



## **CATTERALL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 at 7:00pm at Catterall Village Hall**

**In Attendance:** Cllr J Finch (Chair), 8 Members of the Public (7 of which are Parish Councillors and 1 Wyre Councillor) and E Millington (Clerk and RFO)

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Shaun Turner and 2 Parish Councillors and the reasons accepted.

### **2. Declarations of interest and dispensations**

There were no declarations of interest nor any request for a dispensation for any item on the agenda.

### **3. Minutes of the last meeting**

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

### **4. Annual Report of the Chairman**

Welcome to the 2025 Annual Parish meeting.

As usual can I personally thank each and every one of you for the hard work and commitment you have given over the last twelve months. I also welcome the new members to their first annual meeting.

As always, Emma has continued to work hard, and with the Parish, I would formally like to thank her for her hard work and commitment she has continued to show. I would also like to thank Vice Chair Jan for her continued commitment to funding for new ideas for the village. Without your continued efforts and support, our village would be a different place.

Can I record our thanks to Paul also for his continued commitment and the hard work he put in around the village this year.

I would also like to record my thanks to the Village Hall Committee for continuing to promote the village hall as a valuable asset to the village.

As you will be aware Netta moved away from the village and therefore leaving Catterall in Bloom. I hope to see that they will continue with their hard work in and around the village. As the summer season approaches we are seeing the seeds of their hard work from previous years starting to flourish again. Their continued commitment through the last year does not go unnoticed. We have also seen the planting of the new Micro wood and that will be lovely to see that flourish and grow to be able to put something back into the environment .

This year we had the sad loss of close friend and fellow councillor Dave Sharples, I think you will all agree he was a stalwart to the community and is sadly missed.

The village continues to grow in its size with the new buildings, but we are now relatively full, this year we have seen an application in Claughton for a takeaway restaurant and associated building which may have an impact on our village. We wait and we see. The building work has now started on the plot.

We are hearing that the Policing and Crime commissioner, has again secured extra funding to wards continued policing especially around violence against women and girls as well Anti-Social behaviour so let hope that he can tackle some of the issues we are seeing in the village let's hope their commitment to addressing anti-social behaviour will have a positive step in the area. We also welcomed Elliot Jones as the new Sergeant for the area and he has assured us he and his team are committed to help us as a village.

Once again thank you all very much for your dedicated support and I look forward to being able to support you and the Parish for the coming year.  
Thank you.

Cllr Ian Brayshaw,  
Chair, Catterall Parish Council

*Members accepted this report.*

## **5. Report from the Responsible Finance Officer**

Year Ending 31st March 2025

Catterall Parish Council brought forward £107,548.95 from 2023/2024

Precept £103,500

Receipts £15,285.26

Staff Costs £53,410.95

Payments £86,307.19

Giving a balance of £137,502.37 to carry forward to 2025/2026

**Precept:** The Parish Council took into consideration budget recommendations and increased the precept by 5.61% in 2024/25. However due to the growth of Catterall, Band D properties only faced an annual increase in council tax of £0.01 from £94.56 in 2023/24 to £94.57 in 2024/25.

**Receipts:** The receipts figure is very high in 23/24 due to a large VAT reclaim. This reclaim arose as a result of the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field improvement work undertaken in 22/23.

Bank interest with Unity Trust Bank fell from £1,538.50 in 23/24 to £1,194.62 in 24/25. This was due to savings being split between Unity Trust Bank and Redwood Bank for increased FSCS protection. The Redwood Bank pays interest annually in May, and the first interest payment on this account is due May 2025.

The CCLA account continues to pay good interest rate, in 24/25 the fund grew by £2,564.71.

An insurance settlement of £4,236.00 was paid this year to Catterall Parish Council. This was following a vehicle driving into the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field height barrier and damaging it beyond repair.

A grant was received again in 24/25 from Lancashire County Council towards Biodiversity improvements.

**Staff Costs:** Staff costs have increased this year due to a pay award back dated to April 2024.

**Payments:** The playing field was well maintained again in 24/25. Alongside regular grass cutting, tree planting took place and necessary repairs to playground equipment made. The old timber fence on the grass verge at the front of Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field was replaced with recycled plastic bollards.

A second SPiD (Speed Indicator Device) was purchased in 24/25 to attempt to reduce vehicle speeds through Catterall.

Following the demise of the Backpack Blower, a new blower was purchased.

A seat was purchased and sited on Old Lancaster Road, adjacent to Shelly Row. The old seat from this location was refurbished with new recycled plastic timber and moved to the dog field.

The training budget was well used this year with new Councillors attending new councillor training, the Lengthsman undertaking a RPII play area inspection course and the Clerk registering for the CiLCA qualification.

