

Minutes of the Meeting of Comberbach Parish Council held on Tuesday 15 October 2024

Present

Councillors:

John Ryder (Chairman in the Chair)

Bill Briggs

Sandy Cameron

Richard Chandler

John Darwin

Jill Johnston

Val McDermott

Denise French (Clerk)

Cheshire West and Chester Councillor Lynn Gibbon

The Meeting started at 6.45pm.

Public Open Forum

There were no members of the public present.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Councillor Holt due to family reasons.

An apology for absence was also received from the RFO, Stephen Penwill.

Apologies for absence were noted from the Cheshire West and Chester Councillors Marshall and Wright.

2. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest

Councillor McDermott declared an interest in relation to item 10.3 on the agenda – dropped kerb on 12 Cogshall Lane. There were no other declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 3 September 2024

(24/58) RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 3 September 2024 be approved as a correct record.

4. Progress Reports and Updates

4.1 Resilience Plan – Councillor Briggs would provide some amended wording for the introduction. The reference to Owl Joinery would be removed by Councillor Chandler's details. The revised plan would be circulated and the item would be considered at the next meeting.

4.2 Wildflower planting on areas fronting a hedge and highway – the Clerk had contacted CWAC who had advised that specific locations could be proposed for consideration but in general areas around junctions should be avoided due to visibility issues. Members commented that wildflower areas were attractive when in flower but it was essential that ongoing maintenance took place. Members agreed to note the information but take no action at the present moment.

4.3 Footbridge at Hopyards Bridge – Forestry England had confirmed they would remove the current footbridge. The Countryside Officer at CWAC had contacted the Parish Council and other local bodies seeking support towards the principle of fundraising for a replacement bridge. Members agreed that they supported the efforts to provide a replacement footbridge at Hopyards.

4.4 Freedom Fibre – a response had been received from Freedom Fibre regarding connectivity across Comberbach; the letter stated that their full-fibre broadband service was available to all homes within the designated build areas in Comberbach village. Members discussed some homes and businesses where the service did not appear to be available. Members agreed to contact Freedom Fibre and the CWAC digital officer about connectivity for the totality of the village.

4.5 Comberbach Village News – the current coordinator was continuing in the role to the end of the year, there had been issues with delivering the previous edition due to volunteers being on holiday. Members agreed that they would help with delivery if needed and the Chairman would inform the Coordinator.

(24/59) RESOLVED: that:

- (a) The Resilience Plan be updated based on the discussion at the meeting and considered further at the next meeting.
- (b) The information from CWAC regarding wildflower planting be noted.
- (c) The Clerk respond to the CWAC Countryside Officer to confirm that the Parish Council is supportive of the efforts to provide a replacement bridge at Hopyards.
- (d) The Clerk write to the Director of Operations at Freedom Fibre copying in the Digital Sector Specialist at CWAC, regarding connectivity across the whole of the village.
- (e) The coordinator of the Comberbach Village News be informed that Councillors are happy to help with distributing the newsletter if needed.

5.0 Cheshire West and Chester Councillors updates

CWAC Councillor Gibbon updated:

- Funding was available from Cheshire Police SWAP fund via grant applications
- The Government's consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) had now ended. Both CWAC and the Conservative Group had submitted a response. Consultation feedback was expected in January 2024. Areas to be aware of included an increase in housing numbers in CWAC from 1000 to 2100

per year. There was further clarification awaited on the definition of 'grey' belt and the inclusion of gypsy and traveller pitches on new developments.

- A consultation was taking place on proposals relating to the future of Anderton Boat Lift and Visitor Centre
- An Expression of Interest had been submitted to the Government for devolution and a CWAC subregional Task Group had been established working across the three authorities Cheshire West, Cheshire East and Warrington.
- Members' Budgets were open for applications up to the end of January 2025.
- There were a number of consultations on the CWAC website.
- A new Alexa skill had been developed by CWAC as an additional way for residents to access information using simple voice commands; it was available 24/7.
- Highways - work continued across the ward and she had arranged site visits to raise concerns in some locations.
- Northwich Community Partnership was holding an event to bring together a wide range of people and organisations with the aim of helping make the lives of everyone living and working in the Northwich area happier and healthier. The event was taking place on Wednesday 6th November 2024 at Brio Leisure Northwich from 11am to 1pm.
- The latest round of funding was available via the Cheshire West Crowd. Projects needed to align with one or more of the Council's priorities.

Members discussed whether any residents may be eligible for pension credit and Councillors Johnston and McDermott agreed to offer sessions at the Memorial Hall to help with making an application.

Members asked Councillor Gibbon whether there was any update on Winnington Bridge but there was nothing new to report at the moment.

