



Astley Village Parish Council

4 November 2020 at 7pm

Present

Councillor Laura Lennox (Chair) (in the Chair); Councillors Arnold Almond, Rod Fraser, Chris Lennox, John McAndrew, Anne Pryce, Gillian Sharples and Chris Sheldon.

295.01 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

295.02 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.

No declarations were made.

295.03 Public Engagement

At 7.01 pm it was:

RESOLVED - That Standing Order 70 be suspended, and the meeting be adjourned to allow members of the public to address the meeting.

Councillor Aidy Riggott (Lancashire County Council) attended the meeting and reported on the following issues:

- The waste centres continued to remain open. All vans and trailers (including single axle trailers) must make an appointment to visit a recycling centre.
- Libraries remained open Monday to Saturday 10am to 12 midday and 2pm to 4pm. It was possible to book an appointment for essential internet access and although browsing was not allowed the libraries continued to offer services from the door, including 'Six of the Best' collection of books from the door, collection of reservations from the door and return of books at the door.

At 7.10 pm the meeting resumed.

295.04 Minutes

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 2 September 2020 (copies of which had been circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

295.05 Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED – That the Press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of item 17 “Employee Salaries” (Minute 17) due to the confidential nature to be discussed pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

295.06 Parish Clerk Report

The Parish Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on ongoing projects and work outstanding and suggesting the Parish Council consider its Vision, Aims & Objectives to inform the review of the ‘Village Development Two Year Plan’.

The Parish Council discussed the recent security issues relating to the Parish Council email addresses provided by Easy Web Sites and Mr James Reilly, Managing Director of Easy Web Sites joined the meeting to respond to Councillors concerns.

RESOLVED – (1) That the following Vision, Aims & Objectives be approved:

‘Improving Astley Village for everyone’

AIM 1: To be a Parish where local people are involved in their community

- To ensure the Parish Council is listening and communicating effectively with residents.
- To encourage residents to engage with Parish Council activities and the decision making processes.
- To work with local businesses, Chorley Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and Places for People to improve the Village and meet issues raised by local residents

AIM 2: To be a cleaner, greener, more attractive Parish

- To make the Village a more attractive and sustainable place for all.
- To work with partners and residents to ensure the Village is clean and attractive.
- To enhance the open spaces and contribute to the environmental sustainability of the Village.
- To influence the regeneration of the built environment through responding to planning consultations.

AIM 3: To support activities that improve the health and well-being of residents

- To work with Partners to encourage and promote good health opportunities.
- To promote cycling within the Village.
- To improve access to play, sport, and leisure facilities and activities.
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AIM 4: To be a Parish that is a safe place to live.

- To improve road safety in the Village.
- To work with Partners to ensure effective Traffic Management arrangements are in place and implemented for events taking place in the Parish and Astley Park.

(2) That the Parish Clerk be requested to investigate the introduction of 'Gateway signs' at each end of Chancery Road and submit proposals to a future meeting of the Parish Council.

295.07 Statutory Business

(i) Co-option to the Parish Council Vacancy

The Parish Clerk reminded members that Keith Robinson had resigned as a Parish Councillor at the Parish Council Meeting on 28 July 2020 and Jennifer Dawson had resigned as a Parish Councillor at the Parish Council Meeting 2 September 2020. In accordance with the provisions of Section 87(2) of the Local Government Act, 1972, notice of the vacancies had been posted on the website and parish council notice boards and that the deadline to request an election to fill the vacancy by ten electors had passed. A notice had therefore been posted on the website and notice boards inviting expression of interest in relation to the vacancies by 30 October 2020.

There remained one outstanding application (deferred from the last meeting) and the applicant had been invited to attend this meeting of the Parish Council but had not done so despite them confirming they still wished to be considered.

RESOLVED – That the Parish Clerk be requested to extend the deadline for expression of interest in relation to the current vacancies to the end of December 2020 and that applicants be informed that their application will only be considered if they attend the meeting of the Parish Council it is due to be considered.

(ii) Planning Issues Relevant to the Village

The Council considered the following two planning applications:

- (a) Two storey side extension at 11 Foxcote Astley Village Chorley PR7 1XE (Reference: 20/01094/FULHH).

RESOLVED – That the planning application be noted, and no representations be made.

- (b) First floor front extension; part single storey / part two storey rear extension and pitched roof to replace existing flat roof at 112 - 114 Deerfold Astley Village Chorley PR7 1UH (Reference: 20/01105/FULHH).

RESOLVED – That the planning application be noted, and no representations be made.

295.08 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 October 2020.

RESOLVED - That the financial position be noted.

