LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held

Monday 27th January, 2025 at 7:30p.m.

at Lower Withington Parish Hall

Present Councillors P. Duffy (Chairman), J. Blackburn, J. Bradley, A. Brocklehurst, P. Chrisp, C. Hamilton, H. Lewis.
Members of the public (0).
Cheshire East Ward Member: Cllr. L. Smetham.
Dr. E. M. Maddock – Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

1. Apologies for absence: None.

001/25 RESOLVED (a) To note there were no apologies for absence. (All in favour)

2. Declarations of interest: None.

002/25 RESOLVED (a) To note no declarations of interest were made. (All in favour)

3. Minutes

(a) The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 25th November, 2024 had been previously circulated to all Members.

003/25 RESOLVED (a) That the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 25th November, 2024 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.

004/25 RESOLVED (a) To note no questions were presented by members of the public. (All in favour)

5. Cheshire East Ward Member Cllr. L. Smetham – Borough Councillor L. Smetham reported that Cheshire East Council continues to experience financial challenges. Town and Parish Councils are increasingly being asked to support the delivery of services within the Borough. Cost savings measures, including service cuts, staff reductions and sale of property, continue to be pursued. Recent changes to national planning policy are likely to have an impact on local planning matters. Cheshire East Council is continuing to participate in discussions about devolution.

005/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the report from Borough Councillor L. Smetham. (All in favour)

6. Finance

(a) Financial Statement 2024/25 as at 27th January, 2025 – Members considered the financial statement 2024/25 which was unanimously accepted. (Appendix A)

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

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

006/25 RESOLVED (a) That the Statement of Account as at 27th January, 2025 be received and the Chairman's observations duly noted. (Appendix A)
(b) That the report on receipts at Appendix B be received and duly noted.
(c) That the schedule of payments listed at Appendix C be approved. (All in favour)

(d) Quarterly bank reconciliation verification – It was reported that it was necessary for a Member to undertake quarterly bank reconciliation verifications.

007/25 RESOLVED **(a) That Councillor H. Lewis be authorised to undertake the quarterly bank reconciliation verification. (All in favour)**

(e) Grant application – It was reported that a grant application had been received from Connecting Chelford requesting support to deliver first aid training within the Parish.

008/25 RESOLVED **(a) That the Parish Council support the delivery of first aid training within the Parish.**
(b) That the Parish Council approve to provide subsidised training to residents of Lower Withington.
(c) That residents attending the training be requested to each pay a £5 attendance fee.
(d) That the Parish Council will fund the remaining training event costs (£266).
(e) That the Parish Council thank Lower Withington Parish Hall for agreeing to waive the venue hire fee in support of the training.
(f) That the Clerk contact Connecting Chelford to make arrangements for the delivery of the training. (All in favour)

7. Planning Applications

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

(b) Planning applications

i. 24/4466/HOUS: Bridge Farm, Hodgehill Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9LU
Proposed single storey rear and side extension to existing residential property.

009/25 RESOLVED **(a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 24/4466/HOUS. (All in favour)**

ii. 24/4765/CLEUD: 3 Welltrough Hall Cottages, Trap Street, Lower Withington. SK11 9EF
Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development to confirm the lawful use of no.3 Welltrough Hall Cottages as a dwelling which can be occupied by persons not employed in agriculture.

010/25 RESOLVED **(a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 24/4765/CLEUD. (All in favour)**

iii. 24/4784/VOC: Lapwing Cottage, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AD
Removal of condition no. 2 of planning permission reference 96/0727P – Dismantling, relocation and reconstruction of cottage complete.

011/25 RESOLVED **(a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 24/4784/VOC. (All in favour)**

iv. Further applications received following issue of agenda:

- Appeal: 24/2623M: Foden Bank Barn, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AD – Certificate of existing lawful use for internal reconfiguration of existing outbuilding to provide ancillary accommodation to the main dwelling house (C3 Use Class).

012/25 RESOLVED **(a) That no comments be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in respect of appeal 24/2623M. (All in favour)**

- Appeal: 23/1613M: Foden Bank Barn, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AD – Conversion of existing gym/office/storage outbuilding to residential annexe.

013/25 RESOLVED **(a) That no comments be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in respect of appeal 23/1613M. (All in favour)**

8. Highway maintenance and enhancements

(a) Updates on highway matters – Members noted the updates listed at Appendix E.

014/25 RESOLVED **(a) That the Clerk continue to pursue updates in respect of outstanding highway matters. (All in favour)**

(b) Highway matters for attention – It was reported that, following reports of mud on Catchpenny Lane, Cheshire East Council had placed additional temporary warning signs on the highway. It was noted that resolving the issue would be preferable to placing several duplicate temporary signs.

015/25 RESOLVED **(a) That the Clerk report the above issue to Cheshire East Council for attention. (All in favour)**

(c) Upgrade to Lower Withington Footpath 5 – It was reported that Cheshire East Council had reviewed the conditional permissions provided by landowners and had concluded that this was not a satisfactory solution. Cheshire East Council had advised that a footpath diversion application, relating to the footpath, would be considered in due course and that matters relating to bridge upgrades could be reviewed at that time.

016/25 RESOLVED **(a) To receive and note the update.**
(b) That this issue be reviewed at a future date as matters relating to footpath FP5 progress. (All in favour)

(d) Village gateways – It was reported that no further information had been received in respect of gateway installations, however, a quotation had been requested for the re-fresh of all white lining (including roundels, dragons teeth, SLOW markings, carriageway edging, central hashed area) to alert drivers to the 30mph zone.

017/25 RESOLVED **(a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)**

(e) Running and cycling events – It was reported that Cheshire East Council had considered the representations and passed them to the event organisers. Cheshire East Council advise that they are not involved with the organisation of the events, only the approval of road closures, however, organising groups are encouraged to engage with parish councils and local residents prior to events taking place.

018/25 RESOLVED **(a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)**

(f) Motorbike and car racing along A535 – It was reported that there had been fewer instances of vehicles racing along A535 recently, however, this may have been due to inclement weather.

019/25 RESOLVED **(a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)**

(g) Traffic calming at Trap Street – It was reported that a resident had raised concerns regarding the speed of traffic travelling through the 30mph zone at Trap Street. Members discussed potential options to address the perceived issue, however, concluded that it would be advantageous to quantify the extent and magnitude of the issue as this would influence which option would be most effective to address identified issues.

020/25 RESOLVED **(a) To receive and note the concerns of the resident.**
(b) That the Clerk request a quotation for the collection of speed monitoring data at Trap Street. (All in favour)

9. 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: Notice of future election charges.
It was reported that a contested election in 2027 would likely result in a charge of £313.60 to the Parish.

021/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the information. (All in favour)

ii. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Publication of revised National Planning Policy Framework.

022/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the information. (All in favour)

iii. Cheshire East Council: New interim housing strategy consultation.

023/25 RESOLVED (a) That no response be submitted to the consultation. (All in favour)

iv. ChALC: 80th Anniversary of VE Day - 8th May, 2025.

024/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the information. (All in favour)

v. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Consultation on Compulsory Purchase Process and Compensation Reforms.

025/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the information. (All in favour)

10. Meetings of External Organisations

(a) Jodrell Bank Observatory World Heritage Site Steering Group – There was nothing to report as no meeting of the group had taken place since the last meeting.

026/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

11. Parish Matters

(a) Gawsworth Ward Policing Team – It was reported that the latest crime report had not identified any incidents with the Parish. It was noted that the Gawsworth and Chelford Ward Policing Team Facebook page had been closed and that all updates would now be published on the Knutsford Police Facebook page.

027/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(b) Community Newsletter – It was reported that the next newsletter will be delivered to residents towards the end of February, 2025.

028/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the report. (All in favour)

(c) Christmas Lights – Members reported that the battery lights used for 2024 were not ideal and that it would be preferable for an electricity supply to be available for 2025. It was noted that the Parish Hall Management Committee had not yet met to discuss outdoor electricity requirements.

029/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(d) Fruit tree planting at Dicklow Cob Village Green – It was reported that the fruit trees had now arrived, however, the current weather was not suitable for planting. Arrangements will be made for planting when the weather improves.

030/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(e) Boundary treatment at Dicklow Cob Village Green – It was reported that no update was available.

031/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

12. Parish Councillor Vacancy – No expressions of interest had been received.

032/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

13. Matters for inclusion on next/future meeting agenda

(a) Updates relating to empty properties at Jodrell Bank.

(b) Consideration of speed review criteria in respect of A535, Salters Lane and Trap Street.

(c) Management of defibrillator cabinets.

14. Date of next meeting: Monday 24th February, 2025 at 7:30p.m.

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.

033/25 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)

15. Matters for consideration including those transferred from above items – None.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8:45p.m.

Signed:..... Date: 24th February, 2025

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APPENDIX A

Financial Statement – 2024/25 as at 27th January, 2025					
Actual 2023/24 £	**Details**	**2024/25 Budget £**	**Actual to Nov. 24 £**	**Agenda Jan. 25 £**	**Budget Balance £**
	Receipts				
10,892.00	Precept	11,142.00	11,142.00		0.00
0.00	Balances	3,000.00	0.00		0.00
228.09	Investment interest		630.86	151.40	0.00
0.00	Sale of assets		0.00		0.00
500.00	Grants, donations & refunds		0.00		0.00
519.96	VAT refund		0.00		125.07
12,140.05	**Total receipts**	**14,142.00**	**11,772.86**	**151.40**	**125.07**
	Payments				
4,334.22	Salary (Clerk)	4,722.00	3,083.60	770.90	867.50
0.00	National Insurance (Employer)	0.00	0.00		0.00
300.00	Allowances (Clerk)	350.00	0.00		350.00
136.41	Administration	300.00	0.00		300.00
0.00	Chairman/Member allowances	0.00	0.00		0.00
185.00	Audit fees (internal & external)	200.00	220.00		-20.00
300.00	Insurance	350.00	300.00		50.00
2,114.96	Grants/Donations (inc. s.137)	2,600.00	0.00	3,000.00	-400.00
345.00	Website	345.00	230.00		115.00
201.50	Subscriptions/affiliation fees	290.00	174.04		115.96
190.00	Room hire	325.00	0.00	200.00	125.00
0.00	Training	210.00	0.00		210.00
0.00	Professional Services	750.00	0.00		750.00
35.98	Assets – purchase	1,000.00	0.00	110.95	889.05
9.99	Assets – maintenance	1,600.00	348.33	52.00	1,199.67
771.49	Newsletter	600.00	440.82		159.18
0.00	Contingency	500.00	560.18		-60.18
95.75	VAT		114.67	10.40	
9,020.30	**Total payments**	**14,142.00**	**5,471.64**	**4,144.25**	**4,651.18**

Cash/Bank reconciliation	**01/04/24**	**25/11/24**	**27/01/25**	**31/03/25**
Balance B/Fwd	34,515.57	34,515.57	40,816.79	36,823.94
Add total receipts	14,142.00	11,772.86	151.40	125.07
Less total payments	14,142.00	5,471.64	4,144.25	4,651.18
Balance C/Fwd	34,515.57	40,816.79	36,823.94	32,297.83
Cumulative balances	**Balance**	**Balance**	**Balance**	**Balance**
	01/04/24	**25/11/24**	**27/01/25**	**31/03/25**
General funds	8,091.91	17,393.13	13,400.28	8,874.17
Earmarked reserves	26,423.66	23,423.66	23,423.66	23,423.66
	34,515.57	40,816.79	36,823.94	32,297.83

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Cash/Bank Reconciliation as at 27th January, 2025

