



Appleton Parish Council

Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road, Appleton, WA4 5EQ

Telephone 01925 268153 Email clerk@appletonparish.gov.uk

To: - Members of the Parish Council

You are summoned to the Full Parish Council meeting of Appleton Parish Council to be held at Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road Appleton WA4 5EQ on **Tuesday 17th March 2026 at 7pm** for the purposes of transacting the business set out in the agenda below.

Yours sincerely
K Newton

Karen Newton Clerk to Appleton Parish Council, date of issue 11th March 2026.

If you have any general enquiries regarding the above meeting, please contact Karen Newton, Clerk on telephone 01925 268153 or email clerk@appletonparish.gov.uk.

If any member of the public wishes to attend the meeting, please contact the clerk before the meeting.

Agenda

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

To welcome members to the meeting and to receive apologies for absence and to approve reasons, if given.

2. Members Code of Conduct

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in any item of business on the agenda and should do so no later than when that item is reached.

Declarations are a personal matter, and each Member must decide whether to declare an interest based on the circumstances.

Any requests for dispensations relating to pecuniary interests, whether made before or during the meeting, will be considered by the Parish Council, and any granted dispensations will be formally documented.

3. **Public Participation**

Members of the public may make representations, ask questions, or give evidence on agenda items during the public participation period. This period is limited to three minutes unless the Chairman directs otherwise. Questions do not require an immediate response and must not initiate debate. All comments must be addressed to the Chairman, who will control the order of speaking.

4. **Minutes**

To Resolve that the minutes of the following meetings be approved as a correct record:

Full Council Meeting – Tuesday 20th January 2026

Full Council Meeting – Tuesday 17th February 2026

Extraordinary Council Meeting – Thursday 5th February 2026

Finance and General Purposes Committee – Thursday 5th February 2026

Finance and General Purposes Committee – Thursday 5th March 2026

Planning Committee – Thursday 5th March 2026

Employment Committee – 19th February 2026

5. **Finance**

5.1 To approve the Payment Schedule Feb 2026.

5.2 To approve the Receipt Schedule Feb 2026.

5.3 To approve the bank reconciliations for Feb 2026.

5.4 To approve and authorise the payment schedule for Mar 2026.

5.5 To note there will be an Additional payment schedule for 27th March to follow by email

6. **Internal Auditor Letter of Engagement**

To consider and approve the Letter of Engagement for the appointment of the Parish Council's Internal Auditor JDH for the financial year 2025/26

Members are asked to review the terms of engagement outlining the scope of the internal audit, responsibilities of the auditor and the Council, and the proposed audit arrangements.

Recommendation:

That the Council approves the Internal Auditor Letter of Engagement and authorises the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer to sign the document on behalf of the Council.

7. **Environmental Working Party – Establishment of Environmental Committee**

To consider the proposal to convert the Environmental Working Party into a Standing Committee, approve the Terms of Reference, appoint members to the Committee, and elect a Chair.

8. **Governance Policies for Adoption**
To consider and adopt the following policies as recommended by the Finance and General-Purpose committee:
- Code of Conduct
 - Dignity at Work Policy
 - Social Media Policy
 - Safeguarding Policy
9. **Governance Policies – Deferred Items**
To consider the following policies and documents deferred from the previous meeting pending amendments:
- Equality and Diversity Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Terms of Reference – Environment Committee
 - Standing Orders
10. **Reports from Parish Councillors**
To consider reports from parish councillors on committees, working groups, and outside bodies.
11. **PCSO / Police report/Update**
To receive an update and report from the local PCSO.
At the time of agenda publication, this report had not been received.
- To note correspondence from Rob McLoughlin regarding concerns raised by the Parish Council about local policing and PCSO provision.
12. **Bridge Lane Playing Fields – Dog Fouling (Update)**
To receive an update from Cllr J Wheeler regarding contact with Warrington Borough Council about the possibility of installing awareness signage.
13. **Part 2 – Confidential**
In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public are excluded from the meeting for this item due to the confidential nature of staffing and financial information.
14. **Clerk/RFO Job Evaluation**
To consider the recommendation of the Employment Committee to reclassify the position of Clerk/RFO to **LC3 below substantive range (SCP 33–36)** with the position commencing at **SCP 33**, backdated to the Clerk's start date.

Members are asked to note that, if agreed, the adjustment will be applied in the **March payroll due to the financial year end**. If the recommendation is not agreed, a

payroll adjustment will be made to rectify the payroll cost breakdown, as outlined in **Part 2 of this agenda.**

15. Deputy Clerk – Salary Scale

To consider the recommendation of the Employment Committee to amend the Deputy Clerk salary scale to LC2 SCP 24–28.

16. Deputy Clerk Recruitment

To consider the recommendation of the Employment Committee to **revise the Deputy Clerk job advertisement and re-advertise the vacancy, including on Indeed, to encourage additional applications.**

17. Bookings Secretary and Ranger – Benchmarking of Roles and Pay

To note the Employment Committee's decision to seek benchmarking information from **CHALC and Cheshire Community Action** regarding job descriptions, responsibilities and salary scales, with a report to be brought back to Council for further consideration.

18. Payroll Costs Nov to Mar 2026

To consider and approve payroll costs for the period November 2025 to February 2026.

March 26 to follow will be presented before the meeting.

19. Dates and time of next meetings

To Note: Upcoming Meeting Schedule

- **Thursday, 19th March 2026**
 - 10:00 am – Employment Committee
- **Thursday 2 April**
 - 9.15am – Planning Committee
 - 9.45am – Finance and General Purposes Committee
- **Tuesday 21 April**
 - 6.30pm – Planning Committee
 - 7.00pm – Parish Council
- **Thursday 14 May**
 - 9.15am – Planning Committee
 - 9.45am – Finance and General Purposes Committee
- **Friday 15 May**
 - 12.30pm – Employment Committee
- **Tuesday 19 May**
 - 6.30pm – Planning Committee

20. Agenda items were addressed as scheduled.

The meeting was officially closed at:

Signed.....

Dated.....

Engagement Letter for: **Appleton Parish Council**

JDH Business Services Limited is pleased to accept appointment as your internal auditor in accordance with the terms and conditions described below.

1.) Respective responsibilities of Council and Internal Auditors

i.) The Council – your responsibilities

- a) As members of the council, you are required to prepare and approve accounts for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of the latest adopted Accounts and Audit regulations and proper accounting practice.
- b) You are responsible for maintaining an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption.
- c) You are responsible for undertaking all reasonable steps to assure yourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice which could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances.
- d) You are responsible for carrying out an assessment of the risks facing the council and taking appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.

You have undertaken to make available to us, as and when required, all the council's books of account and records and related information necessary to carry out our work. You will make full disclosure to us of all relevant information.

The internal auditor shall have the right of access to any member or officer to discuss and to receive information and explanations in connection with any matter arising from the audit.

As part of our normal procedures we may request you to provide written confirmation of any information or explanations given to us orally during the course of our work.

ii.) **Internal Audit – Our Responsibilities**

The internal auditor is responsible for reviewing whether the Council's financial management is adequate and effective., and that it has a sound system of internal control. The scope of internal audit is summarised in the AGAR Annual Return for Local Councils as follows:

- Checking that books of account have been properly kept throughout the year
- Checking payment internal controls to ensure that the Council's financial regulations have been met, payments are supported by invoices, expenditure is approved, and VAT is correctly accounted for
- Reviewing the Council's risk assessment and ensuring that adequate arrangements are in place to manage all identified risks
- Verifying that the annual precept request is the result of a proper budgetary process; that budget progress has been regularly monitored and that the council's reserves are appropriate
- Checking income records to ensure that the correct price has been charged, income has been received, recorded and promptly banked and VAT is correctly accounted for
- Reviewing petty cash records to ensure payments are supported by receipts, expenditure is approved and VAT is correctly accounted for
- Checking that salaries to employees have been paid in accordance with Council approvals and that PAYE and NI requirements have been properly applied
- Checking the accuracy of the asset and investments registers
- Testing the accuracy and timeliness of periodic and year-end bank account reconciliation(s)
- Year-end review of the financial statements
- If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in the previous financial year, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt.
- Reviewing publication requirements and whether the authority has demonstrated that during the previous summer that it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations
- Where the council is sole trustee to a charity, reviewing whether the council has met its responsibilities as a trustee

2.) Reporting

The internal auditor will report to the Council after all interim and year end internal audits. In the event of a serious issue being identified during the year the internal auditor will also report to Council.

3.) Independence and Objectivity

The internal auditor will inform the Council immediately if the internal auditor becomes aware of any conflict of interest that may adversely affect their ability to carry out the internal audit objectively and independently and will resign from the appointment forthwith.

4.) Fees

Our fees are based on the degree of skill and responsibility involved and the time spent on the work and are fixed on the basis of the responsibilities detailed above for each financial year. If it is necessary to carry out work outside the responsibilities outlined in this letter it will involve additional fees that will be agreed with the Council in advance.

Our terms relating to payment of amounts invoiced are strictly 30 days net. Interest will be charged on all overdue debts at the rate for the time being applicable under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998.

5.) Period of Appointment

Once it has been agreed, this letter will remain effective until it is replaced. The appointment is therefore for an unspecified period but subject to annual confirmation by the Council.

6.) Agreement of terms

The terms set out in this letter and our general terms of business shall take effect immediately upon your countersigning this letter and returning it to us or upon commencement of the internal audit, whichever is earlier.

Once it has been agreed, this letter will remain effective until it is replaced. We shall be grateful if you could confirm your agreement to these terms by signing the enclosed copy of this letter and returning it to us immediately.

Yours

JDH Business Services Ltd

I/We confirm that I/We have read and understood the contents of this letter and agree that it accurately reflects the services that I/We expect you to provide.

Signed.....Dated.....

For and on behalf of the Council



Appleton Parish Council

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Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road, Appleton, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 5EQ

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Appleton Parish Council held on 20th January 2026 at 7pm in Appleton Parish Hall

Present: - Councillors L Booth (Chair), R Bett (Vice Chair), G Chapman, L Chapman, E Manson-Sawko, J Wheeler, P Lewenz K Critchley and P Walker.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

An apology for absence was received from **Cllr H Speed** due to illness, which was accepted.

2. Members Code of Conduct

Members were reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in items of business on the agenda, and that declarations are a personal matter for each Member to determine based on the circumstances. Members were also advised that any requests for dispensations relating to pecuniary interests would be considered by the Parish Council and, if granted, formally recorded.

The following declarations were made:

- **Cllr Judith Wheeler** – Planning, DMC and Stockton Heath Festival Trustee
- **Cllr Peter Walker** – Planning and DMC

The meeting was recorded by **Cllr. Ghazala Chapman, Cllr Kenneth Critchley, and Karen Newton Clerk/RFO.**

3. Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

The paragraph for future agendas – (Public Participation) will be amended to reflect the standing orders

4. **Minutes**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the following meetings be approved as a correct record:

Full Council – Tuesday 15 December 2025

Proposed by: Cllr L Chapman and **Seconded by:** Cllr G Chapman

Finance and General Purposes Committee – Thursday 15 January 2026

Proposed by: Cllr L Chapman and **Seconded by:** Cllr P Lewenz

Planning Committee – Tuesday 16 December 2025

Proposed by: Cllr L Chapman and **Seconded by:** Cllr P Lewenz

5. **Finance & Governance**

5.1–5.8 The following items were **deferred** to the **Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on 5 February**, due to the Clerk not having access to the bank:

- Approval of the Payment Schedule for November 2025
- Approval of the bank reconciliations for November 2025
- Approval and authorisation of the Payment Schedule for December 2025
- Noting the publication of items over £100.00 for November 2025 on the Parish Council website
- Approval of the Payment Schedule for December 2025
- Approval of the bank reconciliations for December 2025
- Approval and authorisation of the Payment Schedule for January 2026
- Noting the publication of items over £100.00 for December 2025 on the Parish Council website

6. **Grant Applications**

6.1–6.2. It was noted that applications were **not received in time for the meeting**, and therefore no consideration of applications or grant awards took place.

6.3. A festival report from **Stockton Heath Festival Committee** was received and noted. The Committee thanked the Parish Council for its support of last year's festival. It was noted that the event is run by the **Stockton Heath Festival Committee** and not by Stockton Heath Parish Council.

7. **Precept**

Cllr Chapman introduced the proposed precept, initially calculated at **1.03%**, noting a potential increase to **8.44%** due to two additional costs: the **Community Centre Study (£10,000)** and the **Medical Centre Dudlow Green (£5,000)**.

Members discussed the proposal:

- Several Councillors commented that the Parish Council's reserves are substantial and that a precept increase may not be justified.

- Councillors acknowledged the recommendation from the Finance and General Purposes Committee but suggested that the additional costs could be met from the **earmarked reserves**.
- Councillors noted that the proposed annual increase equated to only approximately **£4 per household**, and some commented that residents may struggle with rising costs.
- Other points raised included the Council's responsibility not to base its precept solely on comparisons with other councils and consideration of potential increased funding from housing developments.

Following discussion on the proposed precept increase to **8.44%**

A **named vote** was taken to increase the precept by **8.44%**.

- **For:** Cllr Chapman, Cllr P Walker, Cllr G Chapman
- **Against:** Cllr Critchley, Cllr Bett, Cllr Wheeler, Cllr Lewenz, Cllr. E. Manson-Sawko
- **Abstention:** Cllr L Booth

The **motion** to increase the precept to **8.44%** was lost

A **named vote** was taken to **not increase the precept**

- **For:** Cllr Critchley, Cllr Bett, Cllr. E. Manson-Sawko
- **Against:** Cllr L Chapman, Cllr P Walker, Cllr G Chapman, Cllr Wheeler, Cllr Lewenz
- **Abstention:** Cllr L Booth

The **motion** not to increase the precept was lost.

Following further discussions on the proposed precept

It was **noted** that the exact precept calculation resulted in a figure of approximately **36.50** per Band D property. However, to avoid an uneven decimal, the precept figure was **rounded up to 36.51**.

- This rounding results in a total precept of **£190,910.79**, which is **£40.79 over the original budgeted amount**. Consequently, this requires an increase to a budget line to cover the additional amount.

It was **proposed to increase the precept to 1.03% if the spreadsheet does not round exactly the calculation be accepted up to 1.05%**.

Proposed by: Cllr Bett and **Seconded by:** Cllr L Chapman

A **named vote** was taken for **increasing the precept by 1.03% Precept**

- **For:** Cllr L Chapman, Cllr G Chapman, Cllr Wheeler, Cllr Lewenz, Cllr Bett
- **Against:** Cllr Critchley, Cllr P Walker, Cllr. E. Manson-Sawko,
- **Abstention:** Cllr L Booth

The motion to increase the precept up to **1.05%** was **gained**.

The Council recognises the financial pressures on residents and is mindful of keeping the precept increase to a minimum. It is proposed that rather than raising the precept, the Council's reserves will be carefully managed and used to meet any shortfalls in funding required for essential services and projects. This approach allows the Council to maintain financial stability and continue supporting the community without placing additional burden on householders. By utilising earmarked reserves prudently, the Council can address current financial needs while planning responsibly for the future.

8. Assertion 10 - AGAR

The Council **noted** that **Assertion 10**, introduced for the **2025/26 AGAR**, requires councils to demonstrate compliance with **UK GDPR**, data protection laws, and digital governance standards.

This includes using council-owned email domains, maintaining an accessible website, having up-to-date IT and data protection policies, and ensuring proper data handling and security.

Failure to comply could lead to audit concerns and public scrutiny. The Council acknowledged the new policy outlining how these requirements will be met.

9. New/ Out of date Policies

Members were asked to consider and adopt the following **new policies**:

1. **IT and Data Policy** – Clerk
2. **Lone Working Policy** – Cllr Richard Betts
3. **Policy on the Use of Public CCTV Applications** – Clerk

Members were asked to **consider** and **adopt** the existing policies that are out of date on the website:

4. **Dignity at work policy** – Appleton Parish Council
5. **Code of Conduct** – Appleton Parish Council
6. **Expenses Policy** – Appleton Parish Council
7. **Income and Debtor Policy** – Appleton Parish Council
8. **Biodiversity Policy** – Appleton Parish Council
9. **Retention Policy** – Appleton Parish Council
10. **Grants Policy** – Appleton Parish Council
11. **Staffing Committee Terms of Reference** – Appleton Parish Council

RESOLVED: That all policies listed above were received and noted. **Cllr R Bett** and **Cllr E Manson-Sawko** will review all policies and submit to the F&GP Committee for review as previously resolved by the Council, prioritising those required as part of **Assertion 10**, and will report back before the end of **March 2026**.

10. Upgrade to email web hosting

Members considered upgrading the Parish Council's email hosting to increase mailbox storage and reviewed the associated costs.

RESOLVED: To upgrade the email web hosting at a cost of **£99.99 per year**.

Proposed: Cllr L Chapman and **Seconded:** Cllr G Chapman

Vote: All agreed.

11. Reports from Parish Council Representatives

Councillors' Reports

Cllr P Lewenz

- Reported that works at *The Dingle* are progressing well.
- The working group is collaborating effectively with the Woodland Trust.
- Discussions are ongoing regarding future housing developments and the creation of a perimeter zone along the woodland path.
- Provided an update on Warrington and Stockton Heath libraries following funding reductions:
 - Stockton Heath Library remains open.
 - Staffing has been reduced to one assistant in the morning and two in the afternoon.
- Requested a future meeting discussion on library services.
- **Cllr J Wheeler**
 - Reported that Stockton Heath Parish Council will hold discussions on library services in **March 2026**.
 - Suggested Appleton Parish Council consider the matter after that meeting.
 - Attended a Boundary Commission meeting held at short notice.
 - Requested that parish and ward boundary considerations be added to next month's agenda.
- **Cllr E Manson-Sawko**
 - Reported that the Cricket Club Chair is changing.
 - The club is considering opening the Pavilion as a wider community hub/café/centre.
 - Suggested inviting representatives to a future meeting to present their plans.
 - Considered the pavilion an asset to the parish.
- **Cllr J Wheeler (additional)**
 - Noted the pavilion has significant historical value.
 - Has collected extensive historical research relating to the building.
 - Tip closure consultation – the parish council will be notified
- **Cllr Ghazala Chapman**
 - Raised concerns regarding the recent escaped prisoner incident.
- **Cllr L Booth**
 - Reported contact with Reverend Duel, who is in contact with the prison.
 - Was put in contact with the prison chaplain, who was unable to comment.

- Has requested a meeting with the prison governor, alongside Cllr Speed and another councillor.
- Awaiting a formal report.
- Was informed that prisoners nearing the end of their sentences are transferred to Thorn Cross Prison.
- Prisoners are integrated into employment schemes; the escape occurred during this process.
- The escaped prisoner has now been recaptured.

12. PCSO / Police report/Update

The council **received and noted** the following update and report from the local PCSO.

Police & Community Safety Report

- **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB):**
 - 15/12 – The Cross Church, Appleton Thorn: Report of a male causing issues outside the church while children were inside. The male left prior to police arrival; reassurance was provided to children and staff.
- **Theft:**
 - 30/12 – Stretton Distribution Centre: Theft of a push bike. Enquiries ongoing, including CCTV review.
- **Suspicious Activity:**
 - 02/01 – Acton Avenue: Report of a male offering gutter cleaning service. Police attended; no trace found.
 - 10/01 – Cann Lane South: Resident reported a Ring doorbell being taped over. Logged for local awareness.
- **Vehicle Damage:**
 - 30/12 – London Road/Windmill Lane: Reports of a damaged vehicle. Damage confirmed to have occurred on the motorway.
- **Drink Driving:**
 - 15/01 – Firs Lane: Male refused to provide a breath sample and was arrested.
- **Incident Overview:**
 - A total of **166 incidents/notifications** were reported to police during this period for Appleton, including prison releases from Appleton Thorn and motorway-related incidents.
- **Street of the Week:**
 - Braeburn Drive
- **Speed Enforcement Activations:**
 - 16/12 – Grappenhall Lane: 7 activations
 - 22/12 – Witherwin Avenue: 5 activations
 - 07/01 – Wrights Green: 0 activations
 - 16/01 – Longwood Road: 2 activations
- **Planned Police Surgeries:**
 - 22/01 (11:00–12:00) – Broomfield's Leisure Centre
 - 28/01 (17:00–18:00) – Broomfield's Leisure Centre
 - 05/02 (17:00–18:00) – Broomfield's Leisure Centre
 - 01/02 (10:00–11:00) – Appleton Thorn Village Hall

- **Other:**
 - A joint estate walkabout with Torus Housing is planned for **21 January**.
 - No further updates at present regarding the future of PCSOs.
13. **Parish Hall New Kitchen**
Members discussed the one quotation for the new kitchen.
- RESOLVED:** To defer consideration until **three quotations** have been received and agree a working group at the next meeting.
14. **Parish Hall Curtains**
Members discussed the one quotation for the Curtains.
- RESOLVED:** To defer consideration until **three quotations** have been received and agree a working group at the next meeting.
15. **Memorial Trees for Roundabout**
Members discussed quotations for the planting of new memorial trees.
- RESOLVED:** That the quotations be left with **Cllr R Betts** and the **Clerk** to seek confirmation regarding the ongoing maintenance of the trees once planted.
16. **Fencing attached to a property in Willow**
Members considered the matter of fencing attached to a property on Willow Lane. It was noted that the fence had already been erected prior to the Council's discussion of the matter.
Members raised concerns that the fencing had been installed before the Council had the opportunity to consider the proposal.
- RESOLVED:** That the Clerk write to **the resident** to advise that liability rests with them, as their contractors installed the fencing rather than the Parish Council.
17. **Section 106 Speed Awareness Signage – Appleton Cross Development**
Members noted the Section 106 obligation associated with the Appleton Cross development for the provision of three speed awareness signs.
Members received and noted correspondence from **Cllr Helen Speed** regarding the status of the signage. It was reported that, due to officer absences, the Section 106 obligation does not appear to have been progressed and that the signage may not yet have been formally ordered.
Cllr Helen Speed advised that she confirm whether the Section 106 order has been issued and, if not, will progress this at the earliest opportunity and keep the Parish Council updated.
Members discussed ongoing concerns regarding vehicle speeding through Appleton Thorn village and the adequacy of current speed awareness measures.
- RESOLVED:** To **note** the update received and to await further confirmation regarding the ordering and delivery of the speed awareness signs, and to continue engagement with relevant authorities regarding traffic-calming measures.

18. Cathedral Hygiene

Members noted that parish approval is required and that the current service may require **three months' notice** if a change is made.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk check existing contracts before a decision is made regarding the new service proposal.

19. Community safety concerns

Members noted and discussed the recent escape of a prisoner from Appleton Thorn Prison, acknowledging that the individual has since been recaptured.