Date	Creditor	Description	Cheque No	Total	Vat	Net
15/11/20	Employee 4	Reimbursements (August 2020)	1583	43.90		43.90
15/11/20	Employee 4	Reimbursements (September 2020)	1584	57.39	2.40	54.99
15/11/20	Employee 4	Reimbursements (October 2020)	1585	57.24	2.40	54.84
01/11/20	Easy Web Sites	Monthly rental	DD	45.60	7.60	38.00
15/11/20	Employee 1	Back Pay	EB	46.12		46.12
15/11/20	Employee 2	Salary (November 2020)	EB	94.47		94.47
15/11/20	Employee 4	Salary (November 2020)	EB	257.74		257.74
15/11/20	HMRC	Tax on Back Pay (Employee 1)	1586	11.60		11.60
15/11/20	HMRC	Tax (November 2020)	1587	64.40		64.40
01/12/20	Easy Web Sites	Monthly rental	DD	45.60	7.60	38.00
15/12/20	Employee 2	Salary (December 2020)	EB	94.47		94.47
15/12/20	Employee 4	Salary (December 2020)	EB	292.30		292.30
15/12/20	HMRC	Tax (December 2020)	1588	73.00		73.00
				1,183.83	20.00	1,163.83

(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 November and 31 December 2020 as follows:

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

(ii) 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.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the revised report format be welcomed, and expenditure incurred as a result of holding virtual meetings (Zoom) be shown against 'Room Hire/Zoom Charges'.

(3) That the grant of £2,000 previously agreed to Chorley Borough Council in respect of Astley Hall be identified as a separate budget heading and not within 'General Reserves'.

(iv) Parish Council Newsletter

The Parish Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) summarising tenders received for the printing of the Newsletter. As part of the tendering exercise, quotes to create the newsletter including design/artwork based on written content and photographs provided had also been invited.

RESOLVED – That M C B Print Ltd ta Printwise (Poulton-le-Fylde) be approached to provide a design and printing service in respect of the Parish Newsletter based on the tender specification and price provided (£530).

(v) Financial Risk Assessment Review

The Parish Clerk submitted an updated Financial Risk Assessment (copies of which had been circulated) to enable the Parish Council to assess the Financial risks that it faced and satisfy itself that it had taken adequate steps to minimise them.

RESOLVED – That subject to the following changes the Financial Risk Assessment be approved:

- On page 5 under 'GDPR' replace "SAR" with "Subject Access Request".
- On page 5 under "Data protection", replace reference to the "Data Protection Agency" with "Information Commissioners Office" and change the level of risk to "L-M" from "L".
- On page 6 under "Meeting location" include reference to remote/virtual meetings and the Parish Clerk to confirm the mobile contact details held for the Village Caretaker.
- On page 6 "Council records – electronic", in the 'Review/Assess/Revise' Column, include details of the current arrangement.
- On page 1 under "Business continuity" include reference to remote/virtual meetings.
- On page 2, under "Bank and banking" including specific reference to Barclays Online Banking as the preferred method of the Parish Council conducting its financial transactions and the Barclays Online Banking Guarantee which protects the Parish Council against fraudulent activity by a third party.
- On page 6, under "Asset damage /loss – Office Equipment" inclusion of the Kyocera M5526CDW Printer.
- Throughout the document, include reference to the date the 'Review/Assess/Revise' action was undertaken (where applicable).

295.09 Village Development Two Year Plan

The Parish Council received a report from Councillor Chris Lennox (copies of which had been circulated) suggesting new and enhanced projects and appropriate budgets.

It was noted that tenders had been invited from three companies to collect, test and dress the Parish Council Christmas tree. Only one quote had been received from City Illuminations Ltd at a cost of £300 per annum.

RESOLVED – (1) That the following revised Village Development Plan be approved:

PROJECTS	ACTIONS	WHEN	BUDGET £
Improve Village centre & enhance Village Green	Work with Chorley, Places for People, The Astley and shop leaseholder as part of Neighbourhood Working projects to improve the Village Centre. Green area in front of shops - plant trees following replacement of hedgeline with knee rail. Wildflower Meadow project at the rear of the Green.	2019/21	1,000
Planter scheme	“Adopt a planter” scheme with residents volunteering to maintain planters at the ends of roads.	2019/20	250
Tree planting	Plant more trees on wet verge areas to soak up excess water & replace trees which have had to be removed.	2019/21	5,000
Wildflower Meadows	Extension of the Wildflower Meadow project introduced at The Farthings to other areas along Chancery Road in conjunction with Chorley,	2020/21	500
New lighting scheme for the Christmas Tree	New lighting purchased – installation for Christmas lights to be agreed.	2020	800
Litter bins	Work with Chorley to site additional litter bins as required, particularly near entrances to Astley Park.	2019/21	
Road safety	Following the purchase of two permanent solar-powered Speed Indicator Devices (SPIDs) on Chancery Road to deter speeding, to monitor data to identify further action to improve road safety.	2020/21	
Health & Well-Being	Encourage activities and groups in the Village; provide grants ; Christmas carol singing event (when permitted); work with Chorley on Westway Fields project to enhance play facilities , with an agreed contribution by the Parish Council.	2019/21	20,000
Respect the Village campaign	Project to keep the Village clean and tidy. Encourage reporting environmental issues to Chorley and Places for People. Provide volunteer litter pick equipment for residents/groups for community litter picks.	2019/20	