Cash				
Balance brought forward 01/04/24				
Current Account		2,500.00		
Business Reserve Account		6,492.38		
Liquidity Manager Account		25,523.19		
		34,515.57		
Plus receipts		11,924.26		
Less payments		9,615.89		
Balance carried forward 27/01/25:		36,823.94		
Bank (NatWest)				
Current Account		8,226.11		03/01/25
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
Approved	0.00			
For approval	-4,144.25			
Less payments already issued	40.00			
		-4,104.25		
			4,121.86	27/01/25
Business Reserve Account		6,563.07		03/01/25
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
	0.00			
		0.00		
			6,563.07	27/01/25
Liquidity Manager Account		26,139.01		03/01/25
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
	0.00			
		0.00		
			26,139.01	27/01/25
Total bank balances 27/01/25			36,823.94	

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APPENDIX B

Receipts

NatWest Bank plc	£7.79	Gross interest – October 2024 (BR)
NatWest Bank plc	£61.17	Gross interest – November 2024 (LM)
NatWest Bank plc	£7.02	Gross interest – November 2024 (BR)
NatWest Bank plc	£67.66	Gross interest – December 2024 (LM)
NatWest Bank plc	£7.76	Gross interest – December 2024 (BR)

APPENDIX C

Payments for approval

Cheque No 000605	J. Blackburn	£40.00	Purchase of Christmas Tree
Cheque No 000606	E. M. Maddock	£687.65	Salary: Dec. 2024 – Jan. 2025 plus expenses (fruit trees)
Cheque No 000607	HM Revenue & Customs	£154.20	PAYE payment
Cheque No 000608	Lower Withington Parish Hall	£200.00	Room hire 2024
Cheque No 000608	Lower Withington Parish Hall	£3,000.00	Contribution towards decorating
Cheque No 000609	MedUK Group Ltd	£62.40	Defibrillator pads

APPENDIX D

(a) Recent planning decisions

24/3076M The Cottage, Macclesfield Road, Jodrell Bank. CW4 8BU
Extension in the footprint of the existing cottage at the sides and also at the rear and refurbishment of the existing cottage.
DECISION STATUS – Approved with conditions (24/12/24)

(b) Outstanding planning applications

24/1216M Oaklyn, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AD
Side/rear and first-floor extensions which have already been approved or deemed lawful with a pitched roof to the single storey extension and closing of two gaps between approved extensions.
DECISION STATUS – Undecided

24/1905M Oaklyn, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AD
Demolition and relocation of annexe outbuilding.
DECISION STATUS – Undecided

24/2965M Holly Tree Farm, Holmes Chapel Road, Lower Withington. SK11 9DT
Erection of a free range egg laying unit.
DECISION STATUS – Undecided

24/3271M Land at Pitt Lane, Lower Withington.
Proposed demolition of a two storey former agricultural building (now in hotel use (C1)) and replace it with a new farmhouse and garage.
DECISION STATUS – Undecided

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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. Broken sign along A535 (near to The Old Cheshire Hunt).
Update: A job has been raised for the sign to be repaired. (No timescale provided)

d. Proposal for double white lines on A535 near to junction with Catchpenny Lane.
Update: Linked to review of A535.

e. Broken post on Parish boundary sign at Salters Lane.
Update: Order placed for replacement post and remounting of sign.

f. 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."

g. Flooding at A535 near junction with Catchpenny Lane
Update: The report has been logged and passed to a member of the team. Highways will aim to assess the report within 20 working days.

h. Broken sign along A535 (junction warning sign), north of junction with Catchpenny Lane
Update: This is not a category 1 defect, therefore, will not be repaired immediately. There is currently no budget for non-emergency sign repairs.

i. Uprooted street sign (Longshoot Road), at junction of Longshoot Road with A535
Update: This is not a category 1 defect, therefore, will not be repaired immediately. There is currently no budget for non-emergency sign repairs, however, if the damage was the result of a vehicle collision and we could potentially recover the costs and get the signs repaired quicker.

j. Broken sign (Brown sign for Clonter Opera) at junction of Longshoot Road with A535
Update: Repair of this sign is the responsibility of the business, however, if the damage was the result of a vehicle collision and we can recover the costs, we will re-erect the sign.

k. Advertising signs on fence along A535 (opposite junction with Longshoot Road
Update: This report has been closed as signs are on a private fence and are the property owners responsibility.