Key points discussed included:

- Information available regarding the incident and subsequent recapture.
- Concerns raised by residents regarding safety, communication, and emergency response.
- Lessons learned and reassurance measures for the local community.
- Whether to request further information or engagement from relevant authorities, including the Prison Service, Police, or Community Safety Partnership.

It was noted that this item had been discussed earlier under **Item 11**.

RESOLVED: That the matter be noted and monitored, with further engagement from relevant authorities to be considered if necessary.

20. Bridge Lane Playing Fields

Members discussed ongoing issues with dog fouling at Bridge Lane Playing Fields and noted concerns raised by residents.

RESOLVED: That consideration of possible actions be **deferred to the next meeting**.

21. Dates and time of next meetings

Dates Noted: Upcoming Meeting Schedule

- **Thursday, 5th February 2026**
 - 9:15 am – Planning Committee
 - 9:45 am – Finance and General Purposes Committee
 - 11:30 am – Extraordinary Full Council Meeting
- **Tuesday, 17th February 2026**
 - 6:30 pm – Planning Committee
 - 7:00 pm – Parish Council
- **Thursday, 19th February 2026**

- 10:00 am – Employment Committee
- **Thursday, 5th March 2026**
 - 9:15 am – Planning Committee
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- **Tuesday, 17th March 2026**
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 - 7:00 pm – Parish Council
- **Thursday, 19th March 2026**
 - 10:00 am – Employment Committee

22. **Agenda items were addressed as scheduled.**

The meeting was officially closed at: 9:20PM

Signed.....

Dated.....



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1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

An apology for absence was received from **Cllr H Speed** due to illness, which was accepted.

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Members were reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in items of business on the agenda, and that declarations are a personal matter for each Member to determine based on the circumstances. Members were also advised that any requests for dispensations relating to pecuniary interests would be considered by the Parish Council and, if granted, formally recorded.

The following declarations were made:

- **Cllr Judith Wheeler** – Planning, DMC and Stockton Heath Festival Trustee
- **Cllr Peter Walker** – Planning and DMC

The meeting was recorded by **Cllr. Ghazala Chapman, Cllr Kenneth Critchley, and Karen Newton Clerk/RFO.**

3. Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

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4. **Minutes**

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Finance and General Purposes Committee – Thursday 15 January 2026

Proposed by: Cllr L Chapman and **Seconded by:** Cllr P Lewenz

Planning Committee – Tuesday 16 December 2025

Proposed by: Cllr L Chapman and **Seconded by:** Cllr P Lewenz

5. **Finance & Governance**

5.1–5.8 The following items were **deferred** to the **Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on 5 February**, due to the Clerk not having access to the bank:

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6.3. A festival report from **Stockton Heath Festival Committee** was received and noted. The Committee thanked the Parish Council for its support of last year's festival. It was noted that the event is run by the **Stockton Heath Festival Committee** and not by Stockton Heath Parish Council.

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- Councillors acknowledged the recommendation from the Finance and General Purposes Committee but suggested that the additional costs could be met from the **earmarked reserves**.
- Councillors noted that the proposed annual increase equated to only approximately **£4 per household**, and some commented that residents may struggle with rising costs.
- Other points raised included the Council's responsibility not to base its precept solely on comparisons with other councils and consideration of potential increased funding from housing developments.

Following discussion on the proposed precept increase to **8.44%**

A **named vote** was taken to increase the precept by **8.44%**.

- **For:** Cllr Chapman, Cllr P Walker, Cllr G Chapman
- **Against:** Cllr Critchley, Cllr Bett, Cllr Wheeler, Cllr Lewenz, Cllr. E. Manson-Sawko
- **Abstention:** Cllr L Booth

The **motion** to increase the precept to **8.44%** was lost

A **named vote** was taken to **not increase the precept**

- **For:** Cllr Critchley, Cllr Bett, Cllr. E. Manson-Sawko
- **Against:** Cllr L Chapman, Cllr P Walker, Cllr G Chapman, Cllr Wheeler, Cllr Lewenz
- **Abstention:** Cllr L Booth

The **motion** not to increase the precept was lost.

Following further discussions on the proposed precept

It was **noted** that the exact precept calculation resulted in a figure of approximately **36.50** per Band D property. However, to avoid an uneven decimal, the precept figure was **rounded up to 36.51**.

- This rounding results in a total precept of **£190,910.79**, which is **£40.79 over the original budgeted amount**. Consequently, this requires an increase to a budget line to cover the additional amount.

It was **proposed to increase the precept to 1.03% if the spreadsheet does not round exactly the calculation be accepted up to 1.05%**.

Proposed by: Cllr Bett and **Seconded by:** Cllr L Chapman

A **named vote** was taken **for increasing the precept by 1.03% Precept**

- **For:** Cllr L Chapman, Cllr G Chapman, Cllr Wheeler, Cllr Lewenz, Cllr Bett
- **Against:** Cllr Critchley, Cllr P Walker, Cllr. E. Manson-Sawko,
- **Abstention:** Cllr L Booth

The motion to increase the precept up to **1.05%** was **gained**.

The Council recognises the financial pressures on residents and is mindful of keeping the precept increase to a minimum. It is proposed that rather than raising the precept, the Council's reserves will be carefully managed and used to meet any shortfalls in funding required for essential services and projects. This approach allows the Council to maintain financial stability and continue supporting the community without placing additional burden on householders. By utilising earmarked reserves prudently, the Council can address current financial needs while planning responsibly for the future.

8. Assertion 10 - AGAR

The Council **noted** that **Assertion 10**, introduced for the **2025/26 AGAR**, requires councils to demonstrate compliance with **UK GDPR**, data protection laws, and digital governance standards.

This includes using council-owned email domains, maintaining an accessible website, having up-to-date IT and data protection policies, and ensuring proper data handling and security.

Failure to comply could lead to audit concerns and public scrutiny. The Council acknowledged the new policy outlining how these requirements will be met.

9. New/ Out of date Policies

Members were asked to consider and adopt the following **new policies**:

1. **IT and Data Policy** – Clerk
2. **Lone Working Policy** – Cllr Richard Betts
3. **Policy on the Use of Public CCTV Applications** – Clerk

Members were asked to **consider** and **adopt** the existing policies that are out of date on the website:

4. **Dignity at work policy** – Appleton Parish Council
5. **Code of Conduct** – Appleton Parish Council
6. **Expenses Policy** – Appleton Parish Council
7. **Income and Debtor Policy** – Appleton Parish Council
8. **Biodiversity Policy** – Appleton Parish Council
9. **Retention Policy** – Appleton Parish Council
10. **Grants Policy** – Appleton Parish Council
11. **Staffing Committee Terms of Reference** – Appleton Parish Council

RESOLVED: That all policies listed above were received and noted. **Cllr R Bett** and **Cllr E Manson-Sawko** will review all policies and submit to the F&GP Committee for review as previously resolved by the Council, prioritising those required as part of **Assertion 10**, and will report back before the end of **March 2026**.

10. Upgrade to email web hosting

Members considered upgrading the Parish Council's email hosting to increase mailbox storage and reviewed the associated costs.

RESOLVED: To upgrade the email web hosting at a cost of **£99.99 per year**.

Proposed: Cllr L Chapman and **Seconded:** Cllr G Chapman

Vote: All agreed.

11. Reports from Parish Council Representatives

Councillors' Reports

Cllr P Lewenz

- Reported that works at *The Dingle* are progressing well.
- The working group is collaborating effectively with the Woodland Trust.
- Discussions are ongoing regarding future housing developments and the creation of a perimeter zone along the woodland path.
- Provided an update on Warrington and Stockton Heath libraries following funding reductions:
 - Stockton Heath Library remains open.
 - Staffing has been reduced to one assistant in the morning and two in the afternoon.
- Requested a future meeting discussion on library services.

• **Cllr J Wheeler**

- Reported that Stockton Heath Parish Council will hold discussions on library services in **March 2026**.
- Suggested Appleton Parish Council consider the matter after that meeting.
- Attended a Boundary Commission meeting held at short notice.
- Requested that parish and ward boundary considerations be added to next month's agenda.

• **Cllr E Manson-Sawko**

- Reported that the Cricket Club Chair is changing.
- The club is considering opening the Pavilion as a wider community hub/café/centre.
- Suggested inviting representatives to a future meeting to present their plans.
- Considered the pavilion an asset to the parish.

• **Cllr J Wheeler (additional)**

- Noted the pavilion has significant historical value.
- Has collected extensive historical research relating to the building.
- Tip closure consultation – the parish council will be notified

• **Cllr Ghazala Chapman**

- Raised concerns regarding the recent escaped prisoner incident.

• **Cllr L Booth**

- Reported contact with Reverend Duel, who is in contact with the prison.
- Was put in contact with the prison chaplain, who was unable to comment.

- Has requested a meeting with the prison governor, alongside Cllr Speed and another councillor.
- Awaiting a formal report.
- Was informed that prisoners nearing the end of their sentences are transferred to Thorn Cross Prison.
- Prisoners are integrated into employment schemes; the escape occurred during this process.
- The escaped prisoner has now been recaptured.

12. **PCSO / Police report/Update**

The council **received and noted** the following update and report from the local PCSO.

Police & Community Safety Report

- **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB):**
 - 15/12 – The Cross Church, Appleton Thorn: Report of a male causing issues outside the church while children were inside. The male left prior to police arrival; reassurance was provided to children and staff.
- **Theft:**
 - 30/12 – Stretton Distribution Centre: Theft of a push bike. Enquiries ongoing, including CCTV review.
- **Suspicious Activity:**
 - 02/01 – Acton Avenue: Report of a male offering gutter cleaning service. Police attended; no trace found.
 - 10/01 – Cann Lane South: Resident reported a Ring doorbell being taped over. Logged for local awareness.
- **Vehicle Damage:**
 - 30/12 – London Road/Windmill Lane: Reports of a damaged vehicle. Damage confirmed to have occurred on the motorway.
- **Drink Driving:**
 - 15/01 – Firs Lane: Male refused to provide a breath sample and was arrested.
- **Incident Overview:**
 - A total of **166 incidents/notifications** were reported to police during this period for Appleton, including prison releases from Appleton Thorn and motorway-related incidents.
- **Street of the Week:**
 - Braeburn Drive
- **Speed Enforcement Activations:**
 - 16/12 – Grappenhall Lane: 7 activations
 - 22/12 – Witherwin Avenue: 5 activations
 - 07/01 – Wrights Green: 0 activations
 - 16/01 – Longwood Road: 2 activations
- **Planned Police Surgeries:**
 - 22/01 (11:00–12:00) – Broomfield's Leisure Centre
 - 28/01 (17:00–18:00) – Broomfield's Leisure Centre
 - 05/02 (17:00–18:00) – Broomfield's Leisure Centre
 - 01/02 (10:00–11:00) – Appleton Thorn Village Hall

- **Other:**
 - A joint estate walkabout with Torus Housing is planned for **21 January**.
 - No further updates at present regarding the future of PCSOs.
- 13. Parish Hall New Kitchen**
Members discussed the one quotation for the new kitchen.
- RESOLVED:** To defer consideration until **three quotations** have been received and agree a working group at the next meeting.
- 14. Parish Hall Curtains**
Members discussed the one quotation for the Curtains.
- RESOLVED:** To defer consideration until **three quotations** have been received and agree a working group at the next meeting.
- 15. Memorial Trees for Roundabout**
Members discussed quotations for the planting of new memorial trees.
- RESOLVED:** That the quotations be left with **Cllr R Betts** and the **Clerk** to seek confirmation regarding the ongoing maintenance of the trees once planted.
- 16. Fencing attached to a property in Willow**
Members considered the matter of fencing attached to a property on Willow Lane. It was noted that the fence had already been erected prior to the Council's discussion of the matter.
Members raised concerns that the fencing had been installed before the Council had the opportunity to consider the proposal.
- RESOLVED:** That the Clerk write to **the resident** to advise that liability rests with them, as their contractors installed the fencing rather than the Parish Council.
- 17. Section 106 Speed Awareness Signage – Appleton Cross Development**
Members noted the Section 106 obligation associated with the Appleton Cross development for the provision of three speed awareness signs.
Members received and noted correspondence from **Cllr Helen Speed** regarding the status of the signage. It was reported that, due to officer absences, the Section 106 obligation does not appear to have been progressed and that the signage may not yet have been formally ordered.
Cllr Helen Speed advised that she confirm whether the Section 106 order has been issued and, if not, will progress this at the earliest opportunity and keep the Parish Council updated.
Members discussed ongoing concerns regarding vehicle speeding through Appleton Thorn village and the adequacy of current speed awareness measures.
- RESOLVED:** To **note** the update received and to await further confirmation regarding the ordering and delivery of the speed awareness signs, and to continue engagement with relevant authorities regarding traffic-calming measures.

18. **Cathedral Hygiene**

Members noted that parish approval is required and that the current service may require **three months' notice** if a change is made.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk check existing contracts before a decision is made regarding the new service proposal.

19. **Community safety concerns**

Members noted and discussed the recent escape of a prisoner from Appleton Thorn Prison, acknowledging that the individual has since been recaptured.

Key points discussed included:

- Information available regarding the incident and subsequent recapture.
- Concerns raised by residents regarding safety, communication, and emergency response.
- Lessons learned and reassurance measures for the local community.
- Whether to request further information or engagement from relevant authorities, including the Prison Service, Police, or Community Safety Partnership.

It was noted that this item had been discussed earlier under **Item 11**.

RESOLVED: That the matter be noted and monitored, with further engagement from relevant authorities to be considered if necessary.

20. **Bridge Lane Playing Fields**

Members discussed ongoing issues with dog fouling at Bridge Lane Playing Fields and noted concerns raised by residents.

RESOLVED: That consideration of possible actions be **deferred to the next meeting**.

21. **Dates and time of next meetings**

Dates Noted: Upcoming Meeting Schedule

- **Thursday, 5th February 2026**
 - 9:15 am – Planning Committee
 - 9:45 am – Finance and General Purposes Committee
 - 11:30 am – Extraordinary Full Council Meeting
- **Tuesday, 17th February 2026**
 - 6:30 pm – Planning Committee
 - 7:00 pm – Parish Council
- **Thursday, 19th February 2026**

- 10:00 am – Employment Committee
 - **Thursday, 5th March 2026**
 - 9:15 am – Planning Committee
 - 9:45 am – Finance and General Purposes Committee
 - **Tuesday, 17th March 2026**
 - 6:30 pm – Planning Committee
 - 7:00 pm – Parish Council
 - **Thursday, 19th March 2026**
 - 10:00 am – Employment Committee
22. **Agenda items were addressed as scheduled.**
The meeting was officially closed at: 9:20PM

Signed.....

Dated.....



Appleton Parish Council

Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road, Appleton, Warrington, Cheshire
WA4 5EQ

Telephone 01925 268153 Email clerk@appletonparish.gov.uk

Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting of Appleton Parish Council held on 5th February 2026 at 11.30AM in Appleton Parish Hall

Present: - Councillors, R Bett (Vice Chair), G Chapman, L Chapman, P Lewenz H Speed, and K Critchley.
Clerk K Newton.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from: -

Cllr L Booth - Prior Engagement

Cllr E Manson-Sawko – Work Commitments

Cllr P Walker – Health

Cllr J Wheeler – Work Commitments

2. Members Code of Conduct

Members were reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in items of business on the agenda, and that declarations are a personal matter for each Member to determine based on the circumstances. Members were also advised that any requests for dispensations relating to pecuniary interests would be considered by the Parish Council and, if granted, formally recorded.

No declarations were made

3. Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

4. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the following meetings be approved as a correct record:

- **Full Council** – Tuesday, 20 January 2026 – Deferred for amendments.
- **Employment Committee** – 29 January 2026 – Approved; **proposed** by Cllr H Speed, **seconded** by Cllr L. Chapman; *all agreed*.

5. **PART 2 CONFIDENTIAL – Employment**

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press were excluded from the meeting for the following items due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. The items related to the personal circumstances of individuals and the management of staffing matters. Only Members of the Council and the Clerk/Assistant Clerk remained present.

6. **Recruitment of Assistant/Deputy Clerk**

The Council considered the Employment Committee's recommendations regarding the arrangements for the recruitment of a new Deputy Clerk.

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations of the Employment Committee in relation to the recruitment of a Deputy Clerk be approved. *(See also item 8)*

Proposed by Cllr H. Speed, seconded by Cllr L. Chapman; all agreed.

7. **Reinstatement of Retired Assistant Clerk on a Temporary Basis**

The Council considered the Employment Committee's recommendations regarding the temporary reinstatement of the retired Assistant Clerk, including the associated terms.

RESOLVED:

That the temporary reinstatement of the retired Assistant Clerk, in accordance with the Employment Committee's recommendations, be approved.

This is a temporary contract, spine level 31 with travelling expenses, a 6 hour week, , and no pension provisions required.

Proposed by Cllr K. Critchley, seconded by Cllr H Speed; all agreed.

8. **Recruitment Process for Deputy Clerk**

The Council considered and discussed the proposed recruitment process for the position of Deputy Clerk, including the job description, selection criteria, recruitment method, interview arrangements, timeline, and remuneration package.

RESOLVED: That:

- the job description for the Deputy Clerk position be approved, and Job Vacancy wording agreed.
- the recruitment method be agreed - Currently to be advertised on the Parish Noticeboard and Parish Council Website.
- the essential and desirable selection criteria be approved for shortlisting. - Process to be used as followed for recruitment of the previous assistant/deputy Clerk
- the interview and selection panel consisting of Councillors Bett, Speed and G Chapman and the Clerk be appointed.

- the recruitment timeline be agreed. Job Vacancy to be issued immediately, closing date 23 Feb. Candidate review, selection, recommendation, Council approval and offer of employment – process complete by mid to late March.
- the salary and benefits be approved in line with organisational policy. Recommended at Spine levels 18 to 23 and 20 hours a week

9. Dates and time of next meetings

Noted: Upcoming Meeting Schedule

- **Tuesday, 17th February 2026**
 - 6:30 pm – Planning Committee
 - 7:00 pm – Parish Council
- **Thursday, 19th February 2026**
 - 10:00 am – Employment Committee
- **Thursday, 5th March 2026**
 - 9:15 am – Planning Committee
 - 9:45 am – Finance and General Purposes Committee
- **Tuesday, 17th March 2026**
 - 6:30 pm – Planning Committee
 - 7:00 pm – Parish Council
- **Thursday, 19th March 2026**
 - 10:00 am – Employment Committee

10. Agenda items were addressed as scheduled.

The meeting was officially closed at: 12PM



Appleton Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Appleton Parish Council held on Tuesday 17th February 2026 at 7pm in Appleton Parish Hall

Present: - Councillors L Booth (Chair), R Bett (Vice Chair), G Chapman, L Chapman, E Manson-Sawko, J Wheeler, P Lewenz and K Critchley.

Attendees: - Clerk – Karen Newton/PCSO

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

An apology for absence was received from

Cllr H Speed will be late to the meeting (arrived 7:10PM)

Cllr P Walker Due to Health

which were accepted.

2. Members Code of Conduct

Members were reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in items of business on the agenda, and that declarations are a personal matter for each Member to determine based on the circumstances.

Members were also advised that any requests for dispensations relating to pecuniary interests would be considered by the Parish Council and, if granted, formally recorded.

The following declarations were made:

Cllr J Wheeler – Planning/ Grant Application for Stockton Heath Festival Trust

The meeting was recorded by **Cllr. Ghazala Chapman, Cllr Kenneth Critchley, and Karen Newton Clerk/RFO.**

3. Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

The Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) was present and was invited by the Chair to give their report.

The PCSO provided an update on recent incidents within the parish, including matters relating to anti-social behaviour and general crime trends. Members were informed of ongoing patrol activity and engagement within the community.

Councillors were given the opportunity to raise questions and matters of concern. The PCSO responded accordingly and offered advice where appropriate.

The Chair thanked the PCSO for their attendance and report.

Action: The Clerk to write to Highways to request consideration of extending the double yellow lines from Dudlow Green Road towards London Road.

Members expressed concerns regarding vehicles parking close to the junction, which is causing obstruction and restricting visibility for drivers exiting Dudlow Green Road onto London Road, thereby creating a potential safety hazard.

Action: It was requested by Cllr P. Lewenz that the Chair, Cllr Laura Booth, write to the Police and Crime Commissioner to express the Council's concerns regarding the proposed reduction in PCSO provision.

Members noted that Appleton has budgeted for the continued provision of a PCSO for the 2026/27 financial year and wish to seek clarification on the position moving forward.

4. **Minutes**

Upon consideration, it was agreed that approval of all the above minutes be deferred until the next meeting of the Full Council to allow Members additional time to review them.

The minutes concerned are:

- **Full Council Meeting** – Tuesday 20th January 2026 - Deferred
- **Extraordinary Council Meeting** – Thursday 5th February 2026 - Deferred
- **Finance and General Purposes Committee** – Thursday 5th February 2026 -Deferred
- **Planning Committee** – Thursday 5th February 2026 – it was **proposed** by **Councillor L Chapman**, **seconded** by **Councillor G. Chapman** and confirmed as correct.

Additional Matters Noted:

- Councillor **K. Critchley** requested that Members check that the voting on the precept reflects the amendments he submitted.
- Councillor **Ken Critchley** also commented regarding the way the votes are recorded; the Clerk agreed to bring the voting sheets to the next meeting.
- To assist with timely approval of previous minutes at Council meetings, the Chair requested drafts of previous minutes be sent to all councillors and the draft minutes updated for any councillor proposed changes and included in the Agenda

attachments for the related upcoming formal Council meeting. It was **noted** that the **Standing Orders** need to be amended to reflect this process.

5. **Finance & Governance**

5.1 The Payment Schedule for January 2026 was considered and approved, **proposed by Cllr L Chapman and seconded by Cllr G. Chapman.**

5.2 The Receipt Schedule for January 2026 was not approved and deferred for further review.

5.3 The Bank Reconciliations for January 2026 was considered and approved, **proposed by Cllr L Chapman and seconded by Cllr G. Chapman.**

5.4 The Payment Schedule for February 2026 was considered and authorised for payment. **proposed by Cllr P Lewenz and seconded by Cllr G. Chapman.**

6. **Banking Arrangements**

6.1 It was **resolved** to authorise signatories on the Parish Council's bank and building society accounts.

6.2 It was **resolved** to approve the addition of Miss Karen Newton and Mrs Irene Derbyshire as authorised persons on the Parish Council's bank and building society accounts, namely:

- Nationwide Building Society
- Mansfield Building Society
- Hanley Building Society
- Skipton Building Society
- Buckinghamshire Building Society
- NatWest Current Account

6.3 It was **resolved** to confirm the removal of Mrs Joanne Monks and Mrs Katy Pepper as authorised persons from all the above accounts.

6.4 It was **resolved** to approve the payment of any associated costs or charges incurred in adding Miss Karen Newton and Mrs Irene Derbyshire as authorised persons on the Parish Council's bank and building society accounts, including identity verification requirements such as Post-Office certification.

