

CHELFORD PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held

Thursday 8th May, 2025 at 7:30p.m.

at Chelford Primary School, Oak Road, Chelford.

Present Councillors B. Brindley (Chairman), J. Fielding, C. Howlett, T. McCrum,
C. Montaldo, S. Mort, M. Shepherd.
The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP.
Members of the public (21).
Dr. E. M. Maddock – Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited The Rt Hon Esther McVey to open the meeting as she had another engagement later in the evening. (Item 4 was brought forward to the start of the meeting.)

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr. D. Wilson, Cllr. S. Wilson, Cheshire East Ward Member Cllr. A. Harrison.

DECISION (a) To note the above apologies for absence.

2. **Minutes:** The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 16th May, 2024 had been previously circulated.

DECISION (a) That the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 16th May, 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. **Parish Council Chairman's Report for the civic year 2024/25** – Councillor B. Brindley presented the following report to the meeting.

Last year has been very busy for the Parish Council. It has been great to see residents coming along to Parish Council meetings throughout the year to share ideas, concerns and requesting support.

A significant milestone this year has been the information that two residential developments are being proposed for the parish at: land west of Cricketers Green and land east of the railway line. Whilst both of these sites were identified within the Cheshire East Local Plan, changes to national policy have meant significant changes to expected timescales. Applications have been submitted to Cheshire East Council for both developments and the Parish Council is awaiting the start of the consultation period. Thank you to those residents who have shared their thoughts regarding the developments – if anyone has any comments that they would like the Parish Council to take into account when determining our response to the application please let us know.

During the year several projects have, finally, come to fruition: four benches have been installed; four dog poo bag dispensers installed and are being well used; one new notice board has been installed at Dixon Drive opposite the Galloway Grange development and the transfer of the custodian trusteeship of Chelford Parish Hall to the Parish Council is now complete. This doesn't change any of the day to day management of the Parish Hall. It just provides a local, sustainable, long-term solution to the custodian trusteeship role. Thanks are extended to all previous custodian trustees for their contribution to the community. Two new speed indicator devices will be installed as soon as the mounting post has been re-planted.

Chelford Activity Park refurbishment is still ongoing, although, difficulties with Cheshire East Council has meant that progress has been painfully slow. There are plans to develop a pathway around the site along with installing gym and trim trail equipment. Efforts are being made to have the tennis net post holes re-installed as soon as possible. It is good, however, to see many young people enjoying the new play area.

CHELFORD PARISH MEETING

The Parish Council has received a suggestion from residents for the bike track to be improved which is being explored.

During the year the Parish Council has continued to press Cheshire East Council, and our Ward Councillor, for the s.106 funds, allocated for community uses, to be made available. It is hoped that an application process, the same or similar to that used for the last round of funding allocations, will be used so that local groups can have opportunity to apply for funds to support their activities and facilities. The Parish Council's grant scheme has, this year, awarded a grant to the Chelford Social Committee for a new shed at The Hub.

The Parish Council continues to represent the interests of the parish with various organisations, including Cheshire East Council, Manchester Airport, Northern Rail, Network Rail and the Police. These relationships enable the Parish Council to contribute positively to discussions about issues which will affect our community. The Parish Council liaises with our Ward Councillor on a regular basis to represent residents issues and concerns. Comments are also submitted direct to Cheshire East Council regarding planning applications and policy consultations affecting our parish.

The Parish Council is continuing to press for action in respect of safety concerns at: the Oak Road / Knutsford Road junction and the zebra crossing. If you encounter an issue at either of these location please do report it to Cheshire East Council so that it can help towards building a bank of evidence to support our requests for positive action to be taken. The Parish Council continues to report highway defects, such as potholes and damaged signage, to Cheshire East Council for attention. White lining works are expected in the near future through the village – 30 roundels, dragons teeth and SLOW markings will be painted to remind drivers of the speed limit through the village.

The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge great work of all the local volunteers including: residents leading the campaign to secure improved broadband services; Chelford Social Committee for their successful fund raising events; the community speed watch team; the newsletter team; Chelford Edging group and all other volunteers working to support the community of Chelford. Also a special mention for Connecting Chelford on being nominated for The King's Award for Voluntary Service.

Finally, in April the Parish Council co-opted two new members – Steve Mort and Mark Shepherd – and we welcome them to their new roles as councillors. There is still one vacancy remaining so if you are interested in joining us please contact the Clerk.

DECISION (a) To receive the report.

4. The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP

The Chairman welcomed The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP to the meeting and invited her to lead the question and answer session with residents.

- (a) **Improvement of broadband services to Chelford:** A resident reported that sufficient local interest had now been registered to enable progress to be made to secure improved broadband services to the Dixon Drive area of Chelford. The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP advised that there was not a currently designated provider for this area since the last supplier returned the contract. Efforts are being made to press for a new contractor to be appointed and for the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme to be opened for the proposed Chelford scheme. Residents noted that the poor broadband services currently available were affecting the ability of some residents to work from home and also for some properties to be successfully let.

CHELFORD PARISH MEETING

- (b) **Proposed residential development within Parish:** Residents raised concerns regarding two proposed residential developments within the Parish. It was considered that the proposed developments would be harmful to wildlife; lead to the loss of some trees; remove land from agricultural uses; exacerbate existing traffic and speeding issues; negatively impact access to local services including Chelford Primary School and the Surgery.
The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP advised that there would be opportunity to raise objections to the proposed developments during the planning application process. National policy relating to planning matters had been changed by the current Government leading to more speculative applications for Green Belt locations, however, this was likely to negatively impact local infrastructure which, in many cases, cannot accommodate significant increases in population.
- (c) **Devolution:** A resident asked for views regarding the proposed Mayoral Combined Authority of Cheshire and Warrington.
The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP advised that she had significant reservations regarding the proposal. It is likely to be a costly political organisation which, given the proposed governance arrangements, will be heavily influenced by existing politicians from the three unitary authorities.
- (d) **Zebra crossing:** A resident raised concern regarding the safety of the zebra crossing. It was reported that cars often fail to stop at the crossing and, due to the position, surrounding buildings, cars and activity can conceal the presence of pedestrians to drivers.
The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP advised that a request had been submitted to Cheshire East Council for the crossing to be upgraded.

DECISION (a) To thank The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP for her attendance at the meeting.

8:03p.m. - The Rt Hon Esther McVey MP and one member of the public excused themselves from the meeting and left.

5. Public Forum

No issues were raised by residents for discussion.

DECISION (a) To note that no issues were raised.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 8:12p.m.

Post meeting note: An expression of thanks had been received from Connecting Chelford for the support provided by the Parish Council, Esther McVey and Anthony Harrison with The King's Award.

Signed:.....

Approval date: 14th May 2026