

# **BRINDLE PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 12 May 2025, at 7pm, 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 Pauline McGovern  
Councillor Cath Singleton  
Councillor John Swann

In attendance: Dianne Scambler (Locum Clerk)  
23 Members of the public

### **1. Apologies and announcements**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bill Nelson and Barbara Robinson.

### **2. Disclosure of personal or prejudicial interests**

Councillor Cranshaw declared a personal interest in items 6 as the Parish Council's representative on the Community Hall Trustees and item 8 at the Parish Council's representative on the Lancashire Association of Local Councils.

### **3. Minutes**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 March 2025, were agreed as a true and correct record for signing by the Chair.

### **4. Adjournment: Public Participation**

Members of the public raised concerns regarding the planned closure of Brindle St. Joseph's Church and Parish Hall, following a recent announcement by the Abbot of Ampleforth. Representatives from various church and community groups attended the meeting to highlight the significant impact the Hall's closure would have on the Parish, particularly on young people in the area.

A local action group had been formed to serve as a liaison between all interested parties, and the Parish Council was asked what support it could offer in the group's efforts to keep the Hall open. While financial instability had been cited as the reason for closure, it was understood that this primarily applied to the Church. The Hall, in contrast, remained in frequent use and was considered financially stable. It was therefore felt that a strong case could be made to preserve the Hall for community use.

The Parish Council reaffirmed its support for the community's efforts to challenge the closure decision and committed to the following actions:

- Parish Councillor McGovern will raise the issue with Chorley Council to explore potential community development opportunities and support available under the District Council's 'Thriving Communities' strategy.
- The Parish Council is to write to the Abbot of Ampleforth and Archbishop of Liverpool to urge that they pause the proposals and engage with the parish community on future solutions for the Church and Parish Hall.
- The Parish Council will maintain close collaboration with the Community Action Group, which is leading a coordinated response on behalf of residents.

## **5. Police Liaison**

Although PC Walton was unable to attend the meeting in person, he provided an update to the concerns raised by the Parish Council:

- Speed enforcement measures have not been conducted recently, as resources are currently focused on Rivington, particularly around the reservoirs and viewpoints.
- A recent patrol of Denham Quarry found the area to be relatively clear of litter and nitrous oxide canisters, though regular monitoring will continue.
- No formal reports of anti-social behaviour have been recorded at the Clayton Brook underpass; however, routine patrols will remain in place to oversee the situation.

On behalf of the Council, the Chair committed to ongoing dialogue with the Police Constable to address residents' concerns, particularly emphasising the urgent need for increased speeding enforcement within the village and monitoring of anti-social behaviour in known hotspots.

## **6. Community Hall**

Councillor Cranshaw provided an update on various activities at the Community Hall, including the successful installation of the new Best Kept Village plaque. A recent clean-up and maintenance day, supported by volunteers, raised £1,000 for charity.

A quote has been obtained for the recementing of ridge stones and the installation of protective door guards.

The Council also noted that defibrillator training had recently taken place and received confirmation that all defibrillators within the village are being routinely monitored to ensure they remain in full working order.

## **7. Lancashire Association of Local Councils Report**

The Association had not convened since the last Parish Council meeting. The Annual Conference is scheduled for 5 June 2025, with a member attendance fee of £50.00. It was agreed that Councillor Cranshaw would represent the Parish Council at the event.

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

There was nothing to report.

**9. Planning Reports**

The meeting discussed recent planning applications with no observations made.

**10. Parish Finances**

The Council received the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2024/25.

- **The Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25 was noted.**
- **Section 1 of the AGAR Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 for Brindle Parish Council was approved for signing.**
- **Section 2 of the AGAR Accounting Statements 2024/25 for Brindle Parish Council was approved for signing.**
- **The Explanation of Variances was noted.**
- **The Certificate of Exemption from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 as the total gross income and expenditure for Brindle Parish Council in the year 2024/2025 did not exceed £25,000 was approved for signing.**
- **The Council noted that the Exercise of Public Rights dates would be from 3 June 2025 to 14 July 2025.**

**11. Accounts**

The Council approved the following payments:

To:	For:	Amount:
Elan City	SpID 2 plus solar panel	£2651.99
HMRC	Tax and NI	£5.00
HMRC	Tax and NI	£61.21
HMRC	Tax and NI (April 2025)	£50.43
LALC	Annual Membership Invoice	£197.61
Brindle Community Hall	Hall Hire	£20.00
T Greenwood	Internal Audit Fee	£50.00
LCC	Installation of SpID 2	£150.00
Katherine Milnes	Clerk Salary	£692.00
Whitehead and Aldridge	Payroll Services	£108.00

The Chair explained that the various HMRC payments related to back dated payments for the Parish Clerk's annual pay increase.

