

WINSFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **Winsford Town Council** held in Room G1, Ground Floor, Wyvern House, Winsford on **Monday 28th September 2026**.

PRESENT

Cllrs Fitzsimmons (Mayor), Beveridge, Bingham, Fletcher, Hartley, Mellor, Moorcroft, Roberts and Welch.

ALSO PRESENT

Members of the public.

Mr. Stephen Beale (John Stephens and Co), Mr. Richard Fletcher (Equilibrium Architects) and Mr. Miles Lewis (Miles Lewis LLP) – present for Part B item on Land.

IN ATTENDANCE

Dr M Bailey (Town Clerk)

Mrs S Rossington (Events Manager)

Mrs E Haspell (Administrative/Civic Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Edwards, Hulmston, Mault, Newton and Pardoe.

Opening/Formal Items

C82	DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	The following Member declared an interest at the meeting. <i>Agenda Item 15 – Grants</i> Cllr Fletcher declared a personal interest - agenda item 15 – Winsford Youth and Community Forum (see minute C95).
C83	OPEN FORUM	Several members of the public attended the meeting, and the following comments were made. • Speaker One - a representative of Cheshire Wildlife Helpers raised concerns about the state of the Winsford Marina and the safety risks affecting visitors and waterfowl. The speaker reported that two swans had recently died after being struck by vehicles driven recklessly and said that immediate action was needed to prevent further harm. It was acknowledged that the Marina is owned by Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWAC), rather than Winsford Town Council, and the Town Council's support was requested in seeking its restoration and addressing anti-social behaviour. The representative

		requested consideration of a number of measures including the installation of CCTV; speed bumps along the route towards the gravelled area; new signage warning drivers about waterfowl and displaying speed limits; signage advising visitors not to feed birds from vehicles and to feed them only beside the water; provision of a life-preserver station; repairs to the fencing, signage, mooring boards and pothole; and measures to address anti-social behaviour. The representative stated that Cheshire Wildlife helpers would be willing to assist with this work. The proposals were said to have the support of a large group of residents and the British Trust for Ornithology, particularly in relation to measures benefiting waterfowl. The Council was asked to support efforts to make the Marina safer for all users. Cllr Fletcher noted that there had been two swan deaths within two weeks and a further near miss. It was suggested that feeding swans from vehicles had made them less wary of cars. Cllr Fletcher supported the residents' concerns and asked that their requests be passed to CWAC without waiting for another swan to be killed. Cllr Beveridge asked whether the matter had been raised with a CWAC councillor or the relevant ward councillor. Cllr Mellor commented that there was more the Town Council could do and that it should consider what action it could take.
C84	HOME START WARRINGTON AND CHESHIRE	This item had been deferred to the next meeting.
C85	MINUTES	The Council RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 20 th July 2026.
C86	MATTERS ARISING	The following matters were raised from the above minutes. • Winsford United FC u10s Lions -. the Clerk to follow up the written report. • Wharton Recreation Ground Football Pitches – a written proposal was requested. The Clerk to follow up. • Land Consultation – a Member asked why this was on the agenda, and it was

		advised that the matter has been deferred pending further information. The item was discussed in the Part B of the meeting. Meeting dates – Members asked for the calendar to be updated.
C87	MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/ APPOINTMENTS	The Mayor said that she had attended twenty engagements since the last meeting and announced that a Quiz Night would be held at the Old Star on Thursday 8th October.
Finance Committee Items		
C88	ACCOUNTS FOR APPROVAL	Members considered the following items. - Payments since last meeting (£107,775.80). - Payments for approval (£33,137.69). Members RESOLVED to approve the above payments, which covered August and September 2026.
C89	BANK RECONCILIATION REPORTS	Members noted the bank reconciliation reports for July and August 2026.
C90	BUDGET REVIEW – TO 31st JULY 2026	Members noted the budget documents, which detailed the budget position up to and including 31st July 2026.
C91	BUDGET REVIEW – TO 31st AUGUST 2026	Members noted the budget documents, which detailed the budget position up to and including 31st August 2026.
C92	BUDGET UPDATE 2026/27	Members noted the budget statement for areas of spend broken down into the External Committee/Finance Committee up to the end of July/August 2026.
C93	BANKING ARRANGEMENTS	Consideration was given to a report which set out a proposal to transfer the Council's banking arrangements to Unity Bank. It was RESOLVED – - To agree to transfer the Council's primary banking arrangements from the Co-operative Bank to Unity Trust Bank. - To authorise the Town Clerk/RFO to open a Unity Business Current Account; and a Unity Instant Access Savings Account. - To delegate authority to the Town Clerk to implement the banking transfer and complete all necessary documentation

		and • To receive a further update report once the transition arrangements have been finalised.
C94	BUDGET SETTING AND CONSULTATION 2027/28	It was RESOLVED – • To approve the Budget Consultation and Engagement Framework for the preparation of the 2027/28 Budget and Precept. • To authorise the Town Clerk to undertake a public consultation programme (November 2026 – January 2027) incorporating: ○ An online consultation survey. ○ A dedicated consultation webpage. ○ Social media engagement. ○ Stakeholder consultation. • To receive a report on the consultation findings prior to the setting of the 2027/28 Precept. • To formally consider the consultation feedback when determining the 2027/28 Precept at the January 2027 meeting of Full Council. • To approve the 2027/28 Budget at the February 2027 meeting of the Council and • To publish a summary of consultation outcomes following adoption of the Budget and Precept.
C95	GRANTS	The Town Council had received the following grant applications for consideration by Members. <u>Friends of Winsford Town Park</u> This application was for £210 towards the cost of sponsoring a page in the calendar. Members APPROVED this application. <i>Cllr Fletcher left the meeting.</i> <u>Winsford Youth and Community Forum</u> This application was for option C, to give the full amount towards the cost of a Friday night youth club at New Images. Members APPROVED this application. <i>Cllr Fletcher returned to the meeting.</i>
Committees/Working Groups		

C96	MINUTES	Members were asked to ratify minutes from the following meetings of Town Council Committees. <u>Planning Committee – 29th July 2026</u> RESOLVED: - Members agreed to ratify the minutes. <u>Brunner Guildhall Working Group – 24th August 2026</u> RESOLVED: - Members agreed to ratify the minutes. <u>Planning Committee – 1st September 2026</u> RESOLVED: - Members agreed to ratify the minutes. <u>Events Committee – 7th September 2026</u> Members noted the following items. • The Salt Fair – it was felt that the event should undergo a full review. • Bonfire night – organising the event would need to begin in March 2027. RESOLVED: - Members agreed to ratify the minutes. <u>Staffing and Assets Committee – 8th September 2026</u> RESOLVED: - Members agreed to ratify the minutes. <u>External Committee – 14th September 2026</u> RESOLVED: - Members agreed to ratify the minutes. <u>Brunner Guildhall Working Group – 15th September 2026</u> RESOLVED: - Members agreed to ratify the minutes.
Policies		
C97	REVIEW OF PLANS/POLICIES/PROCEDURES	Members considered the following policies. • Social Media Policy • Statement of Internal Controls • Civic Protocol Members RESOLVED to approve these policies.
C98	VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY/ POLICY	Members RESOLVED to approve the Volunteering Strategy/Policy.

Planning		
C99	LOCAL PLAN SCOPING CONSULTATION	Members RESOLVED to email the Clerk with their comments.
Other Items		
C100	NATIONAL EMERGENCY BRIEFING (CLIMATE AND NATURE EMERGENCY)	Members RESOLVED to hold a private screening of the briefing and to invite other local councils, local Parish councils; Dr Fallon, volunteers and The Cheshire Wildlife Trust.
C101	SHARED INFORMATION/COMMUNICATIONS	Members shared the following information: - • Brunner Guildhall – it was reported that a member of the public had spent time clearing litter from the Guildhall car park and had prepared a detailed proposal for the work required. He was willing to undertake the work free of charge but would require certain equipment and had suggested recruiting some volunteers to assist.
C102	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	The next meeting to take place on Monday 19 th October 2026 at 6.30 pm.
C103	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.
C104	LAND	Members received an update on land matters concerning the Town Council. The Council unanimously RESOLVED to allow outside speakers to address the Council on this item – details of the speakers included above in these minutes, It was RESOLVED that a further report is presented to the Council at the next meeting.
C105	TOWN CENTRE TOILETS	Members RESOLVED to accept the tender from Wise Facilities Maintenance & Compliance Ltd.
C106	CHRISTMAS TREES	Members AGREED to purchase one Christmas tree. Members were also asked to approve the location. A named vote was requested in relation to this last point. The results of the votes are set out below.

		Winsford Cross Shopping Centre Cllr Mellor – Against Cllr Hartley – Against Cllr Welch – Against Cllr Roberts – Against Cllr Beveridge – Against Cllr Moorcroft – For Cllr Bingham – For Cllr Fletcher – For Cllr Fitzsimmons - Against Winsford High Street Cllr Mellor – For Cllr Hartley – For Cllr Welch – For Cllr Roberts – For Cllr Beveridge – For Cllr Moorcroft – Against Cllr Bingham – Against Cllr Fletcher – Against Cllr Fitzsimmons – For RESOLVED: - Members RESOLVED to approve the location as the Winsford High Street.
	CLOSURE OF MEETING	The Town Mayor declared the meeting closed at 8.24pm.

TOWN MAYOR