

HATHERTON AND WALGHERTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8th SEPTEMBER 2026 AT HANKELOW METHODIST CHAPEL

Present: Cllr Chris Knibbs, Cllr Nigel Dibben, Cllr Katie Clinton, Cllr Steve Mitchell, Cllr Richard Thelwell, Cllr Clare Ward, Cllr Ian Bennion and Cllr James Du Pavey

In attendance

Abbi Miller (Clerk), Janet Clowes (Ward Councillor), Mrs Heather Morgan

26/76 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr Gerald Laxton.

26/77 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

26/78 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Mitchell and seconded by Cllr Clinton and agreed that the minutes from 14th July 2026 are approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

26/79 QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

In accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders, section 1d, members of the public were able to ask a question of the Parish Council or make a statement.

There were no questions or comments from members of the public.

26/80 MATTERS ARISING

26/36 Old Noticeboard – All Councillors agreed to donate the old noticeboard to Doddington & District Parish Council. **RESOLVED:** Cllr Knibbs has arranged.

26/21 Heler's Foods – Screening Trees –

Cllr Clowes reported that, following site visits over the summer, there are clear gaps in the screening, and advised if hedgerow screening formed part of a planning condition, its removal would need to be addressed; however, the Council will await the outcome of the meeting before considering any further action. **UNRESOLVED**

It was agreed that the forthcoming meeting between Cllr Knibbs and Cllr Ward and the site owner should include discussion of:

- Hedgerow gaps along Audlem Road
- Milk tanker traffic and potential alternative routing
- Floodlighting and noise
- Possible community benefits, including whether the company may wish to make a charitable contribution and what such funding might support

26/68 Measures to improve safety on Crewe Road and Boars Head Junction

The Clerk reported that Cheshire East Highways had responded to the Council's request for additional safety measures and confirmed that they will investigate the concerns raised. Members noted that, now the matter is formally logged, any further incidents at either location can be reported with specific details to support the case for intervention.

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It was suggested that BT Openreach could be approached regarding the possible relocation of the telegraph pole near the Boars Head junction to improve visibility and safety.

ACTIONS:

- Clerk to explore whether BT Openreach can relocate the telegraph pole.
- Clerk to circulate the response received from Cheshire East Highways. **RESOLVED.**

Ongoing Actions Log

Grit Bin Installation	Clerk requested & Cllr Dibben added to TRACE	Ongoing	The request has been logged on Trace which is now showing as 'waiting to be assessed'.
Bank House Farm unlawful caravan siting	Cllr Clowes raised with CE Enforcement who are aware	Ongoing	No update, See Enforcements log henceforth.
Bridgemere Lane Triangle HGV traffic	Road Safety team contacted a few times, with no response as yet.	Safety Officer recently retired, Follow up with S Wallace. Ongoing	Clerk to follow up again.
Enforcements Tracking	Emailed various contacts in the Enforcements team, with no response as yet.	June Update given Ongoing	Received good update from Enforcements Officer. Closed as now active.
Water Issue on Hatherton Bends	Works due to start to investigate source of the water	Ongoing	Await, Sept 14-18 th 2026 Investigations

26/81 TO CO-OPT MRS HEATHER MORGAN AS A COUNCILLOR ON THE PARISH COUNCIL

It was proposed by Cllr Du Pavey and seconded by Cllr Bennion and all agreed to co-opt Mrs Heather Morgan on to the Hatherton & Walgherton Parish Council. The Chair welcomed Cllr Morgan on to the Council and the Declaration of Interest was signed.

26/82 FINANCE MATTERS

A) The Finance Report (Appendix 12) was presented by the Clerk.

B) The following payments were authorised:

Payment to	Details	Amount
Abbi Miller	Clerk Wages	£391.92
HMRC	Clerk Contributions	£98.00
Abbi Miller	Printer Ink	£35.00

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ChALC	Training (Cllr Ward & Cllr Thelwell)	£50.00
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- C) The Increase of SCP14 from £15.31ph to £15.82 from the Local Government Services Pay Agreement for 2026/27 was approved, to be backdated to 1 April 2026.
- D) Spend for a new printer and scanner for the Clerk was approved to £150.

26/83 PLANNING MATTERS

Councillors received the Planning Report (Appendix 13).

No new decisions have been issued by Cheshire East Council since the July meeting.

26/83.1 NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

No new planning applications have been received since the July meeting.

26/83.2 CURRENT ENFORCEMENTS

Case Reference	Nature of Problem	Address	Status	Update at Meeting
26/0031/EN F	Continued use for storage despite application 25/4126/CLEUD refused.	Land Adjoining Broomlands Lodge Bridgemere Lane, Hatherton	Open – Priority 3 UPDATE from Enforcement Officer (29/06/26) – 25/4126/CLEUD has been appealed. Appeal reference - APP/R0660/X/26/3378121 The enforcement investigation has been suspended pending appeal outcome	No visit or decision due date has been noted.
25/0663/EN F	Creation of access x 2 (hedgerow & trees also removed)	Villa Farm, Hunsterson Road, Hatherton	NEW UPDATE (from Anita Ralphs): The Tree Officer has completed the investigation. Historic photographs and satellite imagery confirmed that some hedgerow gaps were historic and only became visible when surrounding foliage was cut back. For the newly created access, the Tree Officer confirmed the small parcel of land has been purchased separately from Villa Farm. The works meet DEFRA exemption criteria ("work deemed to be exempt when obtaining access to land where another means of access is not available or is available only at disproportionate cost"). Outcome: No further investigation necessary. • Case closed. • No open enforcement cases remain for this parcel of land. If a structure has been erected following refusal of planning application 25/4200/FUL, Enforcement can open a new case. Status: Closed	ACTION: Clerk to follow up on storage shed application that was refused.

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24/00596E	Unlawful siting of caravan	Bank House Farm	Re-opened – Awaiting update from case officer	ACTION: Cllr Knibbs to seek to obtain evidence. Clerk to follow up with Enforcement.
TPO for ancient trees at Boars Head Pub	Boars Head Pub	Trees officers emailed a number of times to have a TPO registered on these trees. CE Trees do not feel this is necessary.	Update: The Trees Team has reviewed the request following confirmation that the land has been submitted through Cheshire East's Call for Sites process. This does not give the site any planning status, but it is relevant to the TPO assessment. The trees have been triaged as Priority 3 (foreseeable development pressure) rather than Priority 4. The Trees Officer does not intend to carry out a further site visit at this time. The previous BS5837 Arboricultural Impact Assessment (from application 19/0046N) identified the trees as high-quality specimens suitable for retention, and there is no immediate or credible threat such as live applications, statutory notices, proposed works, marked trees, or contractor activity. The Council will keep the request under review and has asked the Parish Council to report any new evidence of increased risk (e.g., site activity, ownership changes, marked trees, contractors on site). Parish Council position: The Council remains concerned about vulnerability to future development and has requested reconsideration and a site visit.	Content with response from Trees Officer but to stay under review.

26/84 NOMINATIONS FOR NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS WITHIN THE PARISH

Cllr Dibben presented an initial list of seven proposed non-designated heritage assets and confirmed he is continuing to collate photographs. Members agreed that aerial imagery would also be useful. It was suggested that the historic fingerpost sign be added to the list.

The Council also noted recent Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group discussions on housing land supply across Cheshire East. Large sites with good access to facilities and located near settlement boundaries are likely to be prioritised; Hatherton and Walgherton currently meet few of these criteria, reducing the likelihood of major development being directed to the parish.

Cllr Knibbs highlighted several valued local green spaces, including the glade at Birchall Bridge and Walgherton Meadows adjacent to the Boars Head, which score highly against community-value indicators. They shall be reviewed by the NP Steering Committee for potential inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan.

26/85 POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN CHEESE PRODUCTION ANNOUNCED RECENTLY BY HELER FOODS

Cllr Laxton outlined initial calculations based on Heler Foods' recent announcement of a £25m investment to expand production to 38,000 tonnes of cheese per year. His estimates suggest this could result in an increase of approximately six additional HGV movements per hour through the parish.

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The Council discussed the possible implications of increased production, including traffic volumes, site capacity, storage requirements, and wider operational impacts. Concerns were raised about whether the existing infrastructure can support a significant rise in vehicle movements.

It was agreed that these issues should be added to the agenda for the forthcoming meeting between parish representatives and the owner of Heler Foods. Councillors noted that if the company intends to remain and expand on its current site, it would be reasonable to seek commitments to improving infrastructure and mitigating traffic impacts.

26/86 HIGHWAY MATTERS

- Cllr Dibben reported that he continues to update the Parish Council website with details of current and upcoming highways works.
- Councillors noted that Hatherton Bends will be subject to a five-day road closure from 14 September to allow Cheshire East Highways to undertake drainage investigations. It was agreed that this presents an opportunity to assess potholes and take photographs while the road is closed.
- The Council discussed the importance of anticipating adverse weather to help prevent localised flooding. Cllr Dibben also shared a map illustrating the numerous roadworks and diversions currently in place across the wider area.
- Cllr Ward indicated she was content to lead on a press report in relation to ongoing highways concerns.

26/87 UPDATE ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr Clowes reported that several key elements of the Neighbourhood Plan are now progressing well. The Housing Needs Survey is nearing completion and will be delivered to every household in the parish, with Parish Councillors assisting in distribution. Cllr Clinton will enquire whether Bridgemere School can act as a collection point. The survey is expected to be issued at the end of September, with residents given three to four weeks to respond. The survey has been developed using the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as the guiding model.

Residents will also receive a two-page 'Introduction to Sites' document, including a small-scale map and parish-specific detail on potential alternative housing sites, to gather public views on future development options.

Cllr Clowes confirmed that the Cheshire Wildlife Trust has completed its ecological report, with minor amendments required following recent legislative and funding changes. She also noted that compensation funding for local wildlife improvement was linked to early HS2 preparatory works as been received. This report should guide the spending priorities.

26/88 UPDATE FROM CHESHIRE EAST WARD COUNCILLOR

Cllr Clowes reported that she had completed the consultation for the Cheshire East Local Plan and had also produced a supplementary document setting out her detailed responses, noting that several of the consultation questions were not directly relevant to local circumstances.

26/89 POLICING MATTERS

Cllr Clinton reported that she had attended the recent police cluster meeting, noting that the Wybunbury ward had been relatively quiet. She highlighted that the police had not been aware that the road outside Bridgemere School carries a 60mph speed limit; PCSO Jarvis will be submitting a report on this.

Cllr Clinton continues to share local policing updates via the parish Facebook page and signpost residents to appropriate reporting channels. She will attend the Community Crime Group (CCG) meeting on 23 September, where body-worn camera footage is reviewed.

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26/90 PARISH IMPROVEMENT WORKING GROUP REPORT AND PROGRESS

Cllr Ward updated the Council on the progress made by the Parish Improvement Working Group following their meeting held on 24th August.

- Tub at Boars Head to be removed; drought-friendly planting planned for Park Lane.
- Ongoing highways issues: requests for signage, verge-drop concerns, and A529 path-clearing responsibilities.
- Footpath destination signs installed; two still outstanding in Wybunbury.
- Two blossom trees on A529 to be replaced.
- Litter-picking dates set; equipment inventory completed.
- CHALC contacted regarding HGV damage to rural lanes.
- Noticeboard leaflet to be drafted promoting projects and volunteer opportunities.
- Various improvement proposals discussed: walking group, QR-coded walk leaflets, wider publicity, possible residents' website, fridge-magnet QR idea; budget approx. £600.
- Police cluster update: quiet ward; Bridgemere 60mph concern; need for better incident reporting.
- Defibrillator locations reviewed.
- Fallen litter sign on A51 to be fixed.
- Dog-waste bin feasibility to be explored; reminder posted on Facebook.
- Next meeting: 26 October.

Additional points from Parish Council meeting:

- Cllr Knibbs will look to borrow the pavement-clearing tool from Hankelow Parish Council.
- Cllr Ward will place a newsletter in the noticeboard summarising completed work and inviting more volunteers.

26/91 CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL CONSULTATIONS

There were no new consultation to consider.

26/92 (ALL) MEMBERS REPORTS TO RAISE TO COUNCIL (FORMERLY AOB)

- Cllr Clinton confirmed she has now completed Speed Gun Training and invited any other councillors interested in training to contact her.
- Cllr Dibben raised the matter of gifts and hospitality declarations. It was confirmed that nil returns are required and can be submitted online. Action: Clerk to circulate the reminder email.
- Cllr Clowes noted that although a budget has been set for the Neighbourhood Plan, some costs may be front-loaded and reduce in later years; members were asked to consider this when reviewing future allocations.
- Cllr Ward raised concerns regarding dog fouling on footpaths and agreed to look into the criteria for applying for a dog-waste bin.
- Cllr Knibbs highlighted the wide range of training opportunities available to councillors and encouraged members to take up any relevant courses.

26/93 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 10th November 2026
Hankelow Chapel, 11 Old School Lane, Hankelow, CW3 0JN

The meeting closed at 21:26 pm.