

## **Grimsargh Parish Council**

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 7 April, 2011 in the Village Hall, Preston Road, Grimsargh at 7.00pm

**Present:-** Councillor Mrs E Murray – Chairman

### **Councillors**

Mrs J Chessell	A R Ellis
Mrs L McCann	Mrs P A Tucker
G T Swarbrick	R G Woollam

**In attendance:-** Sue Whittam – Clerk to the Council  
Councillor N Cartwright – Preston Rural East  
Councillor T Davies – Preston Rural East

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Norman Ridding, Councillor David Hindle and PC Banks.

### **2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 1 April 2010**

Resolved

That the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on Thursday 1 April, 2010 were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman

### **3. Chairman's Report 2010/2011**

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Eileen Murray gave her report on the Parish Council's activities over the last 12 months.

She commented that looking back over the year a major thing that stood out was that it had been a real time for change in the make-up of the Council. We welcomed Cllr Ellis early in the year, filling the existing vacancy. Then it was with great sadness that we all learned of the death of Sam Sellers, only a very short time after he had stood down from the Parish Council. Brian Woodburn had retired at the same time – we lost a great deal of experience and wisdom with their departure. However, we were delighted to welcome the return of Cllr Woollam, accompanied by Cllr Hindle, to complete our numbers once again.

Perhaps a little more taxing on our skills and experience was the announcement by our Clerk, Peter Croft that he would be retiring after a little under 32 years in the role. This brought us through a bit of a steep learning curve in recruitment matters and employment law! However, the outcome was most successful and we are thoroughly enjoying getting to know and being guided by our new Clerk, Sue Whittam. But it is time for more change, it seems. As I write this report I am aware of the results of the uncontested elections for Grimsargh Parish Council, which indicate that we are

potentially losing a further three of our current Councillors, namely Cllrs Swarbrick, Tucker and Ridding.

Without ignoring the fact that Ron has shown that Councillors can return, I wish to take this opportunity to say sincere thanks to those three, and the other Councillors and Clerk who are not present, for their hard efforts and much-valued contributions to Grimsargh Village.

The Chairman then referred to other highlights of the year:

- The Sites for Preston Planning Consultation had some highs and lows. One low being the apparent breakdown somewhere along the communication paths that meant it was a bit of a surprise to GPC in November. It has had some positive outcomes (so far) in that it has shown that Grimsargh residents care hugely about their village and are very welcome to engage in any consultation process. As a Parish Council we are a little more aware of some of the important matters for our residents – little/no call for affordable housing, but clear indications that “Extra Care” accommodation provision would be welcome. We have recognised a need to update and clarify our understanding of the needs and wishes of the Village.
- FoGG – once again this group is to be given heart-felt thanks for their efforts. A special tribute has to be given to Joyce for seemingly inexhaustible levels of patience and stamina in driving through the Play Area issue with Preston City Council. Success has also been finally arrived at with the car park and lighting and a tremendous result was achieved with the Britain in Bloom competition – awarded “Thriving” – an exceptional result for a first time entrant.
- The Lengthsman continues to do a good job – our village is generally pleasantly tidy and cheerful looking – which was recognised in the results of this year’s Best Kept Village Competition, where we were placed fifth in our category – a marked improvement over the previous year.
- The Millennium Woodland has now undergone a change in management with Ron and David taking over from Sam and Brian.
- Crime – while we continue to enjoy a relatively low crime rate, there are disturbing instances of thefts and some unruly behaviour. The most notable issue of “theft” most recently appears to be that of our local policeman! However, judging from last month’s report to the Council from PC Banks, he would be welcomed as a replacement – if that is what is to be advised to us by Lancashire Constabulary.....
- The website, launched early in the year continues to be a useful mechanism of public communication – highlighted in the Sites for Preston consultation communications.

- We are all very much better educated in the matters of Faster Broadband speeds and we hope that the moves around will result in improved services being available for all residents of Grimsargh.
- The usual crib, Christmas tree and carols were this year complemented by the jumbo tree, kindly donated by Alan Coar and hosted by Browns.
- The Council has continued to provide small grants to local causes – for example the Over 60's Christmas Party, Longridge Gymnastics Club, Grimsargh Toddlers, FoGG and others.

Although this is primarily a report on the past year, the Chairman felt it was appropriate to look forward also. The time ahead – with The Localism Bill, “The Big Society”, cuts in some centrally funded services and on-going desires of the Council to improve the lot for the residents of Grimsargh all mean that there are potentially exciting times ahead. But – if the opportunities are to be seized and made the most of – then also some hard work ahead too!

Having thanked the departed and outgoing Councillors, the Chairman also thanked those members who are proceeding in their roles and will therefore be here next May, and also our Clerk, Sue - for their efforts this year.

And finally the Chairman appealed to all present – come May we are going to be seeking new Councillors. The batons are being passed on – please do all that you can to go out & spread the word about how rewarding the work of the Parish Council can be. We will need some solid good replacements for the skills and experience that will have left the Council this year.

#### **4. Matters raised by the Electors**

There being no further business raised, Councillor Mrs P Tucker proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman for her work over the past year, and this was supported by all those present. Councillor G Swarbrick added that the Chairman had certainly made an impression over the last 12 months and it was great that the Parish Council was doing things for the good of the community and was not just a “talking shop”.

Chairman Grimsargh Parish Council