

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**ON THURSDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> MAY 2025 at 6.30pm**

**IN TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH**

### **PRESENT**

In accordance with LGA 1972 Schedule 12 para 17(1) Cllr Dave Hall (Chairman of the Parish Council) presided as Chairman.

Parish Cllrs - Cllr Martin Carefoot, Cllr Barbara Clarke, Cllr Anthony Eccles  
Cllr Michelle Woodburn, Cllr Dave Price (at agenda item 5)

County Cllr Maria Jones and Dave Preston (observer)

City Cllr Stephen Whittam

Marion Brewer - Trinity Church

Judith Burn – Whitsuntide Festival

Gill Paton – Goosnargh Tennis Club

Cllr Woodburn (dual hatted) – Goosnargh & Whittingham in Bloom

Julie Buttle - Clerk to the Parish Council

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Cllr Susan Whittam County Councillor for 2024/25

Local Police representatives

Mark Cornforth - Parish Lengthsman

### **2. APPROVAL OF 2024 ANNUAL PARISH MINUTES**

As the May 2024 Minutes were noted at the June 2024 Parish Council meeting, the Chairman signed them as a true record.

### **3. 2024/25 CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT – Appendix A**

Cllr Dave Hall, Chairman of Whittingham Parish Council presented the Chairman's report - a copy which is appended to the Minutes.

Following the report, those present stated they were saddened to note that the signboard advertising the Parish Walks had been vandalised beyond repair. The purchase of a replacement will be added to the June Parish Council agenda. In response to a question, it was confirmed that other walks which cross the border in to neighbouring parishes, may be checked and added to the advertised routes.

### **4. RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER REPORT – Appendix B**

The Clerk gave the end of year finance report which detailed the income and expenditure for 2024/25. The 2025/26 carried forward CIL balance is **£624,295** with expenditure proposals identified on the CIL Business Plan. The Parish Council has reserves totalling **£63,854** but this is an inflated amount as outstanding invoices are included in the carried forward balance. A full copy of the report is appended to the Minutes and will be included in the summer edition of the Parish Council Newsletter.

### **5. CITY COUNCILLORS' REPORT**

Whittingham Parish Council comes under Preston Rural East and during 2024/25 it was represented by 3 City Councillors - Cllr Mark Bell, Cllr Harry Landless and Cllr Stephen Whittam. Cllr Whittam has attended several Parish Council meetings throughout the year and his support to the Council was acknowledged.

Cllr Whittam stated that there are significant speeding issues across the parish with speed enforcement carried out on Cumeragh Lane and Halfpenny Lane. Concerns also relate to the size of vehicles which struggle to cope with the local infrastructure on the way to Longridge which is a key service centre.

A specific neighbourhood issue at Rogerson Gardens has largely been resolved, however it has been difficult to have an impact on other issues where the law has not been broken.

Following difficulties with the contractor undertaking drainage works in Goosnargh play area, the site is now open although it was noted that some debris needs to be collected and removed. Cllr Whittam will ask the parks dept to clear this before the festival.

Cllr Whittam stressed the importance of reporting highway issues on Love Clean Streets and also asked those present to report discarded nitrous oxide containers to the police.

With regards to neighbour issues, Cllr Woodburn stated that the police are often seen attending the Whittingham Park estate. This was noted and the Clerk will ask the police if there are any specific concerns in the area.

## **6. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – Appendix C**

County Cllr Susan Whittam was unable to attend due to a prior commitment as Mayor of Preston. City Cllr Stephen Whittam presented her report which is appended to the Minutes.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Stephen Whittam for presenting the report and on behalf of the Parish Council, congratulated Cllr Susan Whittam on her appointment as Mayor.

It was stated that the planning committee was a shambles and a discussion started to take place on the Swainson House Farm planning application. As the matter is on the Parish Council agenda, the Clerk requested that the matter be discussed at the later meeting.

The Chairman welcomed newly elected County Councillor Maria Jones and requested her help to tackle speeding issues and concerns regarding school places. She replied by stating it was an honour to serve the local area and she was determined to improve lives for local residents. She would be here for us and will look at any concerns forwarded to her.

## **7. POLICE REPORT – Appendix D**

Unfortunately, a representative from the police was not present, however a written report is appended to the Minutes.

A covering email explained that crime figures remain low although a house has been burgled on Halfpenny Lane. There has also been an increase in thefts from insecure windows during the warm weather. Keyless car thefts are a concern for Lancashire as a whole but the police can supply a pack to put the keys in, which prevent the car from being unlocked.

An attendee mentioned that a pack isn't necessary if you store the car keys in a tin.

## **8. COMMUNITY INFORMATION AND GRANT ALLOCATION**

When setting the budget, the Parish Council sets aside a small amount of money to assist local community groups organise events or provide activities which will be of benefit to the area or its inhabitants. Organisations benefiting from Community infrastructure donations are also invited to update residents on the funding they have received.

### **Trinity Methodist Church**

Marion explained that the building is a warm space where residents can go for companionship. A weekly lunch is provided for 40+ people and the Parish Council has provided a donation to provide the kitchen with a new cooker. Permission has been granted to extend the building to provide additional community use. Quotes for these improvements will be discussed at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

### **Goosnargh & Whittingham Festival Committee**

Judith stated the festival continues to be successful and remains true to its roots. The hanging basket competition will run again this year and there will also be a classic tractor competition providing a rural link. The festival continues to develop and the route plans have changed slightly this year. Final details will be emailed to all.

It costs just under £7,000 to organise the event but costs are reduced through the work of volunteers and support from organisations such as the Parish Council. Costs include insurance, road safety, hire of toilets, food stalls and entertainment.

The festival takes place on the Saturday after the Spring Bank Holiday Monday and this year it will be held on the 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Councillors and the Chairman are welcome to attend the parade will assemble at The Square at 13.00 departing at 13.30.

**Goosnargh Tennis Club**

Gill advised that the summer league has started with Goosnargh in division 3. Social tennis is taking place under the floodlights which were financially supported by the Parish Council.

A tournament was held in April and an open day was held at the beginning of May. Coaching sessions are being held for adults and children aged 4 – 11 years. Fund raising events have also been organised with the funds being used to replace a fence and keep the courts clean. An Italian wine tasting event will take place on the 29<sup>th</sup> June. A new disabled toilet has been added and discussions are taking place to create more space for wheelchair users, including a ramp to the club house and a double gate to access both sides of the courts.

**Goosnargh & Whittingham in Bloom**

Michelle explained that Goosnargh & Whittingham in Bloom entered the Best Kept Village competition for the first-time and their efforts were highly commended. Volunteers help with weeding, trimming and tidying up but additional volunteers are always welcome. Thanks were expressed to So Plants who filled the hanging baskets. The Parish Lengthsman has been assisting the group and work has started tidying areas up before the festival – although additional bins are still required. The Clerk will raise this again with the City Council.

**9. MATTERS RAISED BY ELECTORS**

Those present were aware that the County Council have recently decided to drop plans to expand Goosnargh Oliverson’s school as detailed in the County Councillor report. The Clerk confirmed that LCC’s website states

*We have listened to residents' views and had further talks with our Highways team and decided that we will no longer move forward with the expansion of Goosnargh Oliverson's school building.*

*This is largely due to concerns around the access, traffic and parking that a further 210 children would add to the village.*

*However, we are planning to proceed with a temporary and then permanent site at the Whittingham Hospital site for at least 315 places. If approved, this will deliver 60 additional places from 2026.*

The webpage continues that subject to planning approval being granted; *the new build will have initial provision for 60 places by 2026 - via temporary accommodation.*

Whilst the news was welcomed by those present, County Cllr Maria Jones was requested to find out whether highways would also reassess the impact of traffic to be generated by the Swainson House Farm housing application.

It was questioned how Goosnargh Oliverson School will fit in to the overall strategy to provide school places and - given that the planning application for the new school has not been granted yet - it was also questioned if the proposed plans for the new school can be extended to accommodate the additional numbers, rather than add temporary accommodation. The Clerk will raise these points with LCC school planning department and will report back to the June Parish Council meeting.

As there were no other points raised, the meeting was adjourned for the Annual Parish Council meeting.

A draft copy of the Minutes will be presented to the June 2025 **Parish Council Meeting** prior to the formal Minutes being approved at the **Annual Parish Meeting** in May 2026.

**END**

**Signed (Chairman)** .....

**Date** .....

## WHITTINGHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2025

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

My report about the work of the Parish Council over the past 12 months is made against the increasing political uncertainty affecting Lancashire as a whole. We now await to see which direction of travel Lancashire County Council will go down under new political leadership, whilst the future structure for local government in Lancashire remains uncertain. It is clear to me however that the role of Parish and Town Councils in reflecting the views of local communities has never been more important than it is today.

This is clearly illustrated in relation to planning issues which without doubt have dominated the Parish Council agenda over the past 12 months. Once again, the parish has been hit by speculative development proposals primarily for housing which are clearly unsustainable and fail to meet current planning policy. The present lack of a 5-year housing supply for Preston gives developers a window where applications can override policy and be approved.

A clear example is the application for development of land East of Swainson House Farm. The PC is dismayed to see this application be recommended for approval by planners and we continue to argue strongly on planning grounds that this application should be refused. At this moment in time, we still await the decision of the City Council's Planning Committee.

Further speculative planning proposals are currently giving the PC serious concern including a substantial outline application for new housing adjacent to Broughton Park off Whittingham Lane and significantly the Gladman consultation for a new housing scheme off Churchgate.

Not all planning matters concerning the Parish are negative however. The PC remains supportive overall of the City Council's proposals for the new draft local plan and wishes to remain actively engaged with the City Council on the draft plan as it affects our parish. We have also responded positively to the detailed planning proposals for the redevelopment of much of the remaining Whittingham Hospital site despite some concerns regarding proposals for the management of open spaces on the site. Our support is also being given to the detailed plans for the redevelopment of Whittingham Sports and Social Club and for the plans to extend Trinity Methodist Church as a warm hub for local people to meet, eat and socialize. It is our intention to continue to support this valued community initiative.

We are monitoring the progress of development relating to primary school provision in the Parish and responding to consultations from Lancashire County Council on this matter. The need for a new school at Henry Littler Way to support new housing is welcomed but some concern is given to the expansion of Goosnargh Oliverson's School in relation to increased traffic and parking issues. We will continue to reflect the views of the local community on this issue.

The Parish Council takes pride in having a busy agenda each month to achieve our vision described in our parish plan, to make our parish an attractive place for all people, a place we can all be proud of and enjoy.

This is why we are keen to continue supporting and working with the Goosnargh and Whittingham in Bloom community group to promote a beautiful and well-kept environment for the village and beyond. We have therefore renewed our maintenance contract with a new local company and for the first time we have contracted the services of a self-employed lengthsmen to carry out specific tasks for maintaining and improving parish assets and keeping the local environment tidy. We are especially pleased that the community group's first entry into the Best Kept Village competition resulted in Highly Commended awards in several categories.

Of course, none of the aims and objectives outlined in our parish plan could be achieved without financial support managed through our financial and business plans. We continue to receive significant and welcome income from the Community Infrastructure Levy or CIL via the City Council. Using our parish plan as reference, we consider at length which projects in the parish deserve financial support and through our CIL business plan we monitor the progress of these projects.

As in previous years we aim to keep the parish precept as low as possible by careful budgeting and prudential borrowing from our reserves to fund our month-to-month spending. Our Parish Clerk who is also the Council's Responsible Finance Officer will provide more detail to this meeting about our budget spending. One notable change to our financial procedures in the past year was to switch bank accounts to one which better supports the banking needs of the Parish.

I could not be more pleased to report on some of the excellent projects we are currently supporting or have been completed in the past year. The parish of Whittingham is fortunate to have 2 wonderful village greens for our community to enjoy and the Parish Council considers both to be important community assets to support.

Although Goosnargh Village Green is owned by Preston City Council the PC is supporting funding with the City Council to replace worn out play equipment in the play area. In addition, we are planning to install gym equipment for use by younger people up to the age of 16 yrs and we will continue to support the maintenance of the popular football pitch used by children of the village. In recognition of the work done in the parish by former Cllr Eddie Marginson we intend to plant a commemorative tree and plaque on the green in his name.

Cumeragh Village Green which is owned by the parish council has been suffering from flooding and drainage problems and we are investigating the cause with Lancashire County Council and United Utilities to find a solution. In the meantime, we will improve the green by providing 4 new replacement benches and continue to maintain the play area.

The future of St Johns Church on the old hospital site currently remains our main project but the scale of the tasks we would face to bring this grade 2 listed building back into use is

proving to be beyond the resources available to us and we will now need to review the project with the current owner – Homes England.

Survey work has been completed on 2 of our Parish Walks and signs, stiles and way markers have been checked and replaced where necessary. I give my thanks to Cllr Anthony Eccles for his work on this. A new information noticeboard has been provided on the village green together with leaflets and online information about the walks to help our community enjoy walking in our beautiful parish.

Exciting plans are evolving to create a woodland path through the wooded area of roadside along Whittingham Lane and Cumeragh Lane in the village. The Parish Council is in discussions with Homes England who currently own the wood about the purchase of the land. If this is successful the Parish Council will manage the land to create a community wood and pathway.

Although not in Whittingham Parish the PC has been approached by a representative of Whitechapel Village Hall seeking funding to provide improved toilet facilities. As people from our parish use this village hall from time to time, we consider it beneficial to our local community for the Parish Council to support this request. We are now awaiting costings to consider what funding may be given.

It is not well known that the village clock located in Goosnargh Church Tower belongs to the village and is a community asset having been donated to the village in 1861. The clock requires significant repair and restoration to guarantee its long-term future. The PC has been approached for funding which we are pleased to offer to keep this valuable community asset in good working order.

Car speeding in and around the parish is a continuing problem. Whilst we have failed so far to have enforcement cameras installed by Lancashire County Council in speeding hotspots, we continue to maintain our own speed indicator devices to build up evidence of the level of speeding in the parish. We will continue to use our funds to service and repair these devices to deter speeding motorists and provide evidence of speeding to signal a need for enforcement action.

My final note on our busy business funding plan relates to the upgrade of our Parish Memorial which we commissioned to commemorate VE day 80yrs ago. On VE day itself a ceremony was held at the memorial in Beacon Drive to explain the memorial upgrade, give a blessing to the memorial and for myself as PC chairman, to read a proclamation in relation to VE day. I am pleased to say the event went very well.

Much of the Parish Council's work is routine but non the less important. We support charitable and voluntary organisations with donations such as the Goosnargh and Whittingham Festival, the Goosnargh and Longridge Agricultural Show crafts section and the Goosnargh and Whittingham in Bloom Community Group. In addition, we provide representatives from the PC to some of these organisations.

We consider good communication with the local community to be an essential part of the business of the Parish Council. Our parish website is kept up to date with the business of the

Council and we continue to publish quarterly newsletters. Parish Councillors and the Parish Clerk can be contacted by phone or by e-mail and we provide information online to signpost residents to other organisations.

The Parish Council cannot operate without a dedicated team of volunteer Councillors who give their time freely to serve the local community and I thank them for their service. In the past year we have said goodbye to Cllr Tony Brooks and thank him for his services. There is now a vacancy on the Parish Council and we seek nominations to fill the vacancy. We have also welcomed a new member, Cllr Anthony Eccles who is already making a valued contribution through his enthusiasm, commitment and local knowledge.

Last but not least I would like to give my thanks and appreciation once again to our hard-working Parish Clerk. Over the past 14 years being a parish councillor and especially the past 6 years as chairman, I have seen her workload grow and grow. She always gives the impression that she enjoys the challenge and for some crazy reason seems to relish tackling planning issues. She makes my role and that of my fellow Councillors so much easier and I sincerely hope that she will continue to support our Parish Council at least until the day comes when she says she hates all things to do with planning and has had enough.

Thank you for listening.

**WHITTINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL**  
**FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 1<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2024 TO 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2025**

The year started with a carried forward balance of **£573,656** less the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) balance of **£525,320** leaving the Council with actual reserves of **£48,336**

Itemised Income and Expenditure for **2024/25** is recorded in the box below.

During **2024/25** the Council received **£111,759** in CIL monies. Gross expenditure totalled **£12,784** broken down as follows:

- **£661** on dog bag dispensers
- **£3,542** refurbish the Halfpenny Lane telephone kiosk
- **£2,565** CAD report on St John Church
- **£4,446** on SPID repairs & a solar panel following a traffic collision
- **£1,570** on PROW signboards & leaflets

CIL balance forward, plus income, less expenditure, leaves the CIL balance as **£624,295**. Proposals to spend this are listed on the CIL Business Plan to be approved at the May Council meeting.

The **2024/25** year-end balance of **£688,149** less the CIL balance of **£624,295** leaves the Council with actual reserves of **£63,854** This is an inflated amount as outstanding invoices are included in the carried forward balance.

