

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held at Whitegate Primary School Hall on Monday 12th January 2026 at 7.30pm

Members of the public present: LS, Cllr Stuart Bingham.

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

1.1 Apologise for absence.

Cllr Heath – work

Lynn Campbell / Paul Cronin- holiday

Sue Haigh – missed meeting

Declarations of interest.

None

2.1 To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council 8th December 2025. 1545/26 resolved that the Council approved the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 8th December 2025.

3.1 Matters arising from the minutes of the Ordinary meeting on Monday 8th December 2025.

3.2 Action Log:

- Chase Cllr Bingham regarding littler pick volunteer pilot for Whitegate Lane, this route is not being cleaned. Cllr Bingham arrived at meeting and confirmed there is also a Highways volunteer scheme, managed through Jane Black, however litter picking remains a street care responsibility. Cllr Bingham will follow-up and reply back. Action: SB
- Listed monument Marton Hall – Cllr Baldini still to enquire. Action: PB
- Over-grown hedges, Cllr Baldini/Cllr Rayner still to meet and review. Clerk previously reported St Mary's drive where the pavement remains blocked. Cllr Cotterill reported some hedge cutting near Recreation Room. Action: PB/KR
- Wig Wag – neither working, Clerk to chase named contact for an update. Action: Clerk
- Enforcement plan for footpath in draft– no update, remind Cllr Lewis to enquire. Action: Clerk/GL
- Infra-red camera to identify heat loss in homes, Cllr Rayner will chase. Action: KR

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 1546/26 resolved the following planning application responses:

25/02399/FUL - Land Adjacent Nova Scotia Lane Marton - Erection of two stable blocks and two detached open drying stores with associated paddocks, each stable block to include tack, feed and equipment storage together with groundworks to include access road and parking for two vehicles.

The Parish Council objects to this application on the grounds of overdevelopment in open countryside. The size of the proposed hard standing areas (approx 30m x 30m each) is excessive in relation to the likely equine/agricultural activity.

Each hard standing area of 3,100 sq m together with the access driveway (with the approximate same surface area) will have a detrimental impact on the open countryside.

The size of the stable blocks (15m x 6m x 2.5m each) are excessive for the limited agricultural property of circa 3 acres and will have a detrimental visual impact.

The application refers to parking for two cars and the size of the hard standing areas is out of proportion to this requirement.

The application does not comply with the adopted Whitegate & Marton Neighbourhood Plan (Policy 4). Quote: Development proposals must ensure that the countryside is maintained and protected and new development should maintain and enhance wildlife, hedgerows.....and the open rural character of the parish in general. Planning permission will not be granted for development proposals that have a significant detrimental impact on the rural character of the parish.

The application proposes disposal of surface water by 'soakaway' which will not be effective due to the waterlogged ground conditions for the site.

5.2 Appeals:

- Appeal – Hunters Retreat – no update on planning appeal.
- Rushmere lodge have formally appeal removal of 1.8m fence along the highway.
- Land at Vale Royal Drive for a conversion of a small workshop into a one-bedroom accommodation . Parish Council didn't object, Clerk to forward officer report. Action: Clerk

5.3 Planning enforcements:

- The mosses – awaiting outcome of planning application; request update on application.
- Static Caravan, land on Clay Lane – clerk followed up with planning enforcement an officer has now been allocated and will make enquiries.
- Folley Cottage – not currently being reviewed due to workload.
- Building on left by footpath at Covert Farm on Foxwist Green. There was an application to replace roof however works are more than just a roof replacement. Clerk to enquire with planning enforcement. Action: Clerk

Parish Council has been made aware that a planning application has been approved for a large 60ft building on the site named Redwood, on Nova Scotia Lane, the owner attended a meeting last year and confirm they had no intention to develop the site beyond planting trees, after concerns were raised by residents after electric gates and letter box were installed at the field. Clerk to check as we have not been consulted.

NB: Confirmed application granted under permitted development, parish council was not consulted.

Cllr Rayner informed the meeting about the proposed changes to the planning policy framework (NPPF) information issued Dec 25 is out for consultation – CWAC due to respond by 10th March. Some examples of what they will do differently include: Open existing development residential plots (infill), we are not allowed to do it at moment under Strat 9. Rod Charnley is attending our March Parish Council meeting to discuss implications around the Local Plan and impact on our Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Stuart Bingham suggested that Winsford Town Council and neighbouring parishes need to sit together to discuss further as the proposed developments are relevant to the surrounding parishes, with numbers of electors likely to increase due to urban sprawl.

6. Finances

6.1 The bank statements remain unchanged. Barclays account showed a balance remaining of £102,663.06. The total account balances is £105,967.48 (including savings accounts).

6.2 Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2025/26 introduces a new requirement under Assertion 10 – Digital, Data & Information Governance, which places stronger expectations on all local councils to demonstrate robust digital practices, secure communications, and full compliance with accessibility legislation. Our website host can review our website for £45 per hour and likely to take 1-3 hours to ensure our website is compliant, agreed to progress with this. We already have council email addresses, although they are not .gov.uk email addresses (which is advised but not mandatory).

7. Road Safety update

7.1 20 mph implementation – we received an email from Jayne Black apologising for the delay and this has been raised as a priority due to time lapsed. Technical problem with the wig-wag signs, clerk to chase up, and we are advised there will be a full carriage resurface of Cinder Hill and in the meantime it is being monitored immediate issues are being repaired. We are paying all the costs of the 20 mph speed limit, there is no financial reason to slow it down. Asked Cllr Bingham to progress where this is on the list with Colas in terms of priority. Action: SB

Cllr Rayner received an email from resident regarding an issue on Grange Lane on 16th December where a fire and rescue vehicle under 'blues/twos' was unable to get through, there was also a septic tanker trying to pass, delayed fire engine by 15 minutes, fireman force back wing mirror on vehicle parked opposite side of the road to other vehicles, Cheshire Fire were going to report it. Resident has asked school to reaffirm considerate parking.

Noted accident on Chester Lane Brook, which we believe was as a result of a drunk driver.

8. Parish Issues

8.1 Cllr Cotterill has reported lights out at the top of Cinder Hill and at the Beeches.

Resident spoke about blocked drains on Grange Lane, Utility contractors took tree out which was blocking the sewer. Resident volunteers have cleared a lot of leaves (5 tonnes of leaves in 1 day). Disappointing other areas getting done, Grange Lane are not getting any service.

Resident asked if they have you reported drains?

Verge is council property, tree damage to sewer United Utility matter. If surface water drain CWAC are responsible but they can't always get access unless close road for a period due to parked cars. Noted not many school staff parking on the road now.

Cllr Bingham informed the meeting that the council has spent £1.2m on new road sweepers. There will be a full sweep of borough to determine how long each route takes, where there are problems and to draft a schedule. PC said after road brushing, leaves and mud will go down grid so need to then clear all the grids.

Daleford Lane by the quarry entrance was closed due to a police incident, a fight broke out.

8.1 The Beeches - climate action planting bulbs, too late now for this year, we need feedback from Cllr Heath on what is best for planting. We discounted wild flowers as difficult so some sort of bulbs. Ward councillor Stuart Bingham mentioned the Highways Volunteer scheme again, if the area forms part of the adopted highway.

8.2 United Utilities – Double size of treatment plant at Grange Lane with lots of heavy traffic in/out.

8.4 Footpath action log – continues actions – 6 monthly review.

8.5 Litter pick Sunday 8th March at 9.30am meeting at the Recreation Room.

8.5 Climate action plan – as above. Recreation Room meeting 21st January, Cllr Rayner is welcome to attend to discuss solar panels on Recreation Room roof, as the parish council are keen to invest in something which supports our climate action plan. Cllr Cotterill to send meeting details to Cllr Rayner. Ward Councillor Stuart Bingham referred to Space Hive funding at CWAC, who may be able to offer support. Action: VC/KR

We continue to recognise the efforts of volunteers who carry out litter picking and the work of community volunteers on Grange Lane for keeping the village tidy. Cllr Rayner will liaise with Whitegate PCC Fabric committee, they were previously obtaining quotes for the cobbles on the green.

9. Items for information and discussion only.

9.1 PC annual get together 2nd February 2026.

There being no further business meeting was closed by the chairman at 8.40pm.

Signed by the Chairman **Dated**

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Date of next meeting 9th February 2026.

Outstanding actions (if removed they are complete)

Ref	Date	Action Log	Responsible
	Aug 25 reminders. SB chase up	Actions for Stuart Bingham: Put WMPC forward as volunteers to trial road closures for litter picking Whitegate Lane	SB
7.1	Sept/Nov/Dec 25/Jan 26	Chase where on the priority list with Colas we are for 20mph speed limit	SB
8.3	Sept 25/Oct/Nov/Dec 25/Jan 26	Listed monument sign, investigate where it has gone. PB chat with farmer	PB
8.1/8.3	Oct/Nov/Dec 25/Jan 26	Review overgrown hedges and tree planting	PB / KR
8.5	Sept / Nov 25/Jan 26	Continue climate actions – wild flower planting locations for trees Meeting RR 21/1 and will discuss solar panels Infrared camera – KR follow up with KG	CH VC / KR KR
7.1	Nov/Dec 25/Jan 26	Chase wig wag sign repairs	Clerk
3.2	Jan 26	Footpath enforcement report – ask GL to chase up where this is at	Clerk
5.2	Jan 26	Planning: Officer report for Vale Royal driver conversion Covert Farm – more work going on than just roof changes, clerk to make enquiries with planning enforcement Find out about Redwood application on Nova Scotia as PC not consulted	Clerk

Agenda Call forward

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

Notes: