LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held

Monday 30th March, 2026 at 7:30p.m.

at Lower Withington Parish Hall

Present Councillors P. Duffy (Chairman), J. Bradley, A. Brocklehurst, P. Chrisp, L. Grant, C. Hamilton.
Members of the public (1).
Dr. E. M. Maddock – Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

1. **Apologies for absence**:
Cheshire East Ward Member Cllr. L. Smetham

068/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the apologies for absence. (All in favour)

2. **Declarations of interest**: None.

069/26 RESOLVED (a) To note that no declarations of interest were made. (All in favour)

3. **Minutes**

(a) The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 23rd February, 2026 had been previously circulated to all Members.

070/26 RESOLVED (a) That the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 23rd February, 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (All in favour)

4. **Public forum for questions**: No questions were presented by members of the public.

071/26 RESOLVED (a) To note that no questions were presented. (All in favour)

5. **Cheshire East Ward Member Cllr. L. Smetham**: Borough Councillor L. Smetham had provided a written report which included updates on the following issues: Cheshire East Council is still subject to a Best Value Notice and is working towards the required improvements. Questions are still being asked as to the decision making processes which were involved which led to the letter being sent to Government supporting the proposed new town at Adlington. The proposal appears not to be proceeding at this time. There are growing concerns about the proposed Peak Cluster pipeline. Cheshire East Council will be increasing Council Tax charges by 4.99% for 2026/27. The Council will be returning to the cabinet structure from May, 2026. Work is continuing to prepare for the new devolved authority of Cheshire and Warrington. Changes to national planning policy are leading to an increase in development applications.

072/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the report from Borough Councillor L. Smetham. (All in favour)

6. **Finance**

(a) Financial Statement 2025/26 as at 30th March, 2026: Members considered the financial statement 2025/26 which was unanimously accepted. (Appendix A)

(b) Receipts: The Chairman noted the receipts since the last meeting at Appendix B.

(c) Payments: The Chairman outlined the payments listed at Appendix C.

073/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Statement of Account as at 30th March, 2026 be received and the Chairman's observations duly noted. (Appendix A)
(b) That the report on receipts be received and duly noted. (Appendix B)
(c) That the schedule of payments listed at Appendix C be approved. (All in favour)

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(d) Website accessibility: It was reported that the website accessibility audit and website update report had not identified any significant issues with the website. The supplier had made a number of amendments to the overall site structure to improve accessibility.

074/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the website accessibility audit and update report. (All in favour)

(e) Website accessibility statement: Members considered the updated website accessibility statement.

075/26 RESOLVED (a) That the updated website accessibility statement be approved. (All in favour)

(f) Earmarked reserves: Members reviewed the Council's earmarked reserves. It was considered that the highway safety schemes budget should be 're-set' to £5,000 to enable future schemes to be progressed.

076/26 RESOLVED (a) That existing earmarked reserves be re-confirmed as approved during the budget setting process with the addition of £3,013.71 to the highways safety scheme earmarked reserve (total sum earmarked: £25,423.66). (All in favour)

7. Planning Applications

(a) Recent planning decisions: Members noted planning decisions that had been issued by Cheshire East Council in respect of development within the Parish since the last meeting. (Appendix D)

077/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the updates. (All in favour)

(b) Planning applications

i. 26/0768/PRIOR-1AA: Boundary Farm, Whisterfield Lane, Siddington. SK11 9DB
Prior approval for enlargement of the dwelling by one additional storey.

078/26 RESOLVED (a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 26/0768/PRIOR-1AA. (All in favour)

ii. 26/0923/PRIOR-1A: Dairy House Farm, Catchpenny Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9DG
Prior approval for a single-storey rear extension to original dwelling, extending 8 metres beyond the rear wall, maximum height of 4 metres and eaves height of 3 metres.

079/26 RESOLVED (a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 26/0923/PRIOR-1A. (All in favour)

iii. 26/0925/PRIOR-1A: Oakwood Farm, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AB
Prior approval for a single storey rear extension to original dwelling, extending 8.00m beyond the rear wall, maximum height of 4.00m and eaves height of 3.00m.

080/26 RESOLVED (a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 26/0925/PRIOR-1A. (All in favour)

iv. 26/0926/CLPUD: Oakwood Farm, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AB
Certificate of lawful development for proposed single storey side extensions and two-storey rear extension to the existing dwellinghouse.

081/26 RESOLVED (a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 26/0926/CLPUD. (All in favour)

v. Further applications received following issue of agenda:

- 26/0748/CLPUD: Boundary Farm, Whisterfield Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9DB
  Lawful development certificate for proposed single storey side extensions and two storey rear extensions to the existing dwelling house.

082/26 RESOLVED (a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 26/0748/CLPUD. (All in favour)

- 26/0975/CLPUD: The Cottage, Macclesfield Road, Jodrell Bank. CW4 8BU
  Certificate of lawful development for proposed double garage.

083/26 RESOLVED (a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 26/0975/CLPUD. (All in favour)

8. Highway maintenance and enhancements

(a) Updates on highway matters: Members noted the updates listed at Appendix E. It was also noted that the repairs required along Lower Withington FP3 were being progressed by Cheshire East Council.

084/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Clerk continue to pursue updates in respect of outstanding highway matters. (All in favour)

(b) Highway matters for attention: No defects were reported for attention.

085/26 RESOLVED (a) To note that no new defects had been identified. (All in favour)

(c) Speed survey at Trap Street: Item deferred.

086/26 RESOLVED (a) To consider the speed data further at a future meeting and consider options for next steps. (All in favour)

(d) Village gateways and white lining: It was reported that the request for a quotation to re-fresh the white lining had been re-submitted following no response. Members considered information relating to design constraints for village gateways.

087/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update.
(b) That the Clerk continue to pursue a quotation for the village gateways.
(c) That the existing design objective for the village gateways be amended so as to locate the gateways at the first repeater sign within the 30mph zone. (All in favour)

(e) Issues relating to A535: It was reported that a response was awaited from the Police.

088/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Clerk continue to request updates in respect of Police and Cheshire East Council activities to address the speeding issue. (All in favour)

(f) Highway events: It was reported that no update had yet been received from Cheshire East Council.

089/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Clerk continue to pursue information from Cheshire East Council regarding traffic diversions relating to events. (All in favour)

(g) Speed indicator devices: It was reported that the manufacturer who has previously carried out the servicing of the devices had now ceased trading. Members considered options relating to the speed indicator devices.

090/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Clerk obtain quotations for the replacement of the two

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speed indicator devices with new data collecting models. (All in favour)

9. Meetings of External Organisations

(a) Jodrell Bank Observatory World Heritage Site Steering Group: It was reported that there was nothing to report as the group had not met since the last Parish Council meeting.

091/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

10. Correspondence

(a) To consider specific correspondence received by the Parish Council since the date of the last ordinary meeting and determine such actions as Members consider appropriate thereto:

i. Cheshire East Council: Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2026-36 consultation.

092/26 RESOLVED (a) That no response be submitted to the consultation. (All in favour)

ii. Cheshire East Council: Proposed increases to car parking charges across the borough.

093/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the information. (All in favour)

11. Parish Matters

(a) Gawsworth Ward Policing Team: It was reported that the latest crime report had identified no recent incidents in Lower Withington. Police surgeries continue to be advertised on the Knutsford Police Facebook page.
Members noted that there had been a couple of accidents within the Parish recently.

094/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(b) Community Newsletter: It was reported that the last newsletter had recently been distributed.

095/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(c) Defibrillators: It was reported that both devices were operational.

096/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(d) Christmas lights: Item deferred.

097/26 RESOLVED (a) That the item be deferred to a future meeting. (All in favour)

(e) Empty properties at Jodrell Bank: It was reported that a reminder had been sent to Manchester University for an update ahead of the Annual Parish Meeting.

098/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(f) Boundary treatment at Dicklow Cob Village Green: It was reported that no updates had been received.

099/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

12. Parish Councillor Vacancies

(a) Co-option of parish councillors (2): No expressions of interest had been received.

100/26 RESOLVED (a) That the vacancies be considered at a future meeting. (All in favour)

13. Annual Parish Meeting 2026: Members considered options for the content of the meeting.

101/26 RESOLVED (a) That no speaker be invited to the meeting this year. (All in

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favour)

14. End of Year Administration

(a) Bank reconciliation verification

102/26 RESOLVED (a) That bank reconciliation verification checks have been undertaken periodically during the year. (All in favour)

(b) Chairman role

103/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Chairman has not acted as Clerk or Responsible Financial Officer at any point during the 2025/26 financial year. (All in favour)

(c) Generic email account

104/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Parish Council operates a generic email account hosted on an authority owned domain. (All in favour)

(d) Publication of information

105/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Parish Council publishes required information on the website associated with the authority owned domain. (All in favour)

(e) IT and Email Policy

106/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Parish Council has considered and adopted an IT and Email Policy during the 2025/26 financial year. (All in favour)

(f) Information handling policies

107/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Parish Council has reviewed its information handling policies during the 2025/26 financial year. (All in favour)