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2024/25**

<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance Fwd	573,656.24	Staff costs	24,535.76
Precept	29,345.00	Admin, training & Purchases	549.29
Bank Income	266.39	Website & Newsletter	1,593.70
CIL	111,758.84	Insurance Audit & Election	1,860.45
CIL Interest	25,260.68	Other fees	903.10
VAT Refund	3,230.50		
Other Income	91.78	<b>Parks &amp; opens spaces</b>	
Rights of way donation	800.00	Electric & Xmas tree	220.27
		Football pitch maintenance	1,795.00
		Cumeragh Play area & trees	1,410.00
		Grass cutting contract	6,583.51
		Bat & Bird boxes	131.95
		<b>Grants &amp; Donations</b>	
		Whittingham festival	500.00
		Longridge Agricultural Show	200.00
		Best Kept Village	300.00
		Cumeragh Christmas tree	100.00
		Royal British Legion (S137)	40.00
		<b>Assets &amp; CIL</b>	
		Repairs	325.39
		Net CIL expenditure	10,698.66
		VAT	4,512.94
		2024/25 Expenditure	<b>56,260.02</b>
		2024/25 Year end balance	<b>688,149.41</b>
	<b><u>£744,409.43</u></b>		<b><u>£744,409.43</u></b>

**Reconciliation**

Bank Balances = **£98,200.77** plus Public Sector Fund = **£589,948.64** = **£688,149.41**



Chairman and members of Whittingham Parish Council, unfortunately I am unable to attend your Annual Parish Meeting this evening due to a prior commitment. You will also be aware that at the recent elections I lost my seat on the County Council and so unfortunately I did not receive an invite to the meeting as all my equipment and emails etc have stopped.

I wanted to say that I have really enjoyed working with all of you over the last four years and dealing with the huge amount of casework that comes with being a County Councillor. It is sad that I have not been able to finish off a number of casework issues, but apparently once we are not elected, we have no choice or opportunity to finish off ongoing issues.

However, as a Councillor for Preston Rural North there are a number of cross cutting issues including planning applications in our area. The recent Swainson House Farm Planning Application, is sadly one example, and I am sure that Councillor Anthony Eccles, and local resident Tony Ingham will support the difficulties we faced at Planning Committee. It appears that when the Planning Committee vote against the Officer's recommendation, then they are not turning the application down, but just voting against the recommendation! Words fail me really, but there will be a site visit to look at the application, which is positive, as the Officers slides at the Committee did not bear any resemblance to the current situation with regard to the number of developments currently taking place in that area. I do hope that the Parish Council has raised this issue with Preston City Council, as unfortunately the meeting was neither recorded or available for public viewing.

I am also very concerned now about the lack of school places in Goosnargh and Whittingham, you will have seen, as I have in the local press over the last few days, that the expansion of Goosnargh Oliverson's is not going ahead. I totally understand the concerns of local residents about the parking, but I was hopeful that with the Diocesan land being used as a car park, that the expansion would have the minimum impact on residents. It appears that both the Headteacher and I were surprised at this latest development, and the decision must have been taken recently. We desperately need school places in advance of the new school being hopefully built in Whittingham, but I am now fearful for any new schools going forward, and also concerned that parents will not now get the local school places that they urgently need.

Although, as I have said above, I am no longer a County Councillor, I am still the local Councillor for Preston Rural North and as such I will do everything to support local issues. I will help wherever I can. I was also honoured to have been made Mayor of Preston on 14<sup>th</sup> May, the 697<sup>th</sup> Mayor of Preston and the 18<sup>th</sup> women to have ever held this position. My husband, and your local Rural East Councillor, Stephen Whittam is my Consort, and we are looking forward to supporting our local rural community during this important year. Please get in touch if there is anything we can help you with. We will always be here to help.

Very best wishes

Sue

**Councillor Sue Whittam**

**Councillor for Preston Rural North**

**Mayor of Preston 2025/2026**

Hello Julie,

Regarding the annual Parish Council meeting for Whittingham, here is some information.

Over the year there has been repeat road traffic on Inglewhite Road and also on Cumragh lane. Langly Lane has also had a few RTC's. Overall, throughout this year the main concern for us has been the demand in road traffic related incidents.

Furthermore, with this being said we have been caring out a lot more community road watches to ensure drivers are driving in the correct manor and at the correct speeds. This is something that will continue to take place to ensure that are communities are safe.

I have also been working closely with schools building lots of relationships.

Recently we have been focusing on our opsceptr week. This is focusing on knife crime and spreading awareness as well as prevention of more crimes. I also alongside other PCSO's, have been working with the police cadets doing knife sweeps. We have also given knife presentations out in schools.

There is also mention of a full-time PC for the Rural's which is amazing news so that's something to look forward to!

We have also been supporting evens such as Goosnargh and Grimsargh Festivals.

I have also been linking in with beacon Fell, making sure everything is kept well and safe for the areas that are more secluded.

Hope this was helpful, any questions please don't hesitate to ask.

Kind regards,

Ellie.

**Ellie Burke**  
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