The motion for all items under Agenda Item 6 was **proposed by Cllr P Lewenz and seconded by G Chapman.**

7. **Bank Transfers to Cover Future Payments**

7.1 It was **resolved** to approve the transfer of up to £40,000 from one of the Parish Council's building society accounts into the NatWest current account to cover future payments until receipt of the precept in the new financial year.

Proposed by Cllr L. Chapman and seconded by Cllr G. Chapman.

7.2 It was **resolved** to approve any reasonable charges associated with the transfer.

Proposed by Cllr G Chapman and seconded by Cllr H Speed.

7.3 It was resolved to delegate the decision on which building society account the funds are transferred from to the Clerks for this occasion only, in view of recent staff changes and current access arrangements.

Proposed by Cllr L. Chapman and seconded by Cllr G. Chapman.

8. Quarterly Banking Reconciliation and Checks

8.1 It was **noted** that Cllr Laurence Chapman is already appointed to undertake the independent verification of the bank reconciliations and bank statements for all accounts.

8.2 It was **noted** whether reconciliations have been completed for the following quarters:

- 30 September 2025 – **Yes**
- 31 December 2025 – **No**

9. Grant Applications

9.1 An application was received from Stockton Heath Festival Trust for consideration.

9.2 It was resolved to approve the grant award of £1150.00 to Stockton Heath Festival Trust.

Proposed by Cllr G. Chapman and seconded by Cllr R. Bett.

11. Reports from Parish Council Representatives

To consider reports from parish council representatives on committees, working groups, and outside bodies.

Cllr J Wheeler requested a change to the Item title to councillor reports this will be actioned by the clerk.

Cllr J Wheeler explained that it is not feasible to stop or reverse the one-way arrangement on Quarry Lane due to access constraints and the need to maintain safe passage for refuse vehicles. She noted that any changes must ensure essential services can continue to operate without obstruction or safety risks to residents.

Cllr H Speed

Speeding Traffic on Lumb brook Road

Three solar powered speed indicators are to be erected in Appleton Thorn – two in Grappenhall Lane and one in Lumb Brook Road. A meeting is being arranged with the Officer leading on this to share with them the sites that we believe will be most appreciated by residents.

No news on the cutting back of the bushes and foliage – it may have been done so if anyone goes that way can they have a look please.

Broomfield's Leisure Centre

The planned meeting with Sarah Hall was cancelled on the day and no new date has been offered yet. It was noted at yesterday's scrutiny committee regarding the budget that: "There are some assumptions around Broomfield's as an at-risk site." We do know that everything is being considered in terms of savings and information

from the discussions between Sarah and Government representatives appears to have slowed since just before Christmas.

Appleton Cross – Community Centre

I received ten emails and one telephone calls in one morning regarding access to the new site by contractors even though at the time no works were being progressed. I contacted Homes England and Step Places and asked for a site visit for myself and Sarah Hall. Step Places said discussions were ongoing with planners and Homes England responded in a similar vein. I have asked for a meeting with the planners and for discussions on the relocation of the planned waste recycling centre from next to the secondary school to the industrial estate, which I will give further information on later.

These concerns and our communications with WBC, Homes England and Step Places have resulted in more detailed discussions about the temporary access via the spur off the roundabout on Blackcap Road and that this has now delayed the planning application being put forward.

Since then, workmen have been on Phase One of the Orchard Meadows site, and this has caused a great deal of concern to some residents near to the play area where the vans have been parked. I contacted David Wilson Homes, and they informed me that the works being carried out are to put in place tactile pavements across the site and that the place that the vans parked is the only suitable place on the site. The works had apparently been started earlier than planned.

I have been copied into another email today from Sarah Hall's office who have also been contacted by residents to Homes England asking again for a site visit.

Dudlow's Green Medical Centre and Pharmacy

I have had a programme of actions to be taken by the GP surgery to consult with patients as Appleton Cross is developed from the ICB. In a meeting with the ICB this week I asked to be kept informed of the timescale for this programme of works. I think we need to agree a programme of awareness raising with the residents, but that there isn't a rush to do this at present. I suggest that we ask the Clerk to advise us which Committee should take forward discussions on a programme of awareness raising if the Parish Council agrees to do this.

SEWUE Development Framework

Following the most recent consultation I highlighted concerns about the proposed waste recycling centre next to the Secondary School. We believe that it is replicating the poor siting of the waste recycling centre at Stockton Heath and should be sited on an industrial estate if possible. The proposal was that the land identified by Homes England should be donated to WBC for social and affordable houses and the profits from some of the affordable houses should be used to purchase land on the current nearby industrial estate.

I contacted Homes England about this, and they had discussions with WBC and responded to say that they had been advised by WBC to continue with their plans and suggested that we meet with the planners. I have spoken to Cllr Mundry, who supported the proposal and we agreed that a further approach to the planners would be made, with a request that the meet takes place in Cllr Mundry's office at the town hall. I await a response.

The other concerns I highlighted in my report remain and there hasn't been another meeting proposed by Homes England since the consultation. We believe that it sufficient time has passed now for Homes England to have considered the responses and some of their analysis has been published on their web site, so I am going to propose our next meeting of the South Warrington Parishes SEWUE Working Group is held in March.

HMP Thorn Cross

I have still not had a reply from the Highways Department regarding parking by school parents. Thorn Cross Prison couldn't contact the school to have a meeting due to other priorities, which we are aware of.

We had a meeting at the Prison which Cllr Booth and Browne attended with the Governor and Risk Manager, and they were helpful and informative. They only have category four prisoners and very few choose not to return after leave. If they do it is usually for family reasons as appears to have been the case with this prisoner, who has now returned to a closed prison and has an extended sentence.

Thorn Inn and Nursery Parking

I have had several contacts regarding the parking of cars by parents attending the nursery and the damage to the grass verges on Green Lane. I have visited the Thorn Inn and later had a telephone conversation with one of the co-owners. He explained that the agreement for using the back car park had become difficult due to parking in the main car park and some people parking all day (not parents but probably parking for work or the airport) and they were losing trade that they could ill afford to. He agreed that the nursery could use the back car park again for staff if they put the bollards back after they had entered or exited the car park. I've spoken to the nursery manager, and she was going to speak to the co-owner to firm up the arrangements.

Bins in Green Lane and the Bloor Estate play area at the corner of Arley Road and Grappenhall Lane

I've had a complaint that the bins on the Bloor Estate now have stickers on saying no dog waste and that the bins on Green Lane were full. I explained about the contract that the house owners have with the management committee which doesn't include contaminated waste and that we had made the bin a double bin in Green Lane to compensate as the Borough Council won't empty new bins but will empty double bins instead of single bins.

- Traffic flows post development including pinch points at Lumb Brook Bridge, New Lane and Broad Lane
- The lack of any extra crossings over the canals
- Ensuring compensatory improvements to footpaths/cycleways for any losses
- The width of the new link road from the top of Witherwin Avenue to Appleton Cross (30 meters including two bus lanes, two-foot paths and two cycle lanes.
- Vehicular traffic crossing the existing footpath that links the cricket club to the wall garden

12. PCSO / Police report/Update

At the time of agenda publication, the report had not been received. However, the PCSO attended the meeting and provided his report immediately following public participation

PCSO Report:

Appleton Parish Council Report

17th January – 13th February

Burglary Other

Date	Location	Summary	Action
24/01	Appleton Thorn Trading Estate	Theft of copper cable	On Going CCTV enquires
26/01	Barley castle Trading Estate	Theft of Tools	On Going CCTV enquires and for passing attention
03/02	Ivy house Gardens	Shed Break	No Lines of enquiry

Parking Issues

Date	Location	Summary	Action
27/01	Dudlow Green Road	Report of on-going issues at the Junction of London Road	For passing attention and monitoring. Main vehicle causing issues appears to have left the area.

Attempt Burglary

Date	Location	Summary	Action
02/02	Hatchery Close	Attempt to break in via Garage	Investigations on going, door to door completed

			with crime prevention advice
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Shoplifting

Date	Location	Summary	Action
30/01	Co Op	Male takes various items and makes in waiting vehicle	For on-going enquires regarding vehicle involved

Theft From Motor Vehicle

02/02	Bridge Lane	Items taken from Vehicle	No Lines of Enquiry
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There has been a Total of 157 Incidents/notifications reported to the police during these dates for Appleton which includes prison releases from Appleton Thorn and Incidents on the Motorway.

STREET OF THE WEEK

Hatchery Close

SPEED ENFORCEMENT

21/01 Witherwin Avenue, 0 Activations

05/02 Grappenhall Lane, 3 Activations

11/02 Grappenhall Lane, 6 Activations

Planned Police Surgeries at Broomfield's Leisure Centre

Tuesday 17th February 5 -6

Thursday 26th February 5-6

Thursday 5th March 12-1

Wednesday 11th March 5-6

Mini Police

PCSO Blanchard attended Broomfield's Primary School and worked alongside the Mini Police carrying out 20mph speed awareness on Bridge Lane outside the School.

13. Bridge Lane Playing Fields

At the parish meeting, members discussed ongoing concerns about dog fouling at Bridge Lane Playing Fields and the impact on residents. It was clarified that as the land is owned by Warrington Borough Council and leased to the rugby club, any official enforcement signage would need to come from the landowner, and that Cllr J

Wheeler will contact them to ask whether Appleton Parish Council can install supportive awareness signage in liaison with them. Item deferred until March meeting.

14. Warrington Borough Council – Electoral Review

Members received and noted the information regarding Warrington Borough Council's Electoral Review, including the proposed warding arrangements and consultation timescales. No further discussion took place, and no comments or representations were proposed at this stage.

15. Memorial Trees for Roundabout

Cllr R. Betts discussed the three trees that will replace the existing three trees on the roundabout. It was noted that the new trees would be **replanted**, and that **Warrington Borough Council** would continue with the **maintenance of the trees once planted**.

The quotations for the trees were considered, and the Council **resolved** that the quote from **Specimen Trees** was **better value for money**, offering more for the price quoted of **£1,644.00**.

It was further noted that the **three trees removed from the roundabout will be replanted on land owned by the Land Trust**.

16. Purchase of New Tables and Chairs

The Council considered the purchase of new tables and chairs for parish use. It was noted that the current tables and chairs are in poor condition, insufficient in number, and some are no longer fit for purpose.

The Council **agreed to defer the decision** on the purchase until a **Working Group** has been established to review **all Parish Hall improvements**. The establishment of this Working Group will be included as an **agenda item at the next Full Council meeting**.

17. Part 2 – Confidential Items 17 to 19

In accordance with the **Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960**, the press and public were **excluded from the meeting** for Items 17 to 19 due to the **confidential nature of staffing and financial information**.

18. Staffing Matters

The Council **considered the document received from CHALC**, and it was **noted**.

The Council **agreed the date of 12th March 2026** for interviews. It was further agreed that **all matters regarding the interviews** would be **directed to the Employment Committee** for consideration and agreement.

19. Payroll Costs Nov to Feb 2026

The Council considered the payroll costs for the period November 2025 to February 2026.

Cllr L. Chapman requested a **detailed breakdown of the costs**. The Clerk confirmed

that this breakdown would be **presented to the Employment Committee** for consideration.

Decision: The payroll costs for these periods were **not approved at this meeting.**

20. Dates and time of next meetings

To Note: Upcoming Meeting Schedule

- **Thursday, 5th March 2026**
 - 9:15 am – Planning Committee
 - 9:45 am – Finance and General Purposes Committee
- **Tuesday, 17th March 2026**
 - 6:30 pm – Planning Committee
 - 7:00 pm – Parish Council
- **Thursday, 19th March 2026**
 - 10:00 am – Employment Committee

- **Thursday 2 April**
 - 9.15am – Planning Committee
 - 9.45am – Finance and General Purposes Committee
- **Tuesday 21 April**
 - 6.30pm – Planning Committee
 - 7.00pm – Parish Council

- **Thursday 14 May**
 - 9.15am – Planning Committee
 - 9.45am – Finance and General Purposes Committee
- **Friday 15 May**
 - 12.30pm – Employment Committee
- **Tuesday 19 May**
 - 6.30pm – Planning Committee

21. Agenda items were addressed as scheduled.

The meeting was officially closed at: 8:50 pm

Signed.....

Dated.....



Appleton Parish Council

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Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on Thursday 5th March 2026 at 9.45 AM

Present: -

Committee Members Cllr L Chapman (Chair), Cllr G Chapman, Cllr Helen Speed.

Cllrs: Cllr R Bett, Cllr P Lewenz, Cllr Laura Booth

Clerk: Karen Newton

Public: None Present

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Cllr L. Chapman, welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received and noted as follows:

Cllr J Wheeler – Work Commitments

Cllr P Walker – Health

Cllr K Critchley - Health

Resolved: The apologies for absence were **accepted**.

2. Members Code of Conduct

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

3. Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

4. Minutes

There were no minutes to approve.

5. Budget Report and Summary

The Clerk presented the Budget Report and financial summary for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 December 2025. Detailed income and expenditure statements, earmarked reserves, and receipts reports had been circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. It was confirmed some numbers are updated and may differ from previous reports.

The format of the Finance Report and summary was well received by Councillors, who noted the financial position as of 31 December 2025. Some budget items need to be added to the report

RESOLVED: That the Budget Report and financial position to 31 December 2025 be noted.

Members requested that, for future meetings, the Clerk include a cashbook breakdown (Expenditure against all Budget items including Budget balance per item) alongside the financial reports to provide additional detail on transactions.

6. Policy Review

Members reviewed the following draft policies and governance documents:

- **Code of Conduct** – Proposed by Cllr L. Chapman and seconded by Cllr G. Chapman.
RESOLVED: That the Code of Conduct be approved and recommended to Full Council.
- **Dignity at Work Policy** – Proposed by Cllr Laurence Chapman and seconded by Cllr Ghazala Chapman.
RESOLVED: That the Dignity at Work Policy be approved and recommended to Full Council.
- **Social media** – Proposed by Cllr Laurence Chapman and seconded by Cllr Ghazala Chapman.
RESOLVED: That the social media Policy be approved and recommended to Full Council.
- **Safeguarding Policy** – Proposed by Cllr Laurence Chapman and seconded by Cllr Ghazala Chapman.
RESOLVED: That the Safeguarding Policy be approved and recommended to Full Council.
- **Equality and Diversity Policy** – **Proposed** with two amendments by Cllr Laurence Chapman and **seconded** by Cllr Ghazala Chapman. Cllr Speed abstained from the vote on the proposed amendment to delete the item on “Accessibility”.
- **Data Protection Policy** – Deferred to the next Full Council Meeting (FCM) for further internal review.
- **Proposed Terms of Reference – Environment Committee** – Amendments to proposal reviewed in detail. Some items deleted as already covered in Standing Orders. Updated Terms of Reference with proposed revisions to be circulated internally for accuracy check and if agreed, the update will be recommended to full Council.

Members were asked to consider the documents, propose any amendments (with changes clearly identified for audit purposes), and recommend approval to Full Council.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Confirmed that the date of the next Finance Committee meeting **Tuesday 2nd April 2026 at 9:45 AM – Meeting Closed at 10:50AM**

Chair of the Appleton Parish Council:

Date: