

A meeting of the Parish Council was held at **Read & Simonstone Village Hall, 6 East View, Read, BB12 7PS on Wednesday 4th February 2026 at 7.00p.m.**

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

In attendance: Clerk A Haines, Cllr Malcolm Peplow.

Chair Richard Hanson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies accepted: Cllr. C Pollard

2. Declarations of Councillors' Interest and dispensations

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

Item 11.13: Cllrs A & R Hanson, adjacent landowners to route of bridleway proposed and refuted by LCC.

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 7th January 2025

Approved.

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

None.

5. Public participation

None

6. Borough Councillor's Report

Borough Councillor's Report attached (Appendix I). In brief:

- Signs of geotechnical survey activity of on Hammond Ground. 2 sites at Hammond Ground have been submitted by landowners as available for potential development in response to last year's call for sites, along with a site on Mary's Field.
- It was queried whether developers have to contribute so much towards infrastructure. Infrastructural improvements (roundabouts/relief roads/schools) typically only agreed with very large developments in the region of 2-3000 houses. Small developments of a few hundred houses provide very little added infrastructure. Highways improvement is a concern as the policy on highways centred around a transport mix – if a development is close to bus route/train line, it implies (albeit incorrectly in a lot of cases) a proportion of journeys will be taken this way/model half journeys taken on public transport/on foot.
- Appealing planning applications has huge financial implications and knock on effects on future applications.
- Nothing to report on local government reorganisation. Urges everyone to have say on next survey.

7. Clerk's Report/correspondence:

7.1. Facebook – previous clerk has agreed to remove old website. Still on-going.

- 7.2. Damaged footpath sign on Whin's Lane was reported to PCSO Katie Ferguson, and request for information/witnesses has been put out on social media and parish council website.
- 7.3. Clerk has written again to the homeowner who's garden backs on to allotment site. Homeowner has responded to say they are unsure about what building materials we are referring to, and requested photographic evidence of this/plans of plot 9E. Cllr Neary has inspected the metal fence line which appears to be on the allotment side of the boundary, with building work directly behind this. **ACTION(s):** Cllr Neary and Cllr R Hanson to request a meeting with homeowner to agree a fence line and request when they intend to get rid of the temporary fencing and erect a permanent fence (proposed deadline for this: June).
- 7.4. Response from RVBC Christmas light funding to query on 50 % grant funding provided: The grant criteria states that RVBC would not normally pay more than 50% of any scheme. The grant criteria would have loaded on the website at the start of the application. Also, as RPC actual spend was less than anticipated (due to street post lights being hired and therefore not eligible) and the award was made on the basis of a higher spend, the actual amount has been reduced to reflect 50% of the costs excluding VAT.

8. Reports from external meetings:

- 8.1. Parish liaison meeting attended by Cllr Greenhough:
 - Local Government Reorganisation – there remains a lot of speculation, but trends favouring merging with Lancaster and Preston, which should simplify the delivery of local services. A statutory consultation will be launched soon; Parish Councils will be informed at the start of the process although aren't considered key stakeholders. **ACTION(s):** clerk to post on noticeboards/website/Facebook when LGR consultation information is received to inform public.
 - Another window will open soon for Jubilee Fund. Funding is also available for CCTV, with applications open now.
 - Capital programmes in Clitheroe: Eddisford has a new play area.
 - New budget: council tax increase will be the lowest in Lancashire.
 - Tour de France will be coming through the Ribble Valley. **ACTION(s):** clerk to check route as would be a good way of getting potholes fixed in parish.
- 8.2. Police report (monthly statistics table in Appendix II):
 - **January:** Assault x 1 (parties known to each other), burglary x 1 (likely offenders arrested and charged with conspiracy to burgle), criminal damage x 1 (this is the footpath sign), ASB x 4 (incidents involving parties known to each other, nothing that's likely to impact the wider community), road related offence x 1 (speeding), RTC x 2, theft x 2 (1 x shoplifting and 1 x theft of stone).

9. Playground report:

- 9.1. Cllr McKelvey is meeting a playground contractor tomorrow to discuss quote for playground repairs following inspection.

10. Allotment Management Committee report:

- 10.1. There are ten vacant plots, Cllr Neary is booking viewing appointments.
- 10.2. Contractor for community allotment is booked up until March but will try and find a day earlier in schedule to fit in work on plot draining and levelling.
- 10.3. Still awaiting a breakdown for costs and timeframe from tree surgeon. **ACTION(s):** Cllr Neary will pursue this.
- 10.4. In the current absence of a lengthsman, the new plot holder for 9E has put a fence up. Parish Council will cover the cost of the materials (approximately £300, with some materials left over which can be used for additional allotment work).

- 10.5. Two sets of drawers have been left on the car park area at top off lane. This supports need for CCTV.
- 10.6. AGM held at the end of January, see decision item.

11. Decision Items:

11.1. Responses to allotment bond and rent increases – report from the clerk

- A lot of work has gone into chasing unpaid rent and bonds in January. Most responses received from tenants to prompting have been positive/apologetic; however, some tenants have pointed out that they have done a lot of maintenance work on their own fencing and plots and didn't feel that the bond increase was necessarily fair to long term tenants who have always maintained their plots well. Other tenants have highlighted financial hardships and other extenuating circumstances that have created difficulties in making payments.
- Rent and additional bond monies are still owed by 18 tenants, totalling £1400. **ACTION(s):** If monies not received in 30 days of letter issue, clerk to issue penalty letters stating forfeit of the allotment if no payment received within 14 days.

11.2. Allotment costs following allotment AGM – verbal report from Cllr Neary, report from the clerk (enclosed) on current running costs

- ALLOTMENT EXPENDITURE 25/26 report from clerk:
 - Fencing materials: £1975.22
 - Lengthsman (some of the total lengthsman work is for more fencing material and the odd job in the village too, so I have deducted £500 of total lengthsman costs of £3743): £3243
 - Skip hire: £336
 - Utilities: £665.17
 - Clerk hours (40 @ £16.90): £676
- Total expenditure: £6895.39, total income (once all rent has been paid, as it hasn't yet):
 - rent: £2043.95 (including field).
 - bonds: £3500 (obviously these should be held in a separate pot, which clerk is setting up, to be refunded on return of good condition, so cannot count this as income).
- Plot rent increases for 26/27: increase to £80 (full plot), £50 half plot, £30 ¼ plot. 2027/28 rent increase by 20-25% to a full plot being £100, and other sizes proportional. Cllr Hanson to attend next AGM and explain cost increases to tenants and that if we can't afford to manage the allotments (covering water, administration and maintenance) on the rents charged it might be necessary to sell them. **ACTION(s):** Cllr Neary to inform tenants of new rent increases for 26/27.
- Reports of asbestos on plots: Can be taken to Whinneyhill landfill. If tenants approach Cllr Neary he can arrange this.

11.3. Installations of solar powered light on back street between East View and Church Street – verbal report from Cllr Anderson:

Current lights installed on back street are working ok, no objections and some positive comments. Cllr Anderson requested installing further light on a second street (proposed: Cllr R Hanson, seconded Cllr A Hanson).

11.4. Christmas meal 2026 costings and plans – verbal update. Cllr Hacking approached The Higher Trapp, who have agreed to keep the price £23 a head if we return in 2027, therefore the parish council have agreed to remain. Having a meal

at the village hall would still be pricey and may require volunteers to help, and it would be difficult to provide a hot meal.

- 11.5. **Read in Bloom** – verbal update from Cllr Neary. No responses from potential helpers in newsletter request. Proposed locations for planters: bottom of George Lane (plenty of space for planters), top of George Lane, permission granted from landowner for planters along the wall by mill, site of old telephone box (slimmer planter, move larger planter onto chemist forecourt), triangle at the top of Straits Lane, and the entrance to car park. It will be the responsibility of the Parish Council to maintain (try to keep small and use easy to keep perennials), hopefully some residents/businesses may help to water. **ACTION(s)**: Cllr Neary to approach businesses to ask if they will sponsor planters. Cllr A and R Hanson can water planters at top of Read Caravan Park.
- 11.6. **Allotment AGM**- verbal update from Cllr Neary. AGM went well, some people complaining that they being penalised by bond increases despite having well-maintained plots. Lengthsman costs were highlighted, and it was agreed that the Parish Council cannot be selective in refundable bonds and bonds must be increased across the board. Everyone agreed with community allotment. There were no objections to rent increases, and it was pointed out that allotments in Barrowford charge four times the amount that Read PC do, with water bills on top. Tree management was mentioned as an on-going project, and Issues with perimeter fencing on the field boundary.
- 11.7. **Lengthsman** – verbal update. Clerk has paid lengthsman bill less the amount agreed in the last meeting. The lengthsman has now been paid £3743 for labour to date. Future work needs quotes and prices from the start. Lengthsman scheme is no longer receiving contributions from LCC, and a lot of parishes are going to find their own lengthsman and manage the scheme themselves. Reports of damage on PROW can be reported to LCC and they can send out people to fix. **ACTION(s)**: Cllr R Hanson to meet with lengthsman at allotment and agree what needs rectifying at his own costs. Cllr R Hanson to inform lengthsman coordinator that we will come out of the lengthsman scheme (proposed: Cllr R Hanson, seconded Cllr Neary).
- 11.8. **Policy** – report from the clerk sharing draft of Financial Standing Orders, Data Protection Policy and IT Policy. **ACTION(s)**: (i) clerk to upload new policies to website, (ii) clerk to seek advice on most cost-effective Microsoft 365/antivirus software, (iii) Cllr Hanson to perform finance and bank reconciliation checks once a quarter.
- 11.9. **Tree works at allotment** – verbal report from Cllr Neary covered in item 10.
- 11.10. **Playground signage, gates and quote for repair work** – verbal report from Cllr R Hanson, report from the clerk on playground repair quotes. Andrew Aird quote for gate is reasonable, with 8-year guarantee and installation included. Cllr McKelvey meeting tomorrow for a second quote, clerk waiting on third quote. Car park signs have been replaced.
- 11.11. Community allotment project plan – verbal update covered in item 10.
- 11.12. CCTV electricity costs and additional camera at cricket club – verbal update Cllr R Hanson has emailed the cricket club on 16th January with the proposal that we forfeit lease for electricity costs, no response as yet. Contractor that installed

CCTV previously can provide a quote; however we need to get permission in the first instance. **ACTION(s)**: clerk to chase up CCTV funding.

- 11.13. Cock Bridge Footpath - verbal update. It is the responsibility of an applicant to apply for this. The Horse Society put blanket applications for bridleways across the country, with a lot of desk-based information but not much evidence to pass legal test. There is nothing on land registry about who owns land.
- 11.14. **Item not on the agenda**: In honour of a Blackburn Diocese 100-year anniversary it has been requested by the church that we put up a peace pole on the community garden, by the Christmas tree. No objections.

12. Planning applications and decisions:

1. Two applications have been received, 3/2025/0986, Land opposite Turner Fold Read BB12 7QZ (replied, no objections), and 3/2025/0923, Read Cricket Club Whalley Road Read BB12 7PN (replied: Read Parish Council were informed of the cricket clubs wish to proceed with this development a few months ago when they sought our support. The Parish Council agreed to support the proposal, concluding that the extension will add a valuable storage area).

13. Finance and accounts: Council approved finance report (Appendix III).

Cllr Hanson extended thanks to clerk for policy work.

14. Items for the next agenda:

- 14.1. Playground
- 14.2. Allotments – trees, community, lengthsman
- 14.3. CCTV
- 14.4. Plans for AGM/APM
- 14.5. Budget setting
- 14.6. Read in Bloom

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

The meeting ended at 9.20 pm.

The Next Meeting will take place on 4th March 2026 at 7pm at the Village Hall.

Appendix I: Borough Councillor's Report

BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT TO READ PARISH COUNCIL ON 4 FEBRUARY 2026.

A resident has reported significant activity on Hammond Ground consistent with a geotechnical survey typically carried out prior to a planning application. I have asked our Planning Team whether they have been approached for any pre-application advice and to confirm the nature of any offer that may have been received from the landowner under the Call for Sites process. I will provide a further update.

I have previously warned that large scale housing developments are still a very real threat. This is primarily due to the Labour Government's relaxation of planning rules (the National Planning Policy Framework), Recent decisions in Appeals show the direction of travel and the weakening of Local Planning Authorities' ability to refuse consent for developments that do not offer sufficient infrastructure to support the proposed schemes. I have spoken strongly against this on the Planning Committee but it does not alter the trajectory. Our Head of Service recently warned bluntly in the Planning & Development Committee that we need to prepare for planning applications for some very large housing developments in the Borough in near future.

Nothing new to report on local government reorganisation - up to date information on local government reorganisation can be found on Ribble Valley Borough Council's website. Please look out for the start of the Government's public consultation on this issue which is crucial for the future shape of local government in the Ribble Valley.

Our next Councillor Drop-in Session will be held in the Hub Room at Read and Simonstone Village Hall from 10-11am on Wednesday 25 February 2026. Thanks to the Trustees of the Village Hall, we hope this will give any residents attending the Café easier access to our sessions which will be just across the corridor from the Café in the Main Hall.

Councillor Malcolm Peplow

4 February 2026

Appendix II: The table below shows the crime statistics for various months.

Period	Category												Total	
	Burglary	Drugs	TFV	Road-related offence	Road traffic collision	Robbery	Theft	DTV	Assault	ASB	Public order offence	CD		Other
Jan.'26	1			1	2		2		1	4		1		12
Dec.'25	2				3		1		1	1				8
Nov.'25					3		1		2	0	1	2		9
Oct.'25	1			1	1				4			1		8
Sept.'25	1		1	1			1		1			1		6
Aug' 25	1			1	1		4		1	1		2	1	12
July '25		1	1		1				1					4
June '25				3	1		2		2					8
May '25	1			1	5		1		3					11
April '25				2	3		1			4				10
March '25			1	4	1					4				10
Feb. '25			1	2	2		1							6
January '25								1	2	1				4
Dec.'24		1		1	4		1							7
Nov. '24				3						1				4
October '24				2	3		1			1		2		9
Sept.'24								1	1			1		3
August '24				4				1						5
June'24							1			4				5
April '24	2	1	1											4
October '23	1			1		1	2							5
August '23				1			1	1						3
July '23	1		1				2	2	1	1				8
June '23	1						1		3				1	6
May '23	1		1						1	2		1		6
Total:	13	3	7	28	30	1	23	6	24	24	1	11	2	173

Table Key: TFV = Theft from Vehicle. DTV= Damage to Vehicle. ASB = Anti- Social Behaviour . CD Criminal Damage

Appendix III: Finance Report

January 2026 Account reporting		
Payments		
Date	Item	Amount
02/01/2026	DD Easy websites	£ 58.08
06/01/2026	BP to Barrie Tyrer Website decommissioning	£ 107.78
12/01/2026	BP to Sally McKelvey for Xmas event consumables	£ 13.92
12/01/2026	BP to Sally McKelvey for Xmas event consumables	£ 23.45
12/01/2026	BP to St Johns Church donation	£ 100.00
12/01/2026	BP to R&S Village Hall for room hire	£ 273.00
12/01/2026	BP to Read St Johns School Donation	£ 100.00
13/01/2026	BP to Clifton Pollard postmix for signpost repair	£ 12.89
13/01/2026	BP to: Water Plus	£ 31.65
15/01/2026	BP to Easy websites: set up fee	£ 300.00
15/01/2026	BP to HMRC clerk salary and NI (see clerk payslip)	£ 179.58
15/01/2026	BP to Anna Haines clerk salary	£ 496.40
22/01/2026	BP to Anna Haines paper	£ 3.99
22/01/2026	BP to ICO for registration certificate	£ 52.00
27/01/2026	BP to Sabden PC for lengthsman scheme	£ 3,722.71
30/01/2026	BP to Zac Millar 9D bond return	£ 100.00
30/01/2026	BP to Peter Dewhurst 9D bond return	£ 50.00
30/01/2026	BP to David Scott bus shelter cleaning December	£ 35.00
31/01/2026	service charge	£ 6.00
Total		£ 5,666.45
Receipts		
Date	Item	Amount
02/01/2026	Marshall 5B	£ 18.55
02/01/2026	Karen Webster 15B	£ 5.00
06/01/2026	Steven Neary 9B 13A	£ 161.91
15/01/2026	Karin Targett 6A	£ 50.00
16/01/2026	LEF grant GLG171 for community allotment	£ 1,284.00
16/01/2026	Marshall plot 5B	£ 50.00
21/01/2026	Tsang 1B	£ 50.00
21/01/2026	Butterworth 16 A	£ 50.00
22/01/2026	Graveston 19B	£ 50.00
22/01/2026	Pike 5A	£ 50.00
23/01/2026	Howarth 3A & B	£ 137.10
26/01/2026	McIntyre 1C	£ 50.00
28/01/2026	Bleasdale 18B	£ 50.00
29/01/2026	Heptonstall 10B	£ 50.00
29/01/2026	John Pallister Ltd	£ 633.60
29/01/2026	John Pallister Ltd	£ 633.60
29/01/2026	Knight 12D	£ 50.00
Total		£ 3,373.76
Bank accounts		
	Unity Current:	£ 2,648.98
	Unity Savings:	£27,833.03
	Total	£30,482.01
	Balance brought forward	£32,774.70
	Difference from previous month	-£ 2,292.69
Bank reconciliation		
	Receipts - Payments	-£ 2,292.69
	Difference from previous month	-£ 2,292.69
	Do these amounts match?	YES

READ PARISH COUNCIL

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Cash Flow for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026

		Actual Income												
INCOME	Stream	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Total
	RVBC Precept	14,824.00												14,824.00
	HMRC VAT Return		7,656.30		470.80									8,127.10
	RVBC Grants		500.00					125.00		334.12				959.12
	Concurrent Funding						2,086.00							2,086.00
	Other grants		30.04								1,284			1,314.04
	Rents and licenses		500.00	60				18.00	726.89	358.20	1,384.76			3,047.85
	Bank interest			310.56			258.36			203.63				772.55
	Other income		1,811.84											1,811.84
	Contributions					375.00								375.00
	Bonds				50.00	100.00	100.00	150.00	850.00	105.00	705			2,060.00
	Bank switches				82.22									82.22
	Totals:	14,824.00	10,498.18	370.56	603.02	475.00	2,444.36	293.00	1,576.89	1,000.95	3,373.76	0.00	0.00	35,459.72

READ PARISH COUNCIL

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		Actual Expenditure														
EXPENDITURE	Stream	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Total	Budget	Rem.
clerk salary	Admin. Exp.		632.50	559.55	540.35	622.35	622.35	662.65	642.20	642.20	496.40	676.00	676.00	6,772.55	3500.00	-3272.55
HMRC (tax/NI)	Admin. Exp.			0.46	59.21	49.12	25.31	36.85	33.78	33.78	179.58	38.85	38.85	495.79	768.00	272.21
Expenses (mileage, printing, consumables)	Admin. Exp.				39.71		27.83	1.49		24.85	3.99	20.00	20.00	137.87	466.00	328.13
clerk training	Admin. Exp.		35.00	144.00								0.00	0.00	179.00	0.00	-179.00
membership subscriptions	Admin. Exp.	281.30		118.00								0.00	0.00	399.30	135.00	-264.30
audit fees	Admin. Exp.						60.00	426.00				0.00	0.00	486.00	468.00	-18.00
payroll services	Admin. Exp.				72.00				72.00			0.00	72.00	216.00	720.00	504.00
Insurance	Admin. Exp.			654.28								0.00	0.00	654.28	600.00	-54.28
Bank charges	Admin. Exp.	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	72.00	0.00	-72.00
General admin	Admin. Exp.						19.55				52.00	20.00	20.00	111.55	460.00	348.45
wesite /IT/computing costs	Admin. Exp.							95.00			465.86	55.00	55.00	670.86	552.00	-118.86
allotment bond return	Admin. Exp.						50.00	50.00			150.00	0.00	0.00	250.00	200.00	-50.00
Lengthsman	Amenity Exp.						1,000.00				3,722.71	0.00	1,000.00	5,722.71	900.00	-4822.71
General maintenance	Amenity Exp.			75.00						62.00	12.89	25.00	25.00	199.89	0.00	-199.89
Allotments	Amenity Exp.				216.00		1,309.92	0.00				25.00	25.00	1,575.92	0.00	-1575.92
Bin emptying	Amenity Exp.	2,230.81							125.40			0.00	0.00	2,356.21	1700.00	-656.21
Grass cutting	Amenity Exp.	1,300.22							1,430.24			0.00	0.00	2,730.46	1460.00	-1270.46
Utilities	Amenity Exp.	85.23	49.58	94.96	54.59	54.82	82.42	54.59	57.33		31.65	46.80	45.47	657.44	800.00	142.56
Bus stop cleaning	Amenity Exp.		35.00		35.00		35.00				35.00	0.00	35.00	175.00	100.00	-75.00
Playground inspection	Amenity Exp.									210.00		0.00	0.00	210.00	150.00	-60.00
Playground equipment contingency repair	Amenity Exp.											150.00	150.00	300.00	1000.00	700.00
Other expenses	Amenity Exp.	120.00										0.00	0.00	120.00	0.00	-120.00
Christmas tree lights	Sundry Exp.								30.00	226.01	37.37	0.00	0.00	293.38	300.00	6.62
Christmas party Higher Trapp	Sundry Exp.					50.00			474.13			0.00	0.00	524.13	400.00	-124.13
Remembrance Sunday	Sundry Exp.								20.00			0.00	0.00	20.00	50.00	30.00
Civic Sunday	Sundry Exp.										200.00	0.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00
Village Hall Hire	Sundry Exp.	60.50									273	0.00	0.00	333.50	260.00	-73.50
Donations	Sundry Exp.									200.00		0.00	100.00	300.00	200.00	-100.00
Other Sundry expenses	Sundry Exp.											0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Playground capital	Capital Exp.			5,876.34	6,061.28			4,699.99				0.00	0.00	16,637.61	0.00	-16637.61
Allotment capital	Capital Exp.											0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other capital	Capital Exp.		474						2,113.60	3,888.00		0.00	0.00	6,475.60	0.00	-6475.60
Totals:		4,084.06	1,232.08	7,528.59	7,084.14	782.29	3,238.38	6,032.57	5,004.68	5,292.84	5,666.45	1,062.65	2,268.32	49,277.05	15,389.00	-33,888.05

Appendix IV: Actions from Agenda

Minute	Action	Status
7.3	Cllr Neary and Cllr R Hanson to request a meeting with homeowner (allotment boundary dispute) to agree a fence line and request when they intend to erect a permanent fence (proposed deadline for this: June).	
8.1	clerk to post on noticeboards/website/Facebook when LGR consultation information is received to inform public.	
8.1	clerk to check tour de france route as precursor to fixing potholes	
10.3	Cllr Neary to pursue tree surgeon costs and timeframe for removing trees	
11.1	clerk to issue penalty letters stating forfeit of allotment not paying rent/bonds	
11.2	Cllr Neary to inform tenants of new rent increases for 26/27.	
11.5	Cllr Neary to approach businesses to ask if they will sponsor planters.	
11.5	Cllr R and A Hanson to water planters at top of Caravan Site	
11.7	Cllr R Hanson to meet with lengthsman at allotment and agree what needs rectifying at his own costs.	
11.7	Cllr R Hanson to inform lengthsman coordinator that we will come out of the lengthsman scheme	
11.8	clerk to upload new policies to website	
11.8	clerk to seek advice on most cost-effective Microsoft 365/antivirus software	
11.8	Cllr Hanson to perform finance and bank reconciliation checks once a quarter.	
11.12	Clerk to chase up CCTV funding	