

Grimsargh Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 4 April, 2013 in the Village Hall, Preston Road, Grimsargh at 7.00pm

Present:- Councillor Mrs E Murray – Chairman

Councillor Peter Burton; Councillor Mrs Joyce Chessell; Councillor Mrs Lynda Cryer; Councillor David Hindle; Councillor Mrs Lynn McCann; and Councillor David Nicholson.

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

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Andy Ellis (Vice-Chairman), Councillor Neil Cartwright – Preston City Council, PC Chris Banks and Reverend Halliwell.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 5 April 2012

Resolved

That the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on Thursday 5 April, 2012 were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman

3. Chairman's Report 2012/2013

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

She said that the year started out with us looking forward to our "Grimsargh Celebrates Preston Guild" events. The programmes (paid for by a grant from LCC via the Parish Champion County Councillor Mike Otter) were delivered and we received lovely positive feedback – and that was the mood that continued. The fortnight of events was agreed by all to be a fabulous success. The Parish Council cannot claim the bulk of the credit for that as it was thanks to the hard work of a good number of dedicated and enthusiastic individuals and groups. However, the concept together, with the modus operandi were devised by us. Having individuals or groups independently responsible for their events, but with a supportive, collaborative overseeing forum worked extremely well and brought out the very best of our Village Community. Councillor Mrs Eileen Murray had given detailed thanks to those concerned at the Strawberry Tea held last summer, but did re-iterate the sincere thanks to all who were involved in that wonderful feature of our year.

The Chairman said we had devised some new schemes – some came and went. The internet sessions and public surgeries proved to be somewhat less than popular. The new Grants Scheme had now given clarity on how groups can apply for a small grant from GPC and the criteria that are required to be met. It is a little surprising how few applications we have received – with just three grants being awarded: Grimsargh Toddlers, Over 60s party and the FoGG Guild 2012 Mosaic. We would welcome more grant applications and we ask that if local groups are interested in raising funds for a

particular event to look at our website for the criteria and the simple grants form. The Suggestion Scheme had only brought in a handful of items, but it seemed sensible to carry on with that one, as those who have put in forms have received responses and the use may increase over time.

Another key “feature” of our year, indeed the past three years had been Planning, most particularly the Hallam proposal. We engaged actively with the planning system, working very hard and learning a great deal along the way about planning law and policy development. That specific planning application came – and went – refused. However we knew there was a good chance there would be an appeal and that too came – and went – dismissed. We received a good deal of positive feedback and thanks from the public for all our hard efforts – and I think that appreciation was well-deserved.

The Chairman stated that we continue to be supported very well by our local police team – some of whom also came and went! While we had a current spate of rural crimes affecting our area, we continued to enjoy living in a relatively safe and secure environment. Our thanks go to our police colleagues for all their hard work and we do appreciate the time they take to come to our meetings and keep us informed and engaged with their activities.

We formally absorbed the governance and management of the Nellie Carbis Woodland and hope to see some renewed vigour in the rejuvenation and sensitive development of that asset.

It was reported that we had now become quite active in our involvement with the Preston Area Committee and Three Tier Forum. These have seen some definitive results in how major planning applications were evaluated with respect to infrastructure. Conservation Area Status had proved to be a test for us all. I am not going to say much more here, as the outcome and next steps are still to be determined, but the Chairman strongly believed we needed to learn and develop from the experiences of the exercise and maybe review how we undertook this type of consultation in the future.

It was further reported that with the resignation of Ron Woollam we now had a vacancy which we can see as an opportunity – to bring in some new and different views, skills and experience. Personally, the Chairman said she would love to see someone with “techy” skills as we certainly need to have a second person who can maintain the website. Someone else would be needed to produce the Newsletter – though that could readily be out-sourced.

Our lengthsman continued to keep the village looking neat & tidy, in so far as his duties allow and our planters are providing wonderful sways of colour during the spring and summer months thanks to the efforts of the volunteer gardeners. Although our ranking in the Best Kept Village was a significant surprise after last year’s triumph, we can use that as an opportunity to get a group of good folk together to co-ordinate a programme of improvements and enhancements.

The Green receiving QEII Fields in Trust Status was a pleasing result and should give an increased level of confidence that area of land will be preserved for recreation in perpetuity. We hope that it warms up for the celebration event planned for May! We were also pleased that the Green received level 5 outstanding in North West Britain in Bloom Competition. This was a fantastic result and recognised the work that FoGG have put into the village green.

As usual the above only outlines the headlines of the activities we have been engaged in. There had been a myriad of other matters which we had reviewed, considered and made recommendations or put in place actions. Being a Parish Councillor can be hard work and I thank you all and, of course our Clerk, for what you have put in over the year.

4. Matters raised by the Electors

There being no further business raised the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.15 pm.

Chairman Grimsargh Parish Council