



Goostrey Parish

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING 2009

VILLAGE HALL, THURSDAY 23rd APRIL 2009 AT 7.30PM

Present: Parish Cllrs. Craggs (Chairman), Collins, Leake,
Nicholls, Padley, Richardson, Robertson, Salmon and Sturman
Cheshire East Cllrs. Brickhill, Kolker & Gilbert
92 members of the Public.

In attendance: Denise Draper, Parish Clerk
Michael Ball, Goostrey Speedwatch Team
Malcolm McCuaig, Area Traffic Engineer

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed all members of the public, Cheshire East Councillors and guests present at the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Gerald & Liz Foster-Clark, Linda Elliott, William & Janet Ollier, David & Kate Hext, Diana Salmon, Derek & Pat Hurdle and Mary Leake.

3. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING 2008

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting 2008 were agreed to be a true record and taken as read.

Chairman: Cllr. David Craggs

Parish Clerk: Denise Draper

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman presented his report which is summarised as follows:

The Parish Council

The council had met 11 times during the year with an average attendance of 7 members. There had been one Extraordinary Council meeting in July to agree the appointment of a solicitor to address the removal of the section 106 agreement to the planning application of the existing Youth Centre site.

There had also been regular meetings of the Amenities, Finance, Village Hall Management, and Planning committees.

The Chairman congratulated Denise Draper, the Parish Clerk, on gaining a Certificate in Local Council Administration.

Parish Council Newsletter and Sponsorship Scheme

The Newsletter had been a continued success as the way of keeping Goostrey residents informed of the progress of Parish projects and news. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Salmon for the editing of the Newsletter.

This year the Council had sponsored Goosfest, contributed to the Roseday Festival and once again hosted a hugely successful Senior Citizens' luncheon. The Chairman thanked all of the school children who provided the marvellous entertainment including a very brave Victoria Harris who gave an excellent flute solo and of course the guides for the last minute table decorations.

A village treasure hunt raised £81.00 as a donation for the First Responders.

Cllr. Collins was thanked for her efforts as Chairman of the Amenities Committee.

Highways Matters

The Parish Council had been in regular contact with Congleton Borough Council over the condition and winter gritting of the roads in the Parish and this would continue with the new Cheshire East Council.

Goostrey Station

The guides and scouts along with other volunteers did a wonderful job of clearing and planting the embankment at the station. The Parish Council would like to see more projects around the station in this next year.

There will be continued efforts for Northern Rail to re-instate the peak time trains to twice hourly.

Booth Bed Lane Play Area

A new goalpost and litter bin had been installed at the play area.

The Village Hall.

Cheshire County Council appointed contractors Cumberbirch to eradicate the damp problems and re-furbish the WC's also making them DDA compliant for wheelchair use.

The project was very successful and it was decided to extend the improvement into the entrance lobby, again for access for the disabled. Of the £25,000 anticipated budget the actual cost was £18,318.05 including the entrance lobby.

With the new improved facilities, investigation has been undertaken to examine the suitability of the Village Hall for civil marriages. The inspection registrar felt that this was achievable.

A new handrail has been installed at the school crossing, making it significantly safer for the children.

Speedwatch

The speed gun will continue to be used in key locations within the village after the winter break. It was this winter that installation of the portable speed indicators took place. An examination of the collected data was to follow later in the meeting.

Goostrey Young People's Project

An agreement had been signed, replacing the section 106 terms forming part of the original planning application, lifting the restrictions on the sale of the old youth centre site.

The heads of lease for the new site were about to be sent to the legal advisers of both parties. Planning permission is in place for the new building.

GYPP group are looking at additional external funding opportunities, if required.

Bog Bean

After many years the Council achieved spectacular Christmas lights on the Bog Bean although there was little time to prepare for the 1st December switch on. The Chairman thanked Mrs Kettle who, as Mrs Christmas with her magic wand, had performed the switch on. He also thanked the scouts for providing food and mulled wine. It is hoped to be better organised this year.

The Chairman also thanked Terence Rathbone for the running repairs and upkeep of the Bog Bean. There has been vehicular damage to the Bog bean as well as areas of the playing fields.

The Chairman also reported an incident shortly after Easter when an air rifle or BB gun had been fired at residences and the windows of commercial properties. He asked all residents to be vigilant.

People

We have just been through massive changes at local Government level, from Cheshire County Council and Congleton Borough Council to the Borough of Cheshire East. This meant losing Cllrs. Ken Oliver, Peter Kolker and Patrick Furlong from our meetings. But we now have Cllr. Andrew Kolker who has been attending over the past year as a shadow Cheshire East councillor.

It was with sadness that the Chairman reported the death of Cllr. Doris Mitchell, who had not been well enough to attend meetings for some time. She will be missed in the village. It was nice to see that her funeral was well attended.

This created a vacancy on the council and, with thanks to all applicants, the Chairman confirmed that Suzanne Jones had been invited to join the Parish Council.

Sue Higginson had resigned as Village Hall caretaker. She did an excellent job and will be hard to replace. Terry Colins and Edna Brannndreth were thanked for keeping the place ticking over.

The Chairman finished his address by thanking:
 The Parish Councillors and the Parish Clerk for all their support and hard work.
 The outgoing County and Borough Councillors.
 The new Cheshire East councillors.

5. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2008/2009

Copies of an unaudited Statement of Accounts for 2007/2008 were circulated for the information of members of the public.

The Chairman of the Finance Committee explained that, although payments exceeded receipts, this was due to improvements to the Village Hall and purchase and installation of Speed Watch equipment. This expenditure had been fully anticipated and was financed from reserves.

6. PUBLIC FORUM

Members or the public raised the following issues:

Repair of the tap in the cemetery. This is the responsibility of the Churchwardens who have already instructed a plumber to carry out repairs.

Areas of flooding on Village Roads. The PC had reported flooding in several areas to Highways. Gullies had been cleared but funds were not available for a longer term solution.

Dogs in Bank View. A resident voiced his concerns and asked for the Parish Council's help regarding the keeping of a large number (up to 16) hounds at a house in Bank View. He commented on the problems of noise and smell and possible contamination of other gardens. Neighbours had already contacted Environmental Health authorities who were unable to take any action. It was also suggested that animal welfare issues might be involved. The Chairman undertook to investigate the correct procedure for pursuing these complaints. The legal position of several dogs being exercised by being led from a bike was also questioned.

Traffic on Mill Lane. A resident raised the problem of the volume and speed of traffic on Mill Lane, especially large wagons, tractors and trailers. He had counted 32 heavy vehicles on the day of the meeting and explained that there was no speed limit at the bridge end of the road. The Parish Council is already addressing this issue, the first step being to establish if permitted use of the farms on Mill Lane is being exceeded. Cllr. Salmon added that tractors were also a problem on Main Road. The Chairman asked residents to continue monitoring the situation and to feed back information to the Parish Council.

Shortage of parking on Sandy Lane. Insufficient parking at the bungalows on Sandy Lane was reported. Carers and even an ambulance have found it impossible to gain access. The Parish Council had, in the past, investigated the possibility of creating additional parking spaces at the Main Road bungalows but, whilst Highways had no objections, Dane Housing would have to finance the work. It was suggested that the Parish Council should contact Dane Housing regarding this problem.

Pedestrian crossing at Mount Pleasant Residential Park. Again the Parish Council had requested this in the past but had been turned down by Highways. This request now to be made again to Cheshire East Council.

Box hedging at Shearbrook Verge. Cllr. Salmon explained that the idea was to prevent vehicles damaging the grass and that the Parish Council had purchased a strimmer which would be used by volunteers to keep the area tidy.

Dog waste & overgrowing hedges. Several people commented on these problems, especially as they affected children walking to school. The Parish Council has requested an extra dog waste bin and would keep encouraging dog handlers to clean up. Cllr. Brickhill advised that the best procedure regarding hedges was to first write to the property owner but then ask Cheshire East Council to deal with the problem by carrying out the work at the owner's expense.

Himalayan balsam. A resident warned of the problem of this prolific and invasive plant which is infiltrating The Bongs and surrounding gardens. It will eradicate all native plants and cause erosion of the banks of streams and rivers. She asked for volunteers to join a group to clear the plant from The Bongs on 13th June, from 10am-4pm and also for residents to clear it from their own gardens.

After presentations by the guest speakers, Michael Ball of the Goostrey Speedwatch team and Cheshire East Councillor David Brickhill, the Chairman thanked the speakers and invited all present to join the Parish Council for light refreshments, the Meeting closing at 9.35 pm.