



## ***Goostrey Parish Council***

### **MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING SATURDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2007**

Present: Cllrs. Salmon (Chairman), Collins, Craggs, Leake, Nicholls & Richardson

In attendance: Denise Draper, Clerk to the Council.

#### **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:**

There were no declarations of interests registered.

#### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Received from: Cllrs. Mitchell, Padley & Sturman.  
Cllr. Robertson had been abroad when the meeting was called.

#### **3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW IN CHESHIRE**

Members had heard presentations by representatives of Cheshire County Council and Congleton Borough Council at the Parish Council Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2007 and had studied available literature on the subject of the future structure for Local Government in Cheshire.

The views expressed were:

Cllr. Leake: Favoured an improved 2-tier system. A single unitary system would dilute the input of Town & Parish Councils.

Cllr. Craggs: Had attended a seminar organised by ChalC and had found all the presentations informative. Considered that there were risks involved with a single unitary or two unitary system, especially of escalating costs and agreed an improved 2-tier arrangement was the best way forward.

Chairman: Cllr. Gordon Salmon

Parish Clerk: Denise Draper

Cllr. Salmon: Also favoured an improved 2-tier system. Considered that the costs of the other options had not been properly thought through and only reflected the best possible scenario.

Cllr. Collins: Had been impressed by the presentation by Congleton Borough Council and favoured an improved 2-tier system.

Cllr. Nicholls: The 15 local committees, proposed under the single unitary system would not be representative of local communities. Their role would be to pass decisions down from the top, not to take opinion up from the grass roots. Councillors would represent a larger area and not be so involved in local issues.

Cllr. Craggs: At present Councillors are elected on a local manifesto. This would not be so much the case if areas were larger.

Cllr. Nicholls: There is too much diversity in the County for it to be managed by a single authority.

Cllr. Richardson: Bigger is not necessarily better. The costs would be too great and a unitary council would be too remote.

There was also discussion about how to inform the residents of Goostrey about the proposed changes in local government and the Council's response.

**Resolved:**

Unanimous support for an improved 2-tier system of Local Government in Cheshire.

The Parish Council will produce an information sheet for distribution to all houses in the Village.

**Actions:** The Chairman and Clerk to send a letter to the Government's Consultation Team (with a copy to CBC) expressing:

Concerns that the basis of consultation is limited to single or two unitary systems and does not include the possibility of an improved 2-tier system which works well in other areas of the country.

Disappointment that consultation has not included Town and Parish Councils and the general public.

The view that an improved 2-tier system is by far the best option.

Lack of confidence in the cost estimates.

Concern at the reduction in elected representatives. At present one councillor represents 1700 electors. Under a single unitary system this would be one per 5600 electors.

#### **4. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING:**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.15 am.