



Willaston Parish Council

Email: clerk@willastonparishcouncil.org.uk

Website: www.willastonparishcouncil.org.uk

Minutes

of a meeting of the Council held at
St Luke's Church, Coppice Road, Willaston, CW5 6QA
on

Tuesday 24th February 2026 at 7pm

Present: Cllrs Cutts, Angier, Newton, Bailey, Barrow, Morris and Salisbury (Chair)

In Attendance: C Coventry - Clerk to the Council
5 Members of the public

1. Apologies

Cllr Kirby, no apologies had been received from Cllr Brazier.

2. Co-option

RESOLVED: Matthew Jones was co-opted and formally joined as a Member of Willaston Parish Council.

3. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Considerations.

- a) Cllr Angier declared a Pecuniary interest in item 11, as payee.
- b) Cllr Morris, item 8, a non-pecuniary interest as local resident to the property in planning application 26/0377/PIP
- c) No dispensations were requested or granted.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the previous meeting of the council held on Tuesday 27th January are a true and correct record.

Matters arising - Item 1, Cllr Bailey requested details of the tributes paid to the late Cllr Frank Morton at the meeting on 27th January, be minuted.

Cllr Salisbury led the tributes, informing us that Cllr Morton had served on Willaston Parish Council for almost 30 years and was a lifelong resident of Willaston and was very knowledgeable on village matters. He provided continuity within the Council and voted on matters with conviction. Having an interest in campanology, he had provided an interesting tour of the Wybunbury Bell Tower to members of the Parish Council in the past and had been bell ringing at St Mary's since 1957.

Cllr Cutts paid tribute saying he had been exceedingly kind and helpful when she first joined the council.

Cllr Bailey recollected, although not the loudest councillor, he always absorbed what was going on and would contribute in a really measured way. He will be much missed around the village.

Item 19, Cllr Cutts and Bailey reported that the Methodist Circuit are keen to retain St Johns and to promote its use as a community asset.

5. Police

- a) No police were present and no report had been received.
- b) Cllr Morris reported that PCSO Jarvis has reached out to arrange a joint meeting, in which they will discuss the proposed reduction in budget for PCSO's and to query the anti-social behaviour on Wistaston Road.

The current closing times of the Playing Field has created less anti-social behaviour, but the police could not advise on opening 24/7. Cllr Angier requested that the issue at the allotments be raised. We would like advice from the police on how we should proceed with the outstanding issues of The Community Resolution Order and information on other outstanding issues, previously minuted.

6. Public Participation

A member of the public had sent in questions about drainage issues at the Spinney, prior to the meeting and the issues were explained to the council regarding continuing incidents of flooding as surface water is not draining. Investigations are ongoing to locate connecting drains.

The council were informed that Cheshire East is investigating this matter as a Statutory Nuisance on behalf of the member of the public as the landowners are failing to engage with the resident. The resident asked if the council was aware of recent signage having been put up, to which the Council had no knowledge as it is private land.

The dedication agreement has been in place with Willaston Parish Council since 1975 and is for maintaining the green space up to the path. If the safety of the path has become an issue then it was questioned if the path should be removed but as it has been there for several years it was reasoned that people would still recognize it as a pathway.

The Parish council has a grass cutting schedule in place and undertake tree works as and when required.

Cllr Bailey answered the question "what is under the surface of the dedicated land" that when tree planting a lot of rubble has been encountered. Maps from 1851 show the area to be green space and trees. However, it may be possible that there was a building on the site after 1910 that has since been demolished.

The council will need to revisit the dedication agreement and consider our obligation under it. The resident asked if the landowners have contacted the Council and the Clerk reported that since taking on the role in July 2025, nothing had been received and that there was no correspondence evident in the electronic files.

3 Members of the public were present and raised their concerns under planning application 26/0377/PIUP, which the council will discuss under item 8.

7. Borough Councillors' Report

No reports have been received from the Cheshire East Councillors.

Cllr Bailey requested it be recorded that Cllr Coiley has not been present for 20 consecutive meetings, Cllr Gage for 22 consecutive meetings and Cllr Simon for 26 consecutive meetings.

8. Planning Applications

- a) Planning applications to be considered.

RESOLVED: 26/0377/PIP 193 Crewe Road, Willaston, Nantwich. CW5 6NE. Object Willaston Parish Council objects to this application for the reasons below.

1. It is contrary to the Willaston Neighbourhood Development Plan, specifically the following policies.

Policy GG1 Green Gap. *The proposal undermines the core objective of the Neighbourhood Development Plan to maintain the Green Gap. By permitting development in this sensitive location, the application would contradict one of the Plan's key aims and the priorities clearly expressed by the community.*

The proposed development is contrary to Policy GG1 because it would erode the physical extent of the Green Gap, harm the local landscape character, and contribute to the visual and physical coalescence of settlements. This would undermine the Neighbourhood Plan's objective of maintaining separation and openness.

H1 Scale of Housing Developments, H1.1 Infill Development, H4. Willaston Settlement Boundary. *The proposed development does not meet the criteria of Policy H1, as it lies outside the*

defined settlement boundary. It fails to comply with Policy H1.1 because it does not constitute the infilling of a small gap within an otherwise built-up frontage.

The proposal also conflicts with the settlement boundary provisions of Policy H4, as it lies outside the defined Willaston Settlement Boundary. Furthermore, it does not meet the definition of infill development. The existing property to the west of the site is extensively screened from the highway by established vegetation and the proposed dwelling would occupy an elevated position set back from the highway. As such, the development would erode the recognised edge of the settlement,

contrary to the purpose of the settlement boundary, which is to protect the character and compact form of Willaston.

In addition, the proposal is contrary to the principles of sustainable development (par. 8 and 174) set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2025). Sustainable development requires the integration of economic, social and environmental objectives. By eroding the Green Gap, undermining local landscape character and conflicting with an up-to-date Neighbourhood Plan, the development fails to support the environmental objective of protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. As such, it does not represent sustainable development and should not benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Policy 9, Design.

This planning application is contrary to the following sections of the Willaston Neighbourhood Plan: 9.5 Design which states "Where possible and subject to the particular style of development's, plots with generous gardens should be considered to provide diversity....preserving the character of Willaston, especially in more established areas."

This proposal is contrary to the above as it is removing a generous garden, with associated diversity, in an established area and replacing it with parking areas and 2 small gardens.

Policy D4 Design of new housing, especially 9.15 a) which states "Demonstrate that the amenities of neighbouring developments will not be adversely affected through overlooking, loss of light or outlook, over dominance or general disturbance".

This proposal adversely affects both 193 and 187 Crewe Road in these respects.

9.15 c) which states "provide an appropriate level of landscaping which complements and enhances the rural character of the local area."

This proposal removes landscaping and mature trees which completely removes the rural character of the local area.

Policy LE3 Woodland, Trees, Hedgerows, Walls, Boundary Treatment and Paving which states "All new developments should seek to protect local woodland, hedgerows, wide verges, walls....from loss or damage where these contribute to the character and amenity of the plan area."

This proposal will remove mature trees and the wildlife which lives in them (reported to be bats by neighbours) and will adversely affect the street scene and wildlife in the area.

RESOLVED: 26/0389/CLPUD 5 Bayley Road, Willaston, Nantwich. CW5 6RL, to submit the following comment to Cheshire East Planning Authority.

Willaston Parish Council has no comments to make on this application.

b) **Planning Applications to be Noted at this Meeting.**

None

c) **To consider planning applications received since the publication of the meeting agenda.**

None

9. Playing Field and Open Spaces

a) Playing Field. The tree has now been re-staked. The Wet Pour resurfacing has been completed. A new sign for the gate is in hand. The Clerk will approach Astbury Fabrications to see if they still have the plaque from the gate.

Feedback is to be given to Wicksteed to see if they will sweep the area and to note that the Heras fencing did not completely cover the areas and was left on the basketball court. Nothing to report on the Spinney or Mike Heywood Green. The wreaths and poppies have been removed from the War Memorial.

b) **RESOLVED:** To approve the quotation for HAGS to do the remedial work on the playing field, accepting both, initial, quotes 1 and 2 totalling £4,245.36. Any additional cost would have to be agreed to before additional works are undertaken. The clerk will double check that the grass matt area under the zip wire is included in these quotations, as this was unclear, before any instructions are issued.

10. Clerks Report

The Clerk submitted a report to the council in advance of the meeting, giving a brief update of work undertaken, planning decisions and communications from the public.

11. Authorisation of Payments

RESOLVED: The schedule of payments for February correctly states the invoices presented and that £15,844.19 is approved to be paid (as detailed on page 4057)

12. Allotments

a) 3 plots re-let, cultivation orders and emails issued. 1 vacant plot, 10 on waiting list. Plots 18 and 19 have been re-sized and we will ask the grounds maintenance contractor to include the remaining strip in the grass cutting as it will now be utilised by the Council.

It was proposed to move to rents being set by m2 from 1st April 2027 and to set rents at a higher rate for non-Willaston residents, as it is recognized they pay a precept to the council. The proposed new tenancy agreement will be shared prior to the next meeting for discussion so they can be issued immediately following the next meeting to allow 12 months' notice.

The provision of the Gates and noticeboard will be brought to the next meeting.

The Council is minded that the new rents are still considerably lower than other parishes and town councils but based on previous situations, that in the interest of the Clerks' workload, we are avoiding significant increases at this time.

b) **RESOLVED:** That we communicate the increases effective from 1st April 2026 as stated in the proposal from Cllr Angier.

- Small plot increased from £6.60 to £7.00
- Half plot increased from £16.50 to £17.50
- Large plot Increased from £22 to £23.50
- Large, long plot increased from £24.50 to £26.00
- Large, gated plot increased from £27.50 to £29.50
- Full plot increased from £33.00 to £35.00
- Gate fee to remain at £1.00

13. The Lamb Public House

RESOLVED: That Cllr Bailey will take the lead in making an application to Historic England for the Lamb to be recognised as a Heritage Asset.

14. IT Policy

RESOLVED: To adopt the new IT policy

15. Council Risk Assessment

RESOLVED: To approve the Risk Assessment subject to amendments.

16. St Marys

RESOLVED: To make a grant of £300 for the upkeep of the church yard.

17. Standing Orders

NOT MOVED: To consider amending the Standing Orders to remove Borough Councillors standing agenda Item.

18. Next Meeting

Tuesday 31st March 2026

The meeting closed at 9:16pm

Signed as a true record by authority of the Council.

Chair

Date: 31st March 2026

