the West Way Sports Hub - Phase 2 (New Play Area and Work to Pathways at the Site) there was a need for at least two benches' parents to sit on. It was suggested that if these were not already included in the proposed scheme, the Parish Council should provide them.

It was proposed that additional benches (8 to 10) be provided elsewhere in the Village at suitable points on other roads or by footpaths and that residents views on suitable locations could be canvased via the Winter Parish Newsletter.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That The Parish Clerk be requested to confirm with Chorley Borough Council that benches would be incorporated into the new play area at the West way Sports Hub.

(3) That £7,000 be allocated to provide additional benches within Astley Village to be funded from the General Reserve.

(4) That residents' views on suitable locations in the Village at suitable points on other roads or by footpaths be canvased via the Winter Parish Newsletter.

(5) That the budget for Improving Community Engagement and Raising the Profile of the Parish Council (03-14) be increased from £500 to £1,500 to be funded from the General Reserve.

(6) That the Parish Clerk be requested to write to Chorley Borough Council inviting suggestions on how the grant of £2,000 towards the renovation of Astley Hall could be used.

(iv) Internal Auditors Report and Statement of Accounts for 2021/22

RESOLVED – That the report and assurances provided by the Internal Auditor be noted.

(v) Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

RESOLVED – As the members of Astley Village Parish Council we acknowledge 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 2022, that:

	Yes	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.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure 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.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
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.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
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.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>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.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
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.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
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
			✓

(vi) Annual Return for the Financial Year 2021/22

It was noted that the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer had certified that for the year ended 31 March 2022 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return had 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.

RESOLVED – That the following Accounting Statements 2021/22 for Astley Village Parish Council be approved as follows:

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2020 £	31 March 2021 £	
1. Balances broughtforward	53,427	59,912	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 andLevies	20,689	20,794	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	5,719	5,817	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	5,251	6,277	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	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	14,627	6,777	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carriedforward	59,912	73,469	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash andshort term investments	59,912	73,469	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	31,377	24,878	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is madeup of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loansfrom third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure notere Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council as a body corporate acts as sole trustee forand is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
		✓	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above donot include any Trust transactions.

304.14 Report of the Village Development Working Group

The Chair of the Working Group (Councillor Chris Sheldon) reported that the Working Group had not met since the last Parish Council Meeting.

304.15 Report of the General Purposes Working Group

The Chair of the Working Group (Councillor Arnold Almond) reported that the General Purposes Working Group met on 22 March 2022 to discuss the refurbishment of the Millennium Notice Board and Gateway Signs. It was agreed:

- Councillor John McAndrew had suggested the Parish Council approach the School Caretaker and agreed to speak to him, regarding his interest in the Parish Council calling on him for assistance with jobs that come up on Astley Village

- Councillors John McAndrew and Arnold Almond would resurrect the discussions regarding inserts to the Gateway Signs, previously agreed in 2021 but not actioned.

In addition, it had been agreed to place an order with White Hill Direct Ltd to (i) purchase an outdoor dual door noticeboard to display 9 sheets of A4 per window (case dimensions 1050 x 1400 x 30mm) painted green finish RAL 6005 at a cost of £679 (ex-vat) and (ii) construct steel sub frame to connect to existing posts and support new case (steel subframe powder coated and welded sections in green finish RAL 6005) to bolt to the existing posts on the existing Millennium noticeboard at a cost of £250 (ex-vat).

It was hoped that the work would be completed within the next 3-4 weeks.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

304.16 Newsletter

The Parish Council discussed the Spring edition of the Parish Council Newsletter.

It was noted that it was hoped the newsletter would be printed the week commencing Monday 9 May 2022 and distributed before the end of May 2022.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

304.17 Annual Council Work Programme - Scheduled Items

The Parish Clerk invited the Parish Council to review and update the Annual Council Work Programme (Scheduled Items) (copies of which had been circulated).

RESOLVED – That the Annual Council Work Programme (Scheduled Items) be noted.

304.18 Environment Reports

The following issues were raised:

- Concern was expressed at the standard of the carriageway repairs undertaken near the roundabout at the entrance to Astley Village and noted that the repairs did not appear to be of the same standard as adjacent areas.
- There had been reports of anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of Buckshaw Close and the situation had been reported to the Police.

304.19 Reports from Parish Council representatives on Other Bodies

Chorley Liaison

Councillor Arnold Almond reported that he and the Parish Clerk had attended a meeting of the Chorley Liaison on Wednesday 16 March 2022. A copy of the agenda for the held on 31 16 March 2022 had been circulated with the Summons.

Friends of Astley Park

Councillor John McAndrew reported that he had made representations on behalf of the Parish Council, against the proposed development at Parklands High School to the Planning Inspector reiterating the previous objections of the Parish Council and Planning Inspectorate had now dismissed the appeal.

Neighbourhood Area Meeting (NW Parishes and Chorley North)

Councillor Arnold Almond reported that he and the Parish Clerk had attended a meeting of the Neighbourhood Area Meetings (Chorley Town North) on Monday 31 January 2022. A copy of the minutes from the meeting held on 31 January 2022 had been circulated with the Summons. The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 29 June 2022.

RESOLVED – (1) That the reports be noted.

(2) At the next Chorley Liaison, the Chair be requested to raise the Parish Council's concern at the difficulties being experienced by Parish Councillors in contacting Council Officers.

304.20 Correspondence

Correspondence received had been reported as part of the 'Parish Clerk Report' (Minute 304.11).

The Parish Clerk reported that Places for People had requested the Parish Council enquiring whether any litter campaigns were being considered as there had been reports of issues near Great Meadow.

RESOLVED – That Councillors Keith Ashton and John McAndrew be requested to respond to Places for People on behalf of the Parish Council.

304.21 Date of Next Meeting

To agreed that the next meeting of the Parish Council would take place on Wednesday 6 July 2022.at 7pm.

The meeting concluded at 9.05 pm.

Chair