

PREESALL TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 10 July 2017
at 7.00pm at Preesall Youth and Community Centre, Lancaster Road, Preesall**

Present: Councillors T Reilly (Mayor), R Black, B Burn, R Drobny, D Hudson, P Greenhough, G McCann, J Mutch, R Lawson, P Orme and L Woodhouse.

In attendance: Alison May, clerk to the town council, and 10 members of the public.

48a(17-18)1 Apologies for absence

Cllr V Taylor

48b(17-18)1 Absent without apology

None

49(17-18)2 Declarations of interests and dispensations

Cllr Drobny – item 4 re police report as he has raised a complaint; Cllr Reilly – item 14, planning application 17/00558/FUL as he is a neighbour and has conducted business with the applicant.

50(17-18)3 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED: 1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June be agreed as a true record, subject to the insertion of the names of the councillors appointed to the finance committee at para 37(17-18)12.

51(17-18)4 Public participation

*At the request of the Mayor, councillors **resolved** to adjourn the meeting to allow non-councillors to speak.*

Members of the public raised the following items:

- The applicant for planning permission in respect of 17/00529/FUL provided councillors with further details on the application and answered their questions.
In response: Councillors thanked the applicant for taking time to address the council.
- The lack of benches along Lancaster Road from Grasmere Avenue and into the village.
In response: The pavement is the responsibility of LCC which has indicated that it would need to conduct a risk assessment to ensure any proposed benches do not obstruct the pavement for pedestrians. Although the frontage in the village appears wide, some of it is private property and therefore could not be used. A similar problem exists in other parts of the village. The Mayor and clerk will make further enquiries.
- Whether CCTV would be installed in the village.
In response: This was not being progressed at present.
- Cycling on the pavement.
In response: This is difficult to address unless the culprit can be identified.
- Pedestrian crossing in the village.
In response: This has now been passed by LCC, which will install it once a funding source has been secured.
- Inadequacy of information provided by the police re crime statistics now that they no longer provide reports with previous month information. It was reported that a formal complaint had been raised with the complaints and discipline department.
- Lack of police presence on gala day once the gala was over and only the fair was operating. Children had been approached by a drug dealer on the gala field and were unable to report this at the time. There had also been a problem with people urinating in public.

In response: The council has not passed a resolution to complain to the police. An item will be requested for inclusion on the August agenda.

- Lack of police action in respect of the ticketing of vehicles illegally parked on pavements.

*At the conclusion of the public participation and at the request of the Mayor, councillors **resolved** to reconvene the meeting.*

52(17-18)14 Planning applications

17/00520/FUL

Proposal: Proposed dormer extension to front and rear

Location: 5 Sandicroft Place Preesall Poulton le Fylde FY6 0PB

Resolved: that the council has no objections to the application (all in favour).

17/00529/FUL

Proposal: Erection of three storey dwelling with new access on to Back Lane

Location: Rear of Green Close 214 Park Lane Preesall Poulton le Fylde FY6 0NW

Resolved: that the council has no objections to the application (all in favour).

17/00558/FUL

Proposal: Single storey rear/side extension

Location: The Mill House 280 Park Lane Preesall Poulton le Fylde

Resolved: that the council has no objections to the application (9 in favour, 1 abstention).

53(17-18)5 Disclosure of information

The Mayor updated the council as to the outcome of his initial investigations into information from a closed session of the council appearing on Facebook. Two scenarios were presented, either an intentional disclosure or accidental in that councillors may have been discussing the matter outside the meeting and been overheard. Cllr Hudson proposed a third scenario of the public being able to hear through the wall separating the council from the public. It was agreed that disclosure of such information is illegal, that this was not an isolated incident - confidential information relating to the clerk having been disclosed since April and that disclosures had been happening for at least a couple of years.

Resolved: that if there is a further instance of information from a closed meeting appearing in public that the matter would be referred to the police for investigation.

54(17-18)6 Clerk's SLCC membership

This item was removed from the agenda as it was no longer relevant.

55(17-18)7 Flagpole at the RAF memorial

It was suggested that some of the costs of the flagpole may be offset through a donation.

Resolved: for Cllr Burn to investigate further and provide costings for the installation of a flagpole.

56(17-18)8 LALC – 73rd annual general meeting 2017

Resolved: That Cllr Orme and Cllr Woodhouse would attend LALC's 73rd annual general meeting on Saturday 18 November 2017 as voting representatives of the council. Cllr Burn would attend as a non-voting representative. Councillors to bring to the August meeting any proposed resolutions they wish the voting members to raise.

57(17-18)9 Land Registry search costs

Resolved: for the clerk to be given permission to conduct a basic search at the Land Registry on potentially vacant plots of land at a cost of £3 per search.

58(17-18)10 Proposed lantern event

The clerk made councillors aware of enquiries she had made in respect of similar events. The feedback received had been that this was not an undertaking to be taken on lightly and one which required detailed advanced planning. Other local councils either made a donation to such an event or had nominated councillors to work with the local gala committees/chamber of commerce, some of which had bought in the services of other bodies to manage the event.

Resolved: that Cllr Hudson would raise this at the next gala committee meeting he attends and bring his findings back to the August meeting of the council.

59(17-18)11 Survey on rural views

Resolved: Not to take part in the survey.

60(17-18)12 Clerk's delegations

Resolved: That the 'Scheme of Delegation to Clerk' be adopted by the council. Also, for the wording of para 5.5 of the financial standing orders to be amended by the insertion of an additional paragraph: '(d)) Expenditure up to the sum of £250; or any other amount resolved to be appropriate by a full meeting of the council (subject to the limitation on delegations in regulation 1.13 and budgetary control in regulation 4.2). A list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the council (or finance committee)'.

Cllr McCann joined at this point of the meeting.

61(17-18)13 Finance committee terms of reference

Councillors discussed the importance of ensuring sound financial management and were provided with an update of the first finance committee meeting and the reasoning behind the request for a monthly working group to meet just prior to the monthly council meeting. The finance committee remit was contained within the draft terms of reference supplied to councillors with the agenda. The proposal for a monthly working group was to ensure the financial probity of the cheque signing and to ensure that it complies with current financial regulations without the need for a formal agenda and minutes. The final resolution to make monthly payments would remain with the council as now.

Cllr Drobny left the room to take a phone call.

Resolved: to approve the terms of reference for the finance committee.

Cllr Drobny returned to the room and stated that he would need to leave the meeting, citing an urgent problem he had just been made aware of.

Resolved: to approve the establishment of a finance working group consisting of the current cheque signatories (Cllr McCann, Cllr Mutch, Cllr Orme, Cllr Taylor). This group will meet prior to the monthly meeting to ensure that the cheques they sign match the invoices and paperwork received (as now but in a more conducive environment and compliant with financial regulation 6.6). They will make recommendations to full council to note and to pay the sums involved.

62(17-18)15 Finance

a) It was <u>resolved</u> to note the following receipts:	
Current account interest	9.32
Reserve account interest	0.24
In Bloom donation	50.00

b) It was <u>resolved</u> to pay the following:	Cheque	
Payroll	182,183, 184	2602.04
Clerk's expenses (on behalf of council)	182	31.89
Lengthsman's expenses (on behalf of council)	183	40.00
Preesall Auto Discount centre Ltd (inv.719)	185	21.97
Cartridge save (inv. 42972)	186	45.36
Viking:	187	65.97
(inv.302488) £10.78		-
(inv.303807) £55.19		-
Information Commissioner's Office (see note)	189	35.00
Easy Websites Ltd (inv. 01-160-3)	190	120.00
Moran's wood components (inv.42647)	191	48.00
Wyre Building Supplies LTD:	192	155.84
(Inv. SI0127516) £20.00		-
(Inv. SI0127516) £78.00		-
(Inv. SI0127516) £42.00		-
(Inv. SI0127516) £15.84		-
Cutts Lane Nursery (inv. 2583)	193	35.00
RHS (In Bloom insurance paid on 26.06.17)	15	70.00
FH & M Davies & son (inv. 05090)	16	1563.12

c) It was <u>resolved</u> to note the following payments by standing order/direct debit	
Easy Websites (hosting fee)	24.00
O2 (mobile phone contract)	14.33
LCC (contributions)	749.09
LCC (deficit) June	8.33

d) It was <u>resolved</u> to accept the Statement of Accounts for June 2017 showing balances of:	
Current account	88,688.49
Reserve account	30,678.04
In Bloom account	5,656.40

e) It was <u>resolved</u> to note the following payment	
Lengthsman's expenses; May arrears excluded from chq 171 (on behalf of council) and paid with chq 183	40.00

63(17-18)16 Councillor apology

At the start of this agenda item the Mayor provided an opportunity to speak in respect of agenda item 16 if so wished. Cllr Greenhough began by making allegations against the Mayor and the other councillors present in respect of discussions at a closed meeting to which she (and all councillors) had been summoned, but she had tendered apologies. She accused councillors of having made slanderous remarks at the meeting and stated that she had taken legal action which would 'probably mean that all of you will be getting a letter from the solicitor'. Cllr Greenhough went on to verbally abuse the clerk who, among other things, she also accused of slander. The Mayor intervened on more than one occasion to request that she refrain from directing personal attacks at the clerk. The clerk reminded Cllr Greenhough that she had been invited to attend a meeting to discuss the matter, to which she replied that she 'wasn't prepared to' do so.

Cllr Orme asked her how, as she had not been present at the meeting, she felt able to make such remarks alleging what had been said. He asked whether another councillor had spoken with her regarding the meeting. She said 'yes' but when asked would not name them. The relevance of this to the earlier agenda item 5 was raised and the presence of a 'mole' in the council.

Her accusations continued with the Mayor requesting order and the need to stick to the agenda. He asked for it to be noted in the minutes that he had provided Cllr Greenhough with the opportunity to speak. He then proceeded to read out the clerk's statement:

'The clerk wishes councillors **to note**, that in accordance with their resolution at the June meeting, a letter was sent by the EWG to the councillor who had made erroneous allegations against the clerk, requesting that the councillor apologise to the clerk by 23 June, thereby bringing this sorry episode to an end. No apology has been received.

Councillors are aware that this request followed an investigation by Wyre Council where it was proved that the clerk did not amend or change documentation prior to the January by-election. Thus, the remarks made in public by a Preesall Town Council councillor that she had done so and that the election was illegal, were false.

The clerk would like to thank those members of the public who have supported her during what has been a very difficult time for both her and her family and also those councillors who have taken their employer responsibilities seriously and ensured that this matter has been dealt with professionally and fairly.'

The Mayor asked for the statement to be noted in the minutes.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 21.00 owing to the disruption caused by the persistent abuse of the clerk and fellow councillors by Cllr Greenhough, despite his numerous requests for this to cease.