LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held

Monday 31st March, 2025 at 7:30p.m.

at Lower Withington Parish Hall

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

1. Apologies for absence:
Councillor C. Hamilton – Personal reason.
Cheshire East Ward Member: Cllr. L. Smetham.

059/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and approve the above apologies for absence. (All in favour)

2. Declarations of interest: None.

060/25 RESOLVED (a) To note no declarations of interest were made. (All in favour)

3. Minutes

(a) The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 24th February, 2025 had been previously circulated to all Members.

061/25 RESOLVED (a) That the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 24th February 2025 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.

062/25 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 was not present at the meeting to report.

6. Finance

(a) Financial Statement 2024/25 as at 31st March, 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.

063/25 RESOLVED (a) That the Statement of Account as at 31st March, 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)

7:33p.m. – Councillor J. Bradley joined the meeting.

(d) Earmarked reserves – Members reviewed existing earmarked reserves:

- **i.** Democratic services fund: £5,000.00
- **ii.** Transparency Code grant: £118.00
- **iii.** Dicklow Cob pathway project grant: £2,205.66
- **iv.** Footbridge upgrade fund: £600.00
- **v.** Highway safety schemes fund: £5,000.00

vi. Village gateway fund: £7,500.00

vii. Local organisation investment fund: £5,000.00

064/25 RESOLVED **(a) That the above listed earmarked reserves be re-confirmed. (All in favour)**

(e) Quarterly bank reconciliation verification – It was reported that bank reconciliation verifications had been carried out and no issues identified.

065/25 RESOLVED **(a) To receive confirmation that bank reconciliation verifications had been completed. (All in favour)**

7. Planning Applications

(a) Recent planning decisions – Members noted that no planning decisions had been issued by Cheshire East Council in respect of development within the Parish since the last meeting. (Appendix D)

(b) Planning applications

i. 25/0526/FUL: The Old Pub, Trap Street, Lower Withington. SK11 9EQ
Proposed change of use from public house with food provision (sui generis) to restaurant and shop (Class E).

066/25 RESOLVED **(a) That the following comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 25/0526/FUL: Lower Withington Parish Council has no objections to the proposed change of use, however, requests that future permitted development rights be removed from the property to ensure any future changes to the site can be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate within the rural setting and are not detrimental to nearby residential properties. (All in favour)**

ii. 25/0812/DSC: Piggotts Hall, Congleton Lane, Lower Withington.
Discharge of condition 3 on application 24/2383M.

067/25 RESOLVED **(a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 25/0812/DSC. (All in favour)**

iii. Further applications received following issue of agenda:

- 25/0742/HOUS: Farmgate Cottage, Farm Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9DU
  Small extension that will externally rebalance the symmetry of the house across the front of the cottage from extensions completed by previous owners, and create a walk in closet and master bedroom suite along with a more proportionate hall stairs and landing befitting the house.

068/25 RESOLVED **(a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 25/0742/HOUS. (All in favour)**

- 25/0833/DSC: Smiths Green Farm, Catchpenny Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9DG
  Discharge of condition 8 on approval 22/1031M: Reserved matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale in connection with outline approval 20/0499M.

069/25 RESOLVED **(a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 25/0833/DSC. (All in favour)**

8. Highway maintenance and enhancements

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

070/25 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 the missing chevron at the junction of Holmes Chapel Road and Long Shoot Road was causing concern.

071/25 RESOLVED (a) That the Clerk report the above issue to Cheshire East Council for attention. (All in favour)

(c) Village gateways – It was reported that the quotation 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 had not yet been received.

072/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(d) Traffic calming at Trap Street – It was reported that the Police had advised that their records indicate that there have been no reports of issues relating to speed over the past 12 months. It is not possible for speed checks to be carried out at Trap Street as there are no currently approved sites. It is recommended that a speed survey is carried out by Cheshire East Council. If a speeding issue is highlighted by the data the Police will explore options to address.

073/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update.
(b) That approval be given to proceed with a speed monitoring survey from Cheshire East Council at a cost of approximately £1,000. (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: Local Transport Plan consultation.

074/25 RESOLVED (a) That no response be submitted to the consultation. (All in favour)

ii. Cheshire East Council: Advance notice of planned road closure of Farm Lane on 2nd September, 2025 (8:30a.m. – 7:00p.m.) for the Four Oaks Tradeshow.

075/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the information. (All in favour)

iii. Manchester Airport: Barrierless Forecourts Information.

076/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the information. (All in favour)

iv. Manchester Airport: Invitation to Parish Council Forum on 7th May, 2025.

077/25 RESOLVED (a) That the link to the meeting be circulated to Members upon receipt. (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.

078/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(b) Cheshire East Council Network Meeting (18/03/25) – The Clerk reported that four presentations provided information on the following items: Cheshire and Warrington Devolution; Local service delivery framework; Family Hubs and the Cheshire East Council Local Transport Plan consultation.

079/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the report. (All in favour)

11. Parish Matters

(a) Gawsworth Ward Policing Team – It was reported that no incidents were highlighted on the latest crime reports. Local surgeries are continuing to take place.

080/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(b) Community Newsletter – It was reported that the next newsletter will include an advert for the Rose Day.

081/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the report. (All in favour)

(c) Fruit tree planting at Dicklow Cob Village Green – It was reported that the fruit trees will be planted in the near future.

082/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(d) First Aid Training – It was reported that the first aid training planned for 28th March, 2025 had been cancelled.

083/25 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(e) Spring litter pick – Members considered dates to hold the spring litter pick.

084/25 RESOLVED (a) That the litter pick take place on 10th May, 2025. (All in favour)

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

085/25 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) Boundary treatment at Dicklow Cob Village Green.

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

(d) Concerns relating to motorbike and car racing along A535.

14. Date of next meeting: Monday 28th April, 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.

086/25 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 8:23p.m.

Signed:..... Date: 28th April, 2025

LOWER WITHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

APPENDIX A

Financial Statement – 2024/25 as at 31st March, 2025					
Actual 2023/24 £	**Details**	**2024/25 Budget £**	**Actual to Feb. 25 £**	**Agenda Mar. 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		846.77	54.68	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		200.76
12,140.05	**Total receipts**	**14,142.00**	**11,988.77**	**54.68**	**200.76**
	Payments				
4,334.22	Salary (Clerk)	4,722.00	4,239.95	385.45	96.60
0.00	National Insurance (Employer)	0.00	0.00		0.00
300.00	Allowances (Clerk)	350.00	0.00	325.00	25.00
136.41	Administration	300.00	0.00	177.27	122.73
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	3,000.00		-400.00
345.00	Website	345.00	245.00		100.00
201.50	Subscriptions/affiliation fees	290.00	174.04	47.00	68.96
190.00	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
35.98	Assets – purchase	1,000.00	110.95		889.05
9.99	Assets – maintenance	1,600.00	400.33	274.00	925.67
771.49	Newsletter	600.00	440.82	101.57	57.61
0.00	Contingency	500.00	560.18		-60.18
95.75	VAT		128.07	72.69	
9,020.30	**Total payments**	**14,142.00**	**10,019.34**	**1,382.98**	**2,940.44**

Cash/Bank reconciliation	**01/04/24**	**24/02/25**	**31/03/25**	**31/03/25**
Balance B/Fwd	34,515.57	34,515.57	36,485.00	35,156.70
Add total receipts	14,142.00	11,988.77	54.68	200.76
Less total payments	14,142.00	10,019.34	1,382.98	2,940.44
Balance C/Fwd	34,515.57	36,485.00	35,156.70	32,417.02
Cumulative balances	**Balance**	**Balance**	**Balance**	**Balance**
	01/04/24	**24/02/25**	**31/03/25**	**31/03/25**
General funds	8,091.91	13,061.34	11,733.04	8,993.36
Earmarked reserves	26,423.66	23,423.66	23,423.66	23,423.66
	34,515.57	36,485.00	35,156.70	32,417.02

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Cash/Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 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		12,043.45		
Less payments		11,402.32		
Balance carried forward 31/03/25:		35,156.70		
Bank (NatWest)				
Current Account		8,226.11		03/01/25
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
Approved	-4,507.70			
For approval	-1,382.98			
Less payments already issued	0.00			
		-5,890.68		
			2,335.43	31/03/25
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	31/03/25
Liquidity Manager Account		26,258.20		05/03/25
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
	0.00			
		0.00		
			26,258.20	31/03/25
Total bank balances 31/03/25			35,156.70	

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APPENDIX B

Receipts

NatWest Bank plc	£54.68	Gross interest – February, 2025 (LM)

APPENDIX C

Payments for approval

Cheque No 000612	P. Chrisp	£101.57	Newsletter printing
Cheque No 000613	Cancelled		
Cheque No 000614	E. M. Maddock	£763.41	Salary: March, 2025, allowances and expenses
Cheque No 000615	HM Revenue & Customs	£142.20	PAYE payment
Cheque No 000616	Defib Store Ltd.	£328.80	Defibrillator pads (2)
Direct Debit	Information Commissioner's Office	£47.00	Data Protection Fee 2025/26

APPENDIX D

(a) Recent planning decisions: None.

(b) Outstanding planning applications

23/1613M	Foden Bank Barn, Lapwing Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9AD Conversion of existing gym/office/storage outbuilding to residential annexe. DECISION STATUS – Refused (21/06/24) – Appeal undecided
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). DECISION STATUS – Negative certificate (09/09/24) – Appeal 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
24/4466/HOUS	Bridge Farm, Hodgehill Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9LU Proposed single storey rear and side extension to existing residential property. DECISION STATUS – Undecided
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. DECISION STATUS – Undecided

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.
DECISION STATUS – Undecided

25/0378/HOUS 10 South View, Salters Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9DZ
Proposed single storey extensions to front and rear.
DECISION STATUS – Undecided

25/0627/NMA Brook Farm, Catchpenny Lane, Lower Withington. SK11 9DG
Non-material amendment to approval 23/2948M for Proposed demolition of a double garage and the construction of a single storey rear extension to accommodate a breakfast and garden room. Insertion of two rooflights to the front roof slope of the house and the construction of an open-sided porch to the east elevation.
DECISION STATUS – Undecided

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)
Sign removed from site.

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. Sign removed from site.

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. Provision of grit bin at Longshoot Road
Update: Information relating to grit bins is available on Cheshire East Council website.

l. 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.

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

n. Broken sign (chevron) at Salters Lane near to Mill House Farm.
Update: No update.