

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held at Whitegate Primary School Hall on Monday 9th March 2026 at 7.30pm

Members of the public present: JK, RC & Ward Councillor S Bingham.

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

1.1 Apologise for absence.

Cllr Cronin - holiday.

Declarations of interest.

None

Rob Charnley, Head of Planning attended to update the parish council on the LA Local Plan process and impact on our neighbourhood plan. Cllr Rayner summarised notes from the meeting as follows:

CWAC are progressing with preparation of a new Local Plan to replace the existing Local Plan (Part One & Part Two). To be known as the 'Legacy System'.

Public consultation has taken place, responses are being reviewed, and the new CWAC Local Plan will be submitted to the government Planning Inspector by end 2026.

It is expected that the inspector will take between 17 and 30 months before adoption of the new Local Plan – approx.. 2029

It is expected that all Local Plans nationally will be standardised with details (like allocations for housing, affordable housing needs and grey/green belt designations) being specific to local councils. They will not duplicate or modify the content of national decision making policies unless directed by the NPPF.

Local Plan SPDs will disappear.

Gypsy & Traveller sites will need to be identified dependent upon local council needs (approximately 120 pitches are likely to be needed in CWAC area).

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is being revised by government and consultation is due to be completed in March 2026. There will be a shift in what Neighbourhood Plans can influence and what they should contain.

It is suggested that rural areas like Whitegate & Marton should continue using their existing adopted Neighbourhood Plan and not start revision yet. Town parishes which are likely to have a significant number of allocations of new housing within their settlement boundaries may wish to start revising their Neighbourhood Plans (based on the draft new CWAC Local Plan). Winsford Town Council has commissioned a consultant group to begin revising their NP (expected cost £50K).

- RC confirmed that that there is not a huge impact for Whitegate & Marton. There is a change to the housing need target with 1100 per/year target next year (previously 500 for 2024) rising to 30,000 over next 20 years. Looking for 15,000 homes on the edge of settlement line. Caught in a cycle, housing demand triggered early, seeing a steady incline of applications.
- Currently finalising LP on the legacy system, have until end of the year to complete, many councils trying to get them over the line in the time frame. If they don't meet deadline not fully aware of the implications. Currently looking at where to put housing, transport modelling, basic needs housing assessment (Spring /Summer). Will be considered by Full Council in October, have we followed due process, and forwarded to Government end of December.
- New system is a visioning exercise 30 months plus 4 months lead in time.
- Old system – planning inspectorate expecting 115 by the end of the year, the earlier we submit the better, its then a 17 month process.

- Lots of policies will be held at national level such as listed buildings.
- Looking at a range of housing needs, GTA assessment identifies 115-120 need for pitches. Need to identify sufficient site for housing and GTA, to pass first hurdle.
- More CIL if adopted NP in place.
- Land sprawl (Grey Belt), green belt, countryside, looking at flooding, development around stations.
- Inward growth moving from cities of Liverpool and Manchester.

Parish Council questioned the impact for us, we are a rural area, not a service centre, our NP addresses the uniqueness of our parish with too many large houses, trying to keep smaller houses. Impact for us is the sprawl from Winsford and traffic on our roads.

- Combined authority will receive more funding for transport, will look at connectivity across CWAC (not currently there).

Parish council raised concerns about infrastructure, not enough schools, hospitals, doctors. Confirmed planners do consult with doctors and dentists, they don't get much feedback from dentists but they are asked. Also asked about agricultural land. Confirmed don't build on the good quality agricultural land.

- Smaller developers are being squeezed out by bigger developers.
- Cllr Bingham spoke about Green Belt, W&M and half of CWAC are green fields, if protect green belt then these fields will be built on. Green belt only covers a proportion of the borough.
- Winsford TC have engaged a consultant to progress their NP. W&M need to be aware of the potential impact of housing such as Whitegate Road, we should pay attention to what's happening in Winsford.
- It is landowners selling their land, there is no compulsory purchases.
- RC confirmed if there is a possible impact of housing then recommend larger settlements to progress their NP, for W&M we should wait.
- PC asked about the planning committee process – it was confirmed that sites are visited virtually now, online session and councillors can visit a site if needed. SB confirmed it was more beneficial this way, more professional and thorough.
- PC to liaise with Catherine Murgatroyd regarding NP.

RC left the meeting.

2.1 To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council 9th March 2026. 1549/26 resolved that the Council approved the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 9th March 2026.

3.1 Matters arising from the minutes of the Ordinary meeting on Monday 9th February 2026.

3.2 Action Log:

- Cllr S Bingham was thanked for completing a litter pick along Whitegate Road whilst there was an extended road closure.
- The plaque has been mounted, just needs to be put in place, agreed location with landowner. Action: PB/CL/KR
- Wig Wag signs have still not been repaired, Clerk to chase again. Action: Clerk
- C Leech has enquired about trees, and some will be available this week for collection. PB/KR/CL to plant. Action: PB/KR/CL

- Covert Farm has been reported to enforcement.
- Resurfacing quote to be followed up. Action: PB
- Footpath officer meeting, SH to arrange a meeting for May/June. Action: SH
- The cobbles repairs are scheduled for the summer holidays. KR will liaise with KG.
- James Creed has kindly repaired the conservation sign.

4. Clerk's report and correspondence

4.1 Discussed and agreed action to Clerk's report and correspondence: actions complete or on the agenda. None

5. Planning

5.1 1550/26 resolved the following planning application responses:

26/00351/TPO Marton North WwTW Cassia Green Marton for 3 No. Oak (T8, T10, T12) and 2 No. Sycamore (T9, T11) - Crown lift to 5m above ground level, to provide sufficient clearance along track for vehicular access to WwTW. The Parish Council does not have the expertise to comment and we defer to the recommendation of the CWAC Tree Officer.

26/00240/FUL 35 Beauty Bank for rear extension at first floor. Single storey front and side extensions. The Parish Council has no objection, subject to the approval of neighbour as the property is close to the proposed building line of side extension

26/00291/FUL Land At Nova Scotia Lane Marton for construction of agricultural general storage and equine stable building. The Parish Council objects to this application for the following reasons:

The proposed buildings (Barn: 4.7m x 4.8m and Stable: 14.4m x3.6m and 5m x 3.6m) have a floor area which is excessive being over 90sq m for a declared requirement of 70sq m. It is not considered that the proposed buildings are essential to the operational need of the existing equine or proposed agricultural use.

The buildings should be designated as 100% equestrian as the case for agricultural use is non existent. Parking at the junction of Nova Scotia Lane and Sandy Lane is currently hazardous due to a narrow highway at the existing field gate access.

The proposed development therefore fails to comply with Policy STRAT9 of the Local Plan and the adopted Whitegate & Marton Neighbourhood Plan."

25/02399/FUL Land Adjacent Nova Scotia Lane Marton application withdrawn.

5.2 Appeals:

- APP/A0665/X/24/3356072 Hunters Retreat Cassia Green Farm Cassia Green Marton - Certificate of lawfulness for the existing use of the land, stables and equestrian facilities at Hunters Retreat have and continue to be used as part of a livery yard, for a period in excess of 10 years. In addition, a hardcore track has been in place from the yard area to the muck heap to assist with the collection and removal of the muck all year round. Appeal dismissed – Clerk has asked for clarification on how this enforcement will be progressed, it was confirmed a planning application will be submitted.
- Rushmere lodge have formally appeal removal of 1.8m fence along the highway. Planning Inspector ref: APP/A0665/C/25/3375569 no update.
- Land at Vale Royal Drive for a conversion of a small workshop into a one-bedroom accommodation . Inspector ref: 6003063. Awaiting appeal decision.

5.3 Planning enforcements:

- The mosses – awaiting outcome of planning application; Clerk has requested an update on application.

- Static Caravan, land on Clay Lane – clerk followed up with planning enforcement who has confirmed that the static caravan will be removed once repairs to tac room roof have been completed along with the container. Leave on list until removed.
- Folley Cottage – aware resident has had a letter from enforcement stating they should not have put fence and laurels on agricultural land.
- Covert Farm – building works appear to be more substantial than the planning permission originally granted in 2021 for alterations to roof of barns 2 and 3. Looks like a substantial rebuilding on the same footprint. Clerk has reported it, no further update.
- The Dingle, Foxwist Green. Concerns were raised with the Parish Council relating to the permitted development and these have been passed to the CWAC planning team (amended wording April 2026).

6. Finances

6.1 The bank statements remain unchanged. Barclays account showed a balance remaining of £102,813.61. The total account balances is £104,170.55 (including savings accounts).

7.2 Paid Clerks Wages £1181.60 and HMRC £295.38

7.3 Paid Quay Payroll fee £15

7.4 Paid CWAC school room hire £288

7.5 Paid narked design £112.50

7.6 Paid Cheshire Community Action £55

7.7 Agreed to donate up to £250 towards 140th anniversary celebrations

7.8 Quote for the grass cutting agreed.

7.9 Paid Peter Baldini £112.50 hedge cutting expenses

7. Road Safety update

7.1 It was noted that a fire engine could not pass along Grange Lane, we are informed that a fire officer has visited the school to talk about fire safety. There is speeding traffic on the new smooth surface ignoring the new 20 mph limit, Clerk to ask PCSO to carryout speed monitoring.

Action: Clerk

We have been advised that we must wait for 1 year before progressing the interactive signs, we feel this is too long, S Bingham to chase up.

Action SB

8. Parish Issues

8.1 The Beeches - resurface quote to chase up.

8.2 United Utilities – work at both sites continues.

8.3 Young person nomination – agreed to present a voucher and invite to our annual meeting

8.4 Footpath action log – no update,

8.5 Climate action plan - KR has purchased an infra-red camera and is working out how to use it, once he has he will write up some instructions. Quotes are being sought for solar panels at the Recreation Room, their next meeting is end of April.

8.6 Tree planning discussed above.

8.7 Whitegate Conservation Group - Kevin Garvey was going to put plan together no update, Cllr Rayner to chase up.

Action: KR

8.8 Annual meeting Monday 27th April, clerk to invite community groups, PCSO and change date on sign.

Action: Clerk

9. Items for information and discussion only.

9.1 KR and JE not available in April, CL to chair meeting and VC take notes.

There being no further business meeting was closed by the chairman at 9.15pm.

Signed by the Chairman Dated

Date of next meeting 13th April 2026.

KR / Clerk absent 13/4/26

Outstanding actions (if removed they are complete)

Ref	Date	Action Log	Responsible
3.2	Feb 26	Source mount for plaque for 'seat' and install	CL/PB
3.2	Mar 26	Clerk to chase highways re Wig Wag signs	Clerk
3.2	Feb 26	Purchase 8 trees and plant	CL
3.2	Jan/Feb 26	Footpath enforcement report – ask GL to chase up where this is at	Clerk
8.1	Feb 26	Resurfacing quote	PB
8.4	Feb 26	Arrange footpath officer meeting April/May	SH
8.5	Feb 26	Young volunteer award – invite to annual meeting and purchase voucher	Clerk
8.6	Feb 26	Explore solar panel options and quotes	CH
8.6	Mar 26	Purchase infra-red camera – user notes	KR
8.7	Feb 26	Whitegate conservation group – chase up proposals	KR
6.	Mar 26	140 th School anniversary - £250 donation	Clerk / VC
7.1	Mar 26	Ask police to conduct speed monitoring Cinder hill	Clerk
7.1	Mar 26	SB to follow up on interactive sign	SB

Agenda Call forward

Ref	Call forward date	Description
	Tbc	VRA re gritting, nuns grave
	Feb 27	Littler pick date
	Sep 26	Purchase bulbs for The Beeches

Notes: