

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held at Whitegate Primary School Hall on Monday 8th June 2026 at 7.30pm

Members of the public present: 17 members of the public, Ward Councillors Gina Lewis and Stuart Bingham (arrived 7.40pm) and representative from MP Andrew Cooper's office. GL remained outside whilst the discussion regarding the planning enforcement matter on Nova Scotia was discussed. In summary:

Cllr Rayner explained the background regarding the piece of land, explaining that a previous application was received for stable blocks and significant hard standing and the Parish Council objected on grounds of over-development of the site, our view is only a recommendation. 29 other comments were made, and the application was withdrawn from the process. There is now another application pending validation which we will comment on in due course.

One resident spoke on behalf of everyone at the meeting regarding the unauthorised development which took place over the Bank Holiday weekend which has seen heavy machinery installing hardcore without planning permission. On 23rd May a stop notice was served and ignored. The development has impacted residents with works early morning as early as 5am. There is major concerns regarding highways along the narrow lane, waste and the stop notice being ignored. Silence has been notable from the Parish Council and resident want to know how they will support residents. The site is not appropriate, and residents have engaged a town and planning consultant to support their objection and have asked for the parish council's financial support.

Cllr Rayner confirmed that we contacted planning enforcement and our ward councillors to alert them to the planning enforcement breach. In follow-up we have received a response from the Head of Planning which confirmed that it is not illegal to start work without planning permission but in doing so risk that they may have to undo what they have done, there remains also the appeal process which takes time. A planning application has been received, and we don't know when that will be available for comment. Until the planning application is considered we cannot comment. The Parish Council has no powers; it is in Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWAC) hands.

With regards to a request for funding, we must remain completely independent, and we cannot support one group of residents against another (land owner). It was suggested that residents may consider setting up a constituted group and gather pledges to support any financial costs. Previously, residents pledged their support when we challenged the Local Plan land allocations for a transit site in the village, which at the time was their land, and is now a newt sanctuary or privately owned. This is different with private individuals. The current Local Plan is under review with application due end of the year, they have a working group currently looking at land allocations and there is a requirement to provide sufficiency, private individual site will not form part of the sufficiency requirements.

Cllr Bingham arrived (7.40pm) and was brought up to date on the discussion.

Residents questioned why the stop-notice has been ignored, and the legality of it with works continuing each day. Heavy machinery continues to work on site, 2 hours today with 10-20 people working on the site. Residents were advised to keep a log of everything and report it. There is currently a large building, a static caravan and two mobile caravans. Resident confirmed they have been reporting directly to the Head of Planning. The stop notice appears to have accelerated works not stop them.

Representative for MP confirmed there are restrictions on what the MP can say, he cannot comment on a live application. Role is more of a facilitator with the council; have asked for an update twice and not received a response. MP's office can request information on when the application will be validated and available for comment.

Parish Council can provide a list of what constitutes material planning considerations which should be in line with the Neighbourhood Plan, Local Plan and national planning policy framework, and will alert residents when the application is available for comment.

The role of the planning committee was outlined and the call-in process.

Action: MP office to request information on when the application will be validated and available for comment; Parish Council to display material planning considerations on their website; Parish Council to alert residents when application is available for comment.

Residents left meeting 8.15pm. Cllr Gina Lewis joined the meeting.

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

1.1 Apologise for absence.

Cllr Cotterill – Holiday

Declarations of interest.

None

2.1 To approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting and Ordinary Parish Council 11th May 2026. 1568/26 resolved that the Council approved the minutes of the AGM and Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 11th May 2026.

2.2 1569/26 resolved to approved the notes of the annual village meeting held on 27th April 2026.

3.1 Matters arising from the minutes of the Ordinary meeting on Monday 11th May 2026.

3.2 Action Log:

- Previously confirmed issue with wig-wag signs supplier.
- Speed reduction from 50-40mph will require evidence, have asked PCSO to support with monitoring.
- Noted footpath officer frustrated with lack of policy to deal with footpath enforcement matters. Cllrs not bottomed out where the policy is at, remove from our action log.
- Cllr Baldini to follow up with TP and Rec Room committee regarding site meeting pre tarmac.
- No further update on the solar panels, a preferred supplier has been discussed.
- Whitegate conservation group has to obtain ecclesiastical approval before work can commence, Cllr Rayner is liaising with the committee.
- Funding towards 140th school anniversary complete, take off action log.

