



Astley Village Parish Council

6 September 2023 at 6.30pm

Present

Councillor Gillian Sharples (Chair) in the Chair; Councillor John McAndrew (Vice-Chair); Councillors Keith Ashton, Rod Fraser, Matt Lynch, Edward Murdoch, Chris Sheldon and Ian Thomas.

312.01 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Emma Barraclough.

312.02 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.

Councillor John McAndrew declared a Personal Interest as a Governor at Buckshaw Primary School and as a member of the Friends of Astley Park.

Councillor Ian Thomas declared a Personal Interest as a trustee of The Leyland and District Royal Air Forces Association Branch.

312.03 Public Engagement

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

Resident made the following points:

Mini Meadows of Wildflowers Areas

A resident expressed concern at the lack of grass cutting in the village and suggested that the grass verges looked a mess due to there being very few wildflowers.

It was reported that Chorley Borough Council had confirmed that the wildflower areas along Chancery Road were sown in May 2023 but that they had been a little slow coming through everywhere. It was suspected that this was due to the prolonged hot, dry weather despite watering these areas during the hot weather to

help facilitate germination and we are starting to see a few flowers coming through.

The Chorley North and Astley Ward Borough Councillors stated that the scheduled grass cutting frequencies in the Village had not changed from previous years but would be happy to respond to requests for additional areas to be cut.

Broadfields Allotments

A resident expressed concern at the decision of Places for People to turn a former small triangle of wood and bushes behind their property, which they thought was a wildlife habitat, into allotments for use by their tenants. They had expressed concern that the land would be used for fly-tipping and attract vermin. They had stated that there was no consultation with residents.

It was suggested that the resident raises the issue directly with Places for People as they were able to take action if a tenant had breached their tenancy agreement as a result of fly-tipping.

312.04 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.

It was reported that the Village Estate Walkabout with Places for People would take place on 26 September 2023 between 11.30am and 1.30pm, meeting at the entrance to Great Meadow.

It was noted that a meeting had taken place between the Chorley North and Astley Ward Borough Councillors and representative of Astley and Buckshaw Junior Football Club, on 7 August 2023, to discuss numerous issues were discussed including funding, a refreshment area, ongoing plans and present agreement issues. It was suggested that the Parish Council invite a representative of the football club to a future Parish Council Meeting to discuss their activities.

The Parish Council was reminded that no response had been received from Chorley Borough Council regarding the request for information enquiring when the lease to Astley and Buckshaw Junior FC for the Pony Field near Derian House was due for renewal and seeking an assurance that the Parish Council would be consulted as part of the renewal process.

It was reported that residents had been impacted by the inconsiderate parking by motorists attending events held at Chorley Rugby Union and Football Club, Brookfields, Chancery Fields, Astley Village. County Councillor Aidy Riggott (Euxton, Buckshaw & Astley) reported that Lancashire County Council had no powers in relation to dangerous parking/obstruction as this was a Police matter unless the vehicles were contravening existing parking restrictions.

RESOLVED – (1) That the reports be noted.

(2) That the Chorley North and Astley Ward Borough Councillors be requested to pursue a response to the Parish Council's request for information regarding the

lease to Astley and Buckshaw Junior FC for the Pony Field near Derian House.

(3) That the Parish Clerk be requested to invite Inspector Mike Moys to attend a future meeting of the Parish Council to discuss dangerous parking taking place in the Village.

312.05 Astley Walled Gardeners Apple Day at Astley Hall.

Mr Dave Goulden, Vice Chairman from the Astley Walled Gardeners attended the meeting to discuss proposals to reduce the parking issues caused in previous years at the Astley Walled Gardeners Apple Day at Astley Hall on the 24 September 2023. It was no longer proposed to seek permission for an events/one way system on Chancery Road during the event due to the cost being £2,000 but instead put in place a traffic management plan to prevent motorists parking on the footway which impeded pedestrian access. In addition, it was hoped to provide additional parking on the tennis courts within Astley Park.

RESOLVED – That Parish Councillors provide feedback to Mr Goulden following the event taking place.

312.06 Minutes

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 5 July 2023 (copies of which had been circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

312.07 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. In particular the following issues were discussed:

Astley Village Garden of Reflection

It was reported that Councillor Sheldon had asked the installer to return the two oval plaques to go under the trees marking the Diamond Jubilee and Platinum Jubilee (with oval Face Plate Stakes Square Section Spike) to Poppy Signs to enable the Parish Council to agree a better fixing arrangement.

Chancery Road Subway

It was reported that a resident had contacted the Parish Council seeking its views on whether the graffiti which had appeared overnight on Saturday 29 July 2023 at the Chancery Road subway was acceptable or whether it's needed to be removed. Due to the nature of the graffiti (it was a memorial to someone who passed away in 2017), it had been agreed by the Chair (following consultation with Parish Councillors) that it be left intact and not removed as the graffiti itself was not offensive.

Hallgate Car Park

It was reported that a resident of Deerfold had contacted Parish Councillors following a near miss whilst leaving the shops car park on Hallgate as their view

had been restricted by the undergrowth and trees on the corner. When they had started to pull out a car had exited the park car park almost colliding with them. It was noted that the hedge, undergrowth and tree restricted the visibility of cars coming out of the pub/shops car park entrance and drivers could not see traffic coming from the park and vice-versa. Lancashire County Council had requested to the Landlord of the Astley Village Centre to cut back the hedges to improve visibility.

Gateway Signs

It was reported that a meeting of the Village Development Working Group had taken place on Monday 24 July 2023 to consider enhancing the existing Gateway Signs. Councillor John McAndrew, who had proposed the insert between the two existing posts, reported that following further enquiries he was now concerned about the durability of the proposed inserts.

Play Area and Path at West Way Sports Hub

It was reported that Chorley Borough Council had confirmed that the CCTV at West Way was monitored in the pavilion and could also be monitored from Chorley Police Station. The Parish Council had expressed concern following damage to the new play equipment and noted that there was only one fixed camera pointing towards the play area which did not cover all the play equipment.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the following expenditure approved by the Parish Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 16.2 be noted:

- Poppy Signs, Plaques for Garden of Reflection - £591.82 (03-8).
- Amazon, Litter Pickers - £23.90 (03-2).
- Post Office Counters Ltd, Postage - £1.85 (01-2).
- PFK Littlejohn LLP, External Audit 2022/23 - £252.00 (01-4).

(3) That Councillor Eddie Murdoch be requested to arrange for the installation of the two oval plaques to go under the trees marking the Diamond Jubilee and Platinum Jubilee at the Astley Village Garden of Reflection

(4) That the Parish Council does not condone graffiti on the Chancery Road Subway or anywhere else within the Village.

(5) That the Parish Clerk be requested to write to Lancashire County Council expressing the Parish Council's safety concerns regarding the Chancery Road Subway especially due to its increased use following the opening of the West Way Sports Hub, and requesting improvements to the lighting and that the walls are painted.

(6) That the Village Development Working Group be requested to consider other ways of enhancing the existing Gateway Signs.

(7) That Chorley Borough Council be requested to change the CCTV at West Way so that the camera pointing towards the play area covered all the play equipment.

312.08 Statutory Business

(i) Co-option to the Parish Council Vacancy

The Parish Clerk reported that there had been no applications received for the vacancy on the Parish Council since the last meeting of the Parish Council.

RESOLVED –The Parish Clerk be requested to invite expressions of interest in relation to the current vacancy 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 not been consulted on any planning application received by Chorley Borough Council since the last Parish Council Meeting on 5 July 2023.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

312.09 Financial Matters

(i) Financial Position

The Responsible Financial Officer submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) showing the financial position as at 23 August 2023.

RESOLVED – That the financial position be noted.

(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 September 2023 and 31 October 2023 as follows:

Date	Creditor	Description	Total (£)	Vat (£)	Net (£)
08/09/23	Employee 4	Reimbursements (July 2023)	44.20		44.20
08/09/23	Employee 4	Reimbursements (August 2023)	45.76		45.76
01/09/23	Easy Web Sites	Monthly rental	66.00	11.00	55.00
23/09/23	Zoom	Zoom Subscription (September 2023)	15.59	2.60	12.99
15/09/23	Employee 4	Salary (September 2023)	360.40		360.40
15/09/23	HMRC	Tax (September 2023)	0.00		0.00
01/10/23	Easy Web Sites	Monthly rental	66.00	11.00	55.00
23/10/23	Zoom	Zoom Subscription (October 2023)	15.59	2.60	12.99
13/10/23	Employee 4	Salary (October 2023)	360.60		360.60
13/10/23	HMRC	Tax (October 2023)	90.00		90.00
			1,064.14	27.20	1,036.94

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.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Parish Clerk be requested to investigate alternative arrangements for the planting/maintenance of planters on Chancery Road including approaching the Chorley in Bloom Chairman, Iris Smith.