The Chairman referred to the damaged speed limit sign on Marbury Road which he had reported on the CWAC website. The sign had eventually been repaired but had required three visits, firstly to assess the damage, a second visit had seen the replacement of the 30mph sign following which he had reported that the 40mph sign also needed replacing which had subsequently been undertaken. Councillor Gibbon agreed to raise this issue with Highways including whether the additional visit to complete the work meant an additional cost.

Members queried responsibility for the bus service through Comberbach which Councillor Gibbon confirmed was Warrington Borough Council.

6.0 Recreation Area and Pump Track

6.1 The Chairman updated that Shane Ross had visited the Recreation Area for the regular maintenance and reported that one of the gates needed repair. It was noted that the MUGA needed to be maintained with either Algon or jet washing.

6.2 The recent inspection report was noted.

6.3 The roof of the Storage Unit had some damaged panels and had been temporarily repaired to make it weatherproof. The Chairman outlined the cost of 3 roofing panels to undertake a permanent repair and to keep 2 panels for spares which was around £150, Members supported this purchase.

(24/60) RESOLVED: that:

- (a) The update and recent inspection be noted.
- (b) Shane Ross be requested to repair the Recreation Area gate.
- (c) The quote for 3 x roofing panels at a cost of £150 be approved.

7. Highways and Streetscene

7.1 Members discussed gulley clearing and the inconsistent cleaning regime that meant gulleys located in the same area were not all cleared at the same time and in addition, that the online portal was not up to date. Members agreed that this item remain on the agenda.

7.2 Members were informed that the Clerk to Antrobus Parish Council was to write to CWAC about the recent successful resurfacing on Gibb Hill after a number of years where short term substandard pothole repairs had been undertaken. Councillor Chandler raised concern about drainage issues on Gibb Hill which he had reported but had not yet been resolved despite repeat requests. It was agreed to refer this information to Antrobus Parish Council.

7.3 The Chairman reported that he and the Vice Chairman had attended the recent CWAC online session hosted by Highways Officers. The session had included information about participating in the Highways Volunteer Scheme. Councillor Johnston reported information she had discovered about the Great British Spring Clean organised and promoted by Keep Britain Tidy between 21 March and 6 April 2025. Members agreed to take part in this initiative by Keep Britain Tidy and consider further at the next meeting.

7.4 The Council noted the issues with the replacement 30mph/40mph sign on Marbury Road that had been raised earlier in the meeting (item 5 refers).

7.5 The Speed Indicator Device (SID) was in need of two new batteries at a cost of £110 which would be shared with Anderton with Marbury Parish Council; Members agreed to this purchase.

7.6 The latest data from the SID was considered. Members suggested siting the SID at the start of the village by the gateway sign and this was agreed.

(24/61) RESOLVED: that

- (a) The issues relating to gulley clearing and the online portal remain on the agenda for consideration at the next meeting.
- (b) The Clerk contact the Clerk to Antrobus Parish Council with the information shared by Councillor Chandler regarding Gibb Hill drainage issues and request that this be considered by Antrobus Parish Council.
- (c) The Parish Council will consider taking part in the Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean in 2025 and this be considered further at the next meeting.
- (d) The Chairman share with CWAC Councillor Gibbon the information about the damaged speed limit sign on Marbury Road so that she can progress this with Highways including whether any additional costs have been incurred.
- (e) Replacement batteries be purchased for the Speed Indicator Device at a cost of £110 to be shared with Anderton with Marbury Parish Council.
- (f) The SID be placed at the start of the village by the gateway sign.

8. Accounts and financial matters

- 8.1 The minutes of Finance Committee held on 8 October were received.
- 8.2 The Quarter 2 budget review was considered.
- 8.3 The accounts for 30 September 2024 were listed in Appendix 1.
- 8.4 The list of payments was in Appendix 2.

(24/62) RESOLVED: that:

- (a) The minutes of Finance Committee held on 8 October be received. Members agreed to purchase a pull up banner and additional lamp post poppies.
- (b) The Quarter 2 budget review be noted.
- (c) The accounts in Appendix 1 with a balance of £19,386.14 and £28,616.42 in reserves be noted.
- (d) The list of payments in Appendix 2 be approved.

9. Projects

9.1 Christmas Music concert – the Barnton Silver Band had been booked for a Christmas Concert to take place on Saturday 23 November at 7.00pm. A number of Members indicated availability to help with the event including setting up and serving mulled wine and mince pies and clearing away afterwards. The event would be promoted in the Newsletter, on posters and on the website.

(24/63) RESOLVED: that the details of the Christmas Concert be noted.

10. Planning

10.1 Planning decisions were listed in Appendix 3

10.2 There were no enforcement matters.

10.3 The Council discussed the dropped kerb that had been installed at 12 Cogshall Lane. This did not appear to have been granted planning approval which was inconsistent with a similar situation at another property on Cogshall Lane. The footpath by 12 Cogshall Lane had also not yet been reinstated with a top surface of tarmac. It was agreed to contact CWAC about both these matters.

(Note: in accordance with item 2 above, Councillor McDermott declared an interest in item 10.3 and left the meeting; she did not take part in the discussion and did not vote).

(24/64) RESOLVED: That:

(a) The update be noted.

(b) The Clerk respond to the planning consultation regarding 18 Senna Lane that the proposed garage location is very close to the house on Mather Drive where there is a window on the boundary of the two properties.

(b) The Clerk contact CWAC Planning and Highways regarding the dropped kerb by 12 Cogshall Lane and lack of footpath reinstatement with tarmac.

11. Correspondence

The list of correspondence had been circulated. The Clerk referred Members to the invitation to attend a meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner organised by Frodsham Town Council.

(24/65) RESOLVED: that the correspondence be noted.

12. Representative Reports

- Comberbach Fete – a meeting was to take place during the week regarding whether the Fete could take place in 2025 due to lack of volunteers.
- Comberbach Memorial Hall Management Committee – Councillor McDermott reported the thanks of the Cubs for bulbs for the planters.
- Police Liaison – the latest PCSO reports had been circulated. Members noted the information on parking issues.
- School Liaison – Councillor McDermott said the school were using the 'considerate parking' banner on an occasional basis to emphasise the message but parking issues had improved slightly.

- Litterpick – Councillor Johnston updated that there were no coordinated sessions arranged but instead individuals could undertake their own litterpick; it was agreed to remove this from the agenda due to the lack of a coordinated group.
- Bowling Club – Councillor Darwin said the Bowling Club C Team had won their league. The bowling season had now ended. The Club Bar remained open on a Friday evening.

13. Exclusion of Public and Press – Part 2

None

The Meeting closed at 8.50pm.

The next meeting of Comberbach Parish Council will be on Tuesday 26 November 2024 at 6.45pm.

Signed Chairman

Appendix 1 Accounts for 30 September 2024

Current account	£19,386.14	Reserve	£28,616.42
Cash book	£48,002.56	Reconciliation:	0

Appendix 2 Payments

Item	Amount	Power
Synchroprint – Inv 6823, CVN Sep 24	£232.32	LGA 1972 s 111
Shane Ross – Grounds Mtce inv 2, ref 23-04	£600.00	LGA 1972 s 111
J Ryder – Materials & bulbs for planters	£45.98	LGA 1972 s 111
Barnton Silver Band – final payment for 23 rd Nov	£100.00	LGA 1972 s 111

Pre-Authorised Payments

Item	Amount	Power
DD – Babble, MS Office license Sep 24	£23.50	LGA 1972 s 111
DD – Tesco Mobile, Aug 24	£7.50	LGA 1972 s 111

Appendix 3 Recent planning decisions by CW&C

APPLICATION DETAILS	DATE OF VALIDATION	CURRENT POSITION
21/05070/OUT - Outline planning permission for a mixed use development of up to 1,550 units of residential dwellings including affordable housing (subject to viability); specialist accommodation for older people including residential care home; local centre and active ground floor uses comprising up to 600 sqm of flexible floorspace for retail (including small convenience food store); up to 275 sqm of health, nursery and community; up to 7,700 sqm of employment space; up to 950 sqm of cafe, restaurant, takeaway and public house floorspace; up to a 2,250sqm (up to 2FE) primary school with associated playing fields (Use Class F1(a)); and associated road infrastructure, landscaping (including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems), public realm and amenity space (all matters reserved except for vehicular access), land at Winnington Works	Wed 22 Dec 2021	Awaiting decision
21/01937/S73, <u>Single storey side and rear extension and creation of first floor (Variation of conditions 2 (approved plans) and 3 (materials) of planning permission 19/01832/FUL), 31 Senna Lane</u>	Fri 30 Apr 2021	Awaiting decision
24/00177/FUL - <u>Two storey, part single storey side extension, single storey rear extension, front canopy porch and detached garage to replace existing.</u> 18 Senna Lane Comberbach	23 January 2024	Awaiting decision
24/00595/FUL - Relocation of existing equine building and the siting of a new stable block with access track and hardstanding area Land Off Senna Lane, Comberbach	26 February 2024	Awaiting decision
24/00958/FUL - Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a replacement dwelling - Resubmission of planning application 23/02023/FUL, Hill View, Hough Lane	28 May 2024	Awaiting decision

24/00647/FUL - steel framed building, Ivy Lodge Farm	3 June 2024	Awaiting decision
24/02049/FUL – single storey garden room, 11 Kennelwood Road	12 July 2024	Awaiting decision
24/01734/FUL - Demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuildings, including removal of the mobile home, and the erection of a replacement dwelling - Brookside Farm, Cogshall Lane	27 June 2024	Awaiting decision