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 1570/26 resolved the following planning application responses:

26/00892/FUL	Hunters Retreat Cassia Green Farm	Erection of an equestrian storage building, relocation of existing arena. Approval for an existing hardcore track and continuation of the livery business on site (part-retrospective)	The Parish Council objects to this application on the grounds of visual impact of the storage building (approx 18m X 12m X 4.4m high). There will be a detrimental impact on the area which has other residential buildings in close proximity. The building is excessively sized in relation to the proposed limited equine use.
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5.2 Appeals:

- Rushmere lodge for removal of 1.8m fence along the highway – appeal dismissed awaiting update on how this is being taken forward.
- 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/comments:

- 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 – no update
- Covert Farm , Foxwist Green– no update.
- The Dingle, Foxwist Green – no update.
- Green Vale, Foxwist Green – no update.
- Land at Nova Scotia Lane - Enforcement reference 26/00206/TRAV, a planning application due to be published for consideration 26/01592/FUL. Clerk asked for it to be noted that immediate action was taken to report the planning enforcement matter on Nova Scotia whilst on holiday on the Saturday morning to the Planning Department. Clerk also responded to resident emails whilst on holiday, and contacted some local residents to update them on action taken but was unable to respond to telephone enquiries.
- Noted that a camper van was parked overnight on Whitegate Station carpark, initially thought it was a caravan. There have been a few over recent months and CWAC ranger has been alerted. Confirmed that a website is sharing places for campervans to stay overnight and this location is listed. Café Manager confirms her support to a no overnight parking/camping sign going up. CWAC Ranger confirms they will install a sign.
- Hartford application for housing development. The Parish Council received an email from a resident group asking for support regarding an application for 110 houses off A556, Chester Road just outside our parish boundary. The Parish Council considered this and confirm that it is outside our boundary and we cannot comment, the Parish Council has not asked for our support or input.

6. Finances

6.1 The bank statements remain unchanged. Barclays account showed a balance remaining of £113,518.43. The total account balances is £116,855.89 (including savings accounts). 1571/26 agreed:

6.2 Pay Clerk Wages £1181.60, HMRC £295.40 and reimbursements £387.20 (Young person award voucher, Internal Auditor, refreshments for annual meeting, amendment to village sign, defib battery, Stationery). Noted battery in defibrillator installed and has been reactivated.

6.3 Pay grass cutting contract when complete.

6.4 Pay Quay Payroll for services £15.

6.5 Pay Chalc affiliation fee £375.20

6.6 Pay Email host fees and website update £49

7. Road Safety update

The road surface on Cassia Green has previously been reported and responded no further action. This has been escalated to Ward Councillors, agreed to share details with MP's office.

Action: Clerk

8. Parish Issues

8.1 The Beeches - see action log above.

8.2 United Utilities – noted a cheque is expected from United Utilities for £1500 compensation and will be ring fenced for use near Grange Lane.

8.3 Cllr Lewis reported mortar on the Mews is a risk, Cllr Rayner to inform the fabric committee.

8.3 General parish issues – Cllr Leech is watering the new trees, doing well, continuing to water them frequently. Cllr Leech has some trees on his land which can be used next year, they need digging out in the autumn and planting. Purchase bulbs for planting in the autumn. Noted ongoing work of residents collecting litter. It was noted in a neighbouring parish they have a citizenship award for voluntary services. We have supported our young volunteers previously and more recently Theo for his litter picking. A discussion ensued regarding freedom of the borough nominations and ceremony.

8.4 Footpath action log – meeting held 14th May. Mid Cheshire Footpath Society also attended. Noted few actions completed including FP12. Cropping issues remain. Fallen tree FP6 reported and awaiting removal. Cllr Haigh will update the log and share with Clerk for publishing on website. Action: SH/Clerk

8.5 Climate action plan - Infra-red camera passed to Cllr Haigh to try, not able to use in current weather conditions.

8.6 Whitegate conservation group - Cllr Rayner to chase the repairs to the cobbles, following our commitment to fund £1k.

8.7 Recruitment plan – clerk has published a guide to being a councillor and advertised in our May newsletter. Councillors asked to continue to make recommendations for people who may be interested.

9. Items for information and discussion only.

9.1 None.

There being no further business meeting was closed by the chairman at 8.50pm.

Signed by the Chairman **Dated**

Date of next meeting 13th 2026.

Outstanding actions (if removed they are complete)

Ref	Date	Action Log	Responsible
3.2	Mar / Apr 26 June 26	GL to follow up with PCSO re 20mph enforcement and enquire about 50-40 mph reduction between Hartford and the village	GL
7.4	May/June 26	Resurfacing progress Summer holiday	PB / VC
8.5	May 26	Progress solar panels	VC / CH
8.7	Feb / April / May / June 26	Whitegate conservation group – chase up proposals	KR
8.3	May 26	Stones on kerbside in future newsletter - June	Clerk
8.9	May 26	Include in donation invites that there is an expectation that they attend annual meeting	Clerk
	June 26	MP office to chase up validation of enforcement application Nova Scotia. MP office to support Cassia Green pothole resurface	MP office
8.3	June 26	Motor on the roof at Mews	KR to inform fabric committee

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: