

BETCHTON PARISH COUNCIL

2nd January 2026

Commenced: 7.30 pm Terminated: 9.00 pm

Present: Councillor Bradley (Chair)
Councillors Beresford, Freer, Moss (part), Tapper and Williams

There were five members of the public in attendance.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Thomson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members of the Parish Council.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 6th November 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no matters raised by Members of the Public at this stage of the meeting.

5. ALMS HOUSES REPRESENTATION

The Chair reported that the Parish Council had been asked for a representative to sit on the Board of Trustees of the Alms Houses.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Williams be appointed as the Parish Council's representative, for the Board of Trustees of the Alms Houses.

6. LOVE LANE GRIT BIN

RESOLVED

- (i) That the provision of a replacement grit bin and grit salt on Love Lane, by Cheshire East Council, be noted;
- (ii) That Councillor Tapper to investigate with Cheshire East Highways, with whom responsibility lies for filling and maintaining the grit bins in the Betchton Parish;
- (iii) That Councillor Tapper to investigate the cost of replacing the grit salt for Betchton Parish, if it is confirmed by Cheshire East Council, that it is the responsibility of the Parish Council to do so.

7. BETCHTON PARISH SIGN

The Chair reported on the missing Parish sign at the Smallwood Traffic Lights.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Tapper enquires with Highways about replacing the sign.

8. TOMMY FIGURES

RESOLVED

That the Tommy Statues remain in-situ.

At this juncture Councillor Moss arrived.

9. ONGOING MAINTENANCE

The Chair referred to the maintenance of the Tommy statues, to prevent their deterioration.

RESOLVED

That the Chair and Councillor Freer to arrange their refurbishment.

10. PLANNING MATTERS

The Parish Council considered the following planning matters:-

- **Comments submitted under the provision of the Standing Orders**

(i) Planning Application 25/3242/FUL

RESOLVED

That the additional comments submitted to the Local Planning Authority, as circulated with the Agenda, be received.

- **New Planning Applications**

There were no new planning applications for consideration at this meeting.

(ii) Local Planning application policy for adjoining parish planning applications

The Chair expressed his strong concerns over the detrimental impact on residents, of any new developments in the area, which might interfere with the contaminated land at the Golf Club, as a result of a change to the water table.

RESOLVED

- (a) That as a duty of care to residents in the Parish, and as a consequence of the contaminated land at the Golf Course, the Parish Council commits to submitting objections to any planning applications to neighbouring Parish Councils, which will have the potential to change the water levels from the Golf Course to the Flashes.**
- (b) That the Chair drafts a letter to be considered at the next meeting, requesting Cheshire East Council to remove the landfill at the Golf Club.**
- (c) That the Chair and Deputy raise their concerns at the next meeting of Sandbach Town Council meeting.**

11. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Further to Minute 6 of the last meeting, Councillor Tapper reported that discussions were ongoing with Sandbach Town Council on this matter.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

12. BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT 2025-2026

The Parish Council considered a report of the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer on the following matters:-

(i) Transactions

RESOLVED

That the following transactions be approved:-

PAYER/PAYEE	DETAILS	RECEIPT	PAYMENT
M Clough	October Salary		£181.71
HMRC	October PAYE		£45.40
Unity Trust Bank	Monthly service charge		£6.00
Information Commissioner	Annual subscription		£47.00
M D Coxey	Payroll		£36.00
HMRC	November PAYE		£45.40
M Clough	November Salary		£181.71

Unity Trust Bank	Monthly service charge		£6.00
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(ii) Approval of Payments

RESOLVED

That the following payments be approved:-

PAYEE/PAYER	DETAILS	PAYMENT
M Clough	January Salary (13 hours @ £17.47 p/h)	Approx. £182.00
HMRC	PAYE January	Approx. £46.00
Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Service Charge	£6.00
M Clough	February Salary (13 hours @ £17.47 p/h)	Approx £182.00
HMRC	PAYE February	Approx £46.00
Unity Trust Bank	Monthly Service Charge	£6.00

(iii) Budget Expenditure at 22nd December 2025

RESOLVED

That the following Budget Head expenditure at 22nd December 2025, be approved:-

Budget Head	Total	Budget Allocated	£ Difference
Salary (including HMRC PAYE Costs)	£1,816.88	£2,400.00	£583.12
Office Expenses	£269.10	£270.00	£0.90
Insurance	£0.00	£350.00	£350.00
Information Commissioner	£47.00	£40.00	-£7.00
Training	£100.00	£100.00	£0.00
Room Hire	£0.00	£120.00	£120.00
Poppies/Wreaths	£0.00	£130.00	£130.00
Community Projects	£0.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
Village Maintenance	£0.00	£150.00	£150.00
Website and Email	£288.00	£300.00	£12.00
Subscriptions	£236.45	£243.50	£7.05
Internal Audit	£136.50	£136.50	£0.00
Contingency	£204.99	£500.00	£295.01
	£3,098.92	£5,740.00	£2,641.08

(vi) Explanation of Variances

RESOLVED

That the virement of £7.00 from the Subscriptions Budget Head to the Information Commissioner Budget Head, be approved.

(iv) Bank Reconciliation as at 22nd December 2025

RESOLVED

That the following Bank Reconciliation as at 22nd December 2025, be approved:-

Bank Reconciliation 22nd December 2025	
BETCHTON PARISH COUNCIL	
Financial year ending 31 March 2026	
Prepared by: Muna Clough, Parish Clerk & RFO	

Balance per bank statement as at 30th November 2025	£
Unity Current Account (20519047)	£9,615.84
Less: any unrepresented cheques	
Unity Current Account (20519047)	£0.00
Add: any unbanked cash	
Unity Current Account (20519047)	
Net bank balances as at 22nd December 2025	£9,615.84
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book (receipts and payments account) for the year, as follows	
CASH BOOK	
Opening Balance	
Unity Current Account (20519047) - 1st April 2025	£6,297.63
Add: Receipts in the year	
Unity Current Account (20519047)	£6,417.13
Less: Payments in the year	
Unity Current Account (20519047)	£3,098.92
Closing balance per cash book [receipts and payments book] must equal net bank balances above	£9,615.84

(v) Bank Statements – Unity Trust Bank

RESOLVED

That the following Bank Statements, as circulated with the Report, be received:-

- **31st October 2025**
- **30th November 2025**

13. BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2026-2027

The Parish Council considered a report of the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer on the 2026-2027 Budget and associated Precept.

A lengthy discussion ensued over the need for adequate funds to cover the costs of a Neighbourhood Plan, which might cost in the region of £9,000 - £16,000.

The total anticipated expenditure for 2026-2027 was £6,220.00. It was likely that there would be some surplus Budget from 2025-2026, however, there had been no reserves for many years, so this needed to be considered.

Members deliberated with various suggested Precept figures, and consulted with the residents that were in attendance. Members discussed the possibility of a Precept of £10,000 and a Precept of £12,000. All residents felt that even though the increase [for both suggested Precepts] on paper was extremely high, ie. 74% and 109% respectively, in practical terms, a Precept of £12,000 would only equate to an increase of £19.40 for the year, or 37p per week, per Band D property. Both the Councillors and the residents, felt that

the benefit to the Parish due to the additional income raised, outweighed the public perception of the percentage increase, so long as this was explained to the residents.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the 2026-2027 Precept request, in the sum of £12,000, be approved.
- (ii) That the Chair and Deputy Chair draft a Notice to inform residents of the reason for the increase in Precept.
- (iii) That the Deputy Chair speak to Cheshire Community Action to establish the costs for implementing and drafting a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish, and reports back to the Parish Council.

14. GOVERNANCE – ASSET REGISTER 2025-2026

Members noted that the Lawn Mower had now been sold, and one Bench had been returned to the store, so both items were removed from the Asset Register.

RESOLVED

That the Asset Register, as appended to these Minutes as Appendix 2, be approved.

15. PARISH CELEBRATIONS

RESOLVED

That consideration of this item be deferred to a later date, as the Parish Council's financial priority was to implement a Neighbourhood Plan.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 5th March 2026, at 7.30 pm at the Club House, Malkins Bank Golf Course.

17. URGENT ITEMS

There were no matters which the Chair was of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

BETCHTON PARISH COUNCIL

BUDGET

2026-2027

Budget Head	Budget
Salary (including HMRC PAYE Costs)	£2,850.00
Office Expenses	£100.00
Insurance	£350.00
Information Commissioner	£50.00
Payroll Services	£150.00
Training	£150.00
Room Hire	£120.00
Poppies/Wreaths	£75.00
Community Projects	£1,000.00
Village Maintenance	£250.00
Website and Email	£350.00
Subscriptions	£275.00
Internal Audit	£150.00
Unity Trust Bank	£100.00
Contingency	£250.00
Neighbourhood Plan - RINGFENCED	£5,780.00
TOTAL	£12,000.00

BETCHTON PARISH COUNCIL
ASSET REGISTER
2025-2026

Asset	Location W3W	Replacement Cost
1 x Notice Board	Malkins Bank - waving.remembers.stops	£2,000.00
1 x Notice Board	Hassall Green - . badge.surfer.unfilled	£2,000.00
Laptop	Clerk's Address	£300.00
Laptop	Clerk's Address	£300.00
3 x Planters Malkins Bank -	1 Planter - stardom.ladder.bulldozer (Betchton Road) 1 Planter - nags.voltage.partly (Betchton Road) 1 Planter - tolerable.upwardly.magnitude (Betchton Road)	£2,250.00
6 x Planters Hassall Green –	///badge.surfer.unfilled (Charles Square) ///famous.essays.standards ///tonsils.nurses.forge ///teams.solo.excavated ///speeds.outdone.quilting (Pink Church) ///rural.delight.cages (Salt Line)	£4,500.00
Lawn Mower	drilled.though.farmed	£500.00
2 x Benches	2 x Benches	£800.00
1 x Planter/Bench	Malkins Bank – Betchton Road. overlaid.unsecured.thrashed	£300.00
1 x Seat	Charles Square	£350.00
1 x Picnic Table	Malkins Bank playground	£350.00
1 x Seat	Dubthorn Lane	£350.00
2 x Tommy Statues		£350.00
18 Large Lamppost Poppies	cookies.removed.encroach (No. 1)	£180.00
Petrol Brushcutter		£150.00
4 x Road Ice Warning Signs		£125.00
Total		£14,805.00

Assets Inspected by:

Date: