

Gressingham Parish Council

Minutes of the of the 385th
meeting
held on 4th April 2022

A meeting of Gressingham Parish Council was held on 4th APRIL 2022 in which the following members were present: Martin Brooks (MB) (Chair), Michele Luxon (ML), Grant Parker (GP), Neil Read (NR) and Sally Riley (SR) plus the Clerk, Lesley Wareing (LW). Resident Moyra Jacques was in attendance for items 385/1 to 385/12.

385/1 Apologies for absence

None – all members were present.

385/2 Declarations of Interest

None .

385/3 Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th January 2022 were approved for signature by the Chair.

385/4 Matters arising from previous minutes (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

No matters arising were raised.

385/5 Finance and Governance

a) 2021/22 end-of-year financial position as at 31st March 2022.

It was noted that end-of-year bank balance was £2614.62 - that is, the balance of £3516.72 shown on the most recent bank statement dated 28 February 2021 less £902.10 of expenditure not yet cleared through the bank: £888.83 for footpath clearance work (£500 of this covered by the Lancashire County Council grant), £9.02 SpID expenses and £4.25 defibrillator expenses. The Precept of £2400 would shortly be credited to the PC's bank account. This would give a starting balance for 2022/23 of £5014.62.

Imminent items of expenditure and income were noted as follows: £45.19 for LALC 2022/23 subscription, and £100 gift voucher for work done on the planning objection report. An outline budget for the year would be brought to the next meeting of the PC..

RESOLVED: i to approve the 2021/22 accounts to 31st March 2022 and that the chair should sign the financial statement;

ii items of expenditure as set out above.

(proposed: MB, Seconded: NR) Action: LW

b) 2022/23 Precept

At the January meeting the Precept was set at £2400 and the documentation submitted to the City Council.

c) Vacancy on PC

It was reported that Penny Foulds had resigned with immediate effect from 18th March 2022. The PC asked that its thanks be recorded for her contribution to the PC and to the village. Members then discussed the process for finding a replacement to serve until the next parish council elections due to take place in May 2023. The Clerk had notified the City Council Elections Office and the required notices had been posted.

d) Preparation for the 2021/22 Annual Governance and Accountability Review

The Clerk reported that had received email instructions for the 2021/22 review process which looked to be the same as in the previous year. The PC had not been selected as part of the random sample required to undergo a full audit so the PC would again be able to submit a Certificate of Exemption to the external auditors as in the previous two years. Now that the 2021/22 accounts had been finalised, the Clerk will arrange for the internal audit to take place as soon as possible. This would be the first stage of the annual review process. Once the internal audit has been completed the PC can approve all the documentation and a Certificate of Exemption submitted to the external auditors by the 1 July 2022 deadline.

RESOLVED: that a Certificate of Exemption should be submitted for the 2021/22 AGAR. (Proposed: MB , seconded NR) Action: LW

e) PC draft Standing Orders

It was noted that the PC needed to have up-to-date Standing Orders and a Code of Practice. A first draft of the Standing Orders was considered. A Code of Practice already existed which didn't need any revisions. Following an opportunity for comments, the documents would be brought to the next meeting of the PC for formal adoption. **Action: MB/LW.**

f) Information sheet on the role and powers of the Parish Council

After discussion during which one further revision was suggested, it was agreed to publish the document on the PC website after the amendment had been made and approved by the Chair. **Action: LW/MB**

g) PC Annual Report

The Clerk reminded members that the chair is required to make an annual report on the previous year's work to the PC's meeting in May each year. This written report could then be published and be available to inform the Annual Parish meeting. It was agreed to include the Annual Report in the Annual Governance Cycle. **Action: MB/LW.**

h) Annual Parish Meeting

MB had consulted Jane Paxman, the chair of the Gressingham Village Trust, and it had been agreed that a physical Annual parish Meeting would be held in late May, in the garden of Gressingham Hall – with contingency plans in case of wet weather. In accordance with convention, the Clerk to the PC would organise and minute the meeting and the PC chair would chair it. **Action: MB/LW.**

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.

385/6

Gressingham and Eskridge Community Emergency Plan (CEP)

The PC received a brief update from NR. 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.

385/7

Police and Crime/Neighbourhood Watch

It was noted that a Gressingham and Eskrigge Neighbourhood Watch Scheme had been started and was awaiting official recognition. Signs would be posted. It was agreed to advertise the existing of the scheme in an upcoming TinyLetter to encourage more sign-ups.

Action: MB/ML

385/8

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). Members discussed a written update from Sally Riley on the current position the contents of which were noted including the fact that there was still no definite information available as to when the application would be considered by the City Council Planning Committee. Members discussed possible further action. It was agreed that SR would attend a meeting of the newly established "Three Counties: Lune Valley Scheme" group and report back. Progress would continue to be monitored.

Action: MB/SR

b) Newly received applications

i) **22/00380/FUL: The Snab, Aughton Road** – installation of two ground mounted solar panel arrays.

The PC was supportive of this application and noting that although the public footpath appeared to run between the two sets of panels, work had been done by the landowner to ensure that the alignment of the footpath was clear to any walkers. **Action: LW (to respond to Planning Office)**

ii) **22/00164/FUL: Netherby, Aughton Road** – alterations to land levels to create a lake.

The PC was supportive of this application. **Action: LW (to respond to Planning Office)**

iii) **22/00401/FUL: Fleets Farm** – erection of field shelter and excavation of land to form storage area underneath

The PC decided that further information from the applicant about the intended purpose of the proposed shelter would be helpful, subject to which a supportive response could then be sent to the Planning Office. **Action: LW**

385/9

Road Maintenance and traffic

a) 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. It was noted that NR would be making an application for a 20mph limit on behalf of the PC. NR had also accepted the County Council's offer of an enhanced-visibility speed limit sign in Rabbit Lane and a "Please Drive Carefully" sign. **Action: NR**

b) SpID update

NR reported that both SpIDs were working. On behalf of the PC he was in the process of completing a Lancashire County SpID questionnaire. **Action: NR**

c) Road fault reports

Thirteen open road faults on the County Council website were noted: W678364, W676502, W678361, W677576, W677574, W621658, W621661, W611319, W673234, W673236, W679270, W673239, W657388. These related to were blocked grids (2), potholes (8) and overgrown footpaths (2).

It was agreed to keep monitoring all faults. **Action: LW (to report)**

385/10

Amenities and facilities

a) Lancashire County Council footpath clearance grant

It was noted that work under the 2021/22 scheme had been completed. The Clerk would submit a report to the County Council. It was agreed that if a similar scheme runs for 2022/23, the PC would wish to opt in. **Action: LW**

b) White Bridges path

MB reported that it was still intended for repair work to be done over the summer on the bridge railings. The PC had agreed to oversee and pay for the repair. **Action: MB/ML**

c) 2022 Litter Pick

This had been held on Saturday March 6th 2022 and organised by David Wiper. The PC recorded it thanks to David Wiper and all the volunteer helpers.

d) PCC lawnmower

The annual service had been carried out by David Lumb, free of charge. The PC recorded its thanks.

e) Queen's Platinum Jubilee

It was noted that plans for a celebratory event to mark the Platinum Jubilee in early June 2022 (likely to be a picnic and beacon at a suitable site) were still under discussion. Members also discussed the suggestion that a commemorative ring of trees could be planted on a suitable site. The PC was broadly supportive of the suggestion but decided to consult further about the level of support and possible funding sources, including with the Fellowship

Action: MB/LW,

f) Greener Gressingham

It was still the hope that trees would be planted over the winter of 2022/23 under a City Council scheme. The recycling point at the OSR was still functioning and two possible stretches of grass verge had been identified for wild flower planting, supported by the City Council. Frances Hamlett was trying to organise this project but had received very few expressions of interest from the village so far. **Action: MB**

g) 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.

h) Defibrillator

It was reported that this was functioning and would continue to be regularly monitored. **Action: SR/MB/NR**

385/11

AOB

The PC discussed some work being carried out within the curtilage of a property in the village which the householder believed to be under 'Permitted Development Rights'. The PC had not received any complaints or been formally approached, but there were a few questions raised by villagers informally. The Chair had consulted with the householder carrying out the work who told the Chair that they had been in consultation with a planning officer at LCC who had confirmed it was allowed under 'Permitted Development Rights'.

After consulting Lancaster City Council Planning Office and Lancashire Association of Local Councils, about the role of the PC in relation to Permitted Development, the PC concluded that no further action was needed. It was agreed that the Clerk would place a log of the discussions in the PC records.

Action: LW

385/12

Date of next meeting

Monday 30th May was agreed as the date of next meeting. This would be the Parish Council AGM at which the Chair, Vice-chair and Clerk/RFO would be confirmed.

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