

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF CROSTON PARISH COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 14 MAY 2025, CROSTON OLD SCHOOL

In attendance: Councillors C Turner, C Baines, K Almond, C Titherington-Teale, D O’Kane, P Fenemore, K Taylor Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer and 13 members of the public

1. **Election of Chair:** It was resolved that Cllr Turner be re-elected at Chair for the next year. The Acceptance of Office form was signed.

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are adjourned for Public Time

The Chair had previously agreed to move Public Time from item 7 to item 2.

2. **Public Time** (was item 7 on the agenda)

To invite / listen to matters raised by members of the public. The Chair, Cllr Tuner read a statement regarding recording public time and requested a vote was taken by those present. Seven members of the public objected.

- a. A resident asked a question about building work taking place to a property, adjacent to the recreation park and School Close. It was cited that if large vehicles caused damage to the road / path, they are liable. The Clerk will contact the resident to ascertain the size of vehicle and advise the School Close Management Committee. This item was on the agenda - 8b.
- b. Home Farm Mews - residents were in attendance about an ‘in principle’ planning application. Cllr A Platt, Chorley Council advised the Parish Council it will receive an invitation to nominate one representative to attend the Planning Committee.
- c. Turflands / Carr Lane junction – residents were in attendance to express their concerns about the heavy vehicles that were encroaching on to the pathways and damaging hedges and road bollards. A resident had reported three incidents to Love Clean Streets in a month. Cllr Platt suggested County Councillor Mark Wade be approached, to request a meeting with the residents. Cllr Almond will attend on behalf of the Parish Council.

Standing Orders / Financial Regulations were reinstated

The Clerk read a statement from Cllr Strachan resigning with immediate effect. The Parish Council requested to record thanks to Cllr Strachan for her great efforts for Croston as a Councillor and Chair. Mrs Strachan will continue with the Keep Croston Tidy group as a volunteer. Due to Cllr Strachan’s resignation, the vacancy would be advertised via Chorley Council for 14 working days. The Clerk would contact Chorley Council.

3. **Co-option and welcome to Councillor Bill Tomlinson**, the Acceptance of Office form was signed.
4. **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs P Strachan, P Sloan and W Tomlinson
5. **Declarations of interest**

Cllr Turner declared an interest re a planning application that had been circulated following publication of the agenda re: Isle of Man Lodge, item 9e.

6. To agree the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 April 2024

The Clerk provided a verbal report regarding a replacement notice board at Morrisons, Station Road. The Clerk had contacted the Company Secretary at James Hall Ltd, the former owner of the store. It was confirmed by phone that James Hall Ltd had sold the store, but it was not known who it was sold to. The Clerk had also contacted the owner of the nursery that use the premises above the store but had no reply. The Clerk stated the best option to ascertain the store / building owner was to do a search via the Land Registry. Due to the imminent internal audit / AGAR preparations, the Clerk's priority was the audit. Cllr Almond volunteered to do a search via the Land Registry to ascertain the owner, so the Parish council can make a formal request regarding a replacement notice board. Resolved Cllr Almond ascertain the owner via the Land Registry.

Cllr O Kane moved a motion for a change to one item in the minutes under Part 2. Item 21 should read Majority in favour, Cllr O'Kane abstained. The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record, and were signed by the Chair, Cllr Turner.

8. Correspondence

- a. **Keep Croston Tidy:** Volunteers had tidied up the Green by weeding, hoeing flower beds, trimming, removing debris, brushing. Bushes either side of the parking area are kept to a suitable height to allow good visibility. Bushes are coming into flower, so they were untouched. Croston Together volunteers have agreed to tidy up their flower bed on The Green. Countrywide continue to mow and trim and weed the paths.
- b. **Work adjacent to recreation park:** A resident on Station Road had asked for permission for a builder's truck to park on the hardstanding on the recreation park from 27 May 2025 for approx. three days, for a patio to be built. This matter had previously been raised under Public Time. The Parish Council approved to the request subject to conditions that had been submitted by Croston Together. It was resolved the Clerk write to the resident outlining the conditions and should there be any damage to School Close, the builder's will be liable.
- c. **Crime figures January – April 2025:** The following crime statistics had been received for Maria Fetherstone, Lancashire Police.

MONTH	INCIDENTS	CRIMES
January	33	4
February	29	8
March	18	4
April	42	5
Total	122	21

The statistics were noted. The Clerk had asked for a crime breakdown but had not received a reply.

- d. **Cock Robin bench:** A resident has written to ask could the dilapidated bench near Cock Robin Cottages be removed. It was resolved the Clerk contact A Wade to ask for removal.
- e. **Croston Coffee Day:** Liz Brown had requested to place a gazebo on the Green to sell raffle tickets from 1.00 – 400pm. It was resolved the Clerk advise this was approved.

- f. **Croston in Bloom:** Anne Peet had advised the summer bedding plants would arrive w/c 19 May 2025 and the invoice would be sent to the Clerk. This had previously been agreed at the March meeting to fund the plants. The hose pipe had sprung several leaks and needed replacing. It was resolved the Clerk reimburse the cost £49.99.
- g. **LALC 2025 conference 7 June 2025:** It was resolved the Chair, Cllr Turner will attend. As a cost of £50. The Clerk will confirm arrangements and arrange payment.
- h. **Possible Co-Op Station Road:** A resident had enquired if the Parish Council could provide an update, which they couldn't. It was resolved the Cllr Titherington-Teale will try to ascertain the situation.

