

Gressingham Parish Council

Unconfirmed Minutes of the of the 387th
meeting held on 30th May 2022

A meeting of Gressingham Parish Council was held on 30th May 2022 at which the following were present: Martin Brooks (MB) (Chair), Michele Luxon (ML), Grant Parker (GP) and Sally Riley (SR) plus the Clerk, Lesley Wareing (LW).

387/1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Neil Read..

387/2 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair and confirmation of Clerk and RFO

It was resolved (proposed SR seconded ML) to elect Martin Brooks as Chair for 2022/23 and (proposed SR; seconded GP) to elect Michele Luxon as Vice-Chair for 2022/23).

It was noted that Lesley Wareing was willing to continue as Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

It was also noted that having followed due process, Sally Riley had been co-opted onto the PC from 3rd May 2022 to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Penny Foulds on 18th March 2022.

387/3 Declarations of Interest

None .

387/4 Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the previous two meetings held on 4th April 2022 and 3rd May 2022 were approved for signature by the Chair.

387/5 Matters arising from previous minutes (not covered elsewhere)

Arising from 385/11 (4th April 2022): it was noted that a written report of discussions relating to building work at Rand Villa had been lodged with the PC records.

387/6 Finance and Governance

a) 2021/22 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

i) Certificate of Exemption

As previously discussed and agreed at the 4th April 2022 meeting the PC now formally confirmed that it would submit a Certificate of Exemption from undergoing a limited assurance review to the External Auditor as all the criteria for doing so were met, i.e.

- total gross income and expenditure was below £25K; **and**
- the external auditor had not issued any of the following during the 2021 AGAR process: public interest report/statutory recommendation/advisory notice/judicial review/application to court re an unlawful item of account **and**
- the relevant financial year (2021/22) was not one of the first three years of the PC's existence.

RESOLVED (proposed MB, seconded SR): that Gressingham Parish Council should submit the Certificate of Exemption to the external auditors after it had been signed by the Chair and Clerk and prior to the submission deadline of 30th June 2022. Action MB/LW

ii) *2021/22 Internal Audit Report*

Members reviewed and accepted the report of the internal auditor (Andrea Lumb) noting that she had made no specific recommendations and had completed and signed the Internal Audit report on p4 of the AGAR Part 2. PC members expressed their thanks to Mrs Lumb for the work she had done.

RESOLVED (proposed MB, seconded SR): to accept the 2021/22 internal audit report.

iii) *2021/22 Annual Governance Statement*

PC members reviewed the Annual Governance Statement on p5 of Section 1 of the AGAR Part 2 and agreed that the PC had acted in accordance with the statements set out in boxes 1-9, noting:

- the processes for the control of finances applied throughout the year and monitored at every meeting;
- monitoring against the Annual Governance Cycle carried out at every meeting of the PC;
- the record in the minutes of the above actions.

RESOLVED (proposed MB, seconded SR):

i) to confirm that appropriate financial control had been duly exercised during 2021/22;

ii) to approve the 2021/22 Annual Governance Statement for signature by the chair and the Clerk. Action: MB/LW

iv) *2021/22 Accounting Statement*

PC members reviewed the Accounting Statement on p6 of the AGAR Part 2, noting that it had been signed by the Clerk (as Responsible Financial Officer) **before** the meeting(as required). The PC had also received the 2021/22 `al accounts spreadsheet (for reference) together with the bank reconciliation and statement of variances (for approval).

RESOLVED (proposed ML, seconded GP): to approve the 2021/22 Accounting Statement for signature by the Chair. Action: MB

v) *Dates for the Exercise of Public Rights*

Members agreed the period during which members of the public would be able to inspect the 2021/22 accounts and AGAR documents, noting that (as required) notice of this period would be published by the Clerk.

RESOLVED (proposed MB, seconded SR): that the period for the exercise of public rights should run for a period of 30 working days from Monday 13th June 2022 until Friday 22nd July 2022 including, as required, the first 10 working days of July and that the Clerk should publish the required documentation on the web-site in advance of this date. Action: LW

b) Annual PC Report to 31 March 2022

MB ran through the report (already published on the PC website) and drew attention to the main items discussed.

c) 2022/23 in-year financial position as at 30th May 2022.

It was noted that balance was £4332.48 as shown on the most recent bank statement dated 25th May 2022. This included the Precept of £2400 credited to the PC's bank account On 12th April 2022

Members discussed the outline budget for 2022/23. It was noted that the PC needed to continue to build up reserves as ideally it should have a reserve of between £2000 and £2400. It would maintain a reserve of £1000 in 2022/23. It was agreed that an additional £500 should be earmarked as a contingency fund for unexpected and unforeseen expenditure. Members noted the known expenditure (estimated at £1750) and discussed how the remaining sum of approximately £1000 might best be spent in the interests of residents of Gressingham and Eskridge.

RESOLVED (proposed MB, seconded ML):

i) to approve the 2022/23 financial statement to 30th May 2022 and that the chair should sign the statement;

ii) to maintain a reserve of £1000 during 2022/23. Action: LW

d) Register of Interests

Members were reminded of the need to declare any relevant pecuniary interest.

e) 2022 Annual Parish Meeting Report

Members received a report of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th May 2022. It was agreed that the meeting had been a useful forum for discussion of village issues. It was noted that the minutes would be published on the PC website. **Action: NR**

f) Information sheet on Powers, Role and Responsibilities of the Parish Council

Members were reminded that minor revisions had been requested to the draft document discussed at the PC meeting held on 4th April 2022. These revisions had now been made and it was agreed that the information sheet should now be published on the PC website. **Action: LW/NR**

g) PC Standing Orders

Following discussion of the first draft of the Standing Orders was at the meeting held on 4th April 2022 the final version was now approved. It was agreed that these would be reviewed annually.

