



## Astley Village Parish Council

### Annual Meeting of the Council

6 May 2026 at 6.30 pm

Present

Councillor John McAndrew (Vice-Chair) in the Chair; Councillors Keith Ashton, Elaine Bibby, Neil Forkin Chris Sheldon and Ian Thomas.

#### **328.01 Election of the Chair of the Parish Council**

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

#### **328.02 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.

Councillor John McAndrew in the Chair

#### **328.03 Apologies for Absence**

Councillors Gillian Sharples.

#### **328.04 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 Interest as a Governor at Buckshaw Primary School.

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

Councillor Ian Thomas declared a Personal Interest as a trustee of The Jubilee Tower Credit Union Ltd.

## 328.05 Public Engagement

Members of the public are invited to put questions/make representations to the members of the Parish Council. The following issues were raised:

### **Chancery Road underpass**

A resident referred to broken glass and rubbish left in the Chancery Road underpass and asked if an additional litter bin or CCTV could be provided.

Councillor Adrian Lowe undertook to arrange for the underpass to be swept by Chorley Borough Council and investigate moving the existing litter bin closer to the underpass itself.

### **Wymundsley**

A resident reported that it was very difficult to egress Wymundsley onto Chancery Road and suggested that a convex traffic mirror be installed on the existing lamppost.

### **Dangerous Parking**

Residents complained of parked cars on dropped crossings. It was noted that Parish Council had written to Lancashire County Council, requesting the introduction of traffic regulation orders (no waiting at any time) on both sides of the bend at Hallgate and Chancery Road to prevent parking in view of the indiscriminate and dangerous parking currently taking place at this location.

It was reported that an annual permit to park on the Hallgate Car Park was available at a cost of £400 and it was suggested that Chorley Borough Council should offer those working for business and staff employed by Oliver House School a permit at a discounted rate with the option to pay for this monthly.

Residents were advised to send photographs of inconsiderate/ dangerous parking in the village to Lancashire County Council and Lancashire Police *They can report future on their non-emergency number, 101. they can also report them through their '[Do It Online](#)' webpage*".

### **Wildflower Meadows**

Residents suggested that the Wildflower Meadows/ Corridors were attracting vermin near Ravensthorpe and requested that the verges be returned to grassed areas and wildflowers be planted in raised planters. They believed the Wildflower Meadows/ Corridors made the village look untidy and was not appealing visually to residents or visitors.

A Councillor suggested that residents contact the Environmental Health Department at Chorley Borough Council to request the Pest Control Team to install boxes to control the rats.

Councillor Adrian Lowe undertook to raise the issue with Pest Control Team at Chorley Borough Council.

### **328.06 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. Councillors Adrian Lowe and Jean Sherwood attended the meeting. It was noted that County Councillor Aidy Riggott had offered his apologies.

It was reported that the missing brickwork at the Chancery Road underpass had been replaced and cleaning of the area has been undertaken. A request had also been made to point the brickwork.

It was reported that it had taken seven months to have the faulty streetlight on Buckshaw Hall Close repaired. This was a result of Lancashire County Council, ENW and Places for People each refusing to accept the issue was their responsibility.

RESOLVED – (1) That the reports be noted.

(2) That Chorley Borough Council be requested to offer those working for business and staff employed by Oliver House School a permit at a discounted rate with the option to pay for this monthly.

(3) That Lancashire County Council be requested to consider the installation of a convex traffic mirror on the existing lamppost due to the difficulty of egressing Wymundsley onto Chancery Road.

### **328.07 Minutes**

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 6 March 2026 (copies of which had been circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **328.08 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.
- Financial Regulations.
- Scheme of Delegation.

RESOLVED - That the Parish Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation be confirmed subject to:

#### **Financial Regulations**

11.1.7 Routine orders for the supply of goods and maintenance covered by the estimates shall be placed by the Parish Clerk or appropriate officer, together with orders for urgent repairs to the Parish Councils assets, regarding which he/she shall consult the Chair.

The deletion of "he/she" and replace with "the Parish Clerk".

### **328.09 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 Neil Forkin.  
Councillor John McAndrew (Ex-officio).

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

#### **General Purposes Working Group**

Councillor Keith Ashton.  
Councillor Neil Forkin.  
Councillor John McAndrew.  
Councillor Ian Thomas.

#### **Village Development Working Group**

Councillor Keith Ashton.  
Councillor Elaine Bibby.  
Councillor Neil Forkin.  
Councillor Chris Sheldon.  
Councillor Ian Thomas.

### **328.10 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 Gillian Sharples.
- Neighbourhood Area Meeting (NW Parishes and Chorley North) - Councillor Gillian Sharples (Substitute Councillor John McAndrew).

### **328.11 Parish Clerk Report**

The Parish Clerk and 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.

#### **Refurbishment of the Footbridge between The Farthings and Long Copse**

The Parish Clerk reported that Lindsey Blackstock, Open Space Strategy Officer (Chorley Borough Council) had met with the contractor to get a quote so I would forward it to the Parish Council in due course.

## Christmas Event 2026

Councillor John McAndrew had discussed with the Headteacher of Buckshaw Primary School, changes to the format of the Christmas event and the school were happy to support the event as follows:

- The event being held round the Christmas Tree on the Village Green. The school day at Buckshaw Primary School for KS2 (juniors) ends at 3.20pm and it was suggested the event starts at 3.30pm. Parents would bring their child across the road from the school to the Village Green.
- There would be carols accompanied by Chorley Silver Cross band. The carols could be reviewed to ensure they were known by the children.
- Two pupils (one from KS1 (Infants) and one from KS2 (juniors)) would be invited to switch on the lights at 3.45 pm. The lights would be switched on manually by the electrician. The school would organise a competition to design a poster to promote the event which could be displayed on the Parish Council Noticeboards, and the winners will switch on the lights and receive a book voucher.
- Invitations to attend the event would be sent to all residents via the Winter Newsletter/posters in the Parish Council Noticeboards and the Chair will write to Ravensthorpe, and the local Wards/County Councillors inviting them to attend.
- Refreshments would be served by Parish Councillors in the Community Centre from around 4pm until 6pm.
- The children would have the opportunity to meet Father Christmas in the small meeting room in the Community Centre (where we hold our meetings) and each child would receive a selection box rather than receiving them at school as at present.
- Holding the event on a Thursday instead of a Friday.

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:

- Lenovo, ThinkPad Laptop £723.02
- Post Office Counters Ltd, Stamps £23.55
- ICO, Annual Registration £52.00
- Microsoft, Microsoft 365 Personal £84.99
- Zurich Municipal, Insurance Premium 2025-26 £518.53

(3) That the Parish Council should proceed with the changes to the format of the Christmas event as outlined above for 2026.

(4) That Councillor Chris Sheldon be authorised to agree on behalf of the Parish Council the works to refurbish the Footbridge between The Farthings and Long Copse subject to the works not exceeding the budget allocated.

(5) That the Parish Clerk be requested to approach DWG (NW) Limited regarding replacing the Coping stones at the planter/ Parish Council notice board at the corner of Hallgate.

(6) That the Parish Clerk be requested to make arrangements for a meeting of the Village Development Working Group to take place on Wednesday 3 June 2026 at 6:30pm via Zoom to discuss:

- Improvements to the Interpretation Boards at West Way Nature Reserve and Councillor Elaine Bibby be requested to confirm what improvements had been proposed by The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside.
- Gateway Sign Enhancements.
- Further planting at the Astley Village Community Garden of Reflection.

## **328.12 Statutory Business**

### (i) Co-option to the Parish Council Vacancies

It was noted that there were three vacancies on the Parish Council. These had been advertised on the Parish Council Noticeboards and website.

RESOLVED – The Parish Clerk be requested to invite expressions of interest 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 applications received by Chorley Borough Council:

- An application for the installation of a 0.8m high fence on top of existing 1m high stone boundary wall at the front of the property (total boundary height of 1.8m along an 18m section). The purpose of the proposed change is to increase privacy, security and reduce traffic noise, whilst also preventing the existing hedge having adverse impact on visibility splay, improving safety for both pedestrians and vehicles. The proposed height is consistent with neighbouring properties and character of the area. The fence colour has been selected to blend with existing boundary features (Reference: 26/00261/FULHH) at Hillside, Southport Road, Chorley, PR7 1NT

The deadline for any representations was 20 April 2026.

- An application for single storey side and rear extension with associated alterations following demolition of existing rear conservatory (Reference: 26/00297/FULHH) at 38 Harperley, Astley Village, Chorley, PR7 1XB

The deadline for any representations was 5 May 2026.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

### 328.13 Financial Matters

#### (i) Financial Position

The Responsible Financial Officer submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) showing the financial position as at 23 April 2026.

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 May 2026 and 30 June 2026 as follows:

Date	Creditor	Description	Total (£)	Vat (£)	Net (£)
08/05/2026	Employee 4	Reimbursements (March 2026)	42.42		42.42
08/05/2026	Employee 4	Reimbursements (April 2026)	43.82		43.82
01/05/2026	Easy Web Sites	Monthly rental	68.64	11.44	57.20
23/05/2026	Zoom	Zoom Subscription (May 2026)	16.79	2.80	13.99
15/05/2026	Employee 4	Salary (May 2026)	428.30		428.30
15/05/2026	HMRC	Tax (May 2026)	107.20		107.20
15/05/2026	HMRC	National Insurance May 2026)	0.00		0.00
01/06/2026	Easy Web Sites	Monthly rental	68.64	11.44	57.20
23/06/2026	Zoom	Zoom Subscription (June 2026)	16.79	2.80	13.99
15/06/2026	Employee 4	Salary (June 2026)	428.50		428.50
15/06/2026	HMRC	Tax (June 2026)	107.00		107.00
15/06/2026	HMRC	National Insurance (June 2026)	0		0
			<b>1,328.10</b>	<b>28.48</b>	<b>1,299.62</b>

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.

#### (iv) Insurance Policy Schedule and Policy Document

The Responsible Financial Officer invited to consider the renewal of the Parish Council insurance from 1 June 2026. A copy of the Insurance Policy Schedule and Policy Document (with details of the main changes to the updated policy wording) (copies of which had been circulated) were reviewed. The Premium for 2026/27 was £518.53 compared to £436.44 in 2025/26.

RESOLVED - The Parish Clerk be requested to renew the existing insurance cover with Zurich Municipal Insurance at a cost of £518.53

(v) Internal Auditors Report and Statement of Accounts for 2025/26

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

(vi) Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

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 2026, 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
			✓

*has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.*

(vii) Annual Return for the Financial Year 2025/26

It was noted that the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer had certified that for the year ended 31 March 2026 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 – (1) That the following Accounting Statements 2025/26 for Astley Village Parish Council be approved as follows together with the explanation of any significant variances year on year in Section 2:

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	
			<i>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.</i>
<b>1.</b> Balances brought forward	<b>58,994</b>	<b>68,401</b>	<i>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.</i>
<b>2.</b> (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	<b>20,389</b>	<b>20,278</b>	<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
<b>3.</b> (+) Total other receipts	<b>5,352</b>	<b>5,511</b>	<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
<b>4.</b> (-) Staff costs	<b>6,550</b>	<b>6,836</b>	<i>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.</i>
<b>5.</b> (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority’s borrowings (if any).</i>
<b>6.</b> (-) All other payments	<b>9,784</b>	<b>20,863</b>	<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
<b>7.</b> (=) Balances carried forward	<b>68,401</b>	<b>66,491</b>	<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
<b>8.</b> Total value of cash and short term investments	<b>68,401</b>	<b>66,491</b>	<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – <b>To agree with bank reconciliation.</b></i>
<b>9.</b> Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	<b>32,002</b>	<b>32,002</b>	<i>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.</i>
<b>10.</b> Total borrowings	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>
<b>For Local Councils Only</b>	Yes	No	N/A
<b>11a.</b> Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.</i>
<b>11b.</b> Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.</i>

**328.14 Spring Newsletter 2026**

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 12 May 2025 and distributed from 22 May 2026 and the Parish Clerk should be notified of any comments/ suggested changes no later than noon on Thursday 7 May 2026.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

**328.15 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.

**328.16 Reports from Parish Council representatives on Other Bodies**

Chorley Liaison

The Chorley Liaison had been held on 18 March 2026. A copy of the Agenda and Key Papers had been circulated for information.

Neighbourhood Area Meeting (NW Parishes and Chorley North)

It was reported that it had been agreed to pause the Neighbourhood Area Meetings, with a decision on their future to be taken after the elections and therefore the next meeting on 17 March 2026 at 6.30pm had been cancelled. The next meeting would take place on Thursday 18 June 2026.

**328.15 Correspondence**

Correspondence received had been reported as part of the ‘Parish Clerk Report’ (Minute 328.11).

**327.16 Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the next meeting of the Parish Council will take place on Wednesday 1 July 2026 at 6:30 pm.

It was reported that Chorley Borough Council had now confirmed the decarbonisation works would start on the 15 May 2026 and should be completed on the 28 September 2026. This would mean that the Community Centre would be unavailable for the Parish Council Meetings on 1 July and 2 September 2026.

RESOLVED – That in view of the failure by Chorley Borough Council to inform the Parish Council that the works had been delayed which had resulted in the January and March meetings unnecessarily being held at the West Way Sports Hub, Chorley Borough Council be requested to make arrangements and fund the cost of the Parish Council Meetings on 1 July and 2 September 2026 being held at the West Way Sports Hub.

The meeting concluded at 8.00 pm.

Chair