



Minutes of Much Hoole Parish Council meeting held on Monday 13th January 2025 at 7.30pm at The Venue, Hoole Village Memorial Hall, Much Hoole.

Present: Cllrs K Hayes (Chair), A. Taylor, R. Lea, E. Jackson, P. Cocker, Clerk Miss A. Evans

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllrs N. Woodcock, T. Hewitt, E. Houghton

2. Declaration of Interests and Dispensations:

Cllr A. Taylor declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7.

3. Minutes of the previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9th December 2024 were reviewed and amended as follows:

- Item 10, paragraph 2 “It was resolved that the precept for 2025-26 be set at £18,770 and using a council tax band D household as an example would be an increase from £23.64 (2024-25) to £24.94, a rise of **£1.90 per annum.**”
Changed to “£1.30 per annum.”
- Item 13a “Council noted Cllr P. Cocker’s update on the pavement on Brook Lane/Liverpool Old Road and that **a Conifer tree had blocked the pavement,**”
Changed to: “a conifer tree is blocking street lighting leaving a long section of the pavement unlit,”
- Item 22 “**Chez Soo** Smithy Lane Much Hoole Preston”
Changed to “Chez Soi”

The amended minutes were approved and signed by the Chair, Cllr K. Hayes.

4. Public Time

There were two members of the public present. One addressed the council regarding the lack of allotments in the local area and long waiting lists for PCC allotments. Council noted that a questionnaire had been sent to Walmer Bridge and Much Hoole residents some years ago and received 48 positive responses for allotments. The member of the public acknowledged that Much Hoole Parish Council doesn’t own land for allotments, and advised the council that previous landowners that were approached for land, were unwilling to pursue legal agreements. Despite this, they still see potential for allotments due to village growth. Chair, Cllr K Hayes expressed the councils support and it was agreed that Cllr R Lea would discuss the issue with Louise Davies at SRBC and contact the member of the public directly with any updates.

5. Correspondence from members of the public.

One email was received regarding the shortage of available allotments in the local area and was discussed further during public time.

6. Reports from other meetings and information on future events

The council noted that the Community Orchard Garden project team, along with the Village Lengthsman, will meet with Louise Davies from SRBC and Ian Wright, LCC Head of Trees Division, at Trafalgar Garden on 14th January 2025 to discuss the planting on Saturday 18th January of 10 fruit trees and 1 fir Christmas Tree.

7. Village Hall

The council noted Cllr A. Taylors’ report on the Village Hall for the past month. The Village Hall was quiet over the Christmas period and New Year but bookings are looking good for the coming year. The management group have met once to discuss the MUGA project but there isn’t much progress in grant funding from local authorities.

8. Off Road Cycle Track

Cllrs A. Taylor and P. Cocker inspected the cycle track between Christmas and New Year. They have reported some litter and signs of digging, though not to a dangerous extent. The recent flooding has not caused long-term damage to the track. However, the picnic tables are situated within a low spot, and this requires a drainage pipe to prevent future flooding, which Cllr R. Lea suggested to budget for next year. In addition to this, Chair, Cllr K. Hayes suggested posting a notice on the Much Hoole Village Facebook page advising people not to dig at the

cycle track and Cllr R. Lea offered to obtain a quote for the design of a sign for the cycle track to discourage digging.

9. Finance

- a) **It was resolved** that the bank reconciliation for the month of December 2024 was agreed to the bank statements and was signed by Cllr A. Taylor and unanimously agreed.
- b) **It was resolved** to authorise the following payments, proposed by Cllr R. Lea, seconded by the Chair, Cllr K. Hayes and unanimously agreed:
 1. Lengthsman H Jackson invoice for December in the amount of £112.00
 2. Clerks December gross salary in the amount of £324.40.
 3. Clerks December reimbursements in the amount of £61.15 (£28.67 for mileage, £2.50 for Lebara PAYG Sim and £29.98 for black and colour printer ink cartridges)
 4. Invoice from P Cafferkey for advice & training in the amount of £54.11
 5. Invoice from Hoole Village Memorial Hall for meeting room hire at £70.00 for the period of June-December 2024 (7 meetings)

10. Precept – Clarification of Band D Household 2024-25 Vs 2025-26

A report was produced and circulated to the council by the Clerk, highlighting a discrepancy in the figures for the previous years' council tax bands. SRBC had provided an incorrect average Band D council tax figure of £23.64, rather than the correct figure of £23.25. The Clerk presented the correct figures and council noted that, compared to 2025-26 agreed figure of £24.94 for a Band D property, this would result in an increase of £1.69 per annum, rather than £1.30. As a result, this would show a 7.3% rise, instead of the previously stated 5.5% rise.

11. CIL Income & Expenditure

A report was produced and circulated to the council by the Clerk, outlining the historic CIL income and recorded CIL expenditure allocated to date. The council noted that there remains £17,134.40 of unspent CIL funds, which are designated for use on community infrastructure projects in the coming years, with deadlines of 2027, 2028 and 2029. However, these funds weren't included in the recent earmarked reserves in next year's budget.

Cllr R Lea made the council aware that if we should have "earmarked reserves of £25k" (£15k for election costs and £10k for a crisis emergency fund) as the Clerk/RFO informed us at our November 2024 meeting, and we have a CIL money balance of £17K, our projected total bank balance of £28k at the end of March 2025 is short by £14k. After discussion, Cllr R. Lea proposed a vote of thanks to Clerk/RFO Amy Evans for her excellent work on this, and proposed that the Clerk/RFO consult with LALC and P Cafferkey to ask three questions: a) is this a correct interpretation of our situation; b) does this shortage of funds matter at all or is it serious? And c) what if anything should we be doing about it? This was seconded by Cllr P. Cocker and unanimously agreed.

12. Parish Clerk and Financial Officer

The council noted that the Clerk had taken the Chairmans Chain of office to be restored and will await further updates when available.

13. Footpaths & Gardens

Cllr P. Cocker reported that there were no updates on footpaths due to the recent poor weather. Regarding the flooding on Smithy Lane, Cllr A. Taylor met with LCC, as flooding was above the manhole outlet, with a blocked pipe under the road causing issues. The manhole in the field was overflowing and willow tree roots have been confirmed as obstructing the pipes flow. LCC is considering using a shredder to clear the pipe. However, a larger pipe, open ditch or other infrastructure will likely be needed to prevent any future flooding. Cllr A. Taylor expects to meet with LCC again in a few weeks.

14. Community Orchard Project

Council noted Cllr R. Lea's update on the Community Orchard project and that he had drafted up a plan for the planting of the fruit trees, which was presented to council. The plan took into consideration pollination and has been produced to include 11 trees in total (10 fruit trees and 1 fir Christmas tree), with materials listed. The planting of the trees will be carried out by the two local schools with 4 teams from one school and 6 from the other (with each team consisting of 2 children to 2 parents and potentially a teacher). Cllr T. Hewitt will confirm beforehand with the schools, which individuals will be carrying out the planting. This will take place on Saturday 18th January 2025 at 10:00am at Trafalgar Garden and will be supervised by the Community Orchard project team. With consent, each team will be photographed upon completion of the planting to ensure cohesion. Once the fruit is ready for picking, the council will establish guidelines for the collection of fruit and ensure the community groups, such as the Scouts, are given the opportunity to participate. Cllr R. Lea presented an invoice

for the purchase of materials, which will be included in the agenda for the next meeting. Additionally, Cllr R. Lea proposed considering purchasing small plaques for each fruit tree at a later date.

15. Village Hall MUGA

Cllr A. Taylor in his role as a member of the Village Hall management team, presented a report on the current status of a potential MUGA at the Village Hall. The council noted that the precept for 2025-26 cannot be altered or increased. However, if the council were to consider offering support for the project, raising funds via the precept could be a potential option in the future. It was agreed that before any decision could be made, both the Village Hall and the parish council would need to consult with residents to gauge their opinions. Chair, Cllr K. Hayes suggested using an online survey to collect feedback from residents, while Cllr R. Lea proposed including this topic in the summer newsletter and during summer events. The Clerk informed the council that CIL funds could be used towards a MUGA, although these funds must be spent within 5 years of receipt in the council's bank account. Cllr R. Lea requested a copy of the Village Hall's business plan for the MUGA to ensure transparency if the council was to provide funds. Chair, Cllr K. Hayes emphasised that if the council were to provide ongoing funding, it would need to clarify its interest in the MUGA. The Clerk confirmed that under Section 19(3) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the council can set aside money annually for recreational facilities, but further research would be needed if the Village Hall opted for this route for funding. Therefore, the council will need to discuss the matter in more detail throughout the coming year, in particular after receipt of the business plan.

16. South Ribble Allotments

Council reviewed the resident's concerns about lack of allotment sites during item 4 of the agenda and await Cllr R. Lea's update once discussions have taken place with SRBC beginning on 14th January 2025.

17. Bus Routes in Much Hoole Village

Council noted the proposed changes to the tendered bus service network in Preston, South Ribble, and Chorley: The Service 12 (Preston – Longton) being replaced by a new Service 115. Usage of the new route was discussed and Chair, Cllr K. Hayes believes the route will be beneficial for students travelling to Runshaw College from Much Hoole. Chair, Cllr K. Hayes proposed adding the information for the new route to the Much Hoole Village Facebook page and to market again more nearer the time to gather interest. This was seconded by Cllr R. Lea and unanimously agreed.

18. Footpath Map Pamphlets

Council reviewed the quote from 'Fertile Frog' for designing footpath map pamphlets. Cllr P. Cocker confirmed that the quote of £800+VAT was for the design only, excluding printing. It was agreed that the map would detail the footpaths in the village and their extensions into the surrounding areas. Cllr K. Hayes suggested that the Clerk confirm with Fertile Frog what would be included in the option 1 quote of £400+VAT and clarify what information the council would need to provide. The council also agreed that the map should feature easy-to-read design, numbered Rights of Way, highlighting points of interest in the village.

19. Fallen Soldiers Plaques

Chair, Cllr K. Hayes suggested that to move this potential project further and gather the relevant information, the Clerk should contact Croston Parish Council's Clerk to obtain the contact details of the Croston Historian.

20. Planning

Council noted the planning application 07/2024/00924/HOH. 108 Liverpool Old Road Much Hoole Preston Lancashire PR4 4QA. Single storey rear extension and first floor side extension over existing driveway.

21. Items for next agenda

- CIL/Reserves/bank balance/budget issue
- Community Orchard Project
- Bus routes
- Footpath map pamphlets
- Fallen soldiers' plaques
- South Ribble Allotments

Approve payment of the materials purchased for the planting of trees in the Community Orchard Garden.

22. Date of the next meeting

The council unanimously agreed to the date of the next meeting being held on Monday 10th February 2025 at 7.30pm at The Venue, Hoole Village Memorial Hall, Liverpool Old Road, Much Hoole, PR4 4QA.