(g) Registration with Information Commissioner's Office

108/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Parish Council is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office as a data controller. (All in favour)

(h) Exercise of public rights 2024/25

109/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Parish Council completed its obligations in respect of the exercise of public rights for the 2024/25 financial year. (All in favour)

(i) Definition of assets

110/26 RESOLVED (a) That assets of the Parish Council be defined as tangible objects which either have a value of over £100 (insurance policy excess) or have an expected lifespan of greater than 5 years (i.e. are long term assets of the Council). (All in favour)

(j) Staff salary

111/26 RESOLVED (a) That the salary award (one increment) for the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer be approved for implementation with effect from 1st April, 2026. (All in favour)

15. Matters for inclusion on next/future meeting agenda

(a) Maintenance of carved owl at Dicklow Cob Village Green.

16. Dates of next meetings:

(a) 27th April, 2026 at 7:30p.m.

(b) 18th May, 2026 – Annual Parish Meeting (7:30p.m.) immediately followed by Annual Parish Council meeting.

17. Exclusion of public and press

(a) To consider passing a resolution under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies

(Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

112/26 RESOLVED **(a) That a resolution to exclude the public and press from the following item of business on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information is not required as there are no items to discuss. (All in favour)**

(b) Matters for consideration including those transferred from above items: None.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8:29p.m.

Signed:..... Date: 27th April, 2026

DRAFT

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Appendix A: Financial Statements

Financial Statement – 2025/26 as at 30th March, 2026					
Actual 2024/25 £	**Details**	**2025/26 Budget £**	**Actual to Feb. 26 £**	**Agenda Mar. 26 £**	**Budget Balance £**
	Receipts				
11,142.00	Precept	11,499.00	11,499.00		0.00
0.00	Balances	3,500.00	0.00		0.00
887.04	Investment interest	0.00	555.43	41.77	0.00
0.00	Sale of assets	0.00	0.00		0.00
0.00	Grants, donations & refunds	0.00	0.00		0.00
95.75	VAT refund	0.00	145.96		148.10
12,124.79	**Total receipts**	**14,999.00**	**12,200.39**	**41.77**	**148.10**
	Payments				
4,625.40	Salary (Clerk)	4,844.00	4,492.62	408.42	-57.04
0.00	National Insurance (Employer)	0.00	6.39	45.51	-51.90
325.00	Allowances (Clerk)	350.00	0.00	312.00	38.00
177.27	Administration	300.00	0.00	190.06	109.94
0.00	Chairman/Member allowances	0.00	0.00		0.00
220.00	Audit fees (internal & external)	440.00	232.00		208.00
300.00	Insurance	350.00	300.00		50.00
3,000.00	Grants/Donations (inc. s.137)	2,600.00	221.67	792.00	1,586.33
245.00	Website	345.00	405.00	135.00	-195.00
221.04	Subscriptions/affiliation fees	285.00	225.62		59.38
200.00	Room hire	325.00	200.00		125.00
0.00	Training	210.00	0.00		210.00
0.00	Professional Services	750.00	0.00		750.00
110.95	Assets – purchase	1,000.00	61.68		938.32
674.33	Assets – maintenance	2,100.00	231.62		1,868.38
542.39	Newsletter	600.00	453.00	162.75	-15.75
560.18	Contingency	500.00	3,013.71		-2,513.71
200.76	VAT		130.17	17.93	
11,402.32	**Total payments**	**14,999.00**	**9,973.48**	**2,063.67**	**3,109.95**

Cash/Bank reconciliation	**01/04/24**	**23/02/26**	**30/03/26**	**31/03/26**
Balance B/Fwd	35,238.04	35,238.04	37,464.95	35,443.05
Add total receipts	14,999.00	12,200.39	41.77	148.10
Less total payments	14,999.00	9,973.48	2,063.67	3,109.95
Balance C/Fwd	35,238.04	37,464.95	35,443.05	32,481.20
Cumulative balances	**Balance**	**Balance**	**Balance**	**Balance**
	01/04/24	**23/02/26**	**30/03/26**	**31/03/26**
General funds	9,814.38	15,055.00	13,033.10	10,071.25
Earmarked reserves	25,423.66	22,409.95	22,409.95	22,409.95
	35,238.04	37,464.95	35,443.05	32,481.20

DRAFT

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Lower Withington Parish Council
Cash/Bank Reconciliation as at 30th March, 2026

Cash				
Balance brought forward 01/04/25				
Current Account		2,335.43		
Business Reserve Account		6,583.75		
Liquidity Manager Account		26,318.86		
		35,238.04		
Plus receipts		12,242.16		
Less payments		12,037.15		
Balance carried forward 30/03/26:		35,443.05		
Bank (NatWest)				
Current Account		5,817.57		05/01/26
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
Approved	-1,810.66			
For approval	-2,063.67			
Less payments already issued	0.00			
		-3,874.33		
			1,943.24	30/03/26
Business Reserve Account		6,636.32		05/01/26
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
	0.00			
		0.00		
			6,636.32	30/03/26
Liquidity Manager Account		26,863.49		05/03/26
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
	0.00			
		0.00		
			26,863.49	30/03/26
Total bank balances 30/03/26			35,443.05	

Appendix B: Receipts

NatWest Bank plc £41.77 Gross interest: Feb. 2026 (LM)

DRAFT

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Appendix C: Payments for approval

Cheque No 000646	E. M. Maddock	£784.21	Salary: Mar. 26 plus allowances and expenses 2025/26 [A]
Direct Debit	HM Revenue & Customs	£189.71	PAYE payment [B]
Cheque No 000647	P. Chrisp	£162.75	Newsletter printing [C]
Cheque No 000648	Lower Withington Parish Hall	£792.00	Grant towards water boiler [D]
Cheque No 000649	Narked Ltd.	£135.00	Website accessibility update [E]

[A] Localism Act 2011 s.1 [Local Government Act 1972 s.112, Local Government Act 1972 s.111]
[B] Localism Act 2011 s.1 [Local Government Act 1972 s.111 - The Income Tax (Pay As You Earn) Regulations 2003 s.67G]
[C] Localism Act 2011 s.1 [Local Government Act 1972 s.142]
[D] Localism Act 2011 s.1 [Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19]
[E] The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 s.6

Appendix D: Planning applications

(a) Recent planning decisions

26/0253/DSC — The Old Pub, Trap Street, Lower Withington. SK11 9EQ
Discharge of condition 2 on approved application 25/2975/VOC – Removal of Condition 4 on approval 23/2257M for proposed demolition of existing extension, proposed new extensions, alterations, reorganisations of internal accommodation and associated works.
Decision: Approved (11/03/26)

(b) Outstanding applications

25/1975/HOUS — Oak Lea, Salters Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9LL
Erection of a prefabricated oak-framed wooden garage on a concrete base slab (retrospective).

25/3685/DSC — Bank View Farm, Hodgehill Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9LU
Discharge of conditions 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13 on approval 24/1276M.

DRAFT

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Appendix E: Updates on reported highway matters

a. Dislodged coping stone and fallen tree on bridge at Catchpenny Lane.
Update: "Unfortunately, funds have been really tight this year [2023/24], however, this will be prioritised in the new year, for replacement."

b. Holes in road at junction of Whisterfield Lane and Chapel Lane.
Update: "Unfortunately no available resource at the moment, we will only repair actionable defects collected by our routine safety inspectors."

c. Proposal for double white lines on A535 near to junction with Catchpenny Lane.
Update: "The enquiry has been assessed and does not present a risk to highway users at this time."

d. Blocked drains/gullies at Trap Street.
Update: "This is still in the system to be checked by our Drainage Team, we are currently working to get through a large back log of drainage and flooding enquiries due to recent weather events. You should receive the system notification when it has been actioned."

e. Flooding at A535 near junction with Catchpenny Lane.
Update: Gullies vary in the speed they can drain water away and some will overflow during heavy rain even if there is no blockage. This does not necessarily mean the gully requires cleaning. We will not visit overflowing gullies during heavy rainfall unless the water is causing a risk to life or property.

f. Surplus temporary signage warning of mud at Catchpenny Lane.
Update: No update.

g. Verge damage at Catchpenny Lane (near junction with A535)
Update: No update.

h. Pothole at Salters Lane (near to No. 1 Dicklow Cob)
Update: "Will be fulfilled by planned works."

i. Cats eyes not replaced on A535 during resurfacing work (near junction of Catchpenny Lane)
Update: "Will be fulfilled by planned works."

j. Cats eyes not replaced on A535 during resurfacing work (near junction with Long Shoot Road)
Update: "Will be fulfilled by planned works."

k. Lighting at Thorntree Bungalows not working
Update: No update.

Signage which has been reported for repair:

- Broken sign along A535 (near to The Old Cheshire Hunt).
- Broken sign along A535 (junction warning sign), north of junction with Catchpenny Lane.
- Uprooted street sign (Longshoot Road), at junction of Longshoot Road with A535.

Note: Cheshire East Council advise that non-emergency sign repairs are not currently being progressed due to lack of available budget.

DRAFT