



ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

AT 8:00PM ON WEDNESDAY 14th MAY 2025

CRICKET CLUB, BLAGUEGATE LANE, LATHOM

MINUTES

Present: Parish Councillors, Andrew Chanter, Roger Clayton, Karen Fairhurst, Ernie Pallas, Jacqueline Raeburn, Darren Steele, Andy Taylor, and 2 members of the public.

Apologies had been received from Ward Councillors Ian Rigby and Linda Webster and County Cllr Adrian Owens.

The meeting was chaired by the Parish Council Chairman, Cllr Darren Steele.

1. To sign as a correct record the minutes of the last Parish Assembly held on 15th May 2024

The Minutes were taken as read and signed by the Chairman Cllr Darren Steele.

2. Financial Report of the Parish Council

The following overview of accounts were made available.

INCOME breakdown for 2024/25

Parish Precept	£	12,240.00
Council Tax Support Grant	£	414.00
Concurrent Grant	£	647.00
LCC for footpaths	£	500.00
LCC Biodiversity grant	£	300.00
Bank Interest	£	3,128.54
National grid	£	2.17
Community Infrastructure Levy	£	76,710.27
CCLA	£	9,006.37
TOTAL	£	102,948.35

EXPENDITURE breakdown for 2024/25

staff salary, includes pension payments	£	10,319.08	
Admin, includes bank charges & stationery	£	210.11	
Training	£	70.00	
Travel expenses	£	94.95	
Website and gov.uk emails	£	491.92	
Room hire	£	550.00	
Audit/Insurance/ICO reg	£	879.67	
Election	£	-	
Subscriptions, CPRE, SLCC, OPSTA	£	482.77	
Litter picking	£	855.00	
Footpaths	£	3,000.00	supported by LCC grant
Street furniture maintenance	£	140.70	
Newsletters	£	480.98	
Section 137 grants	£	-	
Community Infrastructure Projects	£	5,404.74	
Biodiversity grant projects	£	303.00	
Asset purchases	£	635.10	
Woodland maintenance	£	220.00	
TOTAL	£	24,138.02	

The Parish Council Clerk advised that the income without £76,710 CIL funds was £26,238. Minus £24,138 expenses, the balance sheet shows a £2,100 difference to go into reserves. However, it needed to be noted that there had been almost £10,000 income from interest from CIL funds and only £5,400 was spent on CIL projects. Therefore, without the CIL interest, £2,500 of reserves would have been used during the financial year 2024/25.

3. Report of the Parish Council Years – 2024/25

A newsletter, which highlighted the main activities of the Parish Council, had been distributed to all Lathom South residential dwellings in December 2024 and April 2025. The following points were noted:-

- The new Local Plan had been postponed by WLBC with the next consultation now planned for 2026 (pushed back 12-18mths). It was noted that it will be 3 or 4 years before a new Local Plan would be accepted. There is an issue as the current Local Plan expires in 2027 and without a new plan in place, it leaves builders with the opportunity to apply to build anywhere. There is an expectation for another 16,000 new dwellings within West Lancashire. It was noted that Wainhomes still have the option to purchase more land in Lathom off Firwood Road.
- A tree log remained in a dangerous position on the side of Plough Lane. If it had not been removed within the timescale set by LCC Highways then the Parish Council Clerk would pursue the matter.

- A small pond had been built in Swells Wood. It was smaller than originally planned as the ground had been very wet and boggy which had caused issues for the digger. More Friends of Jacobs Wood work parties were planned for later in the year.

4. Matters Raised by Members of the Public present

- A resident raised concerns about the amount of building within the greenbelt and not being able to stop development along roads such as Firwood Road which was not considered suitable for the extra traffic.
- It was reported that youths had committed circa £10,000 of damage to a digger being used for drainage work in a local farm field.

5. Firwood Road Bridge Project

The recent consultation survey on the Firwood Road Bridge Project, currently showed 2:1 in favour of the project.

Some of the negative comments were addressed:

Comment	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic lights would be out of character of the area, suggestion to provide extra street lighting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opinion noted. Extra street lighting could also be considered out of character of the area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too little too late. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both Lathom South Parish Council and South Lathom Residents Association had raised these concerns about the bridge prior to the housing applications being passed by WLBC Planning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers will still go through a red light. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would be a police matter.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the money on projects which would have a greater social impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any suggestions for other projects would be given full consideration.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic lights would cause chaos. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic needs to be controlled as vehicles often cross the bridge at too great a speed and it is not safe for pedestrians. Similar bridges with traffic lights do not suffer from traffic chaos as a result.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put a separate footpath in next to the bridge as there's a gate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gate provides access to a substation only and there is no way to create a public right of way.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a separate footbridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of building an additional bridge would be exorbitant in comparison to the proposed project

The footpath over the bridge has always been too narrow and sloping towards the road but more traffic and pedestrians are now using it. The scheme is to provide a safe refuge for pedestrians. The Parish Council believe that the scheme is needed to save lives and want it designed carefully in consultation with LCC Highways.

A snap shot traffic survey was carried out in September 2024, 5.00pm to 5.09pm, 10 cars travelled over the bridge from Blaguegate Lane and 11 from Spa Lane creating a high chance of 2 cars meeting at the brow of the bridge.

6. Forward Plan

There is still CIL money available for future projects and ideas are welcomed. Bellway and Wainhomes are required to repair Firwood Road when building is complete after which, possible further enhancements of the road could then be considered.

Further development of Swells Wood is planned including : -

- enquiring with an asbestos specialist for a quote to remove asbestos from the side of the bank of the stream.
- Noticeboard for the entrance to the wood.
- Looking into solar powered cameras in the woods.

7. Questions and answers session

There being no further questions, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05pm.

Chairman

13 May 2026