

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held at Whitegate Primary School Hall on Monday 10th July 2023 at 7.30pm

Members of the public present: Ward Councillor Gina Lewis (Ward Councillor Stuart Bingham sent his apology).

Members of the Council present: Cllr Rayner (Chair), Cllr Haigh, Cllr Leech, Cllr Baldini Cllr Campbell, Cllr Cotterill, Cllr Matthew, Cllr Heath.

1.1 Apologise for absence.

None

Declarations of interest.

None

2.1 To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 12th June 2023. 1444/23 resolved that the Council approved the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on Monday 12th June 2023.

3. Matters arising from the minutes Ordinary meeting on Monday 12th June 2023.

3.1 updates noted as follows:

- Cllr Campbell has not yet sorted out her new email address, Clerk has previously provided the contact details.
- Rushmere lodge – we understand a planning officer has been allocated, and we are still awaiting outcome.
- The Beeches – for the benefit of new councillor it was confirmed we own the land, but due to adopted highway we currently do not right to improve it, we are awaiting outcome from Cheshire West and Chester regarding liability. We purchased the land with limited notice (other people were interested), we needed to secure the community asset. All the usual checks were undertaken including land search which didn't identify any concerns. As we started to investigate improvement and undertake risk assessments which identified a number of improvements it became apparent that we cannot improve the area as it forms part of the adopted highway. Ward Councillor Gina Lewis to follow-up with Highways and Legal, we have asked for clarification earlier this year regarding who has legal liability in the event of an accident. Action: Cllr Matthews to send Gina Lewis a map and search info.
- Cllr Matthews to take bank signatory information to bank to enable online banking.
- Ward Councillor Bingham has arranged form Head of Planning to attend our August meeting to discuss our concerns.
- Councillor Campbell did not report the blocked drain, she cleared it herself.
- Cllr Cotterill has spoken to the duty planner regarding the school access, who considers it to be a be highways issue, not planning. School wants to protect and extend the zig area outside school near the rear gated access to improve road safety and restrict parking near school.
- We have found out that the Public Rights of Way (PROW) officer has left CWAC and currently have no PROW officer. It was confirmed we should contact highways/use the report it app with any concerns. Ward Councillor Lewis will find out a contact name if there is one. We understand they are recruiting to the post.
- Ward Councillor Lewis mentioned that the Fire Service are hosting a road safety check day which is a free event.
- Ward Councillor Lewis also gave an update regarding the new Chief Executive and new Director of Public Health.

4. Clerk's report and correspondence

4.1 Discussed and agreed action to Clerk's report and correspondence: actions complete or on the agenda.

4.2 Feedback from Highways online meeting: Cllr Heath attended the meeting and gave her feedback.

The presentation slides will be circulated, questions were restricted but promised to answer all questions raised in writing. Outlined budget constraints, recruitment issues, lots of anger regarding pot holes. The Speed Indicator Devices (SIDS) will no longer be funded by Highways, who believe they have lost their effectiveness, flashing warning are also under review. There was lack of clarity regarding speed limit reduction costs, the policy will be shared.

Prioritisation of pot hole repairs was outlined, which is a risk based strategy based on type of road, speed and pedestrian safety. There is a KPI of repair within 29 days of being painted. Current delays due to new contract award which now has clauses for repair within response time, and more accountability for quality and time; preventative measures not reactive. Next few weeks we should start to see some changes, they also have a new machine dealing with small potholes.

Our experience at the Beeches has identified fewer accidents since the introduction of the flashing signs a few years ago. We are a rat-run through the village with circa 5000 vehicles per day.

Ward councillor Lews explained that the Police Crime Commissioner is looking at speed monitoring as a priority. With investment in monitoring vehicles which are more subtle than the traditional monitoring vehicles. Parking problems in villages key issues to be addressed antisocial behaviour around parking and driving. We have a good presence of speed monitoring within the parish at various locations. Action: CH to circulate presentation.

5. Planning

5.1 1445/23 resolved the following planning application responses:

23/01751/FUL	7 The Paddocks Marton	Single storey front porch extension (previously approved under application 20/00723/FUL)	No objection
23/02032/TPO	Monk Well cottage	Oak (T3) - Fell to ground level. Replant 1 x Quercus spp. in a suitable area on the grounds further away from the property.	The tree looks badly damaged due to another tree falling, we recommend this is referred to the Tree officer for consideration.

5.2 To discuss enforcement/complaints: No updates to planning queries, Enforcement confirmed Coachwood Farm are actively trying to sell static caravan to ensure it is removed from site.

5.3 Updates Granted/declined/public speaking/enforcement - none

The following applications were refused: none

5.4 Neighbourhood plan response from Planning Team – Officer recommends a review and monitoring report to ascertain are the policies working, and any new areas we may want to include. Once reviewed it may not need to go further particularly if minor changes, if significant changes are required we would need to go through 'due process'. Cllr Cotterill and Cllr Haigh volunteered to review as they were part of the original group.

Cllr Heath mentioned she also attended a climate crisis meeting which talked about biodiversity, Cheshire Wildlife review and asked if this was included within the existing plan? Such as designated areas for community orchards, wild flower meadows, and a climate action group.

Essex Uni have created a community carbon monitor for sustainability. It was noted in the parish we have piece of land established as an ecological mitigation site for Great Crested Newts. There is also Church Wood and Whitegate Way. Mersey Forest have trees available, we intend to plant new trees in the hedge by the football field in the Autumn.

Cllr Lewis reminded the PC each member has a £5k members budget allocation.

6. Finances

6.1 The bank statements remain unchanged: Lloyds account showed a balance remaining of £61,085.81. The Barclays account balance is £19,039.53 (£83,371.83 including savings accounts). There were no payments to be made (Clerk reimbursement for Auditor thank you will be claimed in September).

7. The Beeches

7.1 As noted above we are awaiting update from CWAC Highways/Legal team. Cllr Baldini confirmed the interactive sign is working, it was noted the low hanging branches when pulling out of Clay Lane need to be trimmed to improve visibility. Cllr Baldini will have a look.

8. Road Safety update

8.1 To discuss general road safety updates / speed limits objectives around parish:
School Governors have asked Cllr Cotterill to explore options regarding parking, as discussed above
Action: VC

8.2 Litter, footpaths, styles, tree planting.

Cllr Cotterill has reported the growth at the bottom of the trees along Cinder Hill need trimming to allow safe passage of pushchairs. Cllr Rayner confirmed he has previously cut this back and will sort.
Action: KR

9. Parish Issues

9.1 United Utilities (UU) update – no further updates. Hearsay comments noted, nothing official.

10. Items for information and discussion only.

Ward Councillor Lewis confirmed boundary commission has created Mid Cheshire Constituency including Northwich, Middlewich and Winsford (which includes Whitegate).

There being no further business meeting was closed by the chairman at 8.45pm

Signed by the Chairman Dated

Outstanding actions (if removed they are complete)

Ref	Date	Action Log	Responsible
3.2	ongoing	Road safety - A54 speed limit reduction (40mph) PENDING/ Whitegate Lane (50mph) PENDING/ Speed limit 40mph Cassia Lane PENDING	Pending implementation
7.1 3.1	Nov 22/ June 23	The Beeches awaiting response from Highways. RM to share info with GL to chase up	RM/GL
7.4	Feb 22	Add RM to bank signatory for Barclays A/c	RM
8.1	June 23	Take forward school action regarding zig zag lines with Highways following discussion with Planning Officer	VC
3.1	July 23	PC email	LC
4.2	July 23	Circ Highways presentation slides	CH
5.4	July 23	Review NP	SH / VC
7.1	July 23	Cut low lying branches at Beeches	PB
8.2	July 23	Cinder Hill trees cut low foliage	Kr

Agenda Call forward

Ref	Call forward date	Description
	Tbc	VRA re gritting, nuns grave
	Oct 23	Tree planting PB

Notes: