



Astley Village Parish Council

Meeting of the Council 3 September 2025 at 6.30pm

Present

Councillor Gillian Sharples (Chair) in the Chair John McAndrew (Vice-Chair); Councillors Keith Ashton, Chris Sheldon and Ian Thomas.

324.01 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Elaine Bibby and Neil Forkin.

324.02 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.

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

324.03 Public Engagement

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

A resident from Wymundsley attended the meeting and explained that their adjacent neighbour had restricted access to a surface water manhole which only served their property. The surface water manhole was on land outside the boundary of their property, and their neighbour had planted conifers and was refusing access to the manhole. It was their understanding that the Covenant contained in the title deeds to the property, had included the land within the boundary of their neighbour's property to avoid the Chorley Borough Council having to maintain it but that they had a right of access to the surface water manhole. They enquired whether the Parish Council had a copy of the Covenant referred to.

The Parish Council confirmed that they did not have a copy of the Covenant and suggested that the resident sought legal advice on the matter.

It was reported that a resident from Judeland had contacted the Parish Council concerned about the overgrown hedge on verge and footpath on the east side of Judeland at the corner of Chancery Road.

It was suggested that the Parish Clerk contact Chorley Borough Council regarding the footpath) and Lancashire County Council as the highway authority expressing concern overgrown hedge on verge which was impacting on the site lines and visibility on the east side of Judeland at the corner of Chancery Road.

A resident asked why in the Spring Parish Council Newsletter, residents had been asked to suggest locations as to where additional benches could be located around Astley Village when benches had been removed. A Parish Councillor suggested that the benches referred to by the resident were on land within the ownership of Places for People and the benches had not been removed by the Parish Council.

324.04 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. County Councillor Aidy Riggott attended the meeting and reported that the portable toilets which had been located at the Farthings were in connection to the works taking place at Derian House as this was the only suitable location. In addition, he reported that there had been a delay in installing the new LED lamps to the existing lighting columns on the Farthings.

RESOLVED – That the reports be noted.

324.05 Minutes

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 2 July 2025 (copies of which had been circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject under minute 323.10, the date of the Parish Christmas event reading “Friday 5 December 2025”.

324.06 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.

Partnership Street Surgery

It was reported that the Partnership Street Surgery organised by Places for People would take place on 30 September 2025 between 2-4pm from the entrance to Great Meadow.

Lancashire Parish and Town Council Conference - Saturday 1 November 2025

Councillor Ian Thomas confirmed that he would be attending the Lancashire Parish and Town Council Conference on Saturday 1 November 2025 and other Parish Councillors were encouraged to attend.

West Way Active Track Update

The Parish Clerk reminded the Parish Councillors that the Parish Council had requested a path across the middle of the West Way site to link to the play area. Chorley Borough Council had stated that they had tried various different designs of the site and consulted with the FA and Football Foundation and also Astley and Buckshaw Football Club who had no objections to the concept of a path but unfortunately there was not the space to fit in a formal path.

Parish Councillors expressed their disappointment and suggested that residents and users would still cross the site and create an informal grass path link either between the two-football pitched or across the football pitches themselves.

In particular the following issues in the report were discussed:

Proposed Planting at the Astley Village Garden of Reflection

The Estates Team at Chorley Borough Council were in the process of preparing a licence agreement stating that the Parish Council would be responsible for the maintenance of the new planting at the Astley Village Garden of Reflection.

It had previously been acknowledged that the permission of Chorley Borough Council would be required to undertake planting on their land and the future maintenance needed to be considered e.g. would this be undertaken by the Parish Council contractor.

It was reported that DWG (NW) Limited would confirm the date the works would commence in September 2025.

Training on Prevent

It was reported that Tim Horobin, Prevent Delivery Officer from the Community Safety Team at Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council had confirmed it was possible to deliver training on Prevent to members of the Parish Council via Microsoft Teams.

Proposed Improvements to the Chancery Road Underpass

It was reported that a representative from Bryan Lee Builders had met Councillor Chris Sheldon to consider the possible alternatives to renewing the brickwork. They had concluded that it would not be viable to replace the brickwork with sleepers and recommended not take any action on the brickwork for now.

They had also discussed "tidying up" the undergrowth, mainly tree saplings around the entrance to the underpass, which he said could be done. Councillor Sheldon has suggested this is not done until the Autumn as it is still bird nesting season.

Councillor Sheldon suggested that the Borough Ward Councillors be asked if they could ask Chorley Borough Council to support a project to tidy up the brickwork and vegetation around the entrances each side of the underpass, as a "visible" projects to be done this financial year.

Chorley Silver Brass Band

It was reported that unfortunately, Chorley Silver Band were unable to play at the Parish Christmas event as they need to start playing at our Blackburn Cathedral.

They had suggested that if they could assist with any other occasions to contact them, the more notice the better and they will endeavour to book the Parish Council in.

Finger Post Signs

The Parish Clerk had written Chorley Borough Council requesting a licence for four new finger post signs:

- Two fingers directing pedestrians to Finger 1 - Astley Park via the tarmac path and Finger 2 - woodland path.
- Two fingers (just before Merefield) directing pedestrians to Finger 1 - Astley Village Centre (via Chancery Road) Finger 2 – Astley Park.
- One Finger directing pedestrians to the Village Centre via shortcut via Buckshaw Hall Close, Broadfields, Great Meadow and the same wording on a second one finger post at the other side of the pond to provide continuation.

Chorley Borough Council had confirmed that the signs were acceptable and would prepare a new licence agreement once the exact locations had been confirmed. They have also apologised for the oversight in not responding earlier.

Michelle Newman, Community Housing Manager had confirmed that Places for People were agreeable to installation of a fingerpost sign on their land at the proposed location.

White Hill Direct Ltd have provided the following quote for the supply and installation of the fingerpost signs:

System 1 (quantity required 2)

Double Finger Post system

This system gives both directional finger arms on one level

Finger size 770mm x 165mm Face to View

Direction and logo applied to both faces

Chevron End 16mm Double Plate

Aluminium Construction

Main post 76mm x 3500mm

Ball Finial for 76mm Round post

Price £489.00 each (excluding VAT)

System 2 (quantity required 2)

Single Finger Post 770mm x 165mm Face to View

Direction and Logo applied both faces

Chevron End 16mm Double Plate

Aluminium Construction

Main post 76mm x 3500mm

Ball Finial for 76mm Round post

Price £389.00 each (excluding VAT)

Powder Coat finish To RAL 6005 Green (moss Green)

Proof layouts provided prior to production and manufacture

Installation of 4 systems as outlined above at locations in Astley Village.

Assumed locations require soft ground installation, should there be hard ground, tarmac, paving etc then additional charges would be required for machinery hire for cutting and repair materials for reinstating the Hard standing with tarmac etc.

Installation of 4 Units into Soft grounds £ 395.00 (excluding VAT)

Installation of 4 Units into Hard grounds £490.00 (excluding VAT)

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:

- Amazon, Laminated Sheets (REFUND) £12.44
- Amazon, Laminated Sheets £12.44
- Amazon, Black Plastic Cable Ties (REFUND) £7.49
- Amazon, Black Plastic Cable Ties £7.49
- Amazon, Strong Drawstring Bin Bag Liners £24.99
- Elite, Hi Viz Jackets £87.49
- SLCC, Annual Membership Fee £110.00
- Hartwood Maintenance, Maintenance of Planters £170.49
- Bryan Lee Builders, Underpass Works £5,094.44
- PFK Littlejohn LLP, External Audit 2024/25 £252.00

(3) That Chorley Silver Brass Band be invited to play at the Parish Christmas event on Friday 4 December 2026.

(4) That approval be given to the Parish Clerk proceeding with the quote provided by White Hill Direct Ltd for the supply and installation of the fingerpost signs.

(5) That Bryan Lee Builders be requested to replace the sleepers on the school side of the underpass as soon as possible.

(6) That the Borough Ward Councillors be asked to support a project to tidy up the brickwork and vegetation around the entrances each side of the underpass, as a "visible" projects to be done this financial year from within the delegated ward budget allocated to them.

- (7) That the Parish Clerk be requested to arrange for Tim Horobin, Prevent Delivery Officer from the Community Safety Team at Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to deliver training on Prevent to members of the Parish Council on Wednesday 29 October 2025 at 6.30pm via Microsoft Teams.
- (8) That the Parish Clerk be requested to write to Chorley Borough Council expressing the view that residents and users would still cross the site and create an informal grass path link either between the two-football pitched or across the football pitches themselves and asking that a 1 metre path across the middle of the West Way site to link to the play area.
- (9) That Chorley Borough Council be requested to ensure that notices are placed in the bus stops along Chancery Road advising passengers of the one-way restrictions affecting bus services in advance of the restrictions being introduced as part of events held at Astley Park such as the Chorley Flower Show.