Cllr Fenemore left the meeting.

9. Planning applications:

- a. 25/00341/PIP: **Land on east side of Bretherton Road**, Croston. Permission in principle application for the erection of six detached dwellings / associated development. It was resolved the Parish Council **did not support** to this application.
- b. 25/00346/TCON: **4 Carvers Brow**, Croston. Notification of proposed works to trees in Croston. conservation area. T1 elm, 2-3 metre reduction; T2 large mature sycamore, remove lower lateral limb and reduce by up to 3 metres all round; T3 sycamore 2-3 metre reduction. It was resolved the Parish Council supported the application.
- c. 25/00338/PIP: **Land to the north west of Home Farm Mews**, Grape Lane, Croston. Permission in principle application for the erection of six dwellings. It was resolved the Parish Council **did not support** this application.
- d. 25/00384/TCON: **Kirkside, The Hillocks**, Croston. Application of proposed works to trees in Croston conservation area. T1 holly, trim to bring shape treat like hedge or stand-alone topiary shrub. T2, crown reduction by up to 2 metres all round. It was resolved the Parish Council support this application.
- e. 25.004025/CLPUD: **Isle of Man Lodge, Meadow Lane**, Croston PR26 9JP. Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed siting of a mobile home to provide ancillary accommodation. It was resolved the Parish Council **did not support** to this application.
- f. 25/00431/TCON: **The Coach House, Grape Lane**, Croston PR26 9HB. Notification of the proposed works to trees within a conservation area. T1 – fell. T2 reduce height to 10 feet. It was resolved the Parish Council support this application.

10. Financial matters

Cllr O Kane requested a recorded vote for each agenda item. In consideration of the Parish Council's financial situation, the Clerk advised it was taking an inordinate time to draft the minutes, due to Cllr O'Kane's repeated requests for a recorded vote for each agenda item, adding this was an unnecessary cost to the Parish precept. The Clerk had spoken to two other parish council Clerks who advised a more relaxed approach was taken to record decisions. The Parish Council voted by a show of hands and the majority were in favour of recording 'majority, unanimous and abstain' in the minutes from hereon.

- a. **Receive the finance update:** It was resolved to ratify the majority e-resolution to the Lengthsman's salary pay increase by transition to the NJC local government conditions of service. Majority approval.
- b. **Approve the Clerk's claim for April 2025:** It was resolved this be approved. Unanimous.
- c. **Approve the Acting Clerk's claim:** It was resolved this be approved. Unanimous.
- d. **Approve financial transactions for April 2025.** Unanimous.

01Apr2025	Direct Debit	Website monthly subscription	36.96
08Apr2025	B/P to: Croston Old School	Room Hire	37.50
11Apr2025	Chorley Council	Precept income	+39,600.00
17Apr2025	B/P to: Employee 4	Clerk mileage	32.05
17Apr2025	B/P to: Employee 2	Acting Clerk pay tax mth 11 pay	88.86
17Apr2025	B/P to: Employee 3	Lengthsman pay tax mth 11 pay	314.12
17Apr2025	B/P to: Employee 4	Clerk administrative expenses	57.69
17Apr2025	B/P to: Employee 4	Clerk tax mth 11 pay	608.11
23Apr2025	B/P to: Employee 3	Lengthsman tax mth 10 pay	315.72
25Apr2025	Direct Debit	HMRC 373286	443.05
30Apr2025	Service Charge	Monthly bank charge	6.00

- e. **Note the receipt of CIL income** to be paid to the Parish Council on 28 October 2025, £24,855.10. The CIL grant can pay for community infrastructure projects.
- f. **Note the receipt of Precept** on 1 April 2025: £36,170.00 and CIL top up £3609.74.

11. Payments to approve

- a. Renewal of the garden waste subscription of £40 to Chorley Council 2025/26 by direct debit and annually thereafter. Proposed Cllr Baines, seconded Cllr Titherington-Teale. Unanimous.
- b. Renewal of subscription of £525.88 to LALC / NALC 2025/265: Proposed Cllr Titherington-Teale, seconded Cllr Baines. Unanimous.

At this point, Cllr O'Kane temporarily left the meeting to speak to Mr Norcross about recording.

12. Response to annual inspection of the recreation park

Croston Together representatives, Neville Norcross and Andrew Taylor were in attendance. Neville gave an update on the recommendations in the annual inspection report from Wicksteeds, together with estimated costs for the urgent repairs required for safety. It was resolved the Parish Council agree to the costs for the safety repairs to the recreation park. Neville asked about the grant application to Chorley Council and the Clerk would investigate and advise of the outcome. Cllr Baines raised succession planning for volunteers at the recreation park. It was resolved Neville will provide further information, for consideration by the Parish Council. The Parish Council thanked Neville and Andrew for their efforts in keeping the park in a beautiful and safe condition for the children, young people and their families.

13. Proposal to alter the start time of Parish Council meetings

Following discussion re: suggested start times, it was agreed for a 6.30pm start from 18 June 2025. Proposed Cllr Baines, seconded Cllr Titherington-Teale, majority approval.

14. Draft Safeguarding Policy

To consider and approve the draft policy. It was noted the policy needs to include safeguarding of councillors, the Clerk and Lengthsman. It was resolved the Clerk will include wording for consideration at the July meeting.

15. Reports from other organisations None.

16. Date of next meeting 18 June 6.30 pm, Croston Old School, Main Hall

Signed*ETurney*..... Chair

Date*18/6/2025*.....