Resolved (proposed MB, seconded SR): to adopt the Standing Orders with effect from 30th May 2022. Action: LW

h) Parish Council Code of Conduct

It was agreed that the Code of Conduct should be reviewed and revised as appropriate. **Action: LW with MB/SR**

i) Monitoring against Annual Governance Cycle

It was noted that all actions had been carried out at the required times and included in relevant agendas and minutes. Minor revisions to the schedule were approved with immediate effect.

387/7

Gressingham and Eskrigge Community Emergency Plan (CEP)

It was noted that it was one year since the CEP had been set up and, fortunately, it had not yet been needed. It was agreed to keep monitoring the CEP annually.

387/8

Police and Crime/Neighbourhood Watch

It was noted that a Gressingham and Eskrigge Neighbourhood Watch Scheme had now received official recognition. Signs would be posted around the village and window stickers were also available. **Action: MB/ML**

387/9

Planning and Tree Works

a) Applications previously considered by PC and still awaiting decision by Lancaster City Council Planning Committee:

i) 18/01165/HYB: Hornby - erection of 76 residential units and GP surgery, (NOT supported by the PC). Councillors received an oral update from SR on the current position and noted the following:

- that there was still no definite information available as to when the application would be considered by the Planning Committee;
- the discussion at the Hornby PC meeting on 14th April 2022 to which a report had been made by representatives of Story Homes and which meeting had been attended by SR and MB;
- further information provided by the Lunesdale Surgery relating to their support of the application;
- the response received from the Director of Planning and Performance at the Morecambe Bay Clinical Commissioning Group (MBCCG).

It was also noted that the traffic survey report, commissioned by Story Homes for the 2018 application had never been posted on the Planning Office website. The PC had asked John Winstanley (of Story Homes) to provide a copy on several occasions and although he had promised to do so, nothing had been received to date.

Members discussed possible further action. It was agreed that:

i) further letters should be sent to:

- the Lunesdale Surgery and the MBCCG;
- to the Lancaster City Council Planning and Regeneration Department;
- to the Lancashire County Council Highways Department;

ii) that LW should write to the Clerk of Hornby PC to see if the traffic survey report had been made available.

It was agreed that draft letters would be circulated to members for comment and, once approved by the Chair, sent out. **Action: MB/SR/LW**

b) Applications previously considered by the PC and now decided:

i) 22/00380/FUL: The Snab, Aughton Road – installation of two ground mounted solar panel arrays (supported by the PC). It was noted that the application had been approved by the City Council and that if any re-routing of the public footpath became necessary at any point then relevant permission to do so would be required.

ii) 22/00164/FUL: Netherby, Aughton Road – alterations to land levels to create a lake (supported by the PC). It was noted that this application had been rejected.

iii) **22/00401/FUL: Fleets Farm** – erection of field shelter and excavation of land to form storage area underneath (supported by the PC). It was noted that this application had been withdrawn.

387/10

Road Maintenance and traffic

a) SpID update

It was noted that both SpIDs appeared to be working satisfactorily.

b) Traffic issues and road safety concerns

PC members further discussed ongoing concerns about the volume and speed of traffic travelling on roads through the village and proposed traffic calming measures. These included the application to the County Council for a 20mph limit and the County Council's offer of an enhanced-visibility speed limit sign and a "Please Drive Carefully" sign in Rabbit Lane. **Action: NR**

c) Road fault reports

Twelve open road faults on the County Council website were noted: W677576, W677574, W621658, W621661, W611319, W673234, W673236, W679270, W673239, W657388, W683119, W670948. These related to blocked grids (1), potholes (8), a damaged stile (1) and overgrown footpaths (2). It was agreed to keep monitoring all faults. **Action: LW (to report)**

387/11

Amenities and facilities

a) Defibrillator

It was reported that this was functioning, however the battery would need replacing before the winter and it was agreed that this should be purchased (est£250) as soon as it became necessary. **Action: SR/MB/NR**

b) Water main bursts

At the Annual Parish meeting the frequency of bursts in the water main running through Gressingham and the consequent disruption to water supplies and traffic had been raised. It had been requested that the PC should write to United Utilities. On the day of the PC meeting another major burst had occurred in Back Lane and it was agreed that LW should draft a letter to United Utilities and that a copy should be sent to the Lancashire County Council Highways Department. **Action: LW/MB**

c) Greener Gressingham

It was still the hope that trees would be planted over the winter of 2022/23 under a City Council scheme. There were no updates on other initiatives

d) White Bridges path

Members discussed the likely cost of repairs to the paintwork and fabric of the bridges. It was agreed that the PC did not have sufficient funds to undertake any work in the immediate future.

e) Pearson Trust Working Group (PTWG)

Very little progress had been possible during the Covid19 pandemic but Jane Paxman had started the process of putting together a funding bid which she hoped to submit to the Heritage Lottery Fund by 10th June 2022

387/12

Date of next meeting

Monday 25th July 2022 was agreed as the date of next meeting.

Note: these minutes are unconfirmed until ratified by the next meeting of Gressingham Parish Council