**MINUTES**

**Myerscough & Bilsborrow Parish Council**

**Clerk: Laura Bolton**

**Chairman: Cllr Bill Collinson**

**Vice Chairman: Cllr Dan Bolton**

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**Thursday 27th March 2025 at 7pm Bilsborrow Church**

**Present**

Cllr Collinson (Chair), Cllr Bolton (Vice Chair), Cllr Barker, Cllr Willacy, Cllr Pye, Cllr Robinson, Cllr Sutcliffe, Cllr Swift (Wyre Borough Councillor), Laura Bolton (Clerk)

Members of the public – Brian & Debbie Taylor

**Apologies**

Cllr Turner

**Open Session** –Members of the public can make statements, ask questions or raise any matters relating to the Parish.

Brian & Debbie Taylor introduced themselves and advised that they were neighbours and wanted to discuss the MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) plans as it will directly affect them as they live in close proximity. They moved in 14 months ago and were told that the MUGA was due to go on the playing field at Sycamore Road. They have now found out that it is due to be built on land owned by the Trustees of John Cross School which is at the back of their property. They are concerned about noise at night, floodlights and the fact that the already busy Bilsborrow Road will become even busier. They wanted to know when plans were going in. Cllr Collinson advised that we are currently just sorting the Heads of Terms lease between the Parish Council and the Trustees of the school and once that has been finalised the Parish Council will be able to put in for Planning Permission. Cllr Collinson also advised that screening would be put in between the Muga and Threlfalls Farm to help with noise reduction and on a visual aspect as well. Cllr Collinson advised that all these sorts of issues will be dealt with during the planning process. Cllr Bolton advised that it would be best to organise an on-site meeting to discuss and align views on the MUGA. Clerk to facilitate this. Mr & Mrs Taylor also advised councillors of the issues that they have had with the development across the road from them, they are currently dealing with Wyre Planning department with regards to these issues.

* 1. **Minutes of last meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting were checked and signed as a true record of the Parish Council meeting held on the 2nd January 2025. Cllr Collinson confirmed with all councillors that they had received a copy of the minutes via email and were happy it was a true and correct record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Collinson, seconded by Cllr Willacy, all councillors agreed, and the minutes were signed and dated by Cllr Collinson and Cllr Bolton.

* 1. **Declarations of prejudicial interest in any of the agenda item interests and dispensations**

There were no declarations of prejudicial interest for any agenda items.

* 1. **Unitary Council Matters –** Receive reports and updates on matters affecting the Parish from Unitary Councillors.

Cllr Collinson advised that he wanted this added to the meetings so that we can get an update from Ward/Borough Councillors on any issues affecting our Parish. He invited Cllr Bolton to explain a ‘Unitary Council’. Cllr Bolton advised that the government have put forward a proposal to disband/change County Councils into Unitary councils. A collection of ward councils joined to become one Unitary Council. For example, 3 or 4 boroughs would join to make 1 Unitary Council, nothing is currently set in stone and proposals are due at the end of the year. Cllr Bolton will update the Parish Council as and when he has any further information.

* 1. **Police**

Clerk advised councillors of a situation earlier in March of a caravan/unauthorised encampment at Guys Thatched Hamlet. Clerk read an email from Sgt Elliot Jones of Lancashire Constabulary which concluded that due to positive action on his behalf and under Section 60C of the CJPOA Act the owner of the caravan removed it promptly with no incidents. Clerk mentioned that she had sent a message on the village ‘Lets be vigilant’ Whatsapp group when she originally received the email from Wyre Council advising of the situation. Within about 30 mins Myerscough College had taken action and organised increased security on campus. Clerk advised that the current priorities for Wyre neighbourhood policing team (from their website) are: Anti-social behaviour, Road Safety, Drug dealing, Targeting Organised crime.

* 1. **Planning Applications for Input & Decisions**

Cllr Collinson advised that moving forward we will structure the planning applications as follows (New Planning Applications received since last Parish Council meeting, Planning Applications awaiting decisions and Planning Notifications received)

* ***New Planning Applications – received since last Parish Council meeting***
* *Application 25/00143/FUL. Southlands, Bilsborrow Lane, PR3 0RN Proposed erection of detached garage (application received 20/02/25, validated 10/03/25) No comments from councillors, all happy with the planning application.*
* ***Planning Applications Awaiting Decisions***
* Application 24/01060/FUL Lodge Farm, St Michaels Road, Bilsborrow – proposed slurry store with canopy and access track (application validated 23/01/25) – No further comments or updates.
* Application 24/00558/FUL – The Paddocks Garstang Road – change of use to domestic storage retrospective – (application validated 11/07/24) - No further updates or comments
* Application 22/00612/OUTMAJ – land opposite Rockform. Outline application for the erection of a mixed-use class commercial units (application validated 14/06/22) – No further updates or comments
* ***Planning Notifications Received***
* Application 25/00037/FUL Land at Fence Foot Farm, White Horse Lane, Barton Retrospective change of use of agricultural land to domestic to increase garden areas. Application permitted 18/03/25
* Application 25/00036/COUQ Fencefoot Farm, White Horse Lane Barton Prior notification for a proposed change of use of existing agricultural buildings to provide 5 residential dwellings. Prior Approval Approved 10/03/25
  1. **Finance**

The clerk presented a reconciliation of accounts for the Parish Community Account and the War Memorial Account with the most recent bank statements (up to 28th February 2025). These were passed round the room and Cllr Collinson and Cllr Bolton signed and dated the documents. The following cheques were presented:

*Myerscough and Bilsborrow Community Account*

* *Cheque 200369 Wyre Council Annual rent for recreation ground £300*
* *Cheque 200370 Mark Cornforth Lengthsman Wages Jan 2025 £720*
* *Cheque 200371 Mark Cornforth Lengthsman Wages Feb 2025 £576*

*Cheques to be scrutinised & signed M&B Community Account*

* *Cheque 200372 The Lancashire Best Kept Village Competition 2025 entry fee £25*
* *Cheque 200373 Mark Cornforth Lengthsman wages March 2025 tbc*
* *Cheque 200374 Laura Bolton Clerk wages Jan, Feb, March 2025 tbc*
* *Cheque 200375 St Hildas Church room rent for March meeting £20*
* *Cheque 200376 Claughton on Brock Parish Council 1/6 cost of Gaskells Waste bin £123.09*
* *Cheque 200377 HMRC Employee Tax Q4 £249.20*

*War Memorial Account Cheques to be scrutinised & signed*

* *Cheque 100109 G Billington £12.98*

Clerk advised that she had completed a VAT refund for £610.75 for period 1 Jan 2024 to 28 Feb 2025 which was claimed on 13/03/25

Clerk has now received the NS & I Investment Account Statement for period 1 Jan 24 to 31 Dec 24 – the current balance is £21,405.19 (Interest capitalisation for the period = £212.51)

* 1. **MUGA**

Cllr Collinson advised that the Heads of Terms are currently being dealt with by solicitors, Clerk advised that Napthans are working on behalf of the school Trustees as they were already working with them and the Parish Council will be using Vincents. Cllr Collinson advised we now have three quotes for the new MUGA, there is also a new MUGA at Cockerham so he will be arranging to go and have a look at this one as well. Once the planning permission goes in the Parish Council will then need to apply for funding for the remaining part. We currently have the 106 monies but will need to apply for additional monies to fund the project. Clerk advised that Wyre Council had sent some links for the Lancashire Environmental Fund, Lancashire County Council Crowdfund and Harold and Alice Bridges Charity. These will need to be applied for once planning permission has been granted.

Clerk advised that Wyre Council had sent a ‘Portfolio Holder Report’ with regards to the 106 monies (£50,448) to deliver a Multi-Use Games Area on the land adjoining John Cross Primary School in Bilsborrow with a schedule of dates that needs to be agreed. Stage 1 – Project Development (by 30th September 25) Stage 2- Construction and final sign off (by 30th June 2027) and Final Sign off by 20th September 2027. It was agreed that these dates were in line with the Parish Council proposals, Cllr Collinson proposed that we agree to the dates stated in the document, Cllr Bolton seconded, and all councillors agreed.

* 1. **Lengthsman**

Clerk advised that the lengthsmans contact was due for renewal on the 1st April and she has received an email from him asking for a 6% pay increase to cover increase in running costs over the past year such as vehicle tax, fuel costs, consumables, equipment costs and servicing. Clerk advised that Claughton Parish Council who also employ Mark Cornforth have agreed to increase by 5%.

Cllr Robinson asked why clerk had not sent round the lengthsmans timesheets as the last ones he received was in November. Clerk apologised and said she would email the Dec/Jan/Feb timesheets and will email at the beginning of each month for the previous month. Cllr Robinson wanted to query the War Memorial entries for November, the lengthsman has entered that he visited the War Memorial on several occasions within a certain number of days to clean /sweep leaves. Cllr Robinson wanted to know why he had attended so frequently. Cllr Pye said that the War Memorial was kept very tidy and appreciates all the work that goes into this especially around Armistice Day and that it is a credit to the village. Cllr Bolton said that it is a process, the lengthsman was asked to complete a diary of timesheets so that councillors can analyse and go back to him to discuss. Cllr Bolton will organise a meeting with the lengthsman to discuss. Cllr Allan said that she did not think that he did a good job and especially down White Horse Lane. Cllr Bolton suggested that he should do a timetable of what he feels are the areas that need work, Cllr Pye said that we (Parish Council) need to tell him what work we want done. Clerk advised that the Parish Council need to agree whether to renew the contract for another year and whether to agree to the pay increase. Cllr Collinson proposed that we match Claughton and increase by 5% and renew his contract for another year. A vote was taken and the majority of councillors agreed to this. Cllr Bolton and Cllr Sutcliffe will arrange a meeting with Mark Cornforth to discuss the issues mentioned and a plan going forward.

* 1. **Litterpicking in the village**

Clerk advised that she had received an email from a resident regarding litter picking, clerk read email to councillors. They had been out a done a stretch Moss Lane to Guys and had seen the lengthsman do the same stretch just a few days later and they felt that this was a waste of time as they had already picked up the rubbish. Clerk advised that she had discussed with the lengthsman and he had explained that he cannot see litter from the car so has to park up and walk the stretch he is doing. For example, the tow path from Guys to Barton Grange, sometimes there is a lot of litter other times there is not much however he still needs to walk the stretch to check. Clerk advised that going forward we will be using the village volunteer group on WhatsApp ‘ Bilsborrow Volunteer Group’ (to join please WhatsApp 07803631556) to add when and where people have been litter picking so that the lengthsman is aware. Cllr Bolton also suggested that he adds where he has done so any volunteers know where needs to be done. Clerk will advise lengthsman.

Cllr Robinson mentioned again about the ‘muck’ build up either side of the road edge up Bilsborrow Lane from the Roebuck pub, Cllr Willacy advised he had seen council road sweepers go up the road, but they cannot get to the edge due to the overgrown hedges.

* 1. **Bilsborrow Recreation ground**

Cllr Collinson advised that Planning Permission had been granted for the CCTV, Andy Peck from Cockerham Football club has been organising the installation. Cllr Collinson asked if councillors agreed to split the cost of the planning application 50/50, all councillors agreed as the football club take very good care of the recreation ground. Clerk to invoice Cockerham Football Club.

Cllr Swift mentioned that he had noticed that there was a lot of dog poo on the field and that he had comments from residents saying the same. Cllr Collinson said that hopefully the CCTV will discourage this, if not we may need to discuss banning dogs from the recreation ground completely.

* 1. **Best Kept Village – application. Confirmation of ‘Outstanding Features’**

Clerk advised that the application form to enter is due by 30th March, all councillors agreed that we should enter again. The fee to enter is £25, Clerk to sort out the paperwork and send off application form/cheque before the 30th March. It was noted that the Parish Council had offered the lengthsmans services to cut/trim the hedges and carry out some weeding at the village hall to keep tidy and to prepare for the Childrens festival/ Best Kept Village Competition. The Village Hall Committee declined the offer at that time.

* 1. **New benches at the Nature reserve**

Clerk advised we have now received the grant money, Cllr Collinson asked Cllr Willacy what the situation was with the new benches. Cllr Willacy advised that we could have them at any point, they agreed to meet on site to discuss what needs to be done with regards to installation.

* 1. **Funds for E Bikes**

Clerk read email from Sgt Elliot Jones requesting £150 each from local Parish Councils for 2 new e-bikes for use by the Police in the area. Cllr Robinson asked ‘when do we ever see any police in the village?’, Cllr Sutcliffe said that they used to attend Parish Council meetings and be more involved but have not been for a long time. Cllr Collinson asked for a show of hands for who was in favour of giving £150 towards the new e-bikes. The majority voted against.

* 1. **Duchy of Lancaster**

Clerk contacted the Duchy of Lancaster following the discussion last meeting about the tow path from White Horse Lane to Guys and the potential to apply for some grant money to do some work to make the area more suitable for residents/visitors to walk. Clerk advised that she had a reply from Maria Roskell who advised that a representative would attend our next meeting on the 22nd May. To apply for a grant, we need to have plans in place for any works and ideas of cost etc. Clerk to contact Canals & Rivers Trust as a starting point to see whether there are any plans for any works and if there is any criteria for outside works or even if they allow outside contractors to complete any works on the tow path.

* 1. **80th Year since VE Day – Garstang Town Council celebrations 8th May 2025**

Clerk read email from Mrs Edwina Parry regarding the local VE Day celebrations and invitation to a flag raising ceremony at Kepple Lane Park at 10am on 8th May. Cllr Barker will attend on behalf of Myerscough and Bilsborrow Parish Council, Clerk has emailed the headteacher at John Cross School to see if they would like to bring a maximum of 6 pupils to represent the school. Clerk to respond to invitation.

Clerk advised The Town Council are also planning to light a beacon in the evening at 9.30pm – details to be confirmed.

* 1. **Clerks report**

Nothing to report as the items have already been mentioned during the meeting

* Litterpicking
* Bilsborrow Volunteer group
* Best Kept Village Competition
  1. **Items for next agenda**
* Duchy of Lancaster – kissing gates, trees on White Horse Lane (replacement)
* Canal & Rivers Trust update
* Update on Lengthsman

**AOB**

Cllr Robinson asked for an update on the complaint from the residents of Sunnybank Farm regarding some development behind their property, cars in the field and public toilets being stored. Clerk advised that Wyre Council Planning Department have advised that the residents need to complete an Enforcement Report Form. Cllr Robinson advised he had not received to pass on, Cllr Bolton will print hard copy and drop off at residents address.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING 22nd May 2025**

**Signed by Chairman…………………………………………………………………………..Vice Chairman………………………………………………..**

**Date ……………………………………………………………………………**