



## Astley Village Parish Council

### Meeting of the Council

7 January 2026 at 6.30pm

#### Present

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

#### **326.01 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Gillian Sharples and Chris Sheldon.

#### **326.02 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.

#### **326.03 Public Engagement**

Members of the public are invited to put questions/make representations to the members of the Parish Council. No issues were raised.

#### **326.04 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. Councillors Adrian Lowe and County Councillor Aidy Riggott attended the meeting.

#### Introduction of Car Parking Charges on Hallgate Car Park

Parking charges and restrictions between 8am and 5pm (Monday-Sunday) had been introduced on the Hallgate Car Park from 5 November 2025, and there had been evidence of displaced parking on Hallgate which was being monitored, if necessary, traffic regulation orders would be considered to prevent parking on Hallgate (and surrounding roads).

The small car park located between Astley community centre and Oliver House School had around eight spaces, which were owned by the Council. These spaces had been allocated to the school and tied to the rental agreement they had in place with the councils regarding Astley community centre. However, discussions were taking place between Chorley Brough Council and Oliver House regarding potential concessions for the school staff.

It was reported that Lancashire County Council would continue to monitor the impact of the introduction of car parking charges on Hallgate Car Park and were collaborating with Chorley Borough Council including the traffic regulation orders to prevent parking on Hallgate although this was likely to displace parking elsewhere in the village centre/ surrounding residential roads. Below is the full response received from Lancashire County Council re the parking concerns on Hallgate:

“Thank you for your enquiry dated 10 November 2025 raising concerns about parking displacement onto Hallgate and other nearby roads following the introduction of parking restrictions on Chorley Borough Councils car park.

During the consultation period, we advised Chorley Borough Council that introducing parking charges would likely result in vehicles being displaced onto surrounding roads, which has now occurred.

Prior to the implementation of these charges, we met with a representative from Chorley Borough Council and the school. Site visits were conducted, and we informed the school that there were no feasible measures we could introduce to enable school vehicles to park on Hallgate.

Officers also advised Chorley Borough Council that it should be the responsibility of Chorley Borough Council to work collaboratively with the school to identify a suitable solution. This could involve providing parking spaces within the existing car park or assisting the school in creating a designated drop-off area at the front of the premises for pupil pick-up and drop-off.

We are currently assessing the parking situation on Hallgate and will provide a further update once our investigations are complete.”

#### Long Croft Meadow - Dangerous Parking

The Parish Council discussed the continued dangerous parking on Long Croft Meadow by employees of Chorley and South Ribble Hospital including parking on the junction of Chancery Road across the cycle path

RESOLVED – (1) That the reports be noted.

(2) That the Parish Clerk be requested to write to Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, requesting them to remind employees of Chorley and South Ribble Hospital to be considerate when parking with Astley Village.

(3) That residents be advised to provide photographs of inconsiderate/ dangerous parking in the village to Lancashire County Council and Lancashire Police

## 326.05 Minutes

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 5 November 2025 (copies of which had been circulated) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## 326.06 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.

### **Finger Post Signs**

An update was provided in relation to obtaining permission to install four new finger post signs at the following locations:

- Two fingers directing pedestrians to Astley Park via the tarmac path - Finger 1 - and woodland path - Finger 2 - (at The Farthings).
- Two fingers directing pedestrians to Astley Village Centre (via Chancery Road) – Finger 1 and Astley Park – Finger 2 (at Long Copse/ Merefield).
- One Finger directing pedestrians to the Village Centre via shortcut via Buckshaw Hall Close, Broadfields, Great Meadow (Derian House)
- One Finger directing pedestrians to the Village Centre via shortcut via Buckshaw Hall Close, Broadfields, Great Meadow at the other side of the pond to provide continuation (Derian House).

It was noted that Chorley Borough Council had granted permission for the installation of signs on land within their ownership at The Farthings and at Long Copse/ Merefield.

Places for People had granted permission for the installation of a fingerpost sign on land within their ownership directing pedestrians to the Village Centre via shortcut via Buckshaw Hall Close, Broadfields, Great Meadow.

Lancashire County Council had indicated that they had no objections, but this would need be formalised. The Parish Council were asked to agree whether they wish to pursue the “preferred” location for the fourth sign with Lancashire County Council.

Councillor Sheldon had now reviewed the proposed wording on both sides of all fingers on all 4 systems and an order had been placed with White Hill Direct Ltd:

### **Installation of New Christmas Tree Lights**

It was noted that the original quote from the Christmas Tree Lights Contractor provided an option not to trim the tree but replace all lighting at a cost of £2,425 plus vat but the Parish Council in May 2025 had given approval to option 1 and for a specialist tree surgeon to prune/shape the Christmas tree prior to removing the existing lights and replacing them with new multicoloured LED lights at a cost of £2,695 plus VAT including PAtesting the lights annually prior to the Parish Council Carol Singing Event and switching on the lights at the Carol Singing Event on Friday 5 December 2025.

