

Grimsargh Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held remotely on Thursday 3 December, 2020
at 7.30 pm.

Present:- Councillor David Hindle (Chairman); Councillor Mark Bell (Vice-Chairman); Councillor Peter Burton; Councillor Mrs Lynda Cryer; Councillor Terry Cryer; Councillor Mrs Eileen Murray and Councillor Mrs Lindsay Philipson.

In attendance:- Sue Whittam – Clerk to the Council
Councillor Ron Woollam – Preston City Council

33. (20/21) Sound Check, Muting, Voting and Chairman's welcome to attendees

The Chairman, Councillor David Hindle welcomed everyone to this month's remote Parish Council meeting. It was noted that Councillor Mrs Eileen Murray was stepping down from the Parish Council. The Chairman, Councillor David Hindle took the opportunity to thank Councillor Mrs Eileen Murray for her support and commitment to the Parish Council over the last 17 year's and wished her well for the future. Councillor Mrs Lindsay Philipson also thanked Councillor Mrs Eileen Murray for all the help and assistance she had given to her when she was Chairman.

34. (20/21) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs Joyce Chessell.

35. (20/21) 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 2023 in accordance with Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.

36. (20/21) Minutes of the Last Meeting

Resolved

That the minutes of the remote Parish Council Meeting held on 5 November 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman at the next face to face Council meeting in accordance with LGA 1972 sch. 12 Part VI para 41 (1).

37. (20/21) Adjournment for Public Participation and Policing Issues

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

It was noted that the Crib would be put in place tomorrow. It was further noted that the Christmas Tree was now in place but it did not appear to have any lights. The Clerk agreed to contact Preston City Council regarding the Christmas tree lights and would also ask for these to put on a timer so they came on at 3.30 pm.

There was nothing further to report under this item, so the Chairman, Councillor David Hindle then reconvened the meeting.

38. (20/21) Town and Country Planning Act, 1990

It was noted that there were no new Planning Applications in the Parish for consideration at this evening's meeting. However, Councillor Peter Burton had asked for the following application to be considered as it was close to the Parish, but actually in Ribbleton: -

06/2020/1138 - Gaskell House, 45-49 Rough Hey Road, Preston
Conversion of part of existing office building (Class E) to education centre (Class F1) and external alterations (Part Retrospective).

It was agreed to note the application and to keep a watch on this site as it developed.

It was further noted that with regard to Planning Application 06/2020/1052 relating to 138 Preston Road, Grimsargh, the Planning Officer had taken into account the concerns raised by the Parish Council with regard to parking and had informed the Parish Council that the application had been amended to alter the opening hours for the outdoor seating areas and also to retain the existing car park. The application had now been approved.

The Clerk also reported that a further application for a change of use from agricultural land to residential curtilage had been received for 237 Preston Road, Grimsargh (Planning Application 06/2020/1254). The Parish Council had previously agreed that a standard response to all these applications for property that backed onto the Wetlands would be sent by the Clerk to Preston City Council. The Clerk confirmed that she would action this.

There were no further planning issues for discussion at the meeting.

Resolved

- i) That, with regard to Planning Application 06/2020/1138, the Parish Council agreed to note the application and keep a watch on this site as it developed.
- ii) That, with regard to Planning Application 06/2020/1052, the amended application to alter the opening hours for the outdoor seating areas and to retain the existing car park is noted.
- iii) That, with regard to Planning Application 06/2020/1254, that the standard response is sent via the Clerk to Preston City Council as per previous similar applications.

39. (20/21) Report from the Finance Working Group

The Clerk presented the report from the Finance Working Group from their meeting held on 18 November 2020. A copy of the report is presented in the Minute Book. It

was noted that the Working Group had considered a number of reports including the Financial Risk Assessment; Financial Rules and Regulations and the draft budget and it was further noted that these items appeared as separate agenda items on this evening's agenda. In addition to this the Working Group also considered the Lengthsman's pay and his current duties and also the Clerks salary. It was noted that any recommended pay increases were included in the budget recommendations which appeared as a separate item on the Agenda. The Clerk had circulated an email regarding the Lengthsman's duties and the Finance Working Group would be giving further consideration to this in due course.

Resolved

That the report is received and noted.

40. (20/21) Financial Rules and Regulations

As reported above, the Finance Working Group had reviewed the Financial Rules and Regulations and these had been circulated to the Parish Council. The Finance Working Group were recommending an amendment to paragraph 3.3 to change the dates of budget reports to the Parish Council to fit in with the receipt of the bank statements as follows: -

"These statements are to be presented at the September (due to no August meeting), November, February and May meetings of the Parish Council."

The Finance Working Group also recommended an additional paragraph 6.6 to reflect the arrangements for paying the Clerk as follows: -

"The Clerk shall be paid on the 15th of each month. The salary for the current Clerk is Spinal Column Point 24 in line with NALC/NJC pay scales. This shall be adjusted annually to reflect any changes in the pay scales. Any replacement Clerk will be paid in line with their skills and experience."

The amendments were unanimously approved by the Parish Council and a copy of the updated Financial Rules and Regulations is presented in the Minute Book.

Resolved

That, approval is given to the revised Financial Rules and Regulations in relation to the amendment to paragraph 3.3 and the additional paragraph 6.6 as outlined above.

41. (20/21) Financial Risk Assessment

It was noted that the Finance Working Group had reviewed the Financial Risk Assessment and the only amendment was to update the Data Protection Section to confirm that the Parish Council now had a Document and Data Retention Policy in place, and that this was approved by the Parish Council at their meeting on 3 September 2020. This was unanimously approved by the Parish Council and a copy of the updated Financial Risk Assessment is presented in the Minute Book.

Resolved

That, approval is given to the Financial Risk Assessment as now presented including the Data Protection Section in line with the above.

42. (20/21) Neighbourhood Planning

The Clerk reported that Chris Blackburn, the Head of Planning Policy at Preston City Council had now responded to our request to look at the draft Emerging Policies document. It was noted that this was quite a detailed response that needed further consideration before any recommendations could be put forward to the Parish Council. In particular Chris Blackburn had highlighted some additional policies that may be required. The Parish Council agreed to discuss this further at a future meeting when the response from Preston City Council had been discussed in detail by representatives of the Steering Group and our Planner dealing with the Neighbourhood Plan.

Resolved

That, the Parish Council agrees to discuss the draft Emerging Policies document at a future meeting when the response from Preston City Council had been discussed in detail by representatives of the Steering Group and our Planner dealing with the Neighbourhood Plan.

43. (20/21) Social Media Policy

The Parish Council gave consideration to a draft Social Media Policy which would be useful to provide the Parish Council with guidance in the use of online communications. It was noted that currently Councillor Mrs Eileen Murray, Councillor Mrs Lindsay Philipson and the Clerk were the administrators for the Parish Council's social media accounts. As Councillor Mrs Eileen Murray was stepping down from the Parish Council, Councillor Mark Bell indicated that he was willing to take on this role. The Parish Council unanimously approved the Social Media Policy and a copy is presented in the Minute Book.

Resolved

That, the draft Social Media Policy as now presented is approved by the Parish Council and that Councillor Mark Bell, Councillor Mrs Lindsay Philipson and the Clerk are approved as the administrators for the Parish Council's social media accounts.

44. (20/21) Charge My Street

It was noted that Councillor Mrs Eileen Murray had recently seen an article on the "Charge My Street" Project which aimed to provide electric vehicle charging points in suitable locations. A copy of the link to the Project had been circulated by the Clerk with the Agenda. The Parish Council felt this was an interesting project and wished to put forward a number of suitable locations in the village. It was not guaranteed that Grimsargh would be picked for the project, but it was felt this would be beneficial to the village if we were successful.

Councillor Terry Cryer thought a possible three locations may be appropriate and the Village Green car park, the Village Hall and Grimsargh Club were suggested as possible sites for the electric vehicle charging points. These were unanimously agreed by the Parish Council. The Clerk agreed to contact Grimsargh Club and Preston City Council for the Village Green to seek their permission before putting the suggested sites forward. Councillor Mrs Eileen Murray would seek the approval of the Village Hall Committee.

Resolved

That, subject to the approval of the landowners, that Grimsargh Village Green, the Village Hall and Grimsargh Club are put forward as possible sites for electric vehicle charging points as the part of the Charge My Street Project.

45. (20/21) Item for Expenditure – replacement bin Old Railway Walk

It was noted that one of the bins on Old Railway Walk had recently been vandalised and burned, so needed replacing. As the bin was owned by Preston City Council (PCC), it was agreed that the Clerk in the first instance, should contact PCC to see if they intended to replace the bin. In the event of PCC not replacing the bin, the Clerk would come back to the Parish Council regarding the cost of a replacement bin.