A donation was given to the Royal British Legion, to Garstang Festive Lights and to the Parochial Church Council of Garstang St Helens Churchtown towards the upkeep of the closed portion of the graveyard.

Some budgeted projects didn't take place in 24/25 such as the CCTV review, the funds for this have been earmarked for 25/26.

**Carry forward:** The carry forward figure is made up of £58,693.90 in the CCLA fund, this is earmarked for a future playground refresh.

The contingency reserve is currently £40,000. The Practitioners' Guide 2025 issued by the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) lays out proper practice for governance and accounts of small authorities. "5.34. The generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a smaller authority's general reserve is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure."

Emma Millington  
Responsible Finance Officer, Catterall Parish Council

*Members accepted this report.*

## **6. Annual Report from Lancashire County Council**

None received.

## **7. Annual Report from Wyre Councillor**

A verbal report was given.

## **8. Annual Report from Parish Councillors**

### **a) Report of the Wyre Area Lancashire Association of Local Councils**

The April meeting began with a minute's silence to remember Cllr Dave Sharples who had recently passed away. Cllr Sharples was the Wyre Area Secretary for 38 years before stepping down in January as a result of ill health.

The meeting's guest speaker was Kristian Marsh, Route Manager for Highways England. Kristian spoke about the M6 running through the area and tried to address members' concerns about the impact of motorway closures on surrounding routes and communities. Unfortunately the A6 is the only diversion route and, while steps can be taken to minimise disruption for planned works, it is difficult if not impossible to do so when there is an accident.

The meeting also welcomed Sgt Elliot Jones, the new Sergeant for Garstang, Poulton and Over Wyre. He spoke about his belief in visual policing and gave a commitment to be out in the community as much as possible.

The guest speaker at the July meeting was County Councillor Paul Rigby, LCC's Parish Champion. In that role he has a budget of £10,000 to provide small grants to town and parish councils for projects and initiatives in their communities and he encouraged applications.

James Reilly of Easy Web Sites and himself a parish councillor spoke at the September meeting about the requirement for all town and parish councils to have a dedicated parish council email address. He also spoke about the availability of .gov.uk email addresses not only for town and parish councils but also for councillors. At the time of the meeting 16 town and parish councils did not use a .gov.uk email address.

The January 2025 meeting was the AGM and I was, once again, elected as Chair. A number of Area Committees had struggled to recruit an Area Secretary and, to address the problem, LALC had agreed to provide a sum of £500 to each Area Committee with member town and parish councils only needing to contribute £10 per council to be collected through the annual membership fee and this was agreed. Ann Alty of Lancashire Best Kept Village competition was the guest speaker and spoke about the group's work, encouraging town and parish councils to participate. Members noted the recent consultation on strengthening the standards framework and all councils were encouraged to complete the questionnaire.

Cllr Jan Finch  
Chair, Wyre Area Committee

*Members accepted this report.*

### **b) Report of the Catterall Village Hall**

The range of regular activities in the past year has included belly dancing, pilates, Catterall Brownies and Catterall Rainbows, modern dance (adults), Coffee Stop, children's dance, Little Voices (children's singing), two choirs, Christian Fellowship

group, alcoholics anonymous and a new Monday night pizza van in the car park. Unfortunately the twice weekly post office service has been discontinued. It has also hosted private events such as children's parties, christenings, baby showers and Eid Celebrations.

The Committee continues manage the hall in as cost effective way as possible and to invest in the facilities available for the benefit of users. For example, we changed our waste disposal contract and our insurance provider both at a significant saving and secured a contract so that our surplus solar energy is sold back to the network. Work such as this enables us to limit hire charge increases.

The Committee has made a number of improvements this year including decorating most rooms (with the aid of a grant of £250 from Anwyl Homes), installing lights (with the aid of a Lancashire County Council Local Member Grant of £500) on the outside of the building at both front and back to improve visibility and to deter youths from congregating at the back of the hall and disturbing hirers, reorganising the cloakroom and installing additional storage, some further remedial work on the roof has been carried out too.

The Committee take health and safety seriously and ensure that all necessary inspections and testing are carried out on a timely basis. There is a risk assessment for the hall and car park and this is reviewed on a regular basis. All inspection and testing certificates are published on the website. The committee commissioned an asbestos survey and this showed that no asbestos was present in the hall.

We have improved our governance this year with the approval of a "Guidance for Contractors" document, Website Privacy Policy, reviewed and updated the Booking Form and Conditions, developed a Risk Management Policy and Risk Register, Register of Gifts and Hospitality and Register of Interests

Cllr Jan Finch  
Secretary, Catterall Village Hall

*Members accepted this report.*

#### **9. Matters raised by Residents**

None

#### **10. Any Other Business**

None

There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting at 7:15pm.