

Minutes of the Meeting of Comberbach Parish Council held on Tuesday 2 December 2025

Present

Councillors:

Jill Johnston (Chairman in the Chair)

Bill Briggs

Sandy Cameron

Richard Chandler

John Darwin

Val McDermott

John Ryder

Denise French (Clerk)

Stephen Penwill (RFO)

The Meeting started at 6.30pm.

Public Open Forum

There were no members of the public present.

1. Apologies for Absence

CWAC Councillors Gibbon and Marshall had submitted apologies.

2. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 28 October 2025

(25/61) RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 28 October 2025 be approved as a correct record.

4. Progress Reports and Updates

4.1 Resilience Plan – the Council considered the latest version of the Parish Council's draft Resilience Plan, which had been updated with some of the contact details. It was noted that there were sandbags in the storage unit and more bags would be purchased; Councillors Cameron, Chandler and Ryder all had keys to the unit. The Clerk would ask the Joint Emergency Planning Team (JEPT) for advice on the contents of the Resilience Box. Members would check the contact details of their section of the plan as advised by the Clerk. It was agreed that it would be good practice to review the plan on an annual basis. The Clerk had confirmed with the JEPT that it was good practice to make the Resilience Plan a public document but to

redact any personal contact details. It was agreed to consider the Resilience Plan further at the next meeting.

4.2 Pickleball - Councillor McDermott had been contacted by 10 local people who were interested in a pickleball facility in the village. This would be considered further at the next meeting.

4.3 Parish Council vacancy – the Clerk updated that the vacancy was advertised and Cheshire West and Chester Council would advise whether an election had been requested or whether the Parish Council could co-opt.

4.4 Land in the ownership of the Parish Council – the Clerk updated that she had contacted the solicitors to request they progress the land registration. They had sent a plan of the area and asked for confirmation of the land boundary to be registered. Members agreed that the land ownership was as stated in the deeds and the Clerk would convey this to the solicitors and then progress the matter as required.

5. Cheshire West and Chester Councillors update

No CWAC Councillors were available but Councillor Gibbon had sent the written Marbury Ward update to the Clerk which she had circulated. Councillor Gibbon had also contacted the CWAC Chief Executive seeking a meeting with Marbury Parish Council representatives regarding various planning and enforcement matters; an update was awaited on whether a meeting would take place. Members requested that two trees on the junction of Freshfields and Cogshall Lane be surveyed. The Clerk would contact the Ward Councillors about this.

It was noted that there had not yet been any feedback from the Locality meeting held in October.

6. Recreation Area and Pump Track

6.1 Following the successful crowd funding project for funding for the replacement for the infant multi-play unit, Members considered a draft Request for Quotation. Members agreed to add in a sentence about any other information that a bidder might think important and that the request would be sent out by the end of the week. Members agreed to hold a special meeting on 20 January 2026 to consider the quotes.

6.2 Quotes had been received for tree works at the Recreation Area and car park and would be considered in Part 2.

6.3 The Council considered the inspection reports from November and December. It was noted that there was lots of tree debris, but this could be addressed after the tree works were carried out. It was noted that the wooded area had low level branches and twigs and it was agreed to undertake a site visit during daylight hours to assess whether any work was needed to cut back branches.

6.4 The manufacturer of the swing set had undertaken a site visit and was scheduling a visit before the end of the year to address the issue that had been raised by Rospa about the distance between the basket swing and the supporting post. The Clerk would ask for confirmation of the date.

6.5 The Council considered a quote for repairing the wet pour and agreed to the quote. Members also agreed to seek a price for the purchase of wet pour granules to undertake some minor repairs of the surface.

(25/62) RESOLVED: that:

(a) The Request for a Quotation document be approved subject to an additional sentence that bidders add in anything else they think relevant to their quote; and a special meeting be held on 20 January to consider all quotes.

(b) The inspection reports be noted and a site visit be undertaken next year of the wooded area during daylight.

(c) Massey and Harris be asked to confirm the date for works to address the issue raised by the Rospa Inspector regarding the distance of the basket swing to the stanchion.

(d) The quote from Shane Ross of £200 to jet wash the wet pour surface at the Recreation Area be approved.

(e) Councillor Ryder seek a price for wet pour granules.

7. Highways and Streetscene

7.1 The SID had been placed on Cogshall Lane in the 20 mph zone and the data was considered. It was noted that the average speed was 22.9 mph and the top speed was 45 mph. The Clerk would contact a local company asking them to remind their drivers of the speed limits in the village.

7.2 The Clerk had contacted CWAC Highways in September to request they undertake further speed monitoring on Gibb Hill but they had advised they no longer carried out traffic surveys in house and funding would need to be provided by the Parish Council or via the CWAC Members. Members asked the Clerk to see if CWAC could advise the likely cost of a traffic survey, whether Antrobus Parish Council would be willing to contribute, how much CWAC Ward Councillors had left in their ward budget and who was responsible for addressing speeding issues – whether it was CWAC Highways or the Police.

(25/63) RESOLVED: that

(a) The SID data be noted.

- (b) The Clerk contact CWAC regarding likely costs of a speed monitoring device on Gibb Hill and contact Antrobus PC about whether they would part fund the costs; also seek information about the remaining Ward Councillors budget and ascertain responsibility for addressing speeding issues.

8. Accounts and financial matters

8.1 The Parish Council had purchased an artificial wreath for Remembrance Sunday some years ago; it was agreed to make a donation of £100 to the Royal British Legion as a wreath was no longer purchased each year.

8.2 The Parish Council agreed to pay the cost of the village Christmas Tree of £230. Councillor Darwin said a resident had asked whether a Christmas Tree could be located on the triangular area of land by Budworth Lane, next to the benches; the Clerk would investigate the permissions required from CWAC and update to the next meeting.

8.3 The accounts for 31 October 2025 were listed in Appendix 1. The RFO advised that Unity Bank were increasing the monthly fee from £6 - £7 next year. The accounts did not include the funding from CWAC for the replacement multi-play unit as that had been received in November.

8.4 The list of payments was in Appendix 2.

(25/64) RESOLVED: that:

- (a) A donation of £100 is made to the Royal British Legion in lieu of purchasing a wreath.
- (b) The cost of £230 towards the village Christmas Tree be approved.
- (c) The Clerk will investigate the possibility of a Christmas tree on land at the junction of Budworth Lane and report back to a future meeting.
- (d) The accounts in Appendix 1 with a balance of £56,529.93 and £37,000 in reserves be noted.
- (d) The increase in the Unity Bank monthly fee, from £6 to £7 be approved.
- (e) The list of payments in Appendix 2 be approved.

9. Issues and Projects

9.1 The Christmas concert had been booked for Saturday 13 December. The event had been advertised on the website and noticeboards and would be put on the village social media.

9.2 Members discussed a regular cleaning programme for its assets. Members agreed to look after the signs on their own street allocations. Members also

discussed whether to invest in additional items such as floral displays. It was agreed that the Clerk would investigate the cost of hanging baskets and planters from CWAC and Northwich Town Council. Members agreed to walk their own street allocations to identify any opportunities for items such as planters, benches etc.

9.3 It was noted that the suggestion box in the Heritage Phone Box was not used and it was suggested it be removed.

9.4 Members were aware of proposals to reduce the majority of PCSO resource as part of changes to front line policing. The Chairman had drafted a letter to the Chief Constable in opposition to the plans to remove the Marbury PCSO who performed a valuable role and was a visible presence. The letter was supported.

(25/65) RESOLVED: that

- (a) The arrangements for the Christmas concert be noted.
- (b) All Members to be responsible for the signs in their street allocation and to undertake a walk round their area to identify any opportunities for improving the environment with floral displays, benches etc. The item will be considered further at the next meeting.
- (c) The suggestion box be removed from the heritage phone box.
- (d) The draft letter to the Chief Constable be approved and the Clerk will email it to him this week.

10. Planning

10.1 As reported to the previous meeting, the Clerk had received advice from CWAC Planning about high boundary treatments on residential properties. The information was noted.

10.2 Planning decisions were listed in Appendix 3.

10.3 There were no enforcement matters.

(25/66) RESOLVED: that:

- (a) the information from CWAC about boundary treatments be noted.
- (b) the planning update be noted.

11. Correspondence

The list of correspondence had been circulated.

(25/67) RESOLVED: that the correspondence be noted.

12. Representative Reports

- Comberbach Memorial Hall Management Committee – no further update other than items raised during the meeting.
- Police Liaison – the updates from the PCSO had been circulated.
- School Liaison – Councillor McDermott was a regular visitor at the school and had good communication with the Head Teacher. She raised the issue of stationary cars at school pick up time with their engine running and Members agreed that she raise this with the Head Teacher. The Clerk reported that she had seen banners outside schools asking drivers to switch off their engines when stationary.

13. Exclusion of Public and Press – Part 2

(25/68) RESOLVED: That in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business due to the confidential nature of the matters to be discussed.

14. Tree works at the Recreation Area

(25/69) RESOLVED: that the quote from OJT Tree Services be approved for the trees on Parish Council land and the Bowling Club be asked if they wish to fund the work to the tree on their land.

15. Review of hours – Parish Clerk

(25/70) RESOLVED: that the Clerk's hours increase to 320 per year with effect from 1 January 2026.

The Meeting closed at 8.35pm.

The next meeting of Comberbach Parish Council will be on Tuesday 13 January 2026 at 6.30pm.

Signed
Chairman

Appendix 1 Accounts for 31 October 2025

	Current a/c	Savings a/c	Total
Santander	£19,534.79	£21,916.95	£41,451.74
Unity Trust	£45.40	£15,032.79	£15,078.19

Total	£19,580.19	£36,949.74	£56,529.93
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Appendix 2 Payments

Item	Amount	Power
Cllr Cameron – materials for zipwire	£13.61	LGA 1972 s 111
Synchroprint – Nov CVN Inv 8287	£232.32	LGA 1972 s 111
Cllr Ryder – Weedkiller, Cable Ties	£30.30	LGA 1972 s 111

Pre-Authorised Payments

Item	Amount	Power
DD – Babble, MS Office license Oct 25	£23.50	LGA 1972 s 111
DD – Tesco Mobile, Oct 25	£7.95	LGA 1972 s 111
DD – Unity Trust account fee Oct 25	£4.60	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	Wed 22 Dec 2021	Awaiting decision

except for vehicular access), land at Winnington Works		
21/01937/S73, 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	Fri 30 Apr 2021	Awaiting decision
25/00925/FUL - alterations to existing garage to include two dormers and alterations to windows and doors to create home office and ancillary accommodation, 1 Hough Lane Cottages	9 May 2025	Refused
25/01163/FUL - Demolition of existing dwelling, erection of new dwelling, 27 Senna Lane	20 May 2025	Awaiting decision
25/02057/S73 - Single storey rear extension - variation of condition 2 (plans) and condition 3 (materials) of planning application, The Croft, The Avenue	4 August 2025	Approved
25/02716/TPO - 6 Kennelwood Road		Approved
25/02493/FUL – single storey extension, 15 Goosebrook Close		Approved
25/02880/PAA – addition of first floor storey, 17 Senna Lane		Prior Approval Requires Permission
25/03141/TPO – Mixed Species - Selective crown lifting and clearance pruning to maintain clear line of sight between utility poles - Avenue Farm, The Avenue		Approved
25/03364/FUL - Demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuildings, including removal of the mobile home, and the erection of a replacement dwelling -Brookside Farm		Awaiting decision

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