

Parish of Preston

PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Thursday 7th December 2023 at 8.00pm.

Present: Councillors: Sharon Anderson, Andy Hill, Ali Morecroft, Margaret Trinder (Chairman)

In Attendance: Eleven members of the public and Lisa Lathane (Clerk and RFO)

6.1) (Agenda 1) To receive and accept apologies for absence

1. Cllr Burleigh sent his apologies due to work commitments.
2. Cllr Clark sent her apologies due to a prior engagement.
3. Cllr Buckland sent her apologies due to illness.

6.2) (Agenda 2) To receive Chairman's Remarks and Urgent Items

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded them that discussions and debate need to be conducted in a respectful and polite manner. Anyone wishing to speak on an item was asked to do this through the Chairman. The Chairman explained that the Parish Council would listen to what everyone had to say and the actions it took would be what it believed to be in the best interests of the wider community at this moment in time.

Members were reminded to make Declarations of Pecuniary Interest, if appropriate.

6.3) (Agenda 3) Declarations of Interest

None.

6.4) (Agenda 4) To adopt minutes of the previous meeting

These were adopted and were signed by the Chairman.

6.5) (Agenda 5) To consider matters arising not already on the agenda (information only)

None.

6.6) (Agenda 6) Comments from the general public and press (15 mins)

1. **Paving stones at post box:** A member of the public has asked if the Parish Council would install paving stones to make the post box easier to access. There is one already there but more could be considered. . Members **AGREED** to ask Frank Gormill to quote.
2. **Pruning at the layby on Church Lane:** A member of the public has asked if the Parish Council would arrange for the vegetation at the layby to be pruned. Highways have not confirmed if the hedges belong to them. Members **AGREED** to ask Louis Harrington-Smith to quote to cut them back. The Chairman will speak to the residents ahead of any work being undertaken.
3. **Cold Calling Sign:** A member of the public has asked if the Parish Council would discuss putting up signs on the approaches to the village to make clear Preston is a 'No cold-calling' zone. Members **AGREED** that cold-calling wasn't an issue in the village and that signs shouldn't be put up.

Action: The Chairman to ask Frank Gormill to quote for paving stones at the post box.

Action: The Chairman to discuss pruning the vegetation with the residents, then contact Louis Harrington Smith for a quote

Action: The Chairman to inform the resident that the Parish Council does not agree to the request for cold calling signs.

6.7) (Agenda 7) County and District Update

The Parish Council noted that in this calendar year, there had been no County updates and one District update.

6.8) (Agenda 8) Proposed Community Facilities

1. Members **AGREED** that the results of the survey regarding proposed facilities at Altham's Field were conclusive. The working Group has confirmed that development at this location is no longer their plan.
2. The Working Group informed the meeting that a new site was now being considered:
 - i. On the old tennis courts at PHC, next to the Dower House.
 - ii. This would be for a shop, café and village hall.
 - iii. Pedestrian access would be via the gate next to the pond on the Green, with a vehicle access on to Hitchin Road opposite the Recreation Ground.
 - iv. This site is a brownfield site which the planning department supports.
3. Discussion on these plans followed, with members of the public contributing. The Chairman of the Working Group said that the Parish Council had been asked to take over the shop project in the early stages but had declined because it didn't have the resources and that The Preston Trust had also declined. The Chairman of the Parish Council and the Chairman of The Preston Trust, who was present at the meeting, both made it very clear that it had never been suggested to them that their organisation could take over the project.
4. Members **AGREED** the following course of action:
 - i. To ensure due diligence for the community, the Parish Council will discuss the Working Group's proposals with Russell Prince and planning officers at NHDC.
 - ii. The Working Group was asked to provide a detailed, realistic and viable business plan for its proposals for the Parish Council meeting on Thursday 7 March.
 - iii. The Red Lion Board will be invited to present its proposals at the same meeting.
 - iv. At this meeting, the Parish Council will consider the information available and decide on its next actions.
 - v. If Members are satisfied with the business plan at this meeting, they may consider another survey to ensure that everyone in the community is able to have their say on the options available.
5. Members **AGREED** to release a statement on the above to update the community.

Action: Members to agree a statement on the proposed community facilities to be circulated to the community by the Clerk.

Action: The Chairman to discuss the proposed location with Russell Prince and NHDC.

Action: Members to agree the information required from the Working Group for the March meeting.

6.9) (Agenda 9) Planning

1. **To receive and consider responses to planning applications**
23/02564/FPH, Windrush, Back Lane. Members **AGREED** to support this application.
2. **To note decisions and appeals**
23/01910/PNQ, Highwood, Hitchwood Lane, SG4 7RY. PERMISSION GRANTED.
3. **To consider any other planning matters pertinent to the Parish Council**
The Chairman is meeting a representative of Elivia Homes on Friday 8 December to discuss the trees which are marked for felling by the County Council with a view to the developer offering to undertake the work.

6.10) (Agenda 10) Finance

1. Members **NOTED** and **AUTHORISED** the payments and bank reconciliation shown at the end of the minutes.
2. Members **NOTED** the 2023/2024 Budget.
3. Members considered and **AGREED** the draft agenda for 2024/2025. Additional items are a pro rata contribution to a pension for the Clerk with her other Parish Councils and mileage which may be required for the Community Drive Safe scheme.
4. Members **AGREED** to request a precept of £15,589.65 for the 2023/24 Financial Year.

6.11) (Agenda 11) Speeding Traffic

1. **Moving the 30mph sign back to the Dower House:** The Chairman contacted Highways to again request this but the response is the same as the last time: "The Police would not support extending the 30mph limit and they are satisfied the existing speed limit restrictions are still appropriate for the location."
2. **Community Drive Safe:** Members **AGREED** that there are enough volunteers to make the project viable and the application will be submitted. In addition to School Lane we will request a location on Church Lane.

Action: The Chairman to submit the application for Community Drive Safe

6.12) (Agenda 12) Information Boards

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

6.13) (Agenda 13) Pond Maintenance – to consider quotes for works

Members **AGREED** to accept a quote from Max Boreham for £500 to cover two maintenance visits to the pond.

Action: Councillor Clark to ask Max Boreham to undertake this work.

6.14) (Agenda 14) Historical Flooding in Preston – Information from Philip Wray

In the late 1960s there was a flood which affected the Dower House and the gardens of Temple Dinsley. The Chairman has passed this information on to Russell Prince.

6.15) (Agenda 15) Playground Report

Nothing to report.

6.16) (Agenda 16) Church Meadow Update

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

6.17) (Agenda 17) Clerk's Report

Uncontested Election Fees have been approved by NHDC , they have therefore been built into our budget for 2024/2025.

6.18) (Agenda 18) Hertfordshire Highways Update

The clerk has been liaising with Highways regarding the blocked drain at the junction of Butchers Lane / Church Lane. Highways have confirmed that this work will be considered for funding in the 24/25 financial year with hopefully an early start, road space permitting. As usual the road closure for the works will be advertised and notice boards placed on the carriageway 2 weeks prior to start. Residents will be letter dropped 1 week before.

6.19) (Agenda 19) Parish Paths Partnership

Nothing to report.

6.20) (Agenda 20) Cricket Club Representation
None.

6.21) (Agenda 21) Correspondence received
None.

6.22) (Agenda 22) Matters for future consideration
Village proposals policy

The meeting closed at 10.17pm.

Date and Time of next Meeting: Thursday 18th January 2024 at 8pm in the Village Hall

Parish of Preston

5 December 2023 (2023-2024)

Preston Parish Council PAYMENTS LIST

Voucher Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
56 Electricity	24/10/2023		Barclays Current Acco	P24-055	Electricity	E.on	L	89.58	4.48	94.06
57 HMRC	25/10/2023		Barclays Current Acco	P24-056	HMRC PAYE Nat Ins	HMRC	Z	22.26		22.26
58 Salary	26/10/2023		Barclays Current Acco	P24-057	Salary	Staff	Z	421.87		421.87
59 Work From Home Allowance	26/10/2023		Barclays Current Acco	P24-058	Admin	Staff	Z	26.00		26.00
60 Water	07/11/2023		Barclays Current Acco	P24-059	Water	Castle Water	Z	16.02		16.02
65 Domain / emails	13/11/2023		Barclays Current Acco	P24-064	Cybercheck and Domain	Zen Internet Ltd	S	18.48	3.70	22.18
65 Cybercheck	13/11/2023		Barclays Current Acco	P24-064	Cybercheck and Domain	Zen Internet Ltd	S	10.00	2.00	12.00
61 Electricity	24/11/2023		Barclays Current Acco	P24-060	Electricity	E.on	L	120.35	6.02	126.37
63 Pavilion Repairs	27/11/2023		Barclays Current Acco	P24-062	Pavilion Repairs	Herts Plumbing Ltd	S	1,131.00	226.20	1,357.20
62 Salary	27/11/2023		Barclays Current Acco	P24-061	Salary	Staff	Z	602.55		602.55
64 Work From Home Allowance	27/11/2023		Barclays Current Acco	P24-063	Work From Home Allowance	Staff	Z	26.00		26.00
Total								2,484.11	242.40	2,726.51

5 December 2023 (2023-2024)

Preston Parish Council RECEIPTS LIST

Voucher Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Receipt No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
14 Interest	04/12/2023		Barclays Business 1	R24-014	Bank Interest	Barclays Bank	Z	35.05		35.05
15 Interest	04/12/2023		Barclays Business 2	R24-015	Bank Interest	Barclays Bank	Z	305.02		305.02
Total								340.07		340.07

Parish of Preston

5 December 2023 (2023-2024)

Preston Parish Council

Prepared by: _____

Date: _____

Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Approved by: _____

Date: _____

Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

	Bank Reconciliation at 05/12/2023			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2023			52,375.69
	ADD			
	Receipts 01/04/2023 - 05/12/2023			74,600.26
				126,975.95
	SUBTRACT			
	Payments 01/04/2023 - 05/12/2023			24,444.59
A	Cash in Hand 05/12/2023 (per Cash Book)			102,531.36
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements			
	Petty Cash	05/12/2023	0.00	
	Barclays Business 2	05/12/2023	87,899.97	
	Barclays Business 1	05/12/2023	10,100.83	
	Barclays Current Account	05/12/2023	4,530.56	
				102,531.36
	Less unrepresented payments			
				102,531.36
	Plus unrepresented receipts			
B	Adjusted Bank Balance			102,531.36
	A = B Checks out OK			