**BRINDLE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 9 June 2025, at 7:30pm, at Brindle Community Hall, Water Street, Brindle, PR6 8NH**

Present: Councillor Darren Cranshaw (Chair)

 Councillor Louise Croasdale (Vice Chair)

 Councillor John Baldwin

 Councillor Jane Greenway

 Councillor John Swann

County Councillor John Clemson, Lead Member (Highways and Transformation)

In attendance: Dianne Scambler (Locum Clerk)

1. Members of the public

**24. Aplogies and announcements**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Pauline McGovern, Bill Nelson, Barbara Robinson and Cath Singleton.

1. **Disclosure of personal or prejudicial interests**

Councillor Cranshaw declared a personal interest in Items 6 and 7 on the agenda.

1. **Minutes**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 May 2025, were agreed as a true and correct record for signing by the Chair.

1. **Adjournment: Public Participation**

A member of the public expressed concern that the village of Brindle was losing elements of its heritage and cultural identity. This observation was prompted by recent changes to the sign of the Cavendish Arms Public House.

The original pub sign, which had stood for 90 years, was crafted from oak with an integrated stained-glass panel. It was free-swinging, reflecting traditional design and contributing to the character of the conservation area. However, after being removed on New Year’s Day due to inclement weather, the sign had been replaced with a fixed, steel-framed version.

The resident remarked that, given the pub’s location within a designated conservation area, efforts should had been made to preserve and replace the sign in a manner consistent with its historical features. In his opinion, the new design, being rigid and framed in steel, did not align with the traditional aesthetic of the Cavendish Arms Public House and raised concerns about the gradual erosion of the village’s historic charm.

In addition, the gentleman reflected that recent alterations to the front elevations of properties along Smithy Lane had further contributed to his concerns about the diminishing rural charm of the village, expressing that these changes did not align with the traditional aesthetic of the area and risked undermining the visual character that defined Brindle.

While the Council sympathised with the concerns raised, they acknowledged that they have no legal authority to reverse or modify the work undertaken by residents and business owners in the village. Previous efforts to secure conservation orders through the District Council were unsuccessful, as the village was not deemed distinctive enough to warrant special protection for key infrastructure.

However, considering the concerns expressed, the Chair agreed to approach the owners of the Public House to explore whether any adjustments could be made to enhance the aesthetic appearance of the pub sign, ensuring it remained more in keeping with the character of the village.

In response to a query regarding the placement of cameras on a post at the end of Smithy Lane, the Chair clarified that these were installed by Lancashire County Council as part of a traffic speed survey being conducted in the village

1. **Police Liaison**

PC Walton was unable to attend the meeting, and there were no new updates since the last discussion. However, the Chair committed to following up on the outstanding concerns previously raised, including speed enforcement measures, as well as issues related to fly-tipping and antisocial behaviour at Denham Quarry.

1. **Brindle Community Hall**

Councillor Cranshaw provided an update on ongoing activities at the Community Hall, including details on the upcoming Village Show.

Councillor Cranshaw also reported on continued efforts to address the recent increase in dog fouling, outlining the measures being taken to tackle the issue and promote responsible pet ownership within the community.

1. **Lancashire Association of Local Councils Report**

The Chair reported on key updates from the Annual LALC Conference regarding Local Government re-organisation. A proposal is being considered to amalgamate Chorley, South Ribble, and West Lancashire Councils into a single unitary authority. However, as the government aims to establish councils with populations around 500,000, there is ongoing debate about whether Preston should be included.

Many parishes view this as an opportunity to take greater ownership of local community assets. Additionally, the plans include the introduction of a Mayor of Lancashire.

The new Reform administration is pushing for a referendum on the proposal, though opposition exists due to the estimated £2 million cost. The Council will continue to monitor developments and provide further updates as the situation progresses.

Additionally, the County Council’s Treescape Team provided information on their initiative to collaborate with Parish Councils in securing funding for tree, hedgerow, and micro-woodland planting. These projects are particularly beneficial for managing land with poor drainage while also enhancing local biodiversity and green spaces.

1. **Chorley Borough Council/Lancashire County Council Update**

Newly elected County Councillor John Clemson provided an update on the measures he has been undertaking to address key issues within his area, with a particular focus on Highways matters. Having recently been appointed as the Lead Member for Highways and Transformation, Councillor Clemson outlined his priorities and reaffirmed his commitment to progressing improvements. The Council looks forward to collaborating with him in the coming years.

Additionally, Councillor Clemson reported that Lancashire County Council is currently undergoing scrutiny by a team from Reform UK, who are conducting a DOGE-style audit aimed at identifying areas of wasteful spending. The goal of this review is to redirect funds towards frontline services, such as pothole repairs across the County. The findings of the audit were expected to be announced soon.

1. **Planning Reports**

The meeting discussed recent planning applications with no observations made.

1. **Parish Finance**

None.

1. **Accounts for Payment**

The Council approved the payment of the £20.00 hire charge for use of the Community Hall.

1. **Environmental Issues and Concerns**

The Council agreed that a date needed to be set for the litter-picking event, with volunteers already in place and a list of key hotspots identified. It was noted that the only negative feedback from last year’s Best Kept Village competition related to weeds on pavements. However, managing this remains challenging, as dying weeds from spraying often create an unsightly appearance.

1. **Parish Council Projects**

The Council noted that an update would be provided once a substantive clerk had been appointed.

1. **Closure of Brindle St Joseph’s Church and Parish Hall**

The Chair reported that, as agreed, he had written to the Abbot of Ampleforth, who confirmed that time would be allocated for all interested parties to respond to the proposals. This information had been shared with the action group.

The Council noted that there were two separate action groups, one focused on the church and another on the parish hall. The Chair had met with both groups to offer the Council’s support where possible.

Councillor McGovern has engaged the Community Development team at Chorley Council to assist with efforts, and discussions are ongoing to lobby Chorley’s MP, Sir Lindsay Hoyle, to see if he can provide further support.

The Council noted that while raising funds to purchase the hall was a priority, securing financial resources for its ongoing maintenance was equally crucial.

1. **Litter picking**

This was covered earlier on the agenda.

1. **Recruitment of Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer**

The Chair provided an update on the ongoing recruitment process, noting that the Council had received six applications. The Council agreed to consider the applications at an extraordinary meeting taking place after this meeting.

1. **Any Urgent Business**

None.

1. **Date of next meeting**

14 July 2025 at Brindle Community Hall commencing at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 8.19pm