(iv) Internal Audit Plan

The Parish Clerk submitted the current Internal Audit Plan (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Parish Council to review the current arrangements.

RESOLVED – That the existing Internal Audit Plan be approved.

(v) Review of Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit

The Parish Clerk submitted the current System of Internal Audit (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Parish Council to review the current arrangements.

RESOLVED – That the existing System of Internal Audit be approved.

(vi) Financial Risk Assessment

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 the Financial Risk Assessment be approved subject to removing reference to the Village Caretaker.

(vii) External Auditor Report 2022/23

The Parish Clerk reported that the Parish Council had received the External Auditor's Report and Certificate for 2022/23. The External Auditor's limited assurance opinion was that on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in their opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR was in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met.

RESOLVED – That the External Auditor's Report and Certificate for 2022/23 be noted.

312.10 Winter Newsletter 2023

The Parish Council discussed the timing and potential articles for the Winter edition of the Parish Council Newsletter and the following articles were suggested:

- Chair's Report (Councillor Gillian Sharples).
- Christmas Event 2023 (Councillor Emma Barraclough).
- Chorley Flower Show 2023 (Councillor Emma Barraclough).
- Monthly Litter Picks (Councillor Keith Ashton).
- Update on the Village Development Plan (Councillor Chris Sheldon).
- Update on the Astley Village Garden of Reflection (Councillor Ian Thomas).

RESOLVED (1) That the following timetable for the production of the Winter edition of the Parish Council Newsletter be agreed:

- Parish Councillors email the Parish Clerk with suggested articles for inclusion in the Winter Newsletter by Sunday 1 October 2023 and those articles be submitted to by Sunday 15 October 2023.
- All articles be sent to the Printers by Monday 23 October 2023.
- Deadline for Councillors to comment on the proof – Wednesday 1 November 2023.
- Newsletter delivered from Thursday 16 November 2023.

312.11 Chorley Flower Show 2023

The Parish Council reviewed the attendance by Parish Councillors at the Chorley Flower Show on 28, 29 and 30 July 2023 between 10am - 2.15pm and 1.45pm – 5pm and discussed whether it was necessary to attend on all three days.

312.12 Christmas Event 2023

The Parish Clerk reported that the Community Centre had been booked for Friday 8 December 2023 from 5pm until 9pm. The following were suggested:

- Tubs of chocolates be purchased to hand out chocolates during the Christmas singing.
- The number of carols be reduced and should be recognisable to children.
- The Parish Council should purchase selection boxes for every child at Buckshaw Primary School.
- That members of Chorley Little Theatre be approached to sing at the event.

RESOLVED – That following the Christmas singing round the Christmas Tree at 6pm, refreshments be made available in the Community Centre and the Parish Clerk be authorised to approve the associated expenditure from within the existing budget allocated (£800).

312.13 Environment Reports

No issues were raised.

312.14 Reports from Parish Council representatives on Other Bodies

Chorley Liaison

The Chair provided a report following the meeting of the Chorley Liaison held on 19 July 2023 and the Agenda and Key Papers from that meeting had been circulated with the Summons.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

312.15 Correspondence

Correspondence received had been reported as part of the 'Parish Clerk Report' (Minute 312.07).

312.16 Matters for Information

It was reported that Chorley Rugby Union Club was no longer associated with the Chorley Community Trust and had moved from Brookfields, Chancery Fields in Astley Village. The Club had originally secured land off Chancery Road in 1981 before it was sold to the Chorley Community Trust in 2015 who had overseen the re-development of the site with Persimmon Homes building houses on Chancery Fields. At that time, there had been an assurance from the Trust that the development was to secure the long-term future of Rugby being played at this site.

RESOLVED – That the Parish Clerk be requested to write to the Chorley Community Trust seeking an explanation regarding the current developments in view of the assurances previously provided as part of the re-development of the site for housing.

312.17 Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED - It was agreed that the next meeting of the Parish Council would take place on Wednesday 1 November 2023 at 6.30 pm.

The meeting concluded at 8.40 pm.

Chair