

**Minutes of the Croston Parish Council Meeting
held on Wed 14th Feb 2024, at Croston Old School**

In attendance: Cllrs K Almond, P Sloan, P Strachan, C Titherington-Teale, C Turner, S Moulton, P Fenemore, County Councillor A Whittaker Items 1 to 4), Mr P Cafferkey (Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer);

Six members of the public were also in attendance.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Cahill and Worthington.
2. **To agree the minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 13th Dec 2023 and 10th Jan 2024:** The minutes for the meetings held on the 13th Dec 2023 and 10th Jan 2024 were approved as a true record.
3. **To receive declarations of interest:** None
4. **Public Participation:** County Councillor Alan Whittaker was present to again make the parish council aware of the recent decision by Michael Gove (secretary of state for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities) to make Chorley Council a “designated council” with regard to planning matters; this he considered to be undemocratic.

Members of the public were present to object to item 5a below, proposed development on the site of The Crown Pub, Station Road. Concerns included the implementation of double yellow lines which would restrict on road parking for residents, an assumed increase in traffic, and an assumed increase in heavy lorries making deliveries to the proposed store, possibly at unsocial hours. County Councillor Alan Whittaker, who is also a Borough Councillor and sits on Chorley Council Planning Committee commented that the planning proposal had been temporarily withdrawn by Chorley Council following concerns by LCC Highways. It is likely that a visit to the site of the proposed development will take place by members of the planning committee.

Mr Neville Norcross from Croston Together was present to thank the parish council for its support of Croston Together and the voluntary work Croston Together undertake on the recreation park. Mr Norcross mentioned the recent park equipment inspection report which had highlighted some areas of concern (e.g. the Zip Wire). Croston Together in conjunction with the parish council had already addressed the more important areas of concern and the Croston Together volunteers would now start to address the more minor items that required attention.

5. **Planning Matters:**
 - a) 23/00113/FUL, The Crown Station Road Croston, PR26 9RN, Demolition of the existing buildings and erection of a convenience store and cafe with parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure. Note: this was first presented to the parish council in March 2023.
 - b) 24/00077/FULHH, 15 Riverside Crescent Croston PR26 9RU, two storey rear extension, single storey side extension and porch (amendment to approved application 23/00505/FULHH)

There were no objections to item b above. With regard to item a above, and in view of the representations made to the parish council (item 4 above refers) **it was resolved** that the parish council would make representation to Chorley Council with regard to the traffic and parking concerns.

6. **Request for financial contribution towards replacement fence:** A request had been received from the School Close Management Committee for a financial contribution towards a replacement fence which is situated between School Close and Croston Recreation Park. As the parish council does not own the fence and does not have any legal or financial responsibility for the fence it **was resolved** that no financial contribution would be made by the parish council.

7. **Finance Update**

- a) **Finance Report:** The Clerk presented the finance report which shows a forecast estimated balance at the end of the financial year (2023-24) of £16,147, of this, £15,322 relates to Community Infrastructure Levy monies. **It was resolved** that the finance report be approved.
- b) **Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2023/24 accounts:** **It was resolved** that Amanda Partington be appointed as the internal auditor for the audit of the parish council's 2023/24 accounts at a quoted price of £80.00.
- c) **It was resolved** that the following transactions made through the parish council's bank account during the month of Jan 2024 be approved.

Date	£	Payee	Description
02-Jan-24	30.36	Direct Debit (GOCARDLESS)	website monthly fee
08-Jan-24	459.00	B/P to: Countrywide Mntnce	monthly grounds mntnce charge
08-Jan-24	14.97	B/P to: Pauline Strachan	Refund to Cllr Strachan re cable ties
08-Jan-24	516.00	B/P to: John Mayor & Sons	Christmas Tree
12-Jan-24	518.03	B/P to: employee 1	Clerk's net pay for Dec
12-Jan-24	306.81	B/P to: employee 2	Lengthsman's net pay for Dec
12-Jan-24	10.80	B/P to: employee 1	Clerk's mileage for Dec
12-Jan-24	94.75	B/P to: employee 1	Clerk's expenses for Dec, includes SLCC membership fee

Payments approved by email or pre-approved and retrospectively noted:

- d) Urgent approval by Chair / Clerk for playground repairs approx. £250.00 (invoice not yet received from Yates Holmeswood)
- e) Urgent approval by Chair / Clerk for Tree Survey / Risk Assessment of trees on The Green. Quote received for £350.00 plus VAT, Ken Linford Garden Care Ltd.

It was resolved that items d and e above be approved

8. Request for donation of £400 from Croft Field Volunteers for lawn mower service and running costs: Cllr Fenemore declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item.

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This item was deferred pending enquiries as to whether the Church, who own the Croft, were making a contribution.

9. **To consider use of anti-vandal paint on the container on Croston Recreation Park following complaints by residents of School Close:** Advice had been received that anti vandal can be very difficult and expensive to remove if it were to be “daubed” inadvertently on the container by anyone trying to climb on the container. **It was resolved**, therefore, that anti vandal paint would not be used on the container.
10. **To consider request from Clerk to pay for increased capacity in email storage from Easy Websites Ltd. It was resolved** that this request be approved resulting in an increased cost of £5.50 per month (excl VAT).
11. **To appoint a parish council representative for Neighbourhood Area Meetings; Western Parishes:** Cllr Turner kindly volunteered for this role.
12. **To review and approve draft Parish Council Grants and Donations Policy.** Due to time constraints this item was deferred.
13. **Recreation Park Drainage Ditch – Update:** Once better weather arrives, volunteers are to clean the drainage ditch of any debris.
14. **Town Bridge – Update:** the Clerk agreed to redistribute the email recording his conversation with the Bridges Inspector, whereby the Inspector said that the bridge was safe, and that to try and undertake any repairs to the unseated stone may cause further damage.
15. **National Savings & Investments (NS&I) A/C – Update:** The Clerk updated the council to the effect that NS&I had responded to the Clerk’s letter and had sent forms to enable new signatories to the account be named and the money transferred to the parish council’s Unity Trust bank account. The forms are to be approved at the March meeting.
16. **Chorley Liaison Meeting 24 Jan 2024:** Cllr Turner updated the meeting; she had raised the issues of the poor state of the garages to the side of 54 Peartree Road and the egress of sewage onto Grape Lane. Cllr Turner also confirmed she had spoken to the Leader of Chorley Council (Councillor Bradley) who had agreed to help further any future agenda items in respect of the Chorley Liaison Meeting.
17. **Correspondence:**
 - a) a resident had contacted the parish council with regard to potholes outside The Grapes on Town Road. These have now been repaired.
 - b) following the damage to the footbridge behind the church, caused by a bough falling from a resident’s tree, the Clerk reported that the resident is keeping the parish council informed as to progress and has now involved their insurers.
 - c) the Clerk reminded all Councillors about the email from Lancashire Police inviting councillors to attend a personal security briefing via Microsoft Teams.
18. **Date of Next Meeting:** Wed 12th March 2024, 7.30pm, Croston Old School

Approved as a true record, Councillor P Strachan, Chair, 13th March 2024.

