

A meeting of the Parish Council was held at **Read & Simonstone Village Hall, 6 East View, Read, BB12 7PS on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 at 7.00p.m.**

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

**In attendance:** Clerk A Haines

No members of the public attended.

Chair Richard Hanson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Anderson & Cllr Hacking

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

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

Received from Cllrs A Hanson and R Hanson on item 12: PROW Cock Bridge to Read Park.

**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 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025**

Approved.

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

4.1. Facebook: It was mentioned that there should be a link to the new Facebook page on the website, and also that it is very confusing having 2 Facebook Pages (old and new).

**ACTION(S):** (i) Clerk to put link to Facebook on webpage, and contact Facebook about removing old page, and (ii) Cllr A Hanson to make further enquiries about how this can be done.

4.2. Query about whether Christmas lights will be battery powered or solar – answer: solar.

**5. Public participation**

None

**6. Borough Councillor's Report**

Report attached (Appendix I). Matters arising from report:

6.1. Cllr Peplow has raised issues with RVBC for not supporting Read PC bid for EV charge points on car park. LCC EV charge scheme applies to on street charge points and not car parks, and clerk has already queried this with LCC before submitting application. Cllr Peplow will update Read PC if the opportunity arises to resubmit the proposal.

6.2. Onward homes – have an interest in 5 homes on Meadowview Estate.

6.3. Reorganisation – it was queried whether the government would go ahead with the opinions of Lancashire Council's in completed surveys. The biggest chance for this to happen would be if all the councils could agree on the reorganisation, but LCC can ultimately make their own decision in the end. RV has a very good council tax base and everyone wants them in their restructured area. All options for reorganisation keep the RV intact bar one – option 4 (incorporated with Blackburn). This is the most contentious bid in the RV.

6.4. Planning application for 70 + houses/apartments in East Whalley between road and river Calder has been approved this afternoon. The developer has submitted a succession of applications since the original grant application was submitted in 2012. Carried out a viability test for affordable homes – they would need a minimum of 30 % affordable homes for a development of this size. However, the development has been approved with 0% affordable housing. This is an indicator that no matter how hard planners try to throw out inappropriate planning applications, developers will get around this somehow. Developers are also getting away without making any improvements to infrastructure and amenities, which LCC aren't demanding.

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

- 7.1. Grants: clerk has written to the Lancashire Environment Fund to check that the community allotment project is suitable for the Green Grant application, and they have confirmed that the project is eligible for one of these grants. It must be noted: there should be minimum restrictions on public access to the community allotments (confirm on application form), no match funding can be put towards the Green Grant which is for stand-alone discrete projects so it needs to cover 100% of your total project cost, and for any items greater than £1,000 three quotes are required (including online quotation). Application form must be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> December and then fully complete the works and draw down the grant by next March. Tools or equipment (transferrable assets) wouldn't be eligible as it must be for capital items only. Our original proposal was to create a community allotment to enhance wildlife and promote outdoor recreation/environmental education of the local community. We will upgrade and improve an unused allotment, adding infrastructure (shed/glasshouse), providing equipment, planting fruit trees, establishing raised beds, herb beds, and creating pollinator and bird-friendly zones within the parish. **ACTION(S)**: clerk to add items to include in grant as a decision item in November's agenda.
- 7.2. Clerk has thanked everyone who helped write letters of support for the Reg nomination. **ACTION(S)**: Clerk to fill in REG nomination form in time for the December deadline.
- 7.3. AGAR: today (01/10/25) Read Parish Council received the completed AGAR from PKF Littlejohn. We have been asked to consider the final external auditor report at our next meeting, and decide what, if any, action is to be taken. Clerk has attached section 1, 2 and 3 of the AGAR to the agenda pack for councillor's information at this meeting, but due to short notice short notice clerk has proposed deciding on any actions to be deferred to October's meeting **ACTION(S)**: clerk to add decision on AGAR report actions to November's agenda.

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

- 8.1. **Police report:** None submitted in October.

## **9. Playground report:** discussed in decision item 11.1.

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

- 10.1. Cllr Neary has expressed his disappointment regarding fencing issues at the allotment with the lengthsman. Read PC shouldn't be paying for fencing installed in the wrong place in August, providing inappropriate plot sizes. **ACTION(S)**: Read PC to provide clear instructions to lengthsman in writing going forwards.
- 10.2. Need to be mindful of how much we are spending against the budget.
- 10.3. Allotment holders need to maintain their own fencing (perimeter fencing is managed by the parish council).
- 10.4. Cllr Neary has approached the tree surgeon, but is still waiting for a response.

## **11. Decision Items:**

- 11.1. Decision on the emptying of the new playground bin:** RVBC have provided a quote of £5.70/wk to do this, and can do just throughout the cricket season. It was pointed out that the number of children playing football on the playing fields on a Sunday throughout the winter months will increase bin usage/litter in Winter, and it was proposed (Cllr A Hanson) that the bin should be emptied year round (seconded Cllr McKelvey) **ACTION(S):** (i) Cllr A Hanson to contact the council to set up collection, and will update them when the bin has been installed.
- 11.2. Decision on the siting of new Christmas lights:** Cllr Neary has spoken to Craig Ryan from Stately Lighting, who sort out electrics, install the lights and take down after Christmas, store them, and put them up again next year. To install wraparound lighting the initial cost is £265 for electrics (initial infrastructure), and rental cost of £60 for double (2 x 10 long) wraparound column lights (installed 3 m up to the top of the column), plus £80 to install/take down the lights each year. Could potentially ask local businesses to sponsor, proposed (Cllr A Hanson) to install lighting along 8 columns on Whalley Road (apply for licence for all 13) at an initial cost of £2120 this year and £1120 per year going forward, and £50 of lighting (solar lights/battery powered, with timers) to decorate 3 trees in Church Street Gardens. **ACTION(S):** (i) Clerk/Cllr Neary to apply to for licence for columns with LCC (ii) clerk to check when Simonstone got their funding response last year, in order to see if RVBC fund retrospectively.
- 11.3. Read in Bloom: decision on sitings of planters:** Cllr Near proposed siting planters similar to Padiham's but half size, in a variety of locations throughout the village. Considerations: these need maintaining and regular watering, and we need to seek cooperation from local residents and businesses. Cllr Pollard proposed to put a map of suggested locations in the annual newsletter and a request for volunteers to help water each one (seconded Cllr Neary).
- 11.4. Budget setting:** clerk has circulated a suggested 26/27 budget based on current expenditure amended for inflation, and forecasted expenses (Appendix II). This needs amending to factor in the increased costs of emptying the new playground bin. It was agreed that based on budget forecasts the precept will remain the same for next year at £14, 824. **ACTION(S):** (i) clerk to amend budget for bin costs and circulate to councillors for agreement.
- 11.5. Clerk overtime update and workload decision going forward:** the clerk had an appraisal this month, and during this time concerns were raised over workload, which is very high despite clerk working 10 hours overtime each month, which was originally granted for training purposes. Proposed that 12.5 hours overtime will be granted for a probationary period of 6 months (10 hours to catch up with general workload, and 2.5 hours shared with Simonstone PC for training). This will be reviewed in 6 months.
- 11.6. Levelling hump in playground update:** Contractors due to start tomorrow (02/10/25). During this time the playground will be closed. The contractors will be putting in flags for a cycle stand (at an extra cost of £125) near the playground entrance, adjacent to the path. The new bin will be located by the picnic bench, and the fence will be replaced in total costs. **ACTION(S):** (i) clerk to put a notice on website and Facebook, (ii) Cllr Neary to put a notice on the community pages.
- 11.7. Back Street/Fort Street lighting installation update:** Cllr Anderson has sent in a floodlight that has been purchased. This is triggered by motion. Lights will be installed on the gable end and by The Nook. **ACTION(S):** Cllr Neary to take light round to residents to show them.
- 11.8. CCTV quote and coverage update:** Cllr Neary has obtained a new quote for car park CCTV, for an 180 degree network camera (allows viewing of the road, car park and playground, with motion detection and high resolution picture), a bracket used to fix the camera to pole, 4 channel network recorder with 2tb hard drive going to cricket club, a box of duct grade cat5 cable, cetinary wire, Tp link to allow online viewing, supplied and fitted £1300. Still waiting to hear news of IX Wireless posts, but these may not be suitable for CCTV anyway. **ACTION(S):** (i) Cllr A & R Hanson to obtain a third CCTV quote, (ii) clerk to check CCTV guidance (re

playground) with NALC, (ii) Cllr R Hanson and Cllr Neary to check legislation with CCTV companies, and (iv) Cllr Neary to update quote with cost of including pole to mount.

11.9. **Update on plaques and signage for playground, car park and allotments:** No price obtained yet. **ACTION(S)**: (i) Cllr R Hanson to obtain prices, (ii) clerk to chase up playground inspection report.

11.10. **Website provider update:** James from Easyweb will come to the next meeting at 6.30 pm to present on Easyweb websites. Needs to be easy to use, increase engagement and compatible with different devices, have the right level of encryption for GDPR. **ACTION(S)**: clerk to research Assertion 10 for the next AGAR and ask James about this in terms of GDPR on website.

11.11. **Annual tree inspection update:** Cllr Neary still waiting for response from tree surgeon. **ACTION(S)**: Cllr Neary to chase up tree surgeon for response.

## **12. Planning applications and decisions**

12.1. **3/2025/0621** - 23 Jubilee Street Read BB12 7PR, Proposed single storey rear extension to provide additional kitchen diner space. No objections.

12.2. **DMMO Old Coal Staithe, Read 804-708 (888.2630)** - APPLICATION TO UPGRADE TO A BRIDLEWAY THE FOOTPATH FROM A680 AT COCK BRIDGE, READ TO A671 NEAR READ PARK, READ. Submitted by the British Horse Society. Cllr Greenhough commented that she thought that both ends of the path would be dangerous for horses due to the volume and speed of traffic on both roads. It was proposed (Cllr Pollard) that Read PC should be in favour and support this application (seconded by Cllr Greenhough) as there are no other bridleways in Read or Simonstone. **ACTION(S)**: clerk to update planning departments of decisions made.

13. **Finance and accounts:** Approved (see appendix III).

## **14. Items for the next agenda – meeting commences at 6.30 for website talk:**

14.1. **Decision on AGAR report actions**

14.2. **Newsletter – to go out for Christmas, items to add: car park, allotments, playground, Christmas lights, Read in bloom, map of planters.**

14.3. **Read in Bloom**

14.4. **CCTV**

14.5. **Website**

14.6. **Senior citizen's lunch**

14.7. **GDPR/Assertion 10**

14.8. **Playground gates: quotes**

14.9. **Annual tree inspection**

14.10. **Playground report**

14.11. **Update on resident's view on lights**

14.12. **Lancashire Environment Fund grant: items to include in bid**

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

The meeting ended at 9.15 pm.

The Next Meeting will take place on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 6.30 pm at the Village Hall.

Appendix I: Borough Councillor's Report

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT TO READ PARISH COUNCIL ON 1 OCTOBER 2025.**

I would like to start with an update on Ribble Valley Shared Prosperity and Jubilee Fund Bids.

Read and Simonstone Village Hall (Registered Charity) (Scheme 1) – Provide accessible WC - £107,641 (officer's comment 'maximum grant is £100,000)

The recommendation is to move this to full application stage and The Council will be in contact with the applicants to invite this.

Read and Simonstone Village Hall (Registered Charity) (Scheme 2) – accessible route from car park to the main door - £27,727 (officer's comment 'two schemes submitted with the other recommended)

This will not be supported.

Read Parish Council (Parish/Town/District Councils) install EV charge points at Read village car park - £5,000.

This will not be supported on the grounds that Lancashire County Council has a scheme that we result in the roll out of EV charge points.

I am sorry that we have not managed to secure as many projects as we hoped but I am very pleased that the Village Hall accessible WC project will receive substantial funding if the application is completed successfully.

Hot off the press! Last night I attended a Special Policy and Finance Committee Meeting to discuss the appointment of new Chief



Executive to replace Marshal Scott who retires in January 2026 after many years of dedicated service. A press release will be issued very shortly to confirm that subject to Full Council approval, an offer will be made to the successful candidate who currently works for another Lancashire council. I am very pleased that we will have continued effective leadership through a very difficult period whether local government reorganisation ends up going ahead or not.

I have now exhausted my efforts to involve Onward Homes in the meeting I am arranging to discuss the completion of roads and footpaths at Meadow View, Read which is very disappointing. I will be organising a meeting without them and will be in contact with the Parish Council as soon as I know the availability of Jonathan Hinder MP and I have some possible dates. I am hoping that when we get out heads together we will be able to move things forward for the residents of the estate.

Turning to local government reorganisation, there is now a prominent section giving the current update on the home page of Ribble Valley Borough Council's website.

It looks as if Lancashire's different councils will be unable to agree on a single format for reorganisation. There is currently one option for a two unitary council Lancashire (split north & south which puts Ribble Valley in the north), one option for three unitary councils, two for four unitary councils and one for five unitary councils. As discussed previously, Ribble Valley Borough Council's preferred option is the four unitary solution that would see us merge with Preston and Lancaster. The other three unitary option would see Ribble Valley split along the same line as the Parliamentary Constituencies which would put the Pendle and Clitheroe part of Ribble Valley with Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn, Pendle, Burnley and Rossendale councils. I will be supporting the Council's preferred option of merger with Preston and Lancaster if

reorganisation proceeds but this will finally be decided by the Government.

These different options will form the basis of separate bids to the Government Minister and these will need to be submitted on or by 28 November 2025. The Minister will then start a public consultation early in 2026 and will select the preferred option in Summer 2026.

I have sought clarification from Ribble Valley Borough Council's Chief Executive as follows. It looks as if elections to the new 'Shadow Authority' will be held in May 2027 and it seems likely that Ribble Valley Borough's existing Councillors will have their terms extended to April 2028 at which point the Council would be abolished.

Councillor Malcolm Peplow

30 September 2025

DRAFT

## Appendix II: Budget and precept forecast:

Comparisons as of 31/03/2026				
	FINAL ACCOUNTS 2024/25	BUDGET 2025/26	FORECAST ACCOUNTS 2025/26	BUDGET 2026/27
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
RVBC Precept:	14246.00	14824.00	14824.00	14824.00
Concurrent funding:	820.00	0.00	2086.00	2086.00
HMRC VAT Refunds:	886.78	0.00	8927.10	4000.00
LCC, sundry and other grants:	2320.41	0.00	1280.04	500.00
Rents, licences and bonds:	5671.64	0.00	3044.03	3044.03
Other income	2320.41	0.00	2152.42	200.00
	<b>26265.24</b>	<b>14824.00</b>	<b>32313.59</b>	<b>24654.03</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
<b>Administration Expenses:</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Clerk's salary:		3500.00	7033.10	7033.10
HMRC: Employers Tax and NIC:		768.00	367.20	367.20
Expenses: mileage, printing etc.		466.00	187.71	194.84
Clerk training:			179.00	185.80
Membership subscriptions:		135.00	399.30	414.47
Audit fees		468.00	438.00	454.64
Payroll services:		720.00	216.00	224.21
Insurance:		600.00	654.28	679.14
bank charges			72.00	74.74
General Admin:		250.00	139.55	144.85
Website and email hosting, software/hardware:		552.00	126.82	1022.00
Allotment bond return		200.00	200.00	200.00
	<b>0.00</b>	<b>7459.00</b>	<b>10012.96</b>	<b>10995.00</b>
<b>Amenity Expenses:</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Lengthsman:	0.00	900.00	2000.00	2076.00
General maintenance		200.00	1900.92	1973.15
Bin emptying:		1700.00	2230.81	2315.58
Grass cutting:		1460.00	1300.22	1349.63
Utilities:		800.00	837.18	868.99
Bus stop cleaning:		100.00	210.00	217.98
Play area inspection	0.00	150.00	137.02	142.22
Playground equipment repair contingency		1000.00	900.00	900.00
Other Expenses	0.00	10.00	12531.62	1000.00
	<b>0.00</b>	<b>6320.00</b>	<b>22047.76</b>	<b>10843.56</b>
<b>Sundry Expenses:</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Christmas trees, lights and bunting:	0.00	300.00	300.00	1120.00
Christmas party Higher Trapp:		400.00	400.00	400.00
Remembrance Sunday - wreath etc:	0.00	50.00	50.00	50.00
Civic Sunday:		200.00	200.00	200.00
Village Hall hire:		260.00	327.25	339.69
Donations		200.00	200.00	200.00
Other Sundry Expenses:	0.00		0.00	100.00
	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1410.00</b>	<b>1477.25</b>	<b>2409.69</b>
<b>VAT on Expenses to be Reclaimed:</b>				
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Total Expenditure:</b>		15189.00	33537.98	24248.24
<b>SUMMARY:</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Income:	0.00	14824.00	32313.59	24654.03
Expenditure:	0.00	-15189.00	-33537.98	-24248.24
	0.00	-365.00	-1224.39	405.79



## Appendix III: Finance Report

September 2025 Account reporting		
<b>Payments</b>		
Date	Item	Amount
10/09/25	BP to Water plus	£ 82.42
17/09/25	BP to HMRC Clerks tax and NI	£ 25.31
17/09/25	BP to Anna Haines: clerk salary	£ 622.35
18/09/25	BP to Goeff Lambert internal audit	£ 60.00
18/09/25	BP to Empress fencing	£ 1,309.92
18/09/25	BP to Sabden PC for lengthsman cont 25-26	£ 1,000.00
18/09/25	BP to Anna Haines postage	£ 1.55
18/09/25	BP to Anna Haines key cutting noticeboards	£ 18.00
18/09/25	BP to Anna Haines stationary	£ 6.45
25/09/25	BP to Mr NE Goodison	£ 50.00
25/09/25	BP to Anna Haines printing expenses	£ 21.38
25/09/25	BP to David Scott bus shelter cleaning	£ 35.00
30/09/25	service charge	£ 6.00
Total		£ 3,238.38
<b>Receipts</b>		
Date	Item	Amount
23/09/25	Allotment bond from A Bolton	£ 100.00
29/09/25	RVBC concurrent functions grant	£ 2,086.00
30/09/25	Credit interest	£ 258.36
Total		£ 2,444.36
<b>Bank accounts</b>		
	Unity Current:	£ 3,004.55
	Unity Savings:	£ 43,129.40
	Total	£ 46,133.95
	Balance brought forward	£ 46,927.97
	Difference from previous month	-£ 794.02
<b>Bank reconciliation</b>		
Receipts - Payments	-£	794.02
Difference from previous month	-£	794.02
Do these amounts match?	YES	

## **Appendix IV: Actions from Agenda**

Minute	Action
4.10	Clerk to put link to new facebook page on website
4.10	Clerk to contact Facebook about removing old page
4.10	Cllr A Hanson to make enquiries about removing obsolete Facebook pages
7.10	clerk to add items to include in LEF grant as a decision item in November's agenda.
7.20	Clerk to fill in REG nomination form in time for the December deadline.
7.30	clerk to add decision on AGAR report actions to November's agenda.
10.10	Read PC to provide clear instructions to lengthsman in writing going forwards.
11.10	Cllr A Hanson to contact the council to set up playground bin refuse collection, and will update them when the bin has been installed.
11.20	Clerk/Cllr Neary to apply to for licence for columns with LCC
11.20	clerk to check when Simonstone got their funding response last year, in order to see if RVBC fund retrospectively
11.40	clerk to amend budget for bin costs and circulate to councillors for agreement.
11.60	clerk to put a notice on website and facebook about playground closure
11.60	Cllr Neary to put a notice on the community pages.
11.70	Cllr Neary to take light round to residents to show them.
11.80	Cllr A & R Hanson to obtain a third CCTV quote
11.80	clerk to check CCTV guidance (re playground) with NALC
11.80	Cllr R Hanson and Cllr Neary to check legislation with CCTV companies
11.80	Cllr Neary to update quote with cost of including pole to mount
11.90	Cllr R Hanson to obtain prices
11.90	clerk to chase up playground inspection report.
11.10	clerk to research Assertion 10 for the next AGAR and ask James about this in terms of GDPR on website.
11.11	Cllr Neary to chase up tree surgeon for response.
11.12	clerk to update relevant planning authorities of decisions made.