

Grimsargh Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 3 April, 2025 held at Grimsargh Village Hall starting at 7.00 pm.

Present: - Councillor Peter Burton (Chairman); Councillor Trevor Haines (Vice-Chairman); Councillor Mrs Lynda Cryer; Councillor Terry Cryer and Councillor Simon Rusling.

In attendance: - Sue Whittam – Clerk to the Council
Councillor Stephen Whittam – Preston City Council.
20 members of the public.

1. (24/25) Apologies for Absence/Chairman's Health & Safety Announcements

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs Joyce Chessell, Councillor David Hindle, Councillor Mrs Agustina Oliver, Councillor Mrs Jayne Woollam and also from the Police who could not attend due to operational duties.

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.

2. (24/25) Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 4 April 2024

Resolved

That the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 4 April 2024 were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

3. (24/25) Chairman's Report 2024/2025

The Chairman, Councillor Peter Burton gave his report as Chairman for 2024/2025. The Chairman said that he would like to start by thanking his fellow councillors for the time and effort they have put in during the year to help make Grimsargh a safe and thriving place to live. Reviewing the year, the Chairman said that we could look at the various ways we had been working for and with the village community. Planning applications had mainly involved small scale private applications, however the Parish Council had raised concerns and worked with local residents on the bungalow/care home development, which had now commenced, and a proposal for six houses at 339 Preston Rd, both of which had evolved over the years since their first applications. The Parish Council had started the year looking to reinstate its efforts into producing a Neighbourhood plan for the village, however a change in Government had currently put this on hold. The Chairman said that as a Parish Council we were pleased to note that the proposed new local plan did not include any sites within Grimsargh.

The Chairman said that when residents had come to us, we had listened to and worked on, or made representations on road safety concerns on the Whittingham Lane footpath between the new estates on Whittingham Lane and the Village Green,

the widening of skew bridge and also the pond on the Redrow estate that the young people wanted to use as a mountain bike area. The Chairman said that unfortunately we could not always get the outcome wanted by the council and residents, however he wanted to thank all the Councillors, the Clerk and our City Councillors who put in their time and effort.

The Chairman highlighted the events that had been organised by the Parish Council including the combined carols around the crib and the Christmas tree lights switch on, our continued participation in the Best Kept Village Competition, helped by some excellent planters maintained by their villager “parents”, and the production of our biannual Parish newsletter which was distributed to every house in the village.

The Chairman said that we had also produced an electronic version of our welcome pack which could also be accessed by QR codes on our notice boards. We had also upgraded our CCTV. At this point, the Chairman said that he would like to put on record the Parish Council’s thanks to our Lengthsman Adam who had given 20 years’ service to the village, but had now decided to move on. The process of a replacement had already begun with the aim of appointing a new Lengthsman early in the next financial year.

The Chairman said that during the year, the Parish Council had given out grants to Jake Higham for sports equipment to help him represent GB at the World Duathlon in Australia, Grimsargh Club to assist with their refurbishment, and Grimsargh Cricket Club for Practice nets, and pitch improvement. We had also supported the Wetlands when required. The land adjacent to the wetlands had now been planted as a community orchard which hopefully would become a ‘fruitful’ community asset in years to come.

The Chairman said that we also had other village projects in progress, which unfortunately were taking slightly longer than anticipated due to circumstances beyond our control.

4. (24/25) Matters raised by the Electors

Members of the public had come along to raise their serious concerns about the amount of anti-social behaviour on the Redrow estate and the use of land as mountain bike jumps for young people. A number of the public highlighted their experiences which included offensive language, digging the soil and surface near to retaining walls, destruction of trees and habitats. Bags of rubbish had been collected that had been discarded by the young people using the area for bike jumps. One member of the public asked that the area should be fenced to prevent access and further damage. The Chairman, Councillor Peter Burton explained that the land was owned by Preston City Council and that this issue had been raised with both the City Council and the Police over the last 18 months or so. He added that Councillor Mrs Agustina Oliver, who unfortunately could not be at tonight’s meeting, had continually raised this at the Parish Council meetings and City Councillor Stephen Whittam had reported this on a number of occasions to the Interim Director in charge of parks at Preston City Council.

Councillor Simon Rusling said that a few of the young lads had come along to speak to the Parish Council and they had been advised that the land was owned by Preston City Council and that they should ask one of their parents to contact the Parish Council then we could look at what we could do to obtain a facility for the young people, but this would not be on the land that they were currently using. Councillor Simon Rusling said that the young lads had been strongly advised not to cause a nuisance to local residents and to all not destroy any trees, bushes or habitat. It was disappointing that this issue had continued.

Councillor Stephen Whittam said he would contact the Interim Director of parks yet again, and emphasise the need for some action by the City Council before someone was seriously hurt. The Clerk said she would send the contact details for the Interim Director, Mr Taylor at Preston City Council to the resident, and this could be circulated to other residents on the estate. They all could then contact Mr Taylor directly about the continuing issues and the unacceptable situation that they were facing on a daily basis.

The Chairman, Councillor Peter Burton thanked the residents for attending and highlighting this ongoing issue. He then asked if any other members of the public had anything to raise with the Parish Council.

One member of the public asked about the proposals for Browns Garage which had now been sold. There appeared to be a lot of rumours going around about its future use. The Clerk advised that a Planning Application would need to be submitted to Preston City Council for any change of use. At the moment no application had been submitted, so it was difficult to know what was planned for the site. The Clerk said that once a Planning Application had been submitted and validated by Preston City Council then this would be consulted on, and then residents, the Parish Council and any anyone who wished to do so, could send their comments to the Planning Officer. It was a case of keeping an eye on the situation and looking at the Planning Application once it had been received. It was noted that the Parish Council had also received a number of emails from residents raising their concerns about the future use of the site.

One member of the public referred to a number of Public Rights of Way that seemed to be temporarily closed or diverted, and he expressed concerns that some of these had been closed for a long period without any progress. He said that he had sent an email to the Parish Council about his concerns, and Councillor Trevor Haines recirculated the email to the Parish Council. The Clerk advised that one Public Right of Way was closed due to the collapse of the footbridge over Tun Brook and others were closed due to housebuilding taking place near to the footpaths that could be dangerous to walkers. She advised that any concerns should be sent to the Lancashire County Council, Public Rights of Way Team, who were ultimately responsible for temporary closures to public footpaths.

One young person had come along to the meeting to talk about the football pitch that he was trying to get established on The Hills, to keep young people engaged, motivated and healthy. He was seeking the support from the Parish Council. The Chairman, Councillor Peter Burton explained that the land was not owned by the

Parish Council, so currently there was nothing really that the Parish Council could do to support this at the moment. The Clerk suggested a potential way forward was for residents of The Hills to set up a "Friends Group", then residents could get involved and comment on the potential of having a football pitch. The young person was advised to pull together ideas and evidence to send to the landowner, and if appropriate the Parish Council would send a letter of support to the landowners, if the pitch had the backing of local residents.

The Chairman, Peter Burton thanked the young person for coming along to the Parish Council and being very articulate in approaching the Parish Council for help. He wished him luck with his project.

It was also noted that a resident had emailed regarding sunken gullies and road surface issues. The Clerk agreed to write to Highways regarding these issues.

There being no further matter raised the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.30 pm.

Councillor Peter Burton
Chairman Grimsargh Parish Council