

A meeting of the Parish Council was held at **Read & Simonstone Village Hall, 6 East View, Read, BB12 7PS on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 7.00p.m.**

**Present:** Chairman: Councillor Hacking  
Councillors: Anderson, Greenhough, McKelvey, R Hanson, A Hanson & Neary

**In attendance:** Clerk A Haines, Cllr Malcolm Peplow

21 members of the public attended.

Chair Richard Hanson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Pollard

**2. Declarations of Councillors' Interest and dispensations**

**1.1. To receive declarations of interest from Councillors *on items on the agenda***

None

**1.2. To receive requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any)**

None

**1.3. To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate**

None

**3. To approve the minutes of the previous parish council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

Approved (proposed Cllr R Hanson, seconded Cllr Neary)

**4. Matters arising from the above minutes not on the agenda**

Cllr Greenhough has received correspondence from Erling Mitton who has carried out research on the historic fire at Read Mill. Clerk to pass this on to Tony Graves who requested information in April.

**5. Public participation**

Martin Crabtree, resident of George Lane for 40 years and chair of Hammond Ground Residents Group, spoke in relation to point 13H of the minutes of the parish council meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025, specifically the record that Hammond Ground would be the "least objected option" for potential locations for additional housing set against Mary's field. Mr Crabtree's full report is attached to minutes.

Overview of report:

- The Hammond Ground Resident's Group successfully challenged two planning applications and an appeal at public enquiry between 2016 and 2018 to build initially 50 houses with a view to 702 houses on Hammond Ground.
- Second planning application on Hammond Ground received 175 formal objections from Read and Simonstone residents, with petition signed by 400 residents.
- Planning Inspector at 2018 appeal highly complementary of Hammond Ground.
- In 2013 landowners of Hammond Ground proposed their 50-acre site was suitable to build 702 houses on.
- Planning expert Tim Brown (Chief planning officer at Blackpool Council) advised that 50 house proposal was a ploy to get the principle of building past the planners, enabling further applications to achieve target of 702 houses and fill 50-acre site.
- Development of Hammond Ground would double house numbers in Read.

- Need to identify more development options other than Hammond Ground and Mary's field.  
Mary's Field is a third of the size and development would be smaller.
- Requests Parish Council to reconsider the suggestion that Hammond Ground is the "least objected to" site.

Discussion following Mr Crabtree's report:

- Cllr R Hanson: Initial development in Ribble Valley has been concentrated around tier 1 villages. Further development is now being carried out around tier 2 villages. The Parish Council has been asked to consider suitable land for development. Mary's Field is classified as 'infill'. Objections would arise from Straits Lane and the surrounding estates, particularly in relation to the volumes of traffic that development would generate in these areas. The safest option for traffic considerations in the village would be Hammond Ground. South of Whalley Road in Read is greenbelt. Maybe Ribble Valley will consider Read and Simonstone together, which will open up further areas for development, such as south of Whalley Road in Simonstone. Some houses need to be built, and it would be preferable if this were to be on brownfield sites (Friendship Mill/Ribble Valley Motorbodies). Our influence as the Parish Council on planning and policies is limited.
- The Parish Council's recommendation that Hammond Ground is the least objectional option is not set in stone. The Parish Council has the opportunity to try and influence building locations to have the least impact on the village. Traffic and parking on the roads have been brought up time and time again in meetings as a problem in the village.
- Mr Crabtree: 700 extra houses leading off Whalley Road would also cause much additional traffic.
- Member of public queried whether there have been any applications on either site. Cllr R Hanson reports that he believes the owners of Mary's Field will be putting in a planning application.
- Cllr Malcolm Peplow: sits on the planning committee and is not aware of any planning applications on any of the sites mentioned tonight. He is looking carefully for signs of activity on sites around Read and Simonstone. There is a huge pressure to develop housing, and not always affordable housing but for executive housing. This has happened in Langho and Clitheroe and there is little the council can do to avoid this. The current government is determined to develop housing and there is much pressure for this so-called housing need. Existing traffic pressures are unlikely to stop the steamroller of housing. We need to come together in an ordered way as a village and find/agree on the "least worst" options for sites. This would be the best way of fighting development in the worst areas of the village. Access to main roads is key, as extra traffic on small lanes could be catastrophic.
- The Parish hasn't approached the Borough Council as yet with suggested sites, they have only highlighted boundary issues.

