



Appleton Parish Council

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 Tuesday, 16th September 2025 at 7pm in Appleton Parish Hall

Present: - Councillors L Booth, R Bett, G Chapman, L Chapman, K Critchley, P Walker
J Wheeler, H Speed and E Manson-Sawko (arr 7.25pm)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllr Lewenz and anticipated delayed arrival of Cllr Manson-Sawko noted.

2. Members Code of Conduct

Cllrs Wheeler and Walker advised that they would not comment on Planning matters.

3. Public Participation

None.

4. Items to be considered in the absence of the public and press

To consider any agenda items which, Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, require exclusion of public and press due to confidential nature of business to be transacted.

As a new agenda item and routine, Members were advised of consideration requirement but did not state specific items, at this point.

5. Minutes of Parish Council meetings held on 17 June and 15 July 2025

There was concern raised by Cllrs L and G Chapman regarding the content and decisions referenced within the minutes of 17 June, as they believed there to be confusion between meeting dates and decisions made. Following debate, the meeting clerk clarified that the decisions shown were in-fact ratified at the meeting of 17 June and that, only as a result of enquiry from External Auditor, had they been re-stated in an August extra-ordinary meeting to form a response. It was further confirmed that minutes need only detail the decision of Council and, where useful, include a brief outline of discussion.

It was agreed that the draft text circulated from Cllrs Speed and L Chapman should not form part of the formal minutes, but would be saved as an appendices within the Council meeting folder.

Resolved: That:-

- i. The minutes of the meeting held 17 June 2025 were approved as a true record.

- ii. The minutes of the meeting held 15 July 2025 were deferred to next meeting.

6. Minutes of Finance and General Purposes committee meeting and to consider the recommendations

Resolved: that the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes committee meeting held on Thursday 4 September 2025 are approved as a true record.

7. Matters Arising from the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Resolved: the policies and documents, below, as recommended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee for approval, would be deferred to a future meeting, due to proposal within agenda item 12 and potential future review of all policies.

IT policy

Staff Health and Safety Policy and Handbook

Lone Working Policy

Standing Orders

Fire Risk Assessment

Health and Safety Contractors Check List

Annual Fraud Statement (for publication on the website).

8. Planning

Resolved: That the Planning Committee meeting minutes for Tuesday 15th July, Thursday 31st July, Thursday 21st August and Thursday 4th September 2025 are approved as true records.

9. Minutes of the Environment working party meeting on 1 September 2025

Resolved: That the minutes of the Environment working party meeting are approved as a true record.

10. Accounts for 2025/2026 and Payments Schedules

Resolved: that the bank reconciliation at the 31st July 2025 and 31st August 2025 is approved, the July and August 2025 statement of receipts and payments for the financial year 2025/2026 are approved and the payment schedule for September 2025 is approved.

11. Recording meetings

Due to lack of information available, this item will be considered at a future meeting.

12. Training

It was requested that a refund for this training be obtained as Councillors were unable to access the session remotely.

Resolved: the CCTV and Data Protection webinar and fee for Councillor Laura Booth, Councillor G Chapman, Councillor E Manson-Sawko are retrospectively approved at the cost of £36.50 each.

13. PCSO / Police report

The report had been received by email and circulated. It was noted that Police representatives are due to attend October Council meeting. Cllr Wheeler will provide the meeting Clerk with contact details to confirm this.

14. Events Working Group

Members received update from the Lead Councillor in relation to the latest group meeting and activities it is hoped will go ahead, including 2025 Christmas Lights event. It was reported that the lights, left in situ, are now damaged and will need to be removed, re-purchased and installed ahead of the proposed November event. A budget spend request of up to £300 for refreshments and event activities will be presented to Finance and General Purposes Committee and quotations sought for new lighting.

Resolved: approval is granted for the Events Working Group to approach theatre companies for a children's theatre pilot at Appleton Parish Hall, with costings reported back to Council.

15. Parish Councillor reports and feedback from other meetings

Cllr Walker referenced funding requirement for Stockton Heath and anticipated request for Appleton Parish Council to make financial contribution to support the continued running of the library.

Cllr Wheeler advised that the library consultation is ongoing and, at this stage, it is not known what will be needed. It was also requested that the Ranger review grit bins, ahead of winter weather.

Cllr Speed reported on a planned site visit to Lumbbrook Road to review speed issues and invited other Councillors to attend with the WBC Traffic and Road Safety representative. Funding is currently being sought for necessary work to improve Brookfields Leisure Centre and brief updates received on the damaged woodland area, Orchard Meadows Play Area and SEWUE SWP Working Group.

Cllr Speed also advised of a meeting to be held relating to Appleton Cross Community Centre, to which all Members are invited.

16. Policy Task and Finish Group

An amendment to Cllr Manson-Sawko's proposal was proposed and lost.

It was requested by Cllr L Chapman that this vote of 3 in favour, 2 against and 4 abstentions was minuted.

Councillors discussed the policies in place and the necessity for cohesive approach and content.

Resolved: that a Policy task and finish group be formed, consisting of Cllrs Bett and Manson-Sawko, to review Council's current policies and report suggested revisions to the Finance and General Purpose Committee.

17. HR Matters

- i. To receive HR update from the Parish Council Chair

An update was not provided as there was uncertainty surrounding the Part 2 of the meeting.

At this stage of the meeting, members **resolved** that items 17.ii and 18 would be considered in Part 2, due to the confidential nature of the items to be discussed.

- ii. **Resolved:** that the resignation of the Parish Clerk is received and a letter of acknowledgement to be issued.
 - i. To receive update from the Asst Clerk, agree interim arrangements and implement necessary actions.
This item was not considered.
 - ii. **Resolved:** That the recruitment of a Parish Clerk at scale SCP 29 – 32 will be advertised as soon as practicable to ensure that a proposed timetable for undertaking the recruitment process can be adhered to.
- 18. Staffing Panel**
- i. **Resolved:** that an ad hoc Staffing Panel is formed, consisting of Cllrs Booth, Bett, Speed (quorum 3), with delegated authority to determine the Council's response.
 - ii. **Resolved:** that the newly formed Staffing Panel will meet to receive, and agree to the recommendations in the final Investigator's Report relating to incident of 5 June 2025 and report back to next Council meeting.

19. National Pay Award

Resolved: The 2025/26 award and associated back pay for staff is noted and approved.

20. Dates and time of next meetings

Thursday 2 nd October 2025,	9.15am Planning Committee.
	9.45am Finance & General Purposes Committee
Tuesday 21 st October 2025	6.30pm Planning Committee.
Tuesday 21 st October 2025	7.00pm Parish Council.

The Meeting closed at 21:22pm

Cllr L Booth, Chair

Meeting Clerk: KP