324.07 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 not been consulted on any planning application received by Chorley Borough Council since the last Parish Council Meeting on 2 July 2025.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

324.08 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 August 2025.

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 2025 and 31 October 2025 as follows:

Date	Creditor	Description	Total (£)	Vat (£)	Net (£)
05/09/2025	Employee 4	Reimbursements (July 2025)	58.83		58.83
05/09/2025	Employee 4	Reimbursements (August 2025)	43.82		43.82
01/09/2025	Easy Web Sites	Monthly rental	68.64	11.44	57.2
23/09/2025	Zoom	Zoom Subscription (September 2025)	16.79	2.8	13.99
15/09/2025	Employee 4	Salary (September 2025)	414.9		414.9
15/09/2025	HMRC	Tax (September 2025)	103.8		103.8
15/09/2025	HMRC	National Insurance (September 2025)	0		0
01/10/2025	Easy Web Sites	Monthly rental	68.64	11.44	57.2
23/10/2025	Zoom	Zoom Subscription (October 2025)	16.79	2.8	13.99
15/10/2025	Employee 4	Salary (October 2025)	415.1		415.1
15/10/2025	HMRC	Tax (October 2025)	103.6		103.6
15/10/2025	HMRC	National Insurance (October 2025)	0		0

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 – That the report be noted.

(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 – (1) That the Financial Risk Assessment be approved subject to the removal of references to ‘bike hoops’ under ‘Asset damage /loss - Street furniture, SPID, noticeboards etc damage or loss or in need of repair’.

(2) That the Parish Clerk be requested to purchase a new Laptop before the end of the current financial year.

(vii) External Auditor Report 2024/25

The Parish Clerk reported that the Parish Council had received the External Auditor’s Report and Certificate for 2024/25. 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 2024/25 be noted.

324.09 Winter Newsletter 2025

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

- Introduction of Car Parking Charges on Hallgate Car Park (Councillor Adrian Lowe – Chorley Borough Council).
- Christmas Event 2025 (Councillor Ian Thomas).
- Buckshaw Primary School (Councillor John McAndrew/ Headteacher).
- Parish Council Vacancies (Councillor Gillian Sharples)
- West Way Active Track Update (Lindsey Blackstock – Chorley Borough Council).
- Improvements to the footpath through Judeland Wood, e.g. the section from in front of 81 The Farthings down into the Astley Park (Councillor Chris Sheldon).
- Monthly Litter Picks (Councillor Keith Ashton).

RESOLVED - That the following timetable to produce 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 28 September 2025 and those articles be submitted to by Sunday 12 October 2025.
- All articles be sent to the Printers by Monday 20 October 2025.
- Deadline for Councillors to comment on the proof – Wednesday 5 November 2025.
- Newsletter delivered from Friday 14 November 2025.

324.10 Christmas Event 2025

The Parish Clerk invited the Parish Council to consider the arrangements for the Parish Christmas event on Friday 5 December 2025 at 6pm. The Parish Clerk reported that the Community Centre had been booked from 5pm until 9pm.

Councillor John McAndrew had invited Buckshaw Primary School to attend and consult them on how the school could be involved in the event and members of AKoustic would be playing during the evening.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

324.11 Reports from Parish Council representatives on Other Bodies

Chorley Liaison

The agenda from the last meeting held on Wednesday, 16 July 2025 had been circulated for information. The next meeting would be held on 15 October 2025 at 6.30pm.

Neighbourhood Area Meeting (NW Parishes and Chorley North)

The agenda from the last meeting held on Tuesday 22 July 2025 at 6.30pm.had been circulated for information. The next meeting would be held on 17 March 2026 at 6.30pm.

Councillor Chris Sheldon reported that a proposal to support the continuation of the Community Wellbeing Hub at Lancaster Way Community Centre with a focus on support for NEET young people had been approved as a Neighbourhood Priority for 2025/26. He suggested that this may be a facility which residents from Astley Village could benefit from.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Parish Clerk be requested to write to Bernie Heggarty, Community Partnerships Manager (Chorley Borough Council), requesting an update on the Community Wellbeing Hub at Lancaster Way Community Centre.

324.12 Correspondence

Correspondence received had been reported as part of the 'Parish Clerk Report' (Minute 324.06).

323.13 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Parish Council would take place on Wednesday 5 November 2025 at 6.30 pm.

The meeting concluded at 7.50 pm.

Chair