



# Parish of Preston

## PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 8.00pm.

**Present:** Councillors: Sharon Anderson, Julie Buckland, Matt Burleigh, Jane Clark, Helen Page, Margaret Trinder (Chairman)

**In Attendance:** Nine members of public, Lisa Lathane (Clerk and RFO)

**7.1) (Agenda 1) To receive and accept apologies for absence**

1. Cllr Morecroft sent her apologies, members **AGREED** to accept her apologies.
2. District Cllr Graziano sent his apologies due to a North Herts Meeting.

**7.2) (Agenda 2) Chairman's Remarks**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. She reminded members to declare any items of pecuniary interest and that they should listen to everyone's views.

**7.3) (Agenda 3) Declarations of Interest**

None

**7.4) (Agenda 4) To adopt minutes of the previous meeting**

These were adopted and were signed by the Chairman.

**7.5) (Agenda 5) To consider matters arising from the previous minutes not on the agenda**

Cllr Clark confirmed that she will look into options to solve the issue of mud by the Postbox.

**7.6) (Agenda 6) Comments from the general public and press (15 mins)**

The Chair read out a statement from the parish council regarding the pavilion, which answered some of the questions submitted by email.

Members of the public addressed the meeting regarding the pavilion project:

1. One asked if correspondence is sent to members of the working group. The chair confirmed that all comments were passed on to the working group.
2. A member of the public raised concerns that, in their view, there was a lack of transparency in regards to the pavilion project and that information was being hidden.
3. Another member of the public requested that the January minutes be amended to include the following comments from members of the public:
  - The PWG were operating outside of their agreed Terms of Reference.
  - Public questioning the appropriate use of public monies
  - Public questioning why monies were being channelled so eagerly, towards PWG to purchase planning advice.
  - Why PPC would table resolution 1 to vote for funds to be released towards a project when it has knowingly not shared public survey results.
4. Another member of the public questioned why the working group meeting dates were only shared recently, and how any conclusions could have been made from the survey results.
5. Some members of the public queried why the Chairman of the Parish Council was also Chairman of the Pavilion Working Group.
6. A member of the public was of the view that the community wouldn't like what disabled access involved.



7. A member of the public asked for a change in the culture of the parish council. They also requested acknowledgment that the survey carried out was not legitimate. They requested that the working group be disbanded, and stated that the current status quo in regards to the parish council and the working group is not an option.

The Chairman thanked the public for their comments and assured them that the Parish Council would consider them in due course but there were too many questions to be answered immediately at the meeting.

**7.7) (Agenda 7) County and District Update**

None.

**7.8) (Agenda 8) Finance**

1. Members noted and authorised the payments and bank reconciliation shown in Annex 1.
2. Members authorised the signing of the bank reconciliation shown in Annex 2.
3. Members **NOTED** the 2025/2026 Budget.
4. Members reviewed and **AGREED** the Asset Register with the addition of the new parish laptop, and the removal of the old defibrillator cabinet.
5. Members reviewed and **AGREED** the Financial and Management Risk Assessment.

**7.9) (Agenda 9) Planning**

**1. To receive and consider responses to planning applications**

- 26/00321/FPH – Tudor House, Poynders End, Preston, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 7RX

Members **AGREED** to support the above application.

**2. To note decisions and appeals**

- 25/03051/FPH - Highways, Church Lane, Preston, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 7TP. PERMISSION GRANTED
- 25/02316/FPH - Lutyens Cottage, Hitchwood Lane, Preston, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 7RY. RESIDENTS ARE APPEALING THE REFUSAL.

**3. To consider any other planning matters pertinent to the Parish Council**

None.

**Action: The clerk to respond to planning in regards to the Tudor House application.**

**7.10) (Agenda 10) Pavilion Working Party Update**

Members **NOTED** the report from the Pavilion Working Party.

**7.11) (Agenda 11) Church Meadow Lease**

Members **AGREED** to request updated play equipment quotes.

**7.12) (Agenda 12) Government Devolution Survey**

Members **RESOLVED** to go for option of four Unitary Authorities. The Chair will complete the survey on behalf of the parish council.

**Action: The Chair to complete the Government Devolution Survey.**



**7.13) (Agenda 13) Annual Parish Meeting**

Members **RESOLVED** to heavily advertise the Annual Parish Meeting, specifically listing those organisations who will be attending and reporting at the meeting. The PWG will be invited to report.

**7.14) (Agenda 14) The Green**

1. A lorry became stuck on the Green, the company responsible has offered to pay to rectify the damage.
2. Members **AGREED** to tape off the area of the green left without grass, and to grass seed it. Cllr Clark will look into carrying out the work.

**Action: Councillor Clark to investigate the damage to The Green**

**Action: Councillor Clark to sow grass seed as appropriate**

**Action: The Chairman to contact the company responsible for the damage to The Green.**

**7.15) (Agenda 15) Parish Council meeting dates: 2026-2027**

Members reviewed the draft dates circulated and **AGREED** all dates.

**7.16) (Agenda 16) Parish Council Website Update**

The clerk has informed Parish Online that we wish to go ahead, she is liaising with them as to what information needs to be carried over from the current website.

**7.17) (Agenda 17) Pavilion and Recreation Ground**

**a) To agree a quotation for the annual shutter service**

Members **AGREED** to accept a quote from Royal Shutter Doors of £285.

**b) Pavilion Valuation Report**

Members **NOTED** the Pavilion Valuation Report.

**Action: The Chair will accept the quote from Royal Industrial Doors.**

**7.18) (Agenda 18) Hertfordshire Highways Update**

20mph speed limit: The collected data from Preston is being analysed alongside changes to the Speed Management Strategy. When the analysis has been completed a way forward will be discussed with Cllr Barnard. The Parish Council should have an update by the end of this month.

**7.19) (Agenda 19) Parish Paths Partnership**

None.

**7.20) (Agenda 20) Clerk's Report**

A tree came down on Wastes of the Manor, taking with it the BT cable to a resident. Louis Harrington-Smith attended and removed the tree. The resident has thanked the council for a quick response, although BT took 6 days to fix the connection.

**7.21) (Agenda 21) Correspondence Received**

None.



**7.22) (Agenda 22) Matters for future consideration**

Four points raised by a member of the public and questions and comments raised by members of the Public

While discussing this item, the Parish Council agreed that an update to the community on the pavilion project would be included in the next newsletter which will be published before the next Parish Council meeting.

**Action: The Parish Council to agree an update on the pavilion project.**

The meeting closed at 9.55pm.

**Date and Time of next Meeting:** Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 8pm in the Village Hall.



# Parish of Preston

## ANNEX 1

### Preston Parish Council PAYMENTS & RECEIPTS LIST

03 March 2026 (2025-2026)

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Payment Ref.	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
67	HMRC	23/01/2026		Barclays Current Acc	P26-067	Payment - HMRC PAYE Nat Ins	HMRC	Z	-67.38		-67.38
19	Cricket Club Annual Payment	26/01/2026		Barclays Current Acc	R26-019	Receipt - Cricket Club Annual P	Preston Cricket Club	Z	1,513.08		1,513.08
69	Salary	26/01/2026		Barclays Current Acc	P26-069	Payment - Salary	Staff	Z	-529.02		-529.02
68	Grass Cutting / Church Meadov	26/01/2026		Barclays Current Acc	P26-068	Payment - Grass Cutting	R J Dawes	S	-1,349.00	-269.80	-1,618.80
71	Training	05/02/2026		Barclays Current Acc	P26-071	Payment - VAT Training - SLCC	SLCC	S	-115.50	-23.10	-138.60
70	SLCC Membership	05/02/2026		Barclays Current Acc	P26-070	Payment - SLCC Subscription	SLCC	Z	-79.00		-79.00
72	Pension	09/02/2026		Barclays Current Acc	P26-072	Payment - Pension	NEST	Z	-78.34		-78.34
73	Domain and Cybercheck	12/02/2026		Barclays Current Acc	P26-073	Payment - Cybercheck and Dor	Zen Internet Ltd	S	-16.49	-3.30	-19.79
20	Training	17/02/2026		Barclays Current Acc	R26-020	Receipt - VAT Training - SLCC	Kings Walden Parish Counc	Z	38.33		38.33
74	Electricity	17/02/2026		Barclays Current Acc	P26-074	Payment - Electricity	E.on	L	-146.05	-7.30	-153.35
75	Water	02/03/2026		Barclays Current Acc	P26-075	Payment - Water	Castle Water	Z	-45.07		-45.07
76	Valuation	02/03/2026		Barclays Current Acc	P26-076	Payment - Pavilion Valuation	RLP Surveyors	S	-350.00	-70.00	-420.00
77	Salary	02/03/2026		Barclays Current Acc	P26-077	Payment - Salary	Staff	Z	-529.02		-529.02
<b>Total</b>									<b>-1,753.46</b>	<b>-373.50</b>	<b>-2,126.96</b>



# Parish of Preston

## ANNEX 2

3 March 2026 (2025-2026)

### Preston Parish Council

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Bank Reconciliation at 03/03/2026</b>			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2025		91,313.43
	<b>ADD</b> Receipts 01/04/2025 - 03/03/2026		24,580.72
			115,894.15
	<b>SUBTRACT</b> Payments 01/04/2025 - 03/03/2026		24,523.90
<b>A</b>	<b>Cash in Hand 03/03/2026</b> (per Cash Book)		<b>91,370.25</b>
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash	03/03/2026	0.00
	Barclays Current Account	03/03/2026	938.35
	Barclays Business 1	03/03/2026	0.00
	Barclays Business 2	03/03/2026	0.00
	Redwood 95 Day	03/03/2026	81,338.71
	Unity Instant Access	03/03/2026	9,093.19
			<b>91,370.25</b>
	Less unrepresented payments		
			91,370.25
	Plus unrepresented receipts		
<b>B</b>	<b>Adjusted Bank Balance</b>		<b>91,370.25</b>
	<b>A = B Checks out OK</b>		

**Pavilion Working Group report to Preston Parish Council  
5 March 2026**

The PWG has held 8 meetings.

**Key points from the last meeting are:**

- Three members of the public attended the meeting as Observers.
- The PWG noted feedback from the last Parish Council meeting
- The PWG noted 2 points from a comment to the Parish Council following publication of the surveys
- Some amendments to the terms of reference were noted
- Following further consideration, the PWG will add additional points before submitting a written proposal for modification to the terms of reference to the Parish Council
- The PWG noted that the Written Reports would be included in Parish Council minutes and on the Pavilion Project section of the village website
- The PWG agreed that its meeting dates would be published in the village newsletter
- The PWG considered the quotes received for preliminary drawings and additional quotes for the drawings to be converted to plans for a planning application
- To ensure due diligence:
  - Representatives of the PWG will meet with architects on TEAMS to discuss their quotes and examples of their work.
  - Representatives of the PWG will endeavour to obtain references from previous clients of the architects.
- At the next meeting, the PWG will consider feedback from TEAMS and the available references in order to make a recommendation of which architect to select.
- It is anticipated that the PWG will be able to make a recommendation on an architect to the Parish Council at its April meeting.
- The PWG will arrange to meet the architect as soon as possible after selection
- Prior to that meeting:
  - The cricket club will check the criteria for changing rooms to ensure the drawings and plans meet ECB regulations
  - The PWG will note key points from the survey to help decide on the size of the community space

The PPC is requested to note the contents of this update.

**Preston Parish Council**  
**Statement on Pavilion Project**  
**Thursday 5 March 2026**

The Parish Council will start this item with the statement I am about to read. This may answer the questions which some of you have but after the statement, we will take comments and questions. This is the only opportunity for members of the public to speak but they are welcome to stay and listen as Parish Councillors discuss the latest written report from the Pavilion Working Group.

First of all, to ensure clarity and understanding, the recreation ground and the pavilion are owned by the Parish Council. Preston Cricket Club rents the ground and the pavilion from the Parish Council for evenings and weekends in the cricket season which is from mid-April to early September. This means that the Parish Council is responsible for the maintenance and management of the pavilion. This has always been the case. It has never been the cricket club's pavilion.

As the pavilion is now 27 years old, some work is required on the electrics, the plumbing and the drainage and a new kitchen is needed to bring it up to current standards and ensure it is fit for purpose and future proofed so that it can be used for many more years.

Some of you will know that at the moment there are 2 changing rooms, communal showers and a very small umpire's room which do not meet the ECB regulations for the league in which Preston Cricket Club's first team plays. There needs to be home and away changing rooms each with 3 separate showers, facing the pitch. There also has to be Ladies and Under18s changing rooms and showers and the umpire must have a shower too. There must be a kitchen and a communal room. These are the minimum requirements.

The Parish Council appointed a Pavilion Working Group to investigate how best to bring the pavilion up to date, incorporating the latest ECB regulations, by considering either an extension or a new build. At the same time, the working group was tasked with finding out if more community use of the pavilion is viable, particularly during the day. If a lot of money is being raised to improve the facilities we need to try to extend their use over and above that of Preston Cricket Club.

The community were asked if they would use a refurbished or new pavilion. It was too early in the process to ask if they supported a new or extended pavilion. That will come later. The outcome of the survey will be used to consider the potential size of a communal room but it will not be used as a measure to assess the viability of the project.

The Pavilion Working Group has Terms of Reference which are currently being modified, before being submitted to the Parish Council for its agreement. The quorum for a Pavilion Working Group meeting is 3, the same as for a Parish Council meeting. The Pavilion Working Group investigates the options for the pavilion and makes recommendations to the Parish Council who take the decisions for the way forward.

Parish Council minutes from the time the present pavilion was built indicate that other groups used the pavilion and the recreation ground for some time after it was built. The Parish Council would like to see greater use of the pavilion again and the cricket club don't want, need or expect exclusive use of it.

The Parish Council has to adhere to the criteria of the covenant imposed when it took ownership of the recreation ground. It is clear that the land has to be forever maintained as a playing field for organised sport for adults and children. The Parish Council interprets that the covenant also applies to the use of any building it has erected on the site so exercise

classes and indoor sports should be prioritised, while not excluding other options for community use. The covenant also states that no intoxicating liquor may be sold on the property. A shop and café don't meet these criteria which is why they weren't included in the Top 10 headlines of the pavilion survey. Also, given the amount of work required, which I've already outlined, it is unlikely that there will be space to include a shop and café.

The Parish Council has been asked why it didn't consider PHC for improved community facilities. Planning consent has already been granted for the development and the Parish Council will have a lease for the tennis courts and nothing else on that site. The cricket pitch and pavilion planned for the site is an arrangement between The Door UK and Preston Cricket Club and has nothing whatsoever to do with the Parish Council.

The cricket club will be installing the pavilion for their use and there are no plans for it to be used for any other purpose. This pavilion is as well as, not instead of, the pavilion on the recreation ground and Temple Dinsley will become Preston Cricket Club's second pitch. Parking on the site will be managed and only available during cricket matches. Alternative access will be via the permissive path from the village at all other times throughout the year.

A shop and café wasn't included in the Temple Dinsley planning application. For one to be considered, a new application would have to be submitted by The Door UK and its new business partner. Doing so is not currently in their plans.

The Parish Council confirmed that this information is correct with Russell Prince at the end of last month.

As I've said already, some major work has to be done in the pavilion and at the present time we haven't got enough information to decide on the best way forward or how much it will cost. However, decisions already made, and recorded in Parish Council minutes, are that a different location and a different access have been ruled out at the investigation stage. This means that an extension or new build will be on the footprint of the present pavilion.

The Parish Council has section 106 funding from the Castlefield and Back Lane developments. Some of this could be used, possibly with matched finding from the cricket club, to obtain professional advice for the initial stages of the project such as preliminary drawings which could subsequently be used to produce detailed plans in preparation for a planning application. Without drawings, it is impossible to get accurate costings and without costings it is impossible to decide on a course of action. However, we must be clear, doing nothing is not an option.

It is anticipated that the building work will be funded by grant applications and fund-raising ventures within the local and wider community. Sources of funding can't be investigated until professional advice and costings have enabled a decision to be made on the way forward.

I should add that the Pavilion Working Group has been advised by professionals that extending the use of the pavilion could possibly generate more funding. That is partly why the survey was undertaken, to investigate the opportunities to maximise its potential use.

This is where we are at the present time with the project. As it moves forward, the public will be informed and consulted as, when and how the Parish Council and the Pavilion Working Group deem it appropriate.

I hope this answers some of your questions.