The Council noted the following payments made by Direct Debit under section 7.9 of the Council's financial regulations:

- £67.32 Easy Websites monthly management fee – April 2025
- £67.32 Easy Websites monthly management fee – May 2025

The Council noted receipt of the following payments (since 1 April 2025)

From	Description:	Amount (£)	Date of receipt
High Interest Account	Interest	£14.86	4 April 2025
Chorley BC	Precept	£20,171.00	11 April 2025

Chorley BC	CIL	£718.17	22 April 2025
Chorley BC	Neighbourhood Grant Funding 2024/25	£2000.00	22 April 2025

The Council approved the cash book and Financial Statement/Bank Reconciliation.

The Council noted that VAT 126 for 2024/25 had been submitted in the sum of £1760.14. This included the VAT for the purchase of SpID 2, but not the installation costs.

## **12. Insurance Renewal**

The Parish Clerk conducted a review to secure a competitive rate for the Parish Council's insurance premium, and her findings were presented to the Council. Following consideration, the Council resolved to appoint HISCOX Insurance for a three-year term at an annual cost of £466.50 per year.

## **13. Environmental Issues and Concerns**

There were no further matters beyond those already considered under the Police item earlier in the agenda.

## **14. Parish Council Projects**

The Council received updates on the following ongoing projects:

- Neighbourhood Grant / Withnell Fold Walk – The Council is still awaiting quotes for the installation of stiles to improve accessibility along the walking routes.
- Parish Pound Plinth – An update on progress will be provided at the next Council meeting.
- Parish Pound (including title) – The Parish Clerk has prepared a comprehensive legal document to facilitate ownership transfer once the Council is ready to proceed. This initiative was positively recognised in feedback from the Best Kept Village competition and remains a key goal for the Parish Council in the coming year.

## **15. Planning Process**

Councillor McGovern provided the Council with an overview of the planning process, specifically regarding objections to proposed developments on Green Belt land. Drawing from her experience as a District Councillor at Chorley Council, she explained that planning decisions are governed by national regulations and policies. If objections are upheld without strong justification, decisions can be overturned, potentially resulting in financial penalties for the planning authority.

She highlighted the rigorous standards of evidence required and stressed the importance of framing objections around the impact on visual amenity. As this aspect is subjective to individuals, it carries significant weight and cannot be easily dismissed by statistical data.

The Council expressed its appreciation for Councillor McGovern's insightful presentation and thanked her for sharing her knowledge.

**16. Closure of Brindle St Joseph's Church and Parish Hall**

This item was considered under the public participation element of the agenda.

**17. Lancashire Best Kept Village Competition – 2025**

Councillor Cranshaw provided an update on the ongoing preparations for this year's competition. The Council noted that inspections were set to begin on 1 June 2025, emphasising the need for swift action to address known problem areas through clean-up operations.

**18. Litter picking**

Councillor Cranshaw informed the Council that a recent risk assessment had determined that, aside from a few roads where traffic flows too quickly, a community litter-picking event could be safely conducted. The Council had secured the necessary equipment and litter bags from Chorley Council, with arrangements in place for waste collection.

The next steps involved selecting a suitable date and promoting the event across social media platforms. It was also suggested that a list of known problem areas be compiled, with the Chair inviting members to submit their suggestions via email.

**19. Repair works**

Councillor Swann informed the Council that the repair works on Birchin Lane/Holt Lane had been completed.

**20. Grant requests**

The Council approved the following grants:

- Finninton Lane Development, towards costs of legal fees - £200.00
- Village Show, general contribution - £175.00

**21. Adoption of Policies**

The Parish Clerk had circulated the following amended policies and governance arrangements for the Council's consideration prior to the meeting:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Dispensation Policy and Request Form
- Document Retention Policy
- Policy Review Timetable

The Council approved the policies and review timetable.

**22. Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer**

The Council once again expressed its deep gratitude to Katherine Milnes for her dedication and hard work over the past two years, acknowledging her instrumental role in strengthening its operations and the positive impact she had on the Brindle community. The Council placed on record its appreciation for Katherine's service to the Parish Council and people of Brindle. Consideration would be given to an appropriate gift to be presented in recognition of her contributions.

Councillor Cranshaw provided an update on the ongoing recruitment process, noting that the Council had secured the services of a Locum Clerk on an interim basis until a permanent appointment could be made. Additionally, the Council would review

existing working hours and remuneration following a recent benchmarking exercise to ensure alignment with other Parish Councils of similar size and scope.

**23. Date of next meeting**

9 June 2025 at Brindle Community Hall commencing at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 9.11pm