Councillors commented that it appeared the top of the tree had been cut off but there was no evidence that the Christmas tree had been pruned/shaped and by cutting off the top of the tree, the tree would actually grow outwards defeating the objective of containing the tree within the existing barriers.

In addition, at the request of the Contractor, the Parish Council replaced the barrier to the site with a drop-down bollard to enable you to access the site with a cherry picker to dress the tree and Parish Councillors queried whether the quote included hiring a cherry picker and how the tree was dressed.

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:

- Royal British Legion Poppy, Wreath £33.58.
- Post Office Counters Ltd, Postage-Parish Council Summons £2.00.
- Sainsburys, Christmas Refreshments £80.95.
- Printwise, Christmas Printing £100.00.
- Printwise, Winter Newsletter 2025 £760.00.
- Tesco, Christmas Selection Boxes £350.00.
- Tesco, Christmas Selection Boxes £35.00.
- Post Office Counters Ltd, Postage and Stamps £9.36.

(3) The Parish Clerk be requested to confirm with the Christmas Tree Lights Contractor that a specialist tree surgeon was engaged to prune/shape the Christmas tree and whether the quote included hiring a cherry picker and how it was possible to dress the tree without accessing the site with a cherry picker.

#### **326.07 One-Way System/ Road Closure on Chancery Road During Large Events**

The Parish Clerk reported that this item has been placed on the agenda at the request of Councillor Elaine Bibby.

It was reported that on Friday 7 November 2025, Chorley Borough Council had combined the previously separately held “Light up Astley” and Fireworks Display events. This had attracted significantly more people than in previous years, which had led to indiscriminate parking on both sides of Chancery Road (including the grass verges) and surrounding residential roads.

In addition, following the event, motorists did not adhere to the one-way system/ road closure on Chancery Road creating ‘grid lock’ along Chancery Road as there was insufficient room for two cars to pass and it was suggested that the stewards/ marshals needed to be present until after 9pm.

RESOLVED – (1) That Chorley Borough Council be requested to consider reverting to holding separate events for “Light up Astley” and Fireworks Display and if the events are to be combined, introducing an admission charge.

(2) That Chorley Borough Council be requested to ensure the stewards/ marshals be present until after 9pm to ensure motorists adhered to the one-way system/ road closure on Chancery Road creating ‘grid lock’ along Chancery Road.

## **326.08 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 application received by Chorley Borough Council:

- An application for a single storey front and side extension (Reference: 25/01135/FULHH) at 57 Wymundsley Astley Village Chorley PR7 1US. The deadline for any representations was 18 December 2025.
- An application for a first-floor side/rear extension, and single storey rear extension (Reference: 25/01147/FULHH) at 50 The Farthings Astley Village Chorley PR7 1TP. The deadline for any representations was 18 December 2025.
- An application for a single storey rear extension with balcony above, and associated alterations (following demolition of existing conservatory) (Reference: 25/01153/FULHH) at 30 Long Copse Astley Village Chorley PR7 1TH. The deadline for any representations was 25 December 2025.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## **326.9 Financial Matters**

### (i) Financial Position

The Responsible Financial Officer submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) showing the financial position as at 16 December 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 January 2026 and 28 February 2026 as follows:

Date	Creditor	Description	Total (£)	Vat (£)	Net (£)
09/01/2026	Employee 4	Reimbursements (November 2025)	76.89		76.89
09/01/2026	Employee 4	Reimbursements (October 2025)	60.24		60.24
01/01/2026	Easy Web Sites	Monthly rental	68.64	11.44	57.20
23/01/2026	Zoom	Zoom Subscription (January 2026)	16.79	2.80	13.99
15/01/2026	Employee 4	Salary in backpay (January 2026)	428.30		428.30
15/01/2026	HMRC	Tax (January 2026)	107.20		107.20
15/01/2026	HMRC	National Insurance (January 2026)	0		0
01/02/2026	Easy Web Sites	Monthly rental	68.64	11.44	57.20
23/02/2026	Zoom	Zoom Subscription (February 2026)	16.79	2.80	13.99
13/02/2026	Employee 4	Salary (February 2026)	428.50		428.50
13/02/2026	HMRC	Tax (February 2026)	107		107
13/02/2026	HMRC	National Insurance (February 2026)	0		0
			<b>1,378.99</b>	<b>28.48</b>	<b>1,350.51</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.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(iv) To consider a report of the Responsible Financial Officer proposing the 2026/27 budget headings and Precept.

The Parish Clerk submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) to assist the Parish Council in finalising the Budget for 2026/27.