## **6. Borough Councillor's Report**

Cllr Peplow gave an overview, full report attached.

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT TO THE MEETING OF READ PARISH COUNCIL ON 4TH JUNE 2025**

Overview:

- County Cllr Stephen Atkinson now leader of Reform UK Group and LCC.
- Ribble Valley Borough Council remains No Overall Control, conservative-led administration re-elected at council's AGM 13<sup>th</sup> May.

- Cllr Peplow offers support to Parish Council in preparation of full bid for Ribble Valley Shared Prosperity Fund by 31<sup>st</sup> August. Cllr Peplow will be speaking up for bids from Road and Simonstone. Should hear news from expression of interest in coming weeks.
- Ribble Valley's First Time Buyers Grant of up to £15000 towards cost of renovation and energy efficiency works, and Affordable Warmth Fund for low-income households. Clerk to upload details onto Parish Council website and Facebook page.
- Cllr Peplow organising a multi-agency meeting for plight of residents on Meadowview left with incomplete roads and footpaths when developer became insolvent.

Councillor Malcolm Peplow

4th June 2025

## **7. Clerk's Report:**

7.1. Attended Lancashire Association for Local Clerks (LALC) course in May: 'whistlestop tour for new clerks and councillors'. Very useful information on how parish councils operate, their geographical context, their purpose and what they can do if they wish, the roles of the councillors and the clerk. Key points included (more information to be circulated within Parish Council):

- Policies (the importance of having policies in place for when situations arise, including complaints, planning biodiversity). These should be uploaded to the website and reviewed regularly, with dates for review put in calendar.
- In June physical accounts should be made available for public to see and this should be advertised on website.
- Statutory requirements that all councils should refer to.
- Local councils' awards scheme.
- Key documents to read: the practitioners guide, good councillors guide, transparency codes and the Clerks bible: Arnold Baker (founder of NALC) – On local council administration 13<sup>th</sup> edition (next due out in August). All councils should have a copy for the clerk to refer to.

Further training events looking to sign up for in June and July: Clerks finance and understanding precepts (LALC). Also the SLCC (society of local council clerks) offers an Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA) course. Clerk to register.

7.2. Updated insurance policy – now updated with correct contact details and playground information in place.

7.3. Ribble valley settlement review – amendments sent to RV regarding allotments and village car park. It has been highlighted the property between 34 and 38 George Lane, built a few years ago, is still shown as outside the boundary on the document submitted. Clerk to update Ribble Valley Planning Department on this boundary amendment.

7.4. Following the PCC funding opportunities presented in May for summer activities to reduce antisocial behaviour from the PCC (forwarded on to cricket club, con club and football club) clerk has been notified of further PCC funding:

- Violence Against Women and Girls Fund will support intervention projects that aim to prevent violence, support survivors, and create safer environments for women and girls across Lancashire. Suggested that this could be used to fund lighting on back streets. Clerk to look at guidance when funding opens in June.
- Business and Retail Crime Fund will provide financial support for intervention projects aimed at reducing crime in the retail and business sectors, preventing theft, fraud, violence against staff, and other crimes that impact businesses. Opens in September, clerk to check then for more information.

- Rural services network has an extensive list of funding opportunities available, but in particular the Naturesave trust offers **Grants to connect communities to nature**. Applications up to £5000 from groups who are working to connect communities to nature through activities such as Community gardening, green gyms, etc. Deadline **15 July 2025**. Clerk has left a message with Gayle Wray (REG) about setting up a community allotment, could combine with treescapes offer to provide fruit trees for community orchard. Cllr Greenhough mentioned that 2 former residents were interested in running this but are not currently living in Read/Simonstone. Councillors agree that if people are interested in running Read's community allotment for the benefit of the village, then not residing in the village shouldn't be a barrier. Community allotment could be sited on waterlogged plot as £5000 could be used for repair work.

7.5. Hill Speak allotment boundary repairs – letter advising of necessary repairs sent, no reply as yet.

7.6. Advertisement for Money management advice from CAP (Christians Against Poverty) offering money coaching workshops in Clitheroe. Circulated to parish councils, clerk to put on noticeboards.

## **8. Reports from external meetings:**

8.1. **Police report:** This month there have been 3 x assaults – 1 x parties known to each other, 2 x parties unknown, 1 x burglary (entry gained to partial derelict property under renovation, suspect youth related), 1 x road related offence (No MOT), 5 x RTC (3 x damage only, 2 x Injury), 1 x theft (fuel make off).

## **9. Playground report:**

9.1. Contractors have commenced work at 8am on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at the playground removing obsolete equipment and siting the basketball hoop. Interactive board is being fitted and work should be finished by 6<sup>th</sup> June, when the playground inspection will be carried out.

9.2. Discussion needed on levelling of hump at playground entrance, which is a barrier to access for prams and wheelchairs. To be put on agenda for next meeting, obtain quotes for work.

9.3. Refurbished in 2012 sign needs updating.

9.4. There is damage to the fence where the dog bin is – ask lengthsman to repair.

## **10. Allotment Management Committee report:**

10.1. If the community allotment goes ahead, there are 2 plots available.

10.2. Cllr Anderson has dug out where the water issues are on the potential community allotment plot, but has found nothing at present, potentially due to dry weather.

10.3. Allotment inspection 6<sup>th</sup> June to see if tenants have tidied up following provision of skips. Letters will be sent out by clerk if allotments are not in an acceptable condition.

10.4. Lengthsman has done a good job of the fencing on the lane.

10.5. Plots cleared at top of allotment site. Now need to take shed down.

10.6. Overall, the feel of the allotments is good and the site looks much neater. Having 2 skips has been worthwhile.

## **11. Decision Items:**

### **11.1. Installing EV charge points on village car park (Playground):**

- Clerk applied for £5000 from the RV Shared Prosperity funding for to install three EV charge points at Read village car park (by Read village playground), costs include the installation of 3 x public EV charging points, including the charger unit, installation labor, cabling and foundations (guide price from E.On's website for commercial EV chargers). Concerns raised over installation costs depending on existing infrastructure.
- Cllr R Hanson suggests renting charge points rather than buying outright.

- Cllr Peplow highlights car parks in Clitheroe where residents in terraced housing plug in EV vehicles overnight. Considerations regarding car park users blocking spaces overnight/packing limits and restrictions/reduced parking on car park for non-EV users.
- Cllr R Hanson suggests EV charge points to be located opposite playground (next to Motorbodies boundary) to prevent digging up new tarmac.
- Cllr Greenhough raises concerns over maintenance costs. Cllr A Hanson suggests that this would be covered by the income from electric. It may be possible to charge more for electric to generate income on these.
- Clerk has liaised with LCC regarding EV on street charge points (BP Pulse). LCC will be working with district and parish councils over coming months to identify locations to put forward as potential sites for on street chargepoints. They currently have 150 chargepoints located around the county under a contract with BP Pulse on public highways and car parks. Clerk to respond to LCC to ask if Read Parish might be considered as a potential location for future EV installation.

**11.2 Garage land purchase on Fort Street:** Clerk has sent letters to RVBC regarding purchase of Fort Street garage site, no reply as yet.

**11.3 Car park sign for allotment tenants:** Cllrs to review all signs (allotment parking, playground signage, signs for football club and signs covered by trees on playground and signs stating parking restrictions and times on car park.)

**11.4 Back Street/Fort Street lights:** The cost of installing cables into people's gardens will be high. A better option will be to use solar powered lights. Cllr Anderson estimates cost to be £800-£1000 per solar light (Prolectric AE3 solar street lighting), which should last overnight. However, these can't be installed in the road, but need to go on a pole or wall. Other options include lighting bollards, which are expensive and also need to be installed into the road. Cllr A Hanson has identified a smaller, unintrusive wall-mounted option, several of which could be installed on homeowner's walls (permission already gained from 1 homeowner).

**11.5 Devil's elbow road surface response from Ged Mirfin:** it was agreed at county hall that the road needed inspecting, it has been accepted that this is a problematic stretch of road and solutions will be offered. Ged assures the parish council that he will update us on timescales as soon as these are provided. Cllr Peplow points out that the delays in repairs could be largely driven by traffic management issues. Previously a spokesperson from the Highways Agency has stated that the road at Devil's elbow was not deemed high risk in the 2025-26 resurfacing programme following various surveying methods (no on-site inspection).

**11.6 Updating of Facebook page/social media:** Read Parish Council Facebook page is very out-of-date but clerk unable to edit as no admin rights. Clerk to approach Barrie Tyrer for advice on this in meeting next week. May need to ask Facebook to set up new page and remove old one. Simonstone Parish Council have an active up-to-date Facebook page and it would be good to follow their example.

**11.7 Councillor's bespoke email addresses:** Clerk to approach Barrie Tyrer for advice on this in meeting next week. Cllr Anderson no longer has a landline.

**11.8 Plaque for planter and flowers:** Car park plaque will be for Mr Summersgill, planter will commemorate VE Day. Arrangements will be made at the same time as playground signage, which will also show funding by Mr Summersgill.

**11.9 Annual governance and accountability return minuted:** Signed and minuted as of 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025. Cllr R Hanson and clerk to meet on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025 to handover finance to clerk. Proposed that Cllr R Hanson and Cllr McKelvey become signatories in addition to Cllrs Hacking and Pollard to minimise financial transaction delays (proposed Cllr A Hanson,



seconded Cllr Hacking). Cllr R Hanson to speak to Unity bank about setting up additional signatories on account.

## **12. Correspondence:**

- 12.1. Acknowledgement of donation of £350 to Dementia UK by The Silver Bells Christmas Singers following singing of Christmas songs in local villages and at the Christmas tree light up ceremony.
- 12.2. A resident whose garden backs onto the playing field has asked if she can have her hedge cut. Read Parish Council has previously told residents that they can't cut the hedge. This is normally done by the hedge cutter in September. Will advise residents that they can trim the hedge behind their property if they want to, but they can't uproot the hedge.

## **13. Planning applications and decisions:**

- 13.1. Holkers Farm, Whins Lane, Read BB12 7RB. Prior approval under Class Q (a) and (b) for the proposed change of use of one agricultural building to one two-storey, four-bedroom dwelling. No response required from Parish Council.

## **14. Finance and accounts:**

### **A. Payments:**

Date	Item	Amount
21-May-25	Clerk salary	£316.25
21-May-25	Ark Plastics	£474.00
14-May-25	Bus shelter (David Scott)	£3.005
14-May-25	water bill	£49.58
12-May-25	clerk training (LALC)	£35.00
02-May-25	clerk salary	£316.25

### **B. Receipts:**

Date	Item	Amount
21-May-25	READSTONE UTD	£500.00
15-May-25	Second legacy from Mr Summersgill	£1811.84
12-May-25	HMRC VAT return	£242.00
08-May-25	HMRC VAT return	£7414.30
06-May-25	RIBBLE VALLEY B C (VE DAY)	£500.00

### **C. Bank Accounts:**

Unity Current:	£1,913.93
Unity Savings:	£59060.00

Total	<b>£60,973.93</b>
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**15.** Items for the next agenda:

- 15.1. Levelling hump in playground
- 15.2. Back street/Fort street lighting
- 15.3. Plaques and signage for playground, car park and allotments
- 15.4. Facebook and email addresses
- 15.5. Update on website

Please send items for next agenda to clerk 10 days before next meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm.

The Next Meeting will take place on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025 at 7pm at the Village Hall.