PROJECTS	ACTIONS	WHEN	BUDGET £
Improving Community Engagement and Raising the Profile of the Parish Council	Improving communications with residents through upgrading the website and creating email addresses for councillors	2020/21	500
Finger Post signs	To provide signage for pedestrians throughout the village	2021/22	2,500
Gateway signs	To provide gateway signs at the entrance to the Village at each end of Chancery Road featuring Astley Hall.	2021/22	5,000

(2) That the Parish Clerk be authorised to arrange for the collection, testing and dressing of the Parish Council Christmas tree from 1 December 2020 to 6 January 2021 at a cost of £300.

(3) That the Parish Clerk be requested to investigate the Radar Speed Sign not working on the Buckshaw Hall end of Chancery Road.

295.10 Newsletter

The Parish Clerk reported that the 1st Euxton (ROF) Scout Group had confirmed that they could deliver the newsletter during the first week of December 2020 but following the new COVID-19 national restrictions from 5 November this may not be possible.

It was noted that most of the articles had now been received.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and that the newsletter should continue to be produced for distribution once the 1st Euxton (ROF) Scout Group is able to do so.

295.11 Environment Reports

It was reported that Chorley Borough Council had now addressed the condition of the paving (including the removal of weeds) in the Village Centre and at a number of bus stops in the Village.

It was noted that a site meeting was being arranged with Chorley Borough Council and Oliver House regarding the ongoing issues with the barrier to the Community Centre/Astley Park car park.

The following issues were raised:

- The Daffodil Bulbs provided by Chorley Borough Council had now been delivered.
- The bench at the bus stop by Deerfold had been removed following being damaged as a result of vandalism.
- Places for People had worked hard in collecting leaves.

295.12 Reports from Parish Council representatives on Other Bodies

The following confirmed that there were no updates to report:

- Chorley Liaison – Councillor Laura Lennox.
- Neighbourhood Working Group – Councillor Rod Fraser.
- Friends of Astley Park – Councillor John McAndrew

295.13 Correspondence

The Parish Clerk reported that he had received notification from PKF Littlejohn LLP, the Parish Council's External Auditors that the following concerns had been raised on the basis of their review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), and would feature in the report 2019/20:

“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.”

- “The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. The figures in Section 2, Box 3 of the prior year comparative column do not agree to the prior year final signed AGAR. Box 3 for the prior year should read £6,458.
- “The AGAR has not been signed in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Section 2 was not signed by the Responsible Finance Officer before approval”.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and the Parish Clerk be requested to include a response to the concerns when displaying the External Auditors report on the Parish Council's notice boards and website.

295.14 Appointment of Committees

The Parish Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) regarding the appointment of a Personnel Committee including proposed membership and Terms of Reference.

RESOLVED – (1) That a Personnel Committee be appointed with the following membership:

- Councillor Chris Lennox (Chair)
- Councillor Arnold Almond
- Councillor John McAndrew
- Councillor Rod Fraser (Ex-Officio)

(2) That the Terms of Reference suggested in the report be approved.

(3) That the Personnel Committee be requested to review the HR policies/documents suggested in the report at their next meeting.

(4) That in future, the term ‘Village Caretaker’ be used.

295.15 Schedule of Meetings 2021/22

RESOLVED - that meetings take place on the following dates:

- Wednesday 3 March 2021 at the rise of the Parish Meeting
- Wednesday 5 May 2021 (Annual Meeting)
- Wednesday 7 July 2021
- Wednesday 1 September 2021
- Wednesday 3 November 2021
- Wednesday 5 January 2022
- Wednesday 2 March 2022 at the rise of the Parish Meeting

295.16 Matters for information

No matters were raised.

Confidential Item

295.17 Employee Salaries

The Parish Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) updating the Parish Council and the Personnel Committee on the Local Government Services' Pay Agreement 2020-21 and the rates of pay agreed from 1 April 2020 and a request to reduce the weekly hours of the Village Caretaker.

RESOLVED (1) – That the report be noted.

(2) That the contracted hours for the Village Caretaker be reduced from 2.5 hours to 2 hours per week from 1 January 2021.

(3) That the position of Senior Village Caretaker be disestablished, and the Staffing budget be reviewed accordingly.

(4) That the Parish Clerk be requested to discuss with the Village Caretaker and The Brothers of Charity the feasibility of him being able to continue to work safely during the Covid-19 National Restrictions from 5 November 2020.

295.18 Date of Next Meeting

To note that the next meeting of the Parish Council would take place on Wednesday 6 January 2021.

The meeting concluded at 9.34 pm

Chair