It was reported that the 2026/27 Tax Base approved by Chorley Borough Council for Astley Village was 923.83 (1,421 properties).

The Village Development Plan Working Group had met on 9 December 2025 and made recommendations in relation to the Village Development Plan and make recommendations in respect of the Budget for 2026/27.

**Neighbourhood Priority Scheme for 2026/27**

It was reported that typically, neighbourhood priority project proposals were considered during the February/March meetings, however, due to the Local Government Reorganisation, which has introduced some uncertainty around the upcoming arrangements, Chorley Borough Council had agreed to postpone the proposal and selection process for the 2026/27 neighbourhood priorities until after May 2026 and the details of this process will be confirmed at a later date.

## **Additional litter bins including the Astley Village Community Garden of Reflection**

Chorley Borough Council had stated that they were not aware of any littering issues in this area or concerns about capacity in the nearby bins and have requested the reasoning for installing another bin in this area. They would generally only install additional bins where there is a demonstrable issue such as heavy littering and/ or the waste volume reports for nearby bins are consistently high.

## **Commission a survey/ report from The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside to consider further maintenance/future improvements West Way Nature Reserve**

The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside had confirmed that they are happy to come out for a site visit to discuss maintenance and improvements which would include Adam Sharples who carried out the original site visit and quote, although this ended up passing delivery onto our Contracts team as they had hit capacity.

## **Gateway Sign Enhancements**

In relation to enhancing the Gateway Signs it was noted Councillor John McAndrew had previously provided details of proposals together with costings.

It was suggested that consideration be given to illuminating the Gateway Signs (possibly installing solar floodlights) and providing a backing to the signs to make them more visible.

**RESOLVED (Unanimously) – (1) That the Astley Village Parish Precept for 2026/27 be set at £24,200 (Parish Yield: £20,323 and Parish Top-up Grant: £3,877) with the Band D amount being £22 (the same as 2025/26).**

**(2) That the updated Village Development Plan be approved including the following new schemes:**

- To be funded from the Improvements to the Village Centre Budget, providing additional litter bins including the Astley Village Community Garden of Reflection to be funded from the existing budget of £5,750.00.
- To increase the Road Safety Budget to £5,000.00 to enable the Parish Council to work with Lancashire County Council to fund Speed Enforcement.
- The refurbishment of the footbridge between The Farthings and Long Copse to be fully funded by the Parish Council and £5,000 be allocated to fund the scheme.

**(3) That approval be given to:**

- Continuing to make provision for additional improvements to the Chancery Road Underpass and allocate a reduced budget of £2,000.
- Commissioning a survey/ report from The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside to consider further maintenance/future improvements West Way Nature Reserve to be funded from the existing budget of £500.

- Increasing the Astley Village Community Garden of Reflection budget to £1,850.00 for additional planting and future maintenance.

(4) That Parish Councillors be requested to provide photographic evidence of littering at the Astley Village Community Garden of Reflection to support the request for additional litter bins.

(5) That Councillor Elaine Bibby be requested to make arrangements to meet Adam Sharples from The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside to consider further maintenance/future improvements West Way Nature Reserve.

(6) That Councillor John McAndrew be requested to investigate illuminating the Gateway Signs (possibly installing solar floodlights) and providing a backing to the signs to make them more visible.

(7) That Lindsey Blackstock, Open Space Strategy Officer (Chorley Borough Council) be requested to provide a specification for the refurbishment of the footbridge between The Farthings and Long Copse for consideration by the Parish Council to be fully funded by the Parish Council and £5,000 be allocated to fund the scheme.

(8) That the following 2026/27 budget be approved subject to further consideration and review at the end of the financial year:

Budget Heading	Budget Sub-Heading	Total Budget (£)
<b>01 - ADMINISTRATION</b>	01-1 Room Hire/ Zoom Subscription	400.00
	01-2 Office/Sundry (including new Laptop)	1,500.00
	01-3 Insurance	550.00
	01-4 Auditors/Accounts	400.00
	01-5 Election/By-Election/Polls	7,000.00
	01-6 Employee Costs (Salary, Training etc.)	7,000.00
	01-7 Employee Contingency	1,000.00
	01-8 IT/Website	1,000.00
<b>02 - COUNCIL</b>		
	02-1 Newsletter/Publications	1,900.00
	02-2 Village Caretaker	-
	02-3 Councillor Training	500.00
<b>03 - VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN</b>	02-4 Grant Awards/Local Projects and Groups	2,500.00
	03-1 Christmas Tree Lights/ Christmas Event	1,000.00
	03-2 Improvements to the Village Centre (including additional seating and litter bins)	5,750.00
	03-3 The refurbishment of the footbridge between The Farthings and Long Copse	5,000.00
	03-4 Planter Scheme (including maintenance)	1,000.00
	03-5 Tree Planting and Maintenance	500.00
	03-6 Wildflower Meadows/Corridors	250.00
	03-7 West Way Nature Reserve maintenance/future improvements	500.00
	03-8 Astley Village Community Garden of Reflection (additional planting and future maintenance)	1,850.00
	03-9 Chancery Road Underpass Improvements	2,000.00
	03-10 Refurbishment of existing Gateway Signs	500.00
	03-11 Road Safety (Maintenance of SPIDs and Speed Enforcement via Lancashire County Council)	5,000.00

	03-12		
	03-13	Paths to provide access from Great Meadow to the play area at West Way Sports Hub	15,000.00
	03-14	Improving Community Engagement and Raising the Profile of the Parish Council (including updating the Village map board)	2,500.00
<b>04 - GENERAL RESERVE</b>	04	General Reserve	20,000.00
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>		Balance held in the Unify Credit Union deposit Account	10,000.00
			94,600

(v) To review the Review Asset Register

The Parish Clerk submitted the updated Asset Register (copies of which had been circulated).

RESOLVED – That the Asset Register be approved.

(vi) To appoint Internal Auditor for the 2025/26 Accounts.

RESOLVED – That Ms Susan Edwards be appointed as Internal Auditor in respect of the 2025/26 Accounts at a cost not exceeding £100.

**326.10 Introduction of Time Credits Scheme**

The Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) on the introduction of a 'Time Credits Scheme' through Tempo Time Credits, where volunteers to support environmental projects in the Parish such as litter picking, earn credits for the hours they volunteer, which could be redeemed for activities and services.

It was noted that because the funded Time Credits programme in Chorley ended in March 2025, Tempo is no longer able to set up new earn groups in the area or provide the infrastructure to support them and therefore are unable to offer the full scheme locally at present. However, it was suggested that the Parish Council explore Chorley Together, which offered a volunteer recognition programme.

RESOLVED - (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Parish Clerk be requested to investigate the Parish Council joining the Chorley Together volunteer recognition programme.

**326.11 Spring Newsletter 2026**

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

- Annual Report (Councillor Gillian Sharples).
- Christmas Event 2025 (TBC)
- Promoting the Monthly Litter Picks (Councillor Keith Ashton).
- The representations made by the Parish Council in relation to the Introduction of Car Parking Charges on Hallgate Car Park and Dangerous Parking on Long Croft Meadow and advising residents to provide photographs of inconsiderate/dangerous parking in the village to Lancashire County Council and Lancashire

### Police

- New schemes included in the Village Development Plan (Councillor Chris Sheldon).
- The representations made to Chorley Borough Council in relation to One-Way System/ Road Closure on Chancery Road During Large Events held at Astley Park.

RESOLVED - That the following timetable for the production of the Spring edition of the Parish Council Newsletter be agreed:

- Parish Councillors email the Parish Clerk with suggested articles for inclusion in the Spring Newsletter by Wednesday 4 March 2026 and those articles be submitted to by Sunday 5 April 2026.
- All articles be sent to the Printers by Monday 13 April 2026.
- Deadline for Councillors to comment on the proof – Wednesday 6 May 2026.
- Newsletter delivered from Friday 22 May 2026.

### 326.12 Christmas Event 2025

The Parish Christmas reviewed the Carol Singing Event which had been held on Friday 5 December 2025. Unfortunately, attendance had been lower than anticipated due to the inclement weather. The Christmas Tree lights had been switched on by three young people and the Parish Councillors present and refreshments had been served following the event in the Community Centre.

The Parish Council was reminded that at the Parish Council Meeting on 3 November 2021, following discussions between Councillor John McAndrew and the Headteacher of Buckshaw Primary School, changes to the format had been considered including

- 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.

- The day of the event be reviewed perhaps holding the event on a Thursday instead of a Friday.

RESOLVED – That Councillor John McAndrew be requested to discuss with the Headteacher of Buckshaw Primary School the changes to the format previously considered above and the item be considered at the next meeting of the Parish Council in March 2026.

### **326.13 Reports from Parish Council representatives on Other Bodies**

#### Chorley Liaison

The next Meeting would be held on 21 January 2026 at 6.30pm.

#### Neighbourhood Area Meeting (NW Parishes and Chorley North)

The next meeting would be held on 17 March 2026 at 6.30pm.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

### **326.14 Minutes of the Personnel Committee**

The minutes of the Personnel Committee held on Wednesday 12 November 2025 were circulated for information.

RESOLVED – That the minutes be noted.

### **326.15 Correspondence**

Correspondence received had been reported as part of the 'Parish Clerk Report' (Minute 326.06).

### **325.16 Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the next meeting of the Parish Council will take place on Wednesday 4 March 2026 at the rise of the Parish Meeting at the West Way Sports Hub.

The meeting concluded at 8.10 pm.

Chair