

HARGRAVE AND HUXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Report April 2023 – March 2024

Contact detailsC/O Clerk to the Parish Council ... Trudy Ryall-Harvey

Parish Councillors as at March 2024

Roy Bird (Chair)
Fiona Halton
Richard Jones
Stephen Martin
Carolyn Nichols
Mary Pilkington
Stephen Ratledge
Mike Roscoe
Lorraine Sackett

Structure, Governance and Management

As per Parish Council (PC) Standing Orders

Governance

1. The Parish Council (PC) employs a Clerk who is also the Responsible Finance Officer.
2. All Parish Councillors identify in advance any pecuniary interests, outside body's involvement and family or personal interests they or their partners might have and sign a declaration of interest form when elected to the Council. In addition, each parish councillor is expected to abide by the Cheshire West and Chester's Code of Conduct and declare any other potential conflicts of interest with their PC duties at the start of each PC meeting.

Objectives

As per Standing Orders but in summary to represent and act to address the interests of the community and its local residents

Main Points of Note in 2023/24

1. The PC has nine Parish Councillor seats, at the start of the year we had 7 Parish Councillors, however in September we received one resignation and following that have been able to co-opted three residents and therefore currently we have a full quota of nine Parish Councillors.
2. The parish of Hargrave and Huxley has approximately 200 households and 410 elector's.
3. The Parish Council was consulted on 9 planning applications;
 - One was Supported (i.e. positively contributed to the parish as per the Neighbourhood Plan),
 - Six were given a Neutral response (i.e. no material impact as per the NP or general planning considerations)
 - Two were Objected too (i.e. adverse impact as per the NP),

4. The PC continues to utilise its website to provide access to PC papers and distribute information of potential public interest.
5. The PC continue to report to CWaC any issues, these include potholes and footpaths requiring cleaning amongst other issues.
6. The Parish Council undertook a residents survey, one to gauge residents opinion on the lack of bus services in the area, the other to gauge residents opinion to the installation of Dragon's teeth and roundels painted on the road on Church Lane Huxley to remind drivers to slow down as they enter the village, this work has now been requested with CWaC and once this project has been undertaken, the Parish Council has agreed to review how this impacts drivers before making a decision about proceeding with installing Vehicle Activated Signs.
7. With the match funding received from Ward Councillor Mike Jones, the Parish Council have installed kissing gates and spring gates to replace two stiles on a footpath in Hargrave to improve the accessibility of this footpath, the Parish Council hopes to undertake further work in 2024.

Financial Performance

The Parish Council's Budget for 2023-24 was set at £6,328 with a Precept for the year of £5,938 which was 0% on previous years.

For 2023-24, the PC operating costs and projects have come in over budget due to the additional project involving the installation of kissing gates and spring gates, however we received monies towards match funding this project.

The Parish Council has received in £16,166 in Community Infrastructure Levy Funding from Cheshire West. The Parish Council will now consider the best way to spend this money, this money can only be used on specific projects and cannot be included in Parish Council running costs.

The Precept for 2024-25 has been set at £6,057 which is a 1% increase on the previous year.

Council Attendance 2023-24

Hargrave and Huxley Parish Council held 6 Parish Council meetings between May 2023 and April 2024.

On average 6 Parish Councillors attended each council meeting.

CW&C Councillor Mike Jones attended five of the Council meetings having sent his apologies for the November meeting.

The PCSO attended two of the Parish Council meetings, providing the Parish Council with an update of issues arising in the area and giving them the opportunity to highlight concerns.

Over the year Public Participation at the Parish Council meetings has ranged between 1 and 6 members of the public depending on the subject matter on the agenda. The Parish Council always welcome members of the public to attend the Parish Council meeting and there is a maximum of 20 minutes set aside on the agenda for Public Participation at each meeting.

The Chair wishes to pass on his thanks to all of the Parish Councillors who give their time and energy free of charge to assist in Parish Council matters.

This report is signed and dated following a meeting of the Parish Council where the report was approved by all present.

Signed on behalf of the Parish Council

Roy Bird (Chair)