Resolved

That, the Clerk contacts PCC regarding the damaged bin on Old Railway Walk to find out if they are replacing the bin. If PCC do not intend to replace the bin then the Clerk will come back to the Parish Council regarding the cost of a replacement bin.

46. (20/21) Financial Matters and banking

It was noted that we currently had an estimated £139,084.82 in the Nat West bank as at 5 November 2020. It was further noted that the Parish Council had received the CiL payment of £49,821.10 and this was credited on 27 October 2020.

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

- i) Adam Cooper Contractor 30 hours @£14.25 total £427.50 (Cheque no 1046).
- ii) Preston City Council Green Space Contribution £3,190 (Cheque no 1047).
- iii) Cllr Mrs Eileen Murray – reimbursement for zoom £81.70 (Cheque no 1048). It was noted that the Clerk had now taken over the payments for the zoom account and would claim these back in due course.
- iv) Cllr Mrs Eileen Murray – reimbursement for Clerk's new laptop £621.97 + Microsoft Office £26.99 = total £648.96 (Cheque no 1049).
- v) Sally Gorton for website admin £154.19 (Cheque no 1050).
- vi) Sue Whittam 15/11/20 - £901.04 + £20 reimbursement for Remembrance Day wreath = £921.04 (Cheque no 1051).
- vii) PKF Littlejohn External Audit Fee £360.00 (Cheque no 1052).

viii) JRB for dog bin bags £119.46 (Cheque no 1053).

Resolved

1) The following invoices were agreed for payment: -

- i) Sue Whittam 15/12/20 - £901.24.
- ii) Grimsargh Village Hall room hire – Jan, Feb, March 2020 - £45.00.
- iii) HMRC Q3 Tax and NI - £1,069.01.
- iv) Adam Cooper Contractor November to be confirmed at the next meeting.
- v) Preston City Council for new picnic benches Village Green £1,000 (CiL monies).

2) Budget for 2021/2022

The Parish Council gave consideration 2021/2022. A copy of the draft budget had been circulated to the Parish Council for approval. It was noted that the Parish Council had still not been advised of the Green Maintenance charge for next year so it was prudent to include a small increase. The budget was unanimously agreed by the Parish Council and a copy is presented in the Minute Book.

3) Precept for 2021/2022

The Parish Council gave consideration to the precept for 2021/2022. After taking into account the budget as agreed above, it was unanimously agreed to set the precept at the same level as last year at £42,000 for 2021/2022.

4) Report from the External Auditor

The Clerk reported that she had made an error on the AGAR document and should have included the early paid precept by Preston City Council for this financial year in box 2 of the document. The figures in boxes 2 and 3 should read £82,000 (which included the 2020/21 precept which was received in 2019/20) and £12,100 respectively. All grants, including Council Tax Support Grant, should be shown in Box 3, as per the guidance notes on the AGAR.

It was noted that these amendments would have to be corrected on next year's submission.

It was further noted that there were no other matters to bring to our attention. The AGAR and the conclusion of the Audit documents had been published on the Parish Council website.

47. (20/21) Clerk's report – for information only

The Clerk reported that the newsletter was ready for delivery and after discussion it was agreed that this would be delivered to Councillor Terry Cryer and Councillor Mrs Lynda Cryer's house. Councillor Peter Burton would then arrange the distribution of the newsletters to those who delivered them in the village.

The Clerk also reported that the utility check for the replacement sign on Old Railway Walk had now been carried out and the Lengthsman would install the new sign as soon as possible.

The Clerk also reported that she had received the draft vacancy notice from Preston City Council and the notice of the two vacancies would be advertised after Christmas. The notice gave the electorate the opportunity to request an election. In the event that an election was requested then this would only be held after May 2021 due to the Coronavirus regulations. In the event that no election was requested then the Parish Council would have the opportunity to co-opt two new Parish Councillors onto the Parish Council.

The Clerk also reported that the new Noticeboard for The Hills had also been delivered and this would be installed by the Lengthsman as soon as possible.

There was nothing further for the Clerk to report.

48. (20/21) Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Thursday 14 January 2021 at 7.30 pm and this would be a remote meeting.