



THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2017

Monday 8th May at 7.30pm in

The Village Hall

AGENDA

1. Welcome & Introduction
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2016
4. The Chairman's Report
5. The Statement of Accounts
6. Neighbourhood Plan Report
7. Public Forum
8. Close the Meeting

*Please join us for tea, coffee & biscuits after the Meeting at the
New Scout Hut and Youth Centre*



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2016

Tuesday 3rd May at 7.30pm in The Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Godfrey(PG), McCubbin(Vice-Chairman)(CMcC), Bennett (RB), Craggs (DC), Morris (KM), O'Donoghue, (IO), Rathbone (TR) and Williams (EW)

In attendance: Cheshire East Cllrs Gilbert& Kolker, S Jones, Clerk & 65 Members of the Public

1 Welcome & Introduction

Cllr Peter Godfrey, Chairman of the Parish Council welcome everyone to the meeting. He then asked for a minute's applause to celebrate the life and contribution to Goostrey of Cllr Cyril Caulkin who had recently passed away.

2 Apologies for absence – Apologies for absence were received from Peter Kolker and Cllr Emma Williams who may be late.

3 Minutes: To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Annual Parish Meeting 2015. **Resolved:** To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2015 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 Chairman's Report 2015-2016 - Cllr Peter Godfrey, Chairman of the Parish Council, delivered his report for 2015/16. (this is an edited version, the full version of the Chairman's Report is on the web site).

Introduction

This has been a challenging year for the Parish Council in which we have had to make some very big decisions on behalf of the community. So my report is going to concentrate on the key projects that the Council has sponsored this year in addition to its ongoing roles and responsibilities. That is not to say that the normal business of the Council has not continued as before and I would contend that despite the additional workload we have continued to improve our core operations. I should also add that we have plans to further improve our operations with a new website and a new accounting system next year. There is one event I must mention whilst I have so many residents here tonight. On Friday June 3rd there will be a tree planting ceremony on the Bogbean to mark the Queen's 90th birthday. Flagpole Cherry tree will be planted by children from Goostrey Community Primary School at 2pm on 11th June.

Parish Council Projects in 2015-16

Neighbourhood Plan

The first major project the Council has sponsored is the Goostrey Neighbourhood Plan. This had just been launched at the last Annual Parish Meeting but was still in its infancy. As we have got further into the project, we have developed a better knowledge of both its costs and the grants that we may be able claim towards those costs. In view of the slow progress being made by the Cheshire East Local Plan, the Council decided that it was even more important to develop a Goostrey Neighbourhood Plan. It was also clear from the questionnaires filled in as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process that there was widespread support for the development of a Neighbourhood Plan amongst residents. The Council voted unanimously that we should continue to support the development of our Neighbourhood Plan as quickly as is practicable. I am very grateful for the

efforts of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee led by Councillor Rathbone and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (which comprises some Councillors and some other residents) which have enabled them to make the excellent progress they have made so far. I would also like to thank Goostrey residents for their enthusiastic involvement in the process.

Gladman Developments Appeal

The second major project the Council has sponsored is opposing the Gladman Developments Appeal against the refusal of their application to build 119 houses north of Main Road. When we held our last Annual Parish Meeting we were still awaiting the decision on the original planning application. In July, the application was refused by the Cheshire East Strategic Planning Board. Over the summer, Gladman Developments lodged an Appeal against that decision. The Parish Council decided to apply for the right to make its own case at the Appeal in October (this is known as a 'Rule 6 application'). This was because it believed that;

- The proposed development is far too large for our community
- If the appeal were to succeed it would open the door for many, many further applications in Goostrey
- Most Goostrey residents were against it

In addition to its potential to interfere with the operations of the Jodrell Bank Observatory and its impact on the setting of Swanwick Hall, a Grade 2 Listed Building, the proposed development is not sustainable as Goostrey lacks the services needed to support a development of this size. The Council further decided that to have a real chance of influencing the Appeal we needed to instruct a Barrister to present our case to the Inquiry. The unanimous decision to engage a Barrister was endorsed in January.

The Parish Council didn't have to do this, however, we thought we would be failing in our duty if we did not act in line with our beliefs and in line with our understanding of what the majority of residents wanted and do everything we could to oppose the Appeal. The Appeal is to be heard in May and we expect to find out the Inspector's decision later this year.

Precept for 2016/2017

Thus the Parish Council had two exceptional projects we believed both to be in the village's interests and to have the support of the majority of its residents and on the other hand we have no money in our budget which was not committed to the ongoing activities of our Council. After considerable heart-searching, the Council decided unanimously that we should take the unusual step of raising the Precept to enable us to finance the two exceptional projects. The Council estimated that we needed to raise £20,000 through the Precept which amounted to an increase of around 48% in that part of the Council Tax which residents pay to the Parish Council. That percentage looks horrendous until it is converted into actual amount to be paid by each household. This varies between £13 and £39 per year depending on the Council Tax band the house is in. The Council is minded to make this a one-off increase in the Precept but in view of the many uncertainties we face in the planning arena, we are not able to make guarantees on this point.

New Youth Facility/Scout Hut

There is one other important community project which I must talk about. When we held the last Annual Parish Meeting, the Parish Council had just completed the transfer of half of the Old Youth Centre site to the 1st Goostrey Scouts to enable them to build a Scout Hut and Youth Facility for the benefit of the whole community. Since then we have marvelled both at the energy and enthusiasm which the Scouts have put into fund raising for this building and at the generosity, willingness to get involved and support for the project shown by an amazingly broad range of Goostrey residents. As things currently stand the Scouts have raised about £150,000 towards the new building.

It is important that we all remember that the ingenious idea of splitting the plot into two parts came originally from the 1st Goostrey Scouts. The whole rationale behind splitting the Youth Centre site was that, as well as providing a plot for the new Scout Hut and Youth Facility, the sale of the other half of the site would raise money for community projects (including, but certainly not restricted to, the Scout Hut and Youth Facility). No decision has been made on how the money will be spent. It is important to stress that the money from the sale of the land belongs to the community not the Parish Council and, when taking its decisions on how to use the money, the Parish Council must attempt to reflect the views of the whole community. I would like to thank Councillor McCubbin for her tireless leadership of the Parish Council's input to this important community project over the last 4 years. We all hope that we will be able to conclude the sale of the land in the near future.

Final Comments

I would like to end with a few comments about Cheshire East our Unitary Authority. Parish Councils have a duty to develop effective partnerships with their Unitary Authorities. In my view, effective partnerships are based on open communication and honesty and so I believe it is important to highlight those areas in which your Parish Council believes Cheshire East is failing to meet residents' expectations;

- Failure to deliver a Local Plan and to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and the classification of Goostrey as a Local Service Centre have all contributed to opening Goostrey up to unwanted attack from Developers.
- Road surfaces continue to degrade and pothole repairs appear wasteful and ineffective. Booth Bed Lane was raised at last year's meeting and is still the Parish Council's highest priority for highway maintenance work.
- The safety of Goostrey Railway Bridge remains a concern for the Parish Council and yet we cannot even engage with Highways about implementing their recommended solution.
- The failure of Connecting Cheshire to deliver superfast broadband to some areas of the Parish remains a major disappointment.
- The failure to obtain Section 106 money from Bloor Homes to spend on the Booth Bed Lane Play area.
- I hope that at next year's Annual Parish Meeting there will be some real progress to report on these areas of concern.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for electing me as their Chairman and for their help, support and encouragement throughout the year.

5 **Statement of Accounts** – Cllr Cath McCubbin, Chairman of the Finance Committee, delivered her report on the statement of accounts for 2015/16.

The Parish Council acknowledges that we have had a year that has had unexpected expenditure: demolition of the old Youth Centre, immediate costs to start the neighbourhood plan, repairs to Speed Watch equipment and the cost of a Barrister for the Gladman Appeal.

These have all been paid for from our reserve and have therefore depleted them by a substantial amount.

The full cost of the Neighbourhood Plan, is a somewhat unknown quantity. There are grants that may be applied for, but there is no reason to assume that they will be granted or that they will be available within the timeframe we need. Some grants are spread over 3 years and this is too late for Goostrey, as we are expediting our Plan with utmost speed. Grants that are made available, have to be paid back if they are not fully utilised within the financial year and re applied for.

Councillors Morris and Rathbone (Chair and vice Chair of the NP Team) have estimated a figure of £10k for the plan, but this does not take in to account the use of Consultants or grants that maybe withdrawn.

(The cost of the Brereton Plan was over £20k, they did use a number of Consultants)

The Gladman Appeal Barrister Costs have been set at £15k, some monies have already been paid out and the barrister is estimating that £12k will be a realistic estimate. We have a small reserve in our figure for any unforeseen extras.

The base budget has seen a number of changes: - a reduction to a number of PC Donations, but the addition of Three new donations. Homewatch, Speedwatch and Boothbed Lane Playing Fields.

With the small increase in salaries our base budget remains relatively unchanged.

It was agreed by the Parish Council that we increase the precept by the amount of £20k to cover the cost of the Neighbourhood plan, thus allowing for any unforeseen expenditure that may arise. We are also anticipating a small amount left at the end of the 2016/17 financial year to supplement our decreased reserve.

This increase will add the amount of £19.43 pa to the Council tax bill for a Band D House. I.e. £1.62 per month

6 **Neighbourhood Plan** – Cllr Morris made a short presentation on the current status of the Neighbourhood plan.

Cllr Morris outlined the background to the Neighbourhood Plan, giving details of the connection with the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

He went on to explain the area which has been defined for the plan and the vision of the plan to allow for some growth but to manage the growth to conserve open spaces and the character of the village.

The main questionnaire sent out for the Neighbourhood plan received a high level of response and the results have been analysed to help to form the plan. Any planning application that is submitted after the Neighbourhood plan is made will be subject to the policies and conditions in the Neighbourhood plan.

Most of the policies in the plan have been drafted. Our next milestone is to publish a draft plan in September on the Cheshire East web site to receive comments from the public and developers. Any comments need to be reviewed and comments from the examiner will be taken into account. After that the next stage would be the referendum.

The Neighbourhood Plan has its own website which can be accessed from the home page of our website <https://goostrey.info>

7 **Goostrey Village Archive** – Roger Burgess delivered a short presentation on the Goostrey Village Archive.

The group was formed 5 years ago at the request of the Parish Council, to create an archive for the Village. The volunteers have sought help from many sources including Congleton Museum who have given the Archive Group a copy of their cataloguing programme.

A recent donation of documents by Mrs Pat Schofield, collected by her husband had proved to be very interesting. The papers included parish records for the village since the 1500's which the Reverend Hogwell had typed up before he had sent the records to the county archive. These contain some fascinating items of local interest. Jim Schofield also carried out a survey of the boundary stones for the parish and photographed them for the archive.

The database will be used to keep track of the items stored at the Blackden Trust, so that if anyone makes enquires they can find out what is stored in the archive.

8 **Public Forum** – The Chairman opened the floor to residents for questions.

There were questions from residents on the following subjects

- Gladman Appeal and how that would affect the Neighbourhood Plan and housing allocations in Goostrey
- Objections to Goostrey being designated a Local Service Centre in the Local Plan
- Lack of additional services being provided when new houses are being built
- The state of the roads in Goostrey - Cllr Gilbert replied that Booth Bed Lane was on the schedule to be resurfaced.

Cllr Godfrey closed the meeting at 8.50pm and invited everyone to join the members of the Council for Coffee in the Lounge.

|  | | Goostrey Parish Council | |
|--|--------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| | | Unaudited Accounts | Audited Accounts |
| | | 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017 | April 2015 to March 2016 |
| RECEIPTS | | | |
| Precept Payment | £62,571.00 | | £42,571.00 |
| CE Tax Support Grant | £624.00 | | £1,247.00 |
| Vat Refund | £7,006.71 | | £3,203.87 |
| V. Hall Lettings incl VAT | £19,087.89 | | £19,146.92 |
| Bank Interest | £547.51 | | £366.44 |
| Wayleave | £1.19 | | £1.19 |
| Old Youth Centre Donation | £109.63 * | | - |
| Lunch Ticket Sales | £588.00 | | £490.00 |
| Sale of old Christmas Lights | - | | £10.00 |
| CE Grant | - | | £2,000.00 |
| DCLG Grant 1 | - | | £2,210.00 |
| DCLG Grant 2 | - | | £5,790.00 |
| DCLG Grant 3 | £6,085.00 ** | | - |
| DCLG Grant 4 | £2,475.00 ** | | - |
| Refund of Legal fees for land trans | £594.00 | | - |
| Proceeds from Sale of Building Plot | £170,000.00 * | | - |
| Performing Rights | £236.28 | | £213.46 |
| Adjustment (balance accts with ba | £174.95 * | | - |
| Queen's 90th Birthday Grant | £100.00 * | | - |
| | | £270,201.16 | £77,249.88 |
| PAYMENTS | | | |
| VAT Paid | £6,900.42 | | £4,095.20 |
| Administration | £6,137.35 | | £6,037.24 |
| Audit | £480.00 | | £450.00 |
| Donations/Sponsorship | £2,269.79 | | £4,100.00 |
| Maintenance - around Village | £4,891.00 | | £4,724.05 |
| Miscellaneous Items | £1,605.52 | | £282.50 |
| Parish Projects | £2,499.71 | | £2,031.64 |
| Salary & Expenses - Parish Council | £7,494.73 | | £7,383.15 |
| Neighbourhood Plan | £16,838.43 | | £3,330.10 |
| V.Hall expenses | £1,818.50 | | £2,180.92 |
| V.Hall Salary & Expenses | £12,276.94 | £63,212.39 | £12,243.03 |
| Excess of Receipts over Payments | | £206,988.77 | £30,392.05 |
| Balance at 01/04/16 | | £75,611.32 | Balance at 01/04/16 |
| Excess of Receipts over Payments | plus | £206,988.77 | plus |
| Less spend from General Reserves | less | £28,241.06 | less |
| Less spend from Capital Reserves | less | £50,000.00 | |
| Balance of accounts at 31/03/17 | | £204,359.03 | Balance of accounts at 31/03/16 |
| Capital Reserves | £102,960.70 | | - |
| General Reserves | £101,398.33 | | £75,611.32 |
| Total Reserves | £204,359.03 | | £75,611.32 |
| Represented by | | | |
| Current Account | £39,626.00 | | £26,386.50 |
| Deposit Account | £49,520.57 | | £49,224.82 |
| Santander Account (Cap Res) | £75,251.76 | | - |
| Skipton Building Soc (Cap & Gen Res) | £39,960.70 | | - |
| | | £204,359.03 | £75,611.32 |

* Not in budget, ** Not in budget but added to Neighbourhood Plan Budget