

PRESTON BROOK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PRESTON BROOK PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD AT 8:30PM ON TUESDAY 22 JUNE 2026 AT
PRESTON BROOK VILLAGE HALL, SANDY LANE, PRESTON
BROOK, CHESHIRE, WA7 3AW.

Members Present:

A Price, K Dainty, L Hewlett.

Also Present:

Luke Trevaskis - Proper Officer, and 2 members of the public.

1. Apologies

Cllr C Murray

2. Declarations

Cllr Kerry Dainty and Cllr Liam Hewlett noted an interest in the Chester Road Development (Planning Application 22/00203/FUL) for 136 Homes.

5. Minutes

The minutes of the prior meeting were approved, subject to Cllr K Dainty being amended as Vice Chairperson.

6. Police Report

No representations.

7. Ward Councillor Report

Members noted a new ward councillor had been elected and was keen to establish a positive working relationship.

8. Public Forum

No representations.

9. Public Realm

Members noted that the planters had been planted.

Members noted that the ongoing works to Bridgewater Grange appear to be being well received.

Members noted that priority was currently being given to preparations for the Neighbourhood Plan, and that other public realm projects would be pursued when priorities permit (finger post, railing planters/painting, gateway signs).

10. Planning - Chester Road Development (22/00203/FUL)

Members noted:

- 26/00195/COND - PBPC has filed an objection to the planning application regarding play areas, noting that the scheme proposed is extremely limited in its offer in comparison to the original Open Space Strategy which was submitted by the developer originally which included play equipment, gym equipment, and a trim trail.
- 26/00151/NMA / 26/00160/NMA - PBPC has filed an objection to these planning applications that propose the removal of further trees from Chester Road.
- PBPC has also raised a letter to formally bring to the attention of Halton BC the water discharging into the Canal, the removal of the hedgerow adjacent to the M56, and the removal of trees alongside the Canal. It has been requested that Halton BC take action regarding these matters.

11. Tree Protection Order Application

Members noted last year, PBPC applied for a TPO to protect the tree belt adjacent to the Canal. The application has been refused by Halton BC on ground that they do not feel the trees are at risk. There is no lawful obligation on a LPA to issue a TPO. However, PBPC may have mechanisms to support future tree canopy in the Parish through its Neighbourhood Plan and the implementation of such a Policy.

12. Neighbourhood Planning

Members agreed the first meeting of the Steering Group would take place on 28 July 2026. Members noted that the priorities and areas of focus may evolve as the project progresses, and that further engagement and evidence gathering will assist in identifying key opportunities, challenges, and themes for consideration.

Members noted that this programme of work is likely to require a significant investment of office time and resources, and delegated authority to the Proper Officer, in consultation with the Steering Group, to progress the project within exiting approved budgets, including the £15K NP budget, £15K heritage budget, and up to £20K underspend carried forward from the previous financial year.

Members also asked the Parish Clerk to identify any additional officer support or resource that may be required.

The Council approved the commission of an independent heritage report for Preston Brook to evidence its significance, delegated to the Parish Clerk to facilitate within the agreed £15K heritage budget.

The Council approved the commission of an independent tree-hedgerow audit for Preston Brook to evidence current tree canopy and significance, delegated to the Parish Clerk to facilitate within the agreed £17.5K public realm budget (or other if more suitable).

The Council approved the commission of an independent heritage report for Preston Brook to evidence its significance, delegated to the Parish Clerk to facilitate within the agreed £15K heritage budget.

13. Judicial Review Risk

Given the potentially significant financial, legal and reputational implications of commencing judicial review proceedings, members agreed that the Council should first receive a formal litigation assessment of risks from specialised local government counsel before any final decisions are made to pursue such a course of action. Members noted such an assessment would consider

counsel's advice on prospects of success, estimated costs, adverse costs exposure, alternative remedies, and the overall risk profile of the proposed action. This will ensure that members are able to make a fully informed decision and demonstrate prudent stewardship of public funds if/when a future issue became live. The Council agreed to delegate this to the Proper Officer to facilitate.

14. Finance

The Council considered its end of year finances for FY2526. The Council approved the end of year accounts, its bank reconciliation, and approved Section 1 and 2 of its AGAR.

15. Next Meetings

The Council noted the next meetings would be held on 22 September and 23 November 2026.

Signed as a true record

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Chairperson