

Greencroft Parish Council

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28 September 2022 at 6.00pm at Lynwood House,
Lanchester

Present: Sandra McDonagh, Jane Cain, Vivien Self, County Councillor Douglas Oliver,
County Councillor Mike McGaun, Paul McAdam (Clerk)

Apologies: Barbara Jamieson, Gavin Jarvis, John Johnson Dorothy Parry – all noted and
accepted

108/22 Declarations of Interest

None.

109/22 Public Participation

None.

110/22 Minutes of the last Meeting

Resolved that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meetings held on 28 June 2022 and 27 July 2022
be **AGREED** as correct records.

111/22 Planning and Road works

DCC reports had been circulated – no matters raised.

112/22 County Councillor Update

County Councillors Douglas Oliver and Mike McGaun updated the meeting:

- October energy cap has been revised to £2,500 for an average user and further financial support to individuals will follow
 - o £400 to all households
 - o Further support to vulnerable households
 - o Extra Winter Fuel Payments to people aged 66 and over
- Council Tax Rebate Scheme started earlier this year to households and paid directly to those paying Council Tax by Direct Debit
- 79,000 Non Direct Debit payers in Co Durham need to complete an application form to claim this. To date, and despite publicity and reminders there are still almost 19,000 Co Durham households who have not applied
- Discussions/engagement between DCC and Voluntary organisations to deliver warm spaces for individuals to use during the day to reduce heating bills
- Tesco Community Grants (Blue Tokens) looking for next round of applications

113/22 Clerk Update

White Fence Repair – Informed by Mid Durham AAP that they had met with Durham County Council Highways who are still trying to establish the current status.

It was **AGREED** that the clerk would continue to request updates.

Flowers - £200 Grant had been awarded by County Councillors McGaun and Oliver – confirmation had been received and payment should be in the bank account this week. Additionally there is over £450 remaining in the budget for flowers and also the £100 Jubilee Grant awarded earlier in the year was still unused and it was **AGREED** that this would be used to plant a tree along with a plaque commemorating HM Queen Elizabeth II as well as a plaque celebrating the Queens jubilee at the raised border. It was **AGREED** that the clerk would research options before next meeting.

Christmas Lights – Had been discussed previously but it was **AGREED** that there was too much to arrange now as well as Health and Safety concerns around putting them up and down. Clerk to speak to Lanchester Parish Council about how they organise their decorations and options to be considered for Christmas 2023.

Councillor Vacancy Advert – This open ended advert had now been posted on the Greencroft Parish Council website.

Hours Worked – July 14.5 hours, August 7 hours and an estimated 12 hours for September and it was **AGREED** for these to be paid.

114/22 Accounts for Payment

Clerk salary as detailed in 113/22 above – **AGREED**.

115/22 Budget

2022/23 budget position circulated prior to meeting.

Clerk highlighted areas of projected underspend –

Printing/stationery/IT – possibility discussed of another leaflet

Room Hire – unlikely to be required as room for meetings is currently provided free of charge,

Audit – may be required if any queries from external auditor

Training – nothing identified as yet,

Publications/website – there may be a need for Website support to update and manage the website,

Donations/Grants – it was **AGREED** to make a donation of £100 to Willowburn Hospice as a charity located within the Parish Council boundary,

General Repairs & Maintenance – to be discussed further,

Flower Beds – discussed earlier in meeting.

116/22 Speeding traffic in Village

Discussion around paper by Vivien Self which had been circulated previously.

It was acknowledged that there were various initiatives to try and reduce speed but it was not clear how these were co-ordinated and what was evidence had been collected.

It was **AGREED** that a programme of work to tackle excess speed would be undertaken, beginning with the clerk trying to obtain traffic speed data from Durham Constabulary and to contact Cornsay and Gainford Parish Councils to enquire how they were able to install permanent speed indicators.

Councillor Mike McGaun to speak to the Police on the issue and feedback the outcome.

117/22 Taking the Pledge

Discussion around "Taking the Pledge" an initiative to try and reduce instances of bullying and harassment within councils and it was **AGREED** that the Parish Council would sign up to this pledge.

118/22 Tree Conditions in Village

Concern has been raised about the condition of some of the trees in the village which was worrying due to the previous identification of a virus which had weakened some trees, causing one to fall. With high winds usually a feature of the autumn and winter it was felt there was a need to be proactive and have the trees checked out. It was **AGREED** that the clerk would initially contact Durham County Council requesting these trees be checked.

119/22 Seat and Fence Inspections

Jane Cain had undertaken an inspection and noted some damage to the seat nearest the woods. A splinter had been removed and there was some sanding required which would be undertaken in the near future.

120/22 Questions from Members

None received.

121/22 Chair Announcements

None.

122/22 Next Meeting

Tuesday 25th October at 6.00pm at Lynwood House and also via Zoom