



Goostrey Parish Council

The Village Hall
Goostrey
Cheshire
CW4 8PE
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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 28th APRIL 2022 at 7.30pm in the MAIN HALL, VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs Morris (KM)(Chairman), Rathbone (TR)(Vice Chairman) Beckham (NB), Freeman (AF), Morgan (PM), Ross (CR), O'Donoghue (IOD) and Williams (EW)

In attendance: Cllr. A Kolker (AK) - Cheshire East Ward Councillor, Emma Bambrook - Clerk to the Council, 24 Members of the Public

1. **Welcome & Introduction** - The Chairman welcomed residents and Cllr Kolker (CEC) to the meeting.
2. **Apologies for absence** – Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Roberts and Sulej.
3. **Minutes:** To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Annual Parish Meeting on 29th April 2021.

***Resolved:** The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 29th April 2021 were accepted as true record of the meeting.*

4. **Chairman's Report 2021-2022** - Cllr Ken Morris, Chairman of the Parish Council, delivered his report for 2021/22.

The Chairman introduced the members of the Parish Council and thanked them for the time they had given over the past year. KN also thanked Sara Lord who had left the council in September and welcomed Arthur Freeman who had replaced her. Former Clerk, Sharon Jones was thanked for all her work over her nine years with the council and welcomed the new Clerk, Emma Bambrook as well as Village Hall supervisors Yvonne and Chris Duke.

During 2021 the Council moved up from the Local Council Award Scheme Foundation level to Quality level and has submitted an application for accreditation for the Gold Award. This confirms that the Council is following all best practises in its processes.

The Chairman summarised the various improvements made around the village during the year and the various grants and donations made. He also spoke about some of the issues which have faced the Village Hall in terms of the restrictions caused by Covid-19, although the Village Hall is now back to normal, and some of the pressures that continue to be faced.

Speeding continues to be a problem in Goostrey; the SpeedWatch sessions have been temporarily suspended partly due to Covid but also due to lack of resident volunteers. The Council continue to liaise with the Police to encourage them to use their TruCam in Goostrey and average speed cameras are being investigated. There is a proposal by Cheshire East Council to remove permanently fixed speed indicators which Goostrey Parish Council (together with many others) are resisting. Another meeting took place with Cheshire East Highways at the Boothbed Lane junction but unfortunately the

Borough Council have decided not to carry out any further improvements (beyond the new signage and white lining installed 2 years ago).

The Council has responded to all planning applications in Goostrey in the last 12 months by following the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. It has also responded to the Cheshire East Local Plan Part 2 consultation which does not allocate any new sites or housing in Goostrey, although this does not exclude 'windfall' applications. The Parish Council also responded to the Jodrell Bank Supplementary Planning Consultation.

The Parish Council continues to encourage all residents to report Highways faults direct to Cheshire East Council via their website, that includes potholes, street lighting, pavements, drains, fallen branches, road sign issues and any other type of hazard, for their attention.

Next May will be the end of the Council's 4-year term and all positions will become vacant, any resident is welcome to put their name forward at that time for election. In the meantime residents are welcome to attend any of the Parish Council meetings and Committees during 2022.

The full report can be viewed at <https://goostreyparishcouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Annual-Parish-Report-2021-22-v1.pdf>

5. **Finance Review** – Cllr Paul Morgan, Chairman of the Finance Committee, delivered his report on the statement of accounts for 2021/22. An explanation of the council's budget was provided. Based on four cost centres; Parish Council, Amenities, Village Hall and Reserves the budget is set on an annual basis. All council committees review their budgets, identify priorities, and establish how they will be financed. The Finance Committee makes recommendations to the Parish Council and the approved precept request is submitted to Cheshire East Council who collects the money through the Council Tax.

Cllr. Morgan reviewed the budget against the actual spend and highlighted that the main issues had been the impact of Covid on lettings income and being unable to complete projects.

The challenges and considerations involved in setting the precept for 2022/23 were summarised. The precept had not been increased for several years but given the level of inflation, the rise in employer National Insurance Contributions and technical changes this could not continue. Unchecked, a 30% increase would be needed to balance the budget which would have been unacceptable. The Finance Committee estimated the level of inflation, considered the use of reserves, and movement of spend between budgets. This resulted in a regrettable increase of 8.6% on a Band D property which is equivalent to about a penny per day increase.

Cllr. Morgan commented that next year would also pose a challenge with continued uncertainty on costs, however the council would strive to keep any increases as low as possible if not zero.

All finance information is published on our website at www.goostreyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Close the meeting - The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm.

Public Forum

The following questions and comments were received from residents at the meeting:

- A resident congratulated the council on achieving the Local Council Award Scheme Quality Gold.
- The owner of the tree which has caused the pavement to lift on Main Road expressed concern over the accidents which have been caused and frustration that actions to make the pavement safe could not be progressed because of the preservation order on that tree. The resident offered to plant two new trees in the garden to replace it if the tree was felled. The Chairman and Cllr. Kolker updated everyone on the steps currently being taken to try to find a resolution. Cllr. Kolker is currently trying to progress this with Cheshire East Council (CEC) and the Parish Council have agreed that if there is no update then they will proceed to apply for planning permission to fell the tree. It was noted that the felling of the tree was not the purpose of the proposed planning application, it was an effort to try to force the authority to progress the issue and make the pavement safe. The Parish Council will continue to work on this.
- A number of residents raised the state of the roads in the village. The Chairman advised that it was important that everyone report potholes to Cheshire East Council, either via their online reporting tool or by phoning the Highways department. Cllr. Kolker confirmed that CEC had voted at the February budget meeting to take out a loan for £90 million over three years to go towards improving roads. In addition a further £6 million was approved.
- A resident commented on the roadworks near Leighton hospital and that there should be guidance on the hospital's website to provide diversion information and signage on the route to indicate how to get to the hospital. Cllr. Kolker advised that he would speak to the Director of Public Health about this.
- It was reported that the pathway through the bungalows on Sandy Lane is being used by cyclists as a cut through which is causing the surface of the path to be damaged, making it uneven and causing a trip hazard. Also, cyclists travelling at speed is a danger to older residents and those who use walking aids. The Clerk advised that she would contact the PCSO and put him in touch with the resident.
- A resident asked whether the council intended to attend the appeal hearing for the waste site. The Chairman confirmed that this is a hearing where it is the inspector's discretion to ask questions of both parties, which in this case is CEC and the owners of the site, rather than the public. Therefore even if present council representatives wouldn't necessarily be able to comment. The Council objected previously to this application and will be sending in further comments objecting and the public can also submit comments via the Planning Inspectorate website.
- A resident asked what could be done about cars parked outside Sandy Lane bungalows. The Chairman advised that the council asked Plus Dane Housing, who own the buildings to create a lay by or car park but they said that the cost of providing parking was too expensive and asked the council to provide £40,000 towards this but that was not possible at the time. Plus Dane Housing were not willing to invest in this. It was confirmed that residents could park in front of the garages.
- Thanks were expressed to the Parish Council for the grant they have agreed to make to support the building of the new bowling pavilion.
- Thanks were also given to the Parish Council for their support of St. Luke's over the last 12 months. They are still waiting for the Planning Officer to approve the extension to the church. Cllr. Kolker said that he would chase this up.

- A resident asked whether the Kloud 9 presentations in the Village Hall were open to the public and this was confirmed.
- A resident asked whether the Village of the Year competition was still running and if the council would be willing to take part. The organisers of the Best Kept Village competition no longer run this. The council will find out if there are any other similar competitions.
- A member of the Rose Day Committee informed the meeting that Goostrey Rose Day would be back to normal this year but that volunteers were needed.