

Grimsargh Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 11 January, 2024 at Grimsargh Village Hall at 7.30pm.

Present:- Councillor Peter Burton (Chairman); Councillor Trevor Haines (Vice-Chairman); Councillor Mrs Joyce Chessell; Councillor Mrs Lynda Cryer; Councillor Terry Cryer; Councillor David Hindle; Councillor Mrs Agustina Oliver and Councillor Mrs Jayne Woollam.

In attendance:- Sue Whittam – Clerk to the Council
2 members of the public

84. (23/24) Apologies for Absence/Chairman's Health & Safety announcements

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Simon Rusling and Councillor Stephen Whittam, Preston City Council.

The Chairman, Councillor Peter Burton welcomed everyone to the meeting and briefed the Parish Council on possible health and safety considerations for this evening's meeting.

85. (23/24) Declarations of Interest and written requests for dispensation

The Clerk confirmed that written requests for dispensation had been received from all present in order for them to consider the precept up to the 31 March 2027 in accordance with Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.

There were no further declarations of interest.

86. (23/24) Minutes of the Last Meeting

Resolved

That the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7th December 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

87. (23/24) Adjournment for Public Participation

The Chairman Councillor Peter Burton adjourned the meeting for public participation and asked if anyone had anything to raise under this item.

The members of the public present had come along to raise their concerns about the skew bridge and that over the years it had got worse with the amount of traffic going over the bridge and the actual size of vehicles had increased including cars, lorries and buses. They asked if the bridge was likely to be widened as they fully supported this. The Clerk explained that some investigative works had been carried out and the results as yet were unknown. She added that there were a lot of utility services running under the bridge so it depended on whether these could be moved and of course the cost of doing this. The Clerk said that the Parish Council would be consulted on any proposed widening. The Chairman, Councillor Peter Burton

thanked the member of the public for attending and letting the Parish Council know that they supported the widening of the bridge.

Councillor Mrs Jayne Woollam said that the welcome to Grimsargh sign on the car park on the Village Green had disappeared. The Clerk said that she would raise this with Preston City Council who owned the green.

Councillor Mrs Jayne Woollam asked if the pollution monitors had given any data. The Clerk advised that these were still in place and would be removed at the end of February. The information gathered would be shared with the Parish Council.

Councillor Mrs Jayne Woollam advised that she was still looking into the Britain in Bloom Competition and would share any information with the Parish Council.

Councillor Mrs Jayne Woollam asked about the land purchased by the Parish Council and when would it be decided on its use. It was felt that the June newsletter would be an appropriate time to consult with residents about the use of the land. However, it was noted that this was limited due to the conditions of purchase. The main options would either be a community orchard or a wildflower meadow.

Councillor Mrs Jayne Woollam also mentioned the residents' packs and said that maybe they needed a refresh as the packs only included limited information such as the newsletter, Churches together, heritage walks and the farmer's market. It was agreed that the Community Engagement Working Group, (consisting of Councillor Mrs Lynda Cryer, Councillor Terry Cryer, Councillor Trevor Haines, Councillor Simon Rusling and Councillor Mrs Jayne Woollam), should look at this and report back to the Parish Council at the appropriate time.

Councillor Mrs Agustina Oliver asked about the refurbishment of the bench on Old Railway Walk. The Clerk said she would speak to the Lengthsman but it was likely that this would be done in the better weather. The Clerk also advised that the pond on Redrow Estate and the broken fencing would hopefully be repaired soon, as she had been advised that Preston City Council had put the works out for tender.

Councillor Trevor Haines advised that the issue with the children's home was still continuing and the residents had contacted the owners of the house and the estate agent who had rented out the property. They had given a deadline of two weeks for a reply and they would then look at taking further action.

Councillor Trevor Haines said that the lights on the Village Green were still not working and the Clerk advised that Councillor Stephen Whittam had contacted Preston City Council but was not sure if a response had been received.

The Chairman, Councillor Peter Burton then reconvened the meeting.

88. (23/24) Town and Country Planning Act, 1990

There were no new Planning Applications for discussion at the meeting.

89. (23/24) Road Safety Working Group

Councillor Trevor Haines gave an update to the Parish Council regarding the Road Safety Working Group and in particular the latest response from Lancashire County Council (LCC) relating to the issues raised on Whittingham Lane. A copy of the response had been circulated to the Parish Council. Councillor Trevor Haines said that three different Officers from LCC had responded so far and that the Working Group felt quite upset and annoyed about the responses received, as they did not answer the issues raised. Councillor Trevor Haines wanted LCC to concentrate on the maximum speed rather than the 85th percentile and said that some of the information given was factually incorrect. There had also been no response to the question about the traffic calming on Whittingham Lane at D'Urton Manor. LCC Officers were not prepared to meet the Parish Council about the issues.

Councillor Trevor Haines was proposing that he sent a further email to LCC but this time to County Councillor Rupert Swarbrick who was the Cabinet Member for Highways and to ask him to do something. He also suggested that Andy Pratt, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner was contacted as the Chairman of the Road Safety Partnership to see what he could do to help.

The Chairman Councillor Peter Burton said that the footpath at Grimsargh Manor was very narrow with no dropped kerbs and it may be sensible to point this out as part of the argument to get safety improvements for pedestrians. He also suggested that the Clerk should look at the Planning Application for D'Urton Manor as it was likely that the traffic calming had been included when the planning permission had been granted. It would also be sensible for the Parish Council via the Clerk to officially ask for a footpath to go through the village green to enable residents from the new estates to walk safely into Grimsargh.

Councillor David Hindle referred to the original excellent report produced by Councillor Mrs Joyce Chessell and the initial involvement by Andy Pratt and said it was time to involve Andy again as he had always been very supportive of traffic and safety issues.

Councillor Trevor Haines also informed the Parish Council that he had contacted Houghton Parish Council who were supportive of Grimsargh Parish Council and their determination to make the area safe for all users including cars and pedestrians.

The Clerk had forwarded to Councillor Trevor Haines the information on potential Speeding Indicator Devices (SPiDs), that the Parish Council had previously agreed could be funded out of CiL monies. She suggested that it may be worthwhile contacting Renie from Altham Parish Council to undertake some additional data capture from a different location on Whittingham Lane to continue to gather evidence of the problems.

After further discussion, the Parish Council agreed that Councillor Trevor Haines would write a further email to LCC but to the Cabinet Member for Highways, County Councillor Rupert Swarbrick. The Clerk would contact Preston City Council parks to formally ask for a footpath to be created from the new estate, as per the initial plan, where it was included as part of the original planning application but then subsequently removed. The Clerk would contact Renie at Altham Parish Council,

and ask him to liaise with Councillor Trevor Haines to look at a different location on Whittingham Lane to carry out some further data capture and the price of this would be presented to the Parish Council for approval. The Clerk would also pursue the development of a Transport Plan for the village as part of the refreshed Neighbourhood Plan. This would need to be carried out by consultants and she said that she would approach the relevant Officer from LCC for advice. The Parish Council would also consider involving Andy Pratt at the relevant time.

Resolved

- i) That the report from the Road Safety Working Group is received and noted.
- ii) That Councillor Trevor Haines writes to the Cabinet Member for Highways, County Councillor Rupert Swarbrick.
- iii) That the Clerk contacts Altham Parish Council regarding further data capture and Whittingham Lane and that Councillor Trevor Haines would be the contact person to ensure that the correct location was used.
- iv) That the Clerk contact LCC regarding at Transport Plan for the village as part of the refreshed Neighbourhood Plan, and also Preston City Council to formally ask for a footpath to be created from the new estate through the village green into Grimsargh.

90. (23/24) Biodiversity Grant

The Clerk asked the Parish Council to consider projects to spend the £300 Biodiversity Grant given by Lancashire County Council. Councillor David Hindle suggested that a sand martin colony or an extension to the reed bed on the Wetlands may be appropriate. The Parish Council agreed that the Wetlands Trust could discuss this at their next meeting and report back to the Parish Council in February.

Resolved

That the Wetlands Trust are asked to consider projects to spend the £300 Biodiversity Grant at their next meeting and report back to the Parish Council in February.

91. (23/24) Defibrillator – Grimsargh St Michael’s School

The Clerk reported that Grimsargh St Michael’s School had received a new defibrillator as part of a Department of Education initiative and that this had been placed in the cabinet outside the school for use by all. The Parish Council’s defibrillator could now be relocated to a different part of the village and the Clerk asked for possible locations. However, it was noted that the Parish Council would probably need to purchase a new cabinet for the defibrillator and that an electricity supply would be needed. The Parish Council agreed to think about suitable locations and these could be discussed at a future meeting.

The Chairman, Councillor Peter Burton said he would collect the Parish Council's defibrillator from the school and the Clerk said she would contact the school so that collection could be arranged.

Resolved

That the Parish Council consider alternative locations for their defibrillator and these will be discussed at a future meeting of the Parish Council.

92. (23/24) Financial Matters and banking

It was noted that we currently had an estimated £204,775.34 in the Nat West bank as at 5 December 2023.

It was also noted that the following invoices had been paid since last meeting: -

Cllr Mrs Jayne Woollam – reimbursement for bread rolls for Christmas event £17.70 (Cheque no 1242).

J Willan (Field Day Committee) – reimbursement for refreshments for Christmas event £99.39 (Cheque no 1243).

Sue Whittam, Clerk's Salary 15 December 2023 - £1,265.30 + £171.60 for newsletter delivery = total £1,436.90 (Cheque no 1244).

HMRC Q3 Tax and NI - £587.51 (Cheque 1245).

Society of Local Council Clerks subscription renewal £188.00 (Cheque no 1246).

JRB for dog bin bags 2 invoices each invoice £130.26 (Cheque nos 1246 and 1247).

We had also paid Water Plus for Nellie Carbis £24.30 – direct debit.

Resolved

1) The following invoices were approved for payment: -

i) Sue Whittam, Clerk's Salary January new rate of £17.16 per hour as per LALC pay scales and back dated to 1st April 2023 £1,882.67.

ii) Adam Cooper Contractor – to be confirmed at the next meeting.

2) Budget 2024/2025

With regard to the budget for 2024/2025, a draft budget had been circulated to the Parish Council which showed a potential shortfall of around £10k which highlighted the difficulty in projecting expenditure when making decisions before all the information was available for Q3. It was noted that some of the projects including the replacement CCTV and a portable PA system for events could be funded from CiL so they were not included in the general budget figures. It was agreed that a quarterly budget report would be presented to the Parish Council going forward. The Parish Council agreed the budget and a copy is presented in the Minute Book.

3) Precept for 2024/2025

The Parish Council gave consideration to the precept for 2024/2025. This was discussed at length, however after taking into account the budget as agreed above it was agreed to slightly increase the precept request from £42,000 to £43,000 which was slightly less than a 2.5% increase. The Parish Council felt that due to everything rising in cost and although the reserves could be used to offset some costs, that a small increase in the precept was necessary at this time. It was noted that CiL monies could not be used as part of the general budget.

93. (23/24) Clerk's report – for information only

The Clerk said that a consultation on Friargate South was currently being carried out by Preston City Council and that she would circulate the link to the consultation for individual Councillors to respond if they wished. The closing date for comments was 21 January 2024.

The Clerk also said that there was a consultation on the Devolution Deal for Lancashire and that she would circulate the link to the dedicated website and consultation for individual Councillors to respond if they wished. The closing date for comments was 26 January 2024.

The Clerk also reported that the Neighbourhood Planning Workshop for the Parish Council would be held on Thursday 29th February between 10 am – 12 noon at the village hall and she had booked the room.

94. (23/24) Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next Parish Council meeting would be held on Thursday 1st February 2024 at 7.30 pm at Grimsargh Village Hall.