

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held at Whitegate Primary School Hall on Monday 9th June 2025 at 7.30pm

Members of the public present: Eight member of the public and Ward Councillor Gina Lewis attended.

Members of the Council present: Cllr Rayner (Chair), Cllr Campbell, Cllr Cronin, Cllr Heath (arrived 7.50pm).

Members of the public were invited to speak:

Residents of Clay Lane attended the meeting to discuss the current 60 mph from the post box to the A54 junction. They were pleased to note we have added it to our road safety list. Resident don't understand the logic of a 40mph from the Beeches to post box and 60mph for the rest of the lane and want to know how they can get it changed. Cllr Rayner explained it is a long drawn out process, which has taken many years on the other routes, this is the only one we have not yet tackled as a main entry route into the parish. Residents were informed the Dalefords Lane and Chester Lane brook speed limit changes to 40 mph took years. Residents have all written to the various authorities who have batted back it back to the Parish Council. Cllr Rayner confirmed now its added to our list of 6 areas we can work away at it, hopefully soon achieved 20mph outside school in next month or so. The Parish Council is only one vote, every person who complains counts. Increasingly Highways are asking us for us to pay for all / part fund the changes. Interactive signs funded by PC. Residents reiterated its the only access into village not reduced, taking heavy agricultural traffic and damaging road edges, not a matter of every car speeding. Getting the speed limit down to 40 might be a challenge, getting down to 50mph first then reduce further. Which is what we have had to do on Whitegate lane 50mph, still our aim to get to 40mph. Two stage process.

Residents also raised about The Stables planning application. Ward Council Lewis mentioned that the owner has previously volunteered information about a desire for a petting farm not agricultural (although this is not detailed on the planning application). We discussed the application in April, we have objected to it. Residents asked for the application to be call in at planning committee (if not too late). If officers decide it will take into account all the comments. At planning committee will give opportunity for residents to come to committee meeting, will have 3 minutes to speak. Meetings held at Ellesmere Port Library. Agreed for the Parish Council to ask Ward Councillor Stuart Bingham to call the application in, if it is not too late to do so. If it is called in, will need to notify the committee they want to speak 48 hours before hand. Highways are asked as statutory consultees and will make comment on the access. It was reiterated that a decision is made on the application at the time, residents were concerned that the whole picture is not being told. It was confirmed if there was a further change of use that would require another application. Action: Ask S Bingham to call application in. Inform residents if we hear it is scheduled for planning committee (first Tuesday of the month). Will need one nominated speaker. Clerk to inform resident if we hear anything.

Resident of Clay Lane attended to discuss Grange Lane issues. Parish Council confirmed that the 20mph scheme is approved and at the consultation stage, we have not been informed of a date for the change in speed limit. Residents asked about stickers on wheelie bins, we can investigate but need to know what wording you want "Please do not drive on our pavements". Also asked about buddy sign. Residents do not feel that they should have to manage it and feel it should be the school, it was confirmed that this will not be acceptable as school responsibility. If residents want it they need to agree to manage it. Residents thought maybe one permanent buddy on the bend may suffice. Cllr Lews commented that they need to be aware if CWAC don't agree with it on the highway it may be removed. Residents also mentioned tatty cones and tape left out which is not helping make the place look good, if looks scruffy. Residents can either ask school direct or Parish Council can take through the scheduled meetings. Unfortunately the Headteacher is unavailable at the moment. Also Plaque on the Green has been damaged, commented either we need a willing volunteer to repair or ask CWAC. Residents also asked about the increase traffic of slurry tankers, travelling from Hartford turning into Grange Lane. We understand that the Grange Lane pumping station has not yet been recommissioned looks smart, but tankers still required until commissioned so this is temporary. Marton Hall site also not complete. *All residents left the meeting.*

Cllr Lews informed the meeting that Highways have received additional funding for road improvements so there is a lot of work to fill pothole and also carryout preventative work to ensure it is less of a problem before winter. There are 11 areas of borough with a dedicated team, who will liaise with Parish council to do minor works. £14million for whole of borough although there are two bridges with require investigation and remedial works including Winsford railway bridge and Nicholas Street, Chester (fly over). Also mentioned the new highways pricing, H bars – gone up 60%.

1.1 Apologise for absence.

Cllr Leech, Cllr Cotterill, Cllr Haigh – holiday
Cllr Baldini - working

Declarations of interest.

Cllr Campbell for the Spann's application

2.1 To approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 12th May 2025, and Ordinary Parish Council 12th May 2025. 1528/25 resolved that the Council approved the minutes of the AGM and Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 12th May 2025.

3.1 Matters arising from the minutes of the AGM and Ordinary meeting on Monday 12th May 2025.

- Lighting on Cinder Hill – Cllr Lewis has asked for an update.
- White lines on Sandy Lane / Nova Scottia to be completed.
- Mike Dugie – cancelled all meeting, he can't do anything because of project Gigabit has been suspended, hoping new contract outcome so we can explore funding again. Eight new masts being built in CWAC area, once operational will improve mobile connectivity dramatically. Can't test until up and running, agreed to take off the agenda.
- Cheshire Wildlife trust – no response from them. We were advised they were the people who would come out and assess area. Cllr Lewis confirmed this forms part of Cllr Bingham's portfolio. We are seeking advice about what is best to plant at the beeches. Will Pierson Climate change person or Aleta Steel may be able to assist.
- Housing options paper and maps circulated. Local Plan - Strategy paper 3 options, green belt, grey belt etc... be aware but no direct threat. Cross party Local Plan working group. Consultation went live last week, asked to make comment on options. Noted we have done our 5 year review approx. 15 months ago, once the local plan is adopted we will review again. Biggest impact for us is traffic, 10k new homes planned for Winsford.

4. Clerk's report and correspondence

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

5. Planning

5.1 1529/25 resolved the following planning application responses:

25/00946/FUL Wynsgate Clay Lane Marton for single storey side extension – no objection
25/01259/FUL Land At Hillberry for erection of two dwellings and associated works. The Parish Council objects to this application.

This application proposes to build two large (4 bed, 4 bathroom) houses on existing agricultural land which does not comply with CWAC Local Plan STRAT 9 or the adopted Whitegate & Marton Neighbourhood Plan (Policy 1). The CWAC Local Plan provides the appropriate policy context to address the concerns of the community relating to avoiding development in the open countryside and is consistent with the wishes of the community to prevent any multiple property development projects within the parish. The proposed development also does not reflect the W&M Neighbourhood Plan objective for housing permitted by STRAT 9 to reflect the needs of the local community for smaller dwellings. Whitegate and Marton is a not a Service Centre, and the neighbourhood plan states that only new build residences have to be for agricultural or forestry use.

The use of agricultural land for housing development would create a precedent for future applications for development in the open countryside.

5.2 Appeal – Hunters Retreat – no update yet.

Appeal - Vale Farm – converting outbuilding to domestic property, no update yet.

5.3 Planning enforcements:

- The mosses – awaiting outcome of planning application
- Bawsgate Farm – update from planning enforcement to confirm windows being changed
- Static Caravan, land on Clay Lane – awaiting pictures to share with planning enforcement.

6. Finances

6.1 The bank statements: Barclays account showed a balance remaining of £105,375.79. The total account balances is £106,116.21 after payments (including savings accounts). **1530/25** agreed the following:

6.2 Pay Clerk Wages £1120, HMRC £280 and NI £0

6.3 Pay Quay payroll £15

6.4 Pay reimbursement to Clerk £51.70

6.5 Pay Tesco for field rent £720

6.6 Pay AC&E £132.30 for email hosting

6.7 Pay R Jackson grass cutting contract £245

6.8 CIL nil return submitted

7. Road Safety update

7.1 Discussed above. Agreed the changes to the road safety risk register.

8. Parish Issues

8.1 The Beeches - no update.

8.2 United Utilities – update noted above

8.3 General parish issues – none

8.4 Footpath action log – A meeting took place with the footpath officer and representative from Mid Cheshire Footpath Society. Cllr Haigh previously circulated action list with priority for Footpath 46 (back of golf course 7th tee) which has now been completed.

9.5 Climate Action – circulated summary of work discussed. Listed 5 priority items including a tree planting programme and identify public land to plant on. Wild flowers at the Beeches. Explore possibility of solar power at the Recreation room (meeting soon). Infra-red camera to identify heat loss. Clerk to email resident who may be able to assist with this. Recognise the work of volunteers to complete litter picking throughout the year.

9. Items for information and discussion only.

9.1 White lines worn away junction Sandy Lane and Nova Scottia lane, and parents dropping off at the Forst School just pulling out of the junction, resulting in near misses. Clerk to report.

There being no further business meeting was closed by the chairman at 8.47pm.

Signed by the Chairman **Dated**

Outstanding actions (if removed they are complete)

Ref	Date	Action Log	Responsible
	June 25	Grange Lane wheelie bin stickers "Please do not drive on our pavements."	Clerk find out price
9.1	Feb 25	Static caravan Clay Lane junction with Dalefords Lane – need photo evidence and log of usage	PB
	Mar 25 June 25	Actions for Stuart Bingham: Follow up on street lighting on Cinder Hill – chase for update Put WMPC forward as volunteers to trial road closures for litter picking Call in planning application 25/00719/FUL (if not too late) check if this goes to planning committee and alert residents.	Stuart Bingham Clerk
8.3	May 25	Check availability of Headteacher for resident meeting – meeting deferred until Headteacher available	
8.5	May 25 June 25	Investigate company/price for advice on effective planting of wildflowers and trees – complete. Other contacts provided	CH
9.5	June 25	Investigate use of infra-red camera to detect heat loss	Clerk

Agenda Call forward

Ref	Call forward date	Description
	Tbc	VRA re gritting, nuns grave
	Feb 26	Littler pick date
	Sept 25	Savings account

Notes: LC not at July meeting