

WINSFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Winsford Town Council** held in St Chad's Church Hall, Winsford on **Monday 21st July 2025**.

PRESENT

Cllrs Newton (Mayor), Beveridge, Bingham, Edwards, Fitzsimmons, Fletcher, Mellor, Moorcroft, Pardoe and Parkinson.

ALSO PRESENT

Members of the public.

IN ATTENDANCE

Dr M Bailey (Town Clerk)

Ms D French (Deputy Town Clerk)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Hulmston, Mault and Welch.

Opening/Formal Items

C44	DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	No declarations of interest were made by Members present at the meeting.
C45	OPEN FORUM	Several members of the public attended the meeting, and the following comments were made. Speaker One – asked about cutting back overhanging branches in the alleyways on the roads around Shepherd's Fold Drive. It was explained that this was not within the remit of the Town Council. He said he felt disappointed in the overall appearance of the town. He asked about youth services which were not the remit of the Town Council, but it was confirmed that there was one youth club. Speaker Two – referred to the condition of the roads on the new estate off the A5108 (Florence Drive and surrounding roads). It was explained that highway issues were the responsibility of Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWAC). Councillor Pardoe explained that the roads referred to had not yet been adopted by CWAC, but he would liaise with the resident directly on this. The speaker also felt the town looked tired and referenced the Guildhall and Verdin Exchange buildings. She praised the Artisan Market. She also suggested a carnival would be a positive event for the town; she suggested it could be combined with Pride. The Mayor explained that there was a report on tonight's agenda regarding the Guildhall. The Verdin Exchange belonged to CWAC. He explained that Members had investigated a carnival but had little support from the public in terms of helping with such a large-scale event. He was a member of Middlewich and Winsford Rotary during his Mayoral year so would raise the suggestion of a carnival at the next meeting to see if Rotary members had

		any suggestions. Councillor Fletcher also referred to a public meeting about the carnival which had only attracted one member of the public. Councillor Mellor suggested seeing if local churches would be interested in helping with a carnival. She said Pride was a very different event to a carnival. Speaker Three – suggested approaching individual community groups directly about the idea of a carnival rather than a general appeal. Speaker Four – referred to works on Grange Lane by a utility company that had caused damage to grass verges and asked if the company could restore the grass verges rather than CWAC.
C46	MINUTES – 16TH JUNE 2025	The Council RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 16 th June 2025.
C47	MATTERS ARISING	No issues were raised under this agenda item.
C48	MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/ APPOINTMENTS	The Mayor announced that he had attended the following events. • Visit to the Neuromuscular Centre for the opening of their new accessible footpath • Attended the allotment open days at Wharton and Over Allotments and presented prize • Party in the Park • Oak View Academy Open Day • Winsford Pride • St Lukes Midnight Walk • Flag raising event • Darnhall Show • Charity Skydive • Dragons Den at St John's • Allotment Open Days The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Fitzsimmons, had attended an event in Knutsford on behalf of the Mayor. The Mayor gave notice of a fundraising event that would be held on Friday 14th November 2025 which would be an 80's Night with a live tribute band and would include hot food with tickets at £10 each.
Financial Issues		
C49	ACCOUNTS FOR APPROVAL	Members were asked to consider the following. • Payments since last meeting – presented for note (£46,776.11) • Schedule of Payments – these were presented for approval (£21,840.18).

		Queries were raised on the following: - • Big Give - Mayoral Charity Contribution 2024/25 - £1,075.00. This was for the former Mayor's charity contribution to Mentell and would be reimbursed from the Mayor's Charity Account. The payment had been made as part of the Big Give which meant the contribution was doubled. • Travel reimbursement – Councillor Newton – this was for the Mayor to attend a Civic Event in Chester • Various payments to Walker Fire and Neil Hopley for the Brunner Guildhall and Marina Building – these were payments for fire checks and emergency lighting and for electrical checks and resulting work that was required • It was requested that staff did not pay out of their own accounts but that the Town Council bank card was used where possible. Members RESOLVED to approve and note the above payments as indicated above.
C50	BANK RECONCILIATION REPORT	Members noted the bank reconciliation report for June 2025. A query was raised about the payment to Jacob Evans, and it was explained that this was for the audio visual for Winsford Decides event.
C51	REVIEW OF GRANTS POLICY	Members RESOLVED to amend the policy to allow grants of 100% of the project cost and refer the overall policy to External Committee for review.
C52	GRANTS	The Town Council had received the following grant applications for consideration by Members. <u>Winsford Youth and Community Forum</u> This application was for £3,920.00 towards the cost of Summer Fun Days. Members RESOLVED to approve this application. Members asked for a named vote. Cllr Beveridge – Abstain Cllr Bingham – For Cllr Edwards - For Cllr Fitzsimmons – For Cllr Fletcher – For Cllr Mellor – For Cllr Moorcroft – For

		Cllr Newton – Abstain Cllr Pardoe – For Cllr Parkinson – For <u>Friends of Weaver Parkway</u> This application was for £1,500.00 towards the cost of an information board explaining the history of the swinging bridge to Furnivals salt works. Members RESOLVED to approve this application. Members asked for a named vote. Cllr Beveridge – Abstain Cllr Bingham – For Cllr Edwards - Against Cllr Fitzsimmons – For Cllr Fletcher – For Cllr Mellor – For Cllr Moorcroft – For Cllr Newton – Abstain Cllr Pardoe – For Cllr Parkinson – For <u>Yarn Bombers</u> This application was for £300 towards the cost of the purchase of two pop-up signs to advertise the group's work. Members RESOLVED to approve this application. Members asked for a named vote. Cllr Beveridge – For Cllr Bingham – For Cllr Edwards - For Cllr Fitzsimmons – For Cllr Fletcher – For Cllr Mellor – For Cllr Moorcroft – For Cllr Newton – For Cllr Pardoe – For Cllr Parkinson – For <u>Woodford JFC</u> This application was for £1,000 towards the cost of equipment, storage containers and pitch fees. Members RESOLVED to approve this application. Members asked for a named vote. Cllr Beveridge – Abstain Cllr Bingham – For Cllr Edwards - For
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		Cllr Fitzsimmons – For Cllr Fletcher – For Cllr Mellor – For Cllr Moorcroft – For Cllr Newton – Abstain Cllr Pardoe – For Cllr Parkinson – For <u>Winsford Academy Camp Kenya</u> This application was for £2,000 towards the cost of the expedition for Academy students. Members RESOLVED to approve this application. Members asked for a named vote. Cllr Beveridge – Abstain Cllr Bingham – For Cllr Edwards - Against Cllr Fitzsimmons – Against Cllr Fletcher – Abstain Cllr Mellor – For Cllr Moorcroft – For Cllr Newton – For Cllr Pardoe – For Cllr Parkinson – For <u>Winsford Academy</u> This application was for £2,500 towards the cost of a gardening project to purchase equipment, renewable energy installation and pond restoration and wildlife support. Members RESOLVED to approve this application. Members asked for a named vote. Cllr Beveridge – Abstain Cllr Bingham – For Cllr Edwards - Against Cllr Fitzsimmons – For Cllr Fletcher – For Cllr Mellor – For Cllr Moorcroft – For Cllr Newton – Abstain Cllr Pardoe – For Cllr Parkinson – For <u>Changing Lives</u> This application was for £1,000 towards the cost of enhancing the Buddy and Befriending Scheme. Members RESOLVED to approve this application. Members asked for a named vote.
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		Cllr Beveridge – Abstain Cllr Bingham – For Cllr Edwards - For Cllr Fitzsimmons – For Cllr Fletcher – Against Cllr Mellor – For Cllr Moorcroft – For Cllr Newton – Abstain Cllr Pardoe – For Cllr Parkinson – For <u>St John the Evangelist Over</u> This application was for £3,773.77 towards the cost of purchasing banqueting chairs and folding tables. Members RESOLVED to approve this application. Members asked for a named vote. Cllr Beveridge – Abstain Cllr Bingham – For Cllr Edwards - For Cllr Fitzsimmons – Against Cllr Fletcher – Abstain Cllr Mellor – For Cllr Moorcroft – For Cllr Newton – Abstain Cllr Pardoe – For Cllr Parkinson – Abstain
Committees/Working Groups		
C53	PLANNING COMMITTEE	Members noted that the previous meeting of the Town Council had resolved to reinstate the Planning Committee in accordance with the arrangements in place during the previous council (from 2019-2023). The Town Clerk had submitted draft Terms of Reference for consideration. Members RESOLVED to: (a) Approve the Terms of Reference as submitted (b) Approve the membership of Planning Committee as five Members with a quorum of three (c) Confirm the membership of Planning Committee to be Councillors Bingham, Fitzsimmons, Mellor, Newton and Pardoe. (d) Require all Members of the Planning Committee to undertake at least one training session out of two offered or otherwise be removed from the committee (e) Allow virtual meetings to be held if the Committee wishes.

C54	EVENTS WORKING GROUP – TERMS OF REFERENCE	Members reviewed proposed Terms of Reference for the Events Working Group. The Town Clerk explained that the NALC Legal Topic Note said committees and working groups can be considered the same. Members RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference and to change the name to Events Committee.
C55	REVIEW OF COMMITTEE/WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP	Members reviewed the membership of committees and working groups and were asked to make any recommendations accordingly. Members were informed that there was one vacancy on the Staffing and Assets Committee. Members RESOLVED to nominate Councillor Fitzsimmons to the Staffing and Assets Committee.
C56	MINUTES	The following minutes were considered by the Town Council. <u>Finance Committee – 16th June 2025</u> Members RESOLVED to ratify the minutes. <u>Events Working Group – 23rd June 2025</u> Members RESOLVED to: (a) Ratify the minutes (b) Approve the acts for Salt Fair 2025 (c) Approve the service for VJ Day 80th Anniversary on 15th August 2025 <u>Staffing and Assets Committee – 7th July 2025</u> Members RESOLVED to: (a) Ratify the minutes (b) Approve the creation of a company limited by guarantee to manage the Brunner Guildhall (c) Approve tenders for work on the Brunner Guildhall (d) Approve actions related to pavilions at the Recreation Grounds (e) Approve the staffing report <u>External Committee – 10th July 2025</u> Members RESOLVED to: (a) Approve examining the installation of mobile CCTV at Rilshaw Meadows. (b) Support the CWAC approach to Lottery funding to support the work on the cross on Delamere Street (c) Approve the quote from WAP Lawton and Son for pond work on Town Park (d) Approve proposals for the creation of entrances at events on the Marina Island that are organised by

		the Town Council to allow challenges to be made to those attending. To take account of the provisions of Martyn's Law for future events. (e) Approve the proposals for potential S106 funding.
Planning Issues		
C57	CHESHIRE WEST LOCAL PLAN – ISSUES AND OPTIONS	Members considered the CWAC consultation on the Issues and Options paper for their new Local Plan. It was noted that the Issues and Options paper was concerned with housing and land supply, along with employment land but was not concerned with infrastructure. The proposals would enable the Town Council and residents to have their say in where they thought residential development should be located. One proposal related to protecting the Green Belt; it was noted that there was no Green Belt within the boundary of Winsford and support for the option of protecting the Green Belt could result in greater levels of housing land being allocated in Winsford. Members had previously agreed that this matter would be discussed at a meeting of Planning Committee. It was suggested that the Committee also consider a letter to inform residents about the consultation and the implications of the option to protect the Green Belt. Members RESOLVED to discuss a letter to residents at the meeting of the Planning Committee that will also consider the Issues and Options consultation and the response of the Town Council.
Policies		
C58	ALLOTMENTS POLICY	Members considered a draft Allotments Policy that was aimed to establish the basis for the management of the two allotment sites provided by the Town Council at Moss Bank (Over Allotments) and Greville Drive/Station Road (Wharton Allotments). Members RESOLVED to defer consideration of the Allotments Policy to the next meeting of the Town Council to enable consultation with the two Allotments Associations. <i>Cllr Edwards left the meeting.</i>
Other Items		
C59	LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME	Members considered the Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS) which had been developed to celebrate the achievements of parish and town councils. The scheme enabled councils to demonstrate their adherence to sector standards and ongoing improvement. There were three levels – Bronze, Silver and Gold. It was recommended that the Town Council applied for the Bronze Award which required online registration at a cost of £50 and an

		accreditation fee of £80 should the Award be granted. Members RESOLVED to note the draft application form and approve the application by the Town Council for the LCAS Bronze Award.
C60	SHARED INFORMATION/ COMMUNICATIONS	There was no shared information.
C61	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Members noted that the next meeting of the Town Council will be on Monday 15 th September 2025 at 7.00 pm.
C62	EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	Members RESOLVED that, due to its confidential nature, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following matters in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.
C63	TENDERS FOR WORK	Members RESOLVED to accept the following tenders and quotes: - (a) KJW Landscapes in the sum of £7,500 plus VAT for installation of fencing at Barton Stadium. (b) Northwich Town Council in the sum of £21,475.00 plus VAT for all matters relating to the installation, maintenance and removal of all Christmas light motifs; Christmas tree lights; pre and main switch on events; and PAT testing of all motifs and lights; the contract to apply for Christmas 2025 and 2026. Members asked for a named vote on (b). Cllr Beveridge – Against Cllr Bingham – For Cllr Fitzsimmons – For Cllr Fletcher – For Cllr Mellor – For Cllr Moorcroft – For Cllr Newton – For Cllr Pardoe – For Cllr Parkinson – For (c) To approve the two tender documents inviting tenders for works to the Brunner Guildhall building with a closing date of 5th September 2025.
C64	INSURANCE POLICY 2025/26	Members RESOLVED to approve the Insurance Policy with Zurich Municipal at a cost of £11,348.44 per annum for the three years to 30 th June 2028.
C65	POLICY FOR DEALING WITH ABUSIVE, UNREASONABLY PERSISTENT OR	Members RESOLVED to: - (a) Declare three named individuals as abusive, unreasonably persistent or vexatious in accordance

	VEXATIOUS MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC	with the policy on Abusive, Unreasonably Persistent or Vexatious Members of the Public (b) Hold all Town Council meetings including committees and working groups in a meeting room at Wyvern House due to safety concerns. Members asked for a named vote. Cllr Beveridge – For Cllr Bingham – For Cllr Fitzsimmons – For Cllr Fletcher – For Cllr Mellor – For Cllr Moorcroft – For Cllr Newton – For Cllr Pardoe – For Cllr Parkinson – For
	CLOSURE OF MEETING	The Town Mayor declared the meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

TOWN MAYOR