

Preston Brook Parish Council

**MINUTES OF PRESTON BROOK ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT 8:30PM ON TUESDAY 25 MARCH 2025 AT PRESTON BROOK VILLAGE HALL, SANDY
LANE, PRESTON BROOK, CHESHIRE, WA7 3AW.**

Members Present:

A Price, J Walton, C Murray, K Dainty, P Bolton, L Hewlett.

Also Present:

Luke Trevaskis - Proper Officer, and five members of the public.

1. Apologies

Cllr Lauren Sanders

2. Declarations

Cllr Alan Price and Cllr Cathy Murray noted an interest in Preston Brook Village Hall.

Cllr Kerry Dainty and Cllr Liam Hewlett noted an interest in the proposal for future partnership working with Heatherfield Heritage on the 250th Anniversary of the Preston Brook Tunnel, and the Planning Application 22/00203/FUL and Planning Application 25/00107/OUT.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the prior meeting were approved.

5. Police

Members noted that there had not been an update received from Cheshire Police.

6. Public Realm

Members requested that Marbury Landscapes be approached to confirm date for collection and installation of boulders. The quote of £318 was approved.

Members noted that we continued to await confirmation from Halton BC regarding land ownership of the proposed village signs. The PO will contact Halton BC.

Members noted that waste was awaiting collection from Bridgewater Grange, and it was confirmed that if Halton BC does not collect the green waste then it may be appropriate when the budget arrives in the new financial year to arrange for a contractor to undertake collection and disposal.

In light of the fact that there is a realistic prospect that the boulders will be delivered to Bridgewater Grange, it was noted that the location may become over-crowded if planters are also installed. It was agreed that prior to the next meeting a new location for the planters would be agreed.

7. Finance

The Council approved Month 11 budget summary and accounts, and bank reconciliation. The Council also noted the precept would arrive in April 2025.

8. Borough Councillor Report

Members noted that no report had been received.

9. Highways

Members noted that it was likely that works would take 3-4 years to conclude on Chester Road, in light of planning developments and the extended cycleway.

A resident raised concern regarding the last time the Bridgewater Canal bridge was surveyed and recommended the Council contact Halton for clarification.

10. Planning

Members noted the recent communications from residents regarding Planning Application 25/00107/OUT, and various concerns were discussed at length. The Council agreed to engage consultants to draft a strong objection on a number of material planning grounds to ensure any future iterations for development at this site were more appropriate and had due regard for all the regulations and legislation required to be met prior to such an application being considered by Halton BC.

Members noted the ongoing communications with CWaC regarding the Preston Brook Forest project.

Members considered a report regarding the Bridgewater Tunnel and agreed that work should be undertaken to upgrade the listing of the heritage asset from Grade II to Grade I. It was noted that further clarity would be required from experts regarding its historical impact and significance.

Members noted that draft Terms of Reference were required prior to the first meeting of the NP Steering Group, which should take place once the new budget has been received.

11. 250th Anniversary of the Preston Brook Tunnel

The Council noted the PO would be submitting an application for grant funding to the Lottery, and would work with members in the coming months to design and cost some interpretation boards for installation adjacent to the canal depicting its history.

12. Newsletter

Members agreed the next newsletter should be circulated by end of Spring.

13. ChALC

The Council noted it has not yet received a response from NALC in relation to the motions the authority submitted to be heard by member councils, which were deemed not acceptable as proper motions by the ChALC board.

Members noted that devolution and local government reorganisation arrangements were on the horizon. Discussions centred around concerns regarding amalgamation and a loss of local identity, and a strong link to Cheshire. It was agreed that the Parish Council would work to ensure it retains the best outcomes for its residents, and PO agreed to continue to pursue this matter in the interests of the Parish.

14. Next Meetings

It was noted that the next meeting of the Council would be held on:

Tuesday 27 May 2025

15. Public Forum

It was requested that the next newsletter include a page for the Village Hall.

Signed as a true record

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Chairperson