

Preston Brook Parish Council

MINUTES OF PRESTON BROOK PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD at 7:30pm ON TUESDAY 18th MAY 2021 AT PRESTON BROOK VILLAGE HALL

Opened at 7.30pm
Part 1

Members Present

D.Felix, M.Marlow, N,Cannam (in the Chair), L.Sanders

Also present:

Clerk to the Council

C Wyna

Public

There were 5 members of public present

1. **Apologies** – No apologies received
2. **Declarations** – There were no declarations of interest.
3. **To receive and note the Annual Chairs report**
The annual report was read to those present by the current Chair Nigel Cannam. Councillors thanks Nigel for his support and service. Thanks were also passed on to D.Felix for his support and service over many years. The report is detailed at the bottom of the minutes.
4. **To elect a Chairman for next 12 months**
Only two members of the parish council were in attendance. L.Sanders agreed to take the Chair – this was AGREED
5. **To elect a Vice Chairman for the next 12 months and sign their declaration of Acceptance of Office**
The only other present elected parish councillor was M.Marlow who agreed to take Vice Chair – this was AGREED.
6. **To consider the co-option of N.Cannam**
N.Cannam advised that due to new work commitments and also being part of Sandymoor Parish Council (new parish in which he lived), he advised that he wouldn't be standing for co-option. Two members of public Gary Littler and Peter Bolton raised their interest in being co-opted and following discussion it was AGREED that both be co-opted to the parish council.
7. **Police Report** – PCSO Bromley updated that there had been 13 bikes stolen from escape. Village hall activity was being monitored. A survey of residents at Waterfront had taken place resulting in advice of bike thefts and damage to vehicles. Speeding across village was discussed and Clerk updated on discussions with Simon Saul. PCSO Bromley to follow up to start reviewing action to be taken.

8. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Meeting of 20 April 2021 be accepted as a true record. The minutes were AGREED by all present.

9. Financial Report

a) **Receipts** – £13,000 – Precept 2021/2022

b) **Payments approved**

C.Wyna – Salary - £320.42

HMRC - £74.20

Zurich – Annual liability insurance - £257.60

Reimbursement to C.Wyna – Purchase of appliances for village hall - £488

c) **Balance of account** - £37,279.04

d) **To approve the Income & Expenditure Report for 2021/22**

The Clerk presented the income and expenditure report. This was AGREED by all present.

10. Policies

a) To approve the Model Standing Orders 2018

b) To approve the Model Financial Regulations

Both items were **deferred** to the next meeting to enable new Councillors to consider their content prior to approval

11. To discuss and agree next steps in response to the correspondence between Cllr J Bradshaw and Ian Saxby regarding speeding issues and turning on Windmill Lane

This item was **deferred** to the next meeting to enable new Councillors to consider the content prior to commenting further.

12. To approve repair/replacement of bench at Windmill Lane and associated budget

Following some reports from residents, the Clerk requested the replacement of the wooden bench at Windmill Lane. This was used by many but it was now beyond repair. The Clerk agreed to obtain prices for approval at the next meeting of a composite bench.

13. To discuss approach to recruitment of Parish Councillors

Despite co-option of two new Councillors, the Clerk advised of the need to build up the parish council numbers in order to meet the required 8 Councillors in line with the constitution.

Councillors were to give thought to various options that could be considered to support this and present at the next meeting.

14. Correspondence

None received.

15. Urgent items

It was requested that whilst back to face to face meetings, how could we engage others to join who weren't comfortable with the new arrangements. It was discussed to trial at the next meeting a set up of a virtual live meeting and review success.

16. Public forum

- a) Resident from Aston Green was in attendance (Terry) to raise concern on the land drain issues stating that matters were still not resolved and was ongoing. The Clerk updated on everything the parish had done in order to support and what outcome was sought. Terry advised that despite contacting the council and ward councillor, no response had been forthcoming but he hadn't followed this up. This was now a civil issue between Terry and the landowner at Tannery Farm. The Clerk concluded with Terry that this would simply be noted.

17. Next meeting

- Date and time of next meeting being Tuesday 15th June 2021 at 7:30pm.
- Meeting closed at 9:05pm

18. Exclusion of Public and Press

Part 2

Items of a "confidential or other special nature" during which it is likely that the meeting will not be open to the public and press as there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Clerk advised that he would be looking to tender resignation soon due to a new job. It was agreed that an approach be discussed at the next meeting to recruit a replacement.

Signed as a true record

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**Councillor L Sanders
Chairperson**

Preston Brook Parish Council

2021 AGM Chairman Report – Cllr Nigel Cannam

This last year has been a very different year in all respects.

For the Preston Brook Council it has meant that we have had to adopt a new way of working and meeting, a very different approach to that of which we were used to, all due to the CoVid 19 pandemic. All Councillors and the Clerk had to be based at home, carry out Parish Council Business and attend monthly meetings online using devices and services they were all less familiar with. We made it work and we carried on ensuring that the Council could still function, at a slightly reduced capacity but was still functional.

Thank you all for that and thank you for making it work.

Throughout the year we have lost and gained councillors.

In May 2020 Mike Bryne resigned for personal reasons.

In July we lost the Chair (J Sampson) as she was moving to Scotland.

From September Nigel Cannam became the Chair and David Felix became the Vice Chair.

In October Mike Marlow was Co-Opted in.

In December we welcomed Lauren Saunders to her first meeting after being Co-Opted onto the Council.

As I alluded to earlier Council work has continued. Discussions started concerning the amalgamation of the Village Hall with the Preston Brook Parish Council which could help develop the community feel, and identity. The results of a resident survey suggests that this move would be agreeable to the residents of the village. This will need to be progressed over the coming months, years! Is still an option?

In July 2020 we received notification that the M56 Junction 11a project had been terminated, this was an un-expected shock. The Parish Council will continue to discuss with Highways England and Halton Borough Council whether heavy traffic can be diverted away from Preston Brook.

We have been responding to any planning applications that we are made aware of with relevant and beneficial comments. Currently there are no applications that we need to be concerned with.

From a Council administrative perspective and due to the “Jackie Weaver and online virtual recorded meeting incident that became viral” it was agreed that the Preston Brook Parish Council Documentation, Process and Policies should all be reviewed, this is still ongoing and should be complete very soon.

Leading on from the admin point a review was held to determine whether Councillors should have digital devices provided so that attendance to online meetings and the ability to perform Council work offline could be made accessible. The conclusion was that the Councillors will continue to use their own devices for both meetings and work.

Projects.

A smiling SID has been purchased and deployed in number of pre agreed locations within the village to monitor traffic and display a notice ☺ ☹ to the drivers depending on vehicle speed. Traffic speeding has been identified as a concern in Preston Brook and Preston on the Hill. HBC and the Police do not paper to be too concerned as no action has been taken so far.

Generally work and projects have been delayed and progress has been slow due to the CoVid situation and the lockdowns.

A number of projects have been identified and will require further work, maybe these can be progressed next year with the easing of the lockdowns.

- Village Garden redevelopment – Cllr Sanders
- Seating and planters – Cllr Cannam
- Bridgewater Grange strip – Cllr Marlow
- Playpark redevelopment – Clerk

Some major funding has been agreed by the Preston Brook Parish Council to assist with the Village Hall development with a donation of £20,000 to help with the refurbishment of the toilets to ensure compliance with DDA. However the VH hall work seems to have stalled possibly due to a lack of leadership with the Village Hall committee. Should this donation be revisited and reconsidered by the Preston Brook Parish Council? The refurbishment of the Kitchen is also an area that could benefit from financial support from the Parish Council, this should also be considered. Costs will have changed since the donation was agreed.

Friends of Bridgewater Green.

FoBG continue with their industrious support and maintenance of the green with some financial help from the PBPC council. Thank you to FoBG

To finish,

It has been a difficult year but the Parish Council has succeeded in continuing as a working Council. However it is clear that not enough members are present on the Council so an initiative will have to be devised and run to encourage residents to join the Council, Play a more active apart in the community for the benefit of the Community.

Thank you.