



Walton Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at St John's Church Community Hall, Old Chester Road, Higher Walton, on Thursday 2 October, 2025.

Present Councillor C Hewitt – Chair

Councillors: S Harris (Deputy Chair), V Lacey, R Hardie, D Hazeldine, A Williams, J Cooke, R Bennett (arrived 19:05), Borough Councillor Matt Scott (arrived 19:05), invited guests Neil Simpson, Ian Branckenbury and 5 Member of the Public.

Attending Clerk- Madison Brotherton-Baker.

Councillor Harris opened the meeting at 19:00 and welcomed everyone.

97 Resignation of the Chair of the Council

97.1 It was noted the Council had received Cllr Harris's letter of resignation. Cllr Harris shared that it was a privilege to have been Chair to the Council and gave her thanks the council for their support.

97.2 It was noted that the Council accepted Cllr Harris's resignation. The Council shared their gratitude and appreciation to Cllr Harris for her time as Chair of the Council.

98 To receive nominations and elect the Chair of the Council and to receive the Chair Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

98.1 It was **Resolved** that Councillor Hewitt would serve as Chair of the Council for the remainder of 2025/26. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was read and signed.

98.2 It was noted that there was a vacancy in the Deputy Chair Position. It was **Resolved** that Cllr Harris will serve as the new Deputy Chair for the remainder of 2025/26. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was read and signed.

The newly elected Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that as part of standard practice, the Clerk records each meeting on her device. Once the meeting minutes have been agreed, the recording of the meeting is then deleted.

99 Apologies for absence

The Chair advised apologies were received from Cllr Allison and Cllr Saberi. It was noted that Cllr Allison had suffered a nasty fall. The Council shared their well wishes and hopes Cllr Allison has a speedy recovery.

100 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made at this point in the meeting.

101 Matters to be considered with the exclusion of the press and public

[using Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s. 2] To consider if any items on the agenda should be considered in closed session because of the nature of the information to be disclosed, whether pertaining to an individual, a contract or legal advice.

No matters were raised.

102 Public Participation

In accordance with Standing Orders, members of the public and any visitors in attendance may address the meeting.

102.1 PCSO Report – No PCSO was in attendance. Report for September, 2025 was received and circulated prior to the meeting. No comments were made.

102.2 Walton Hall Estate Report. The Council received an informative report from invited guests Neil Simpson (Walton Hall's Estate Manager) and Ian Brackenbury (Assistant Director of Operations and Services WBC). With prior agreement from the Chair 15 minutes were allowed to present the report. Neil reported recent works undertaken at the estate including drainage to the overflow carpark and repair works to the pedestrian footpath. Following the report Councillors asked questions. The Chair thanked Neil Simpson and Ian Brackenbury for their report.

102.3 Members of the Public. 5 members of the Public were in attendance. The Chair noted each member of the public had 3 minutes to address the meeting. All 5 members of the public attended the meeting to raise concerns regarding lack of resident parking on Old Chester Road, and shared the further impact the events at Walton Gardens have on parking in the area.

It was noted that both WPC and Walton Hall Estate understand the residents' concerns regarding the lack of resident parking and are supportive of a potential residents parking scheme. WPC are keen to work with residents to help resolve the issue and explore ideas to get a solution. Ian Brackenbury will liaise with Cllr Harris to gather information to feedback to the Walton Hall Estates team regarding the impact of its visitors on resident parking to Old Chester Road.

Cllr Williams suggested a separate meeting to be arranged to discuss Resident Parking concerns on Old Chester Road. Clerk to liaise with Cllr Williams.

The Chair thanked members of the public for speaking and attending the meeting.

(19:40pm Invited guests Neil Simpson and Ian Brackenbury, along with 5 members of the public left the meeting)

102.4 Borough Councillors – Cllr Harris gave a verbal update on Devolution, noting all three Councils had approved Devolution and that it will be going ahead. Cllr Harris noted that initially there will be a Strategic Combined Authority, followed by a Mayoral Election in 2027.

Cllr advised she had attended the SEWUE meeting on 30.09.25, noting a positive meeting but due to confidentiality further updates are to follow.

103 Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4 September, 25 were **Resolved** to be a true record and signed by the Chair.

104 Vacancy in Office of Councillor

It was noted that Councillor Greene had resigned from position of Councillor and the resignation had been accepted by the Chair on 23 September, 25. It was noted that the Vacancy in office of Councillor had been posted.

105 Policies

The Clerk noted that following a review of SLCC documentation, she felt that rather than a general Home Visits Policy, a specific policy for WPC Planning Visits Policy was required. Clerk to form policy and issue to Councillors for comment.

106 Creamfields

Cllr. Bennett declared his interest in Creamfields due to being the landowner but stayed in the room due to the event having already taken place.

Cllr Harris noted she was working to arrange a Creamfields resident debrief meeting following the event to gather resident feedback. It was agreed that prior to the WPC advertising the event to the public, the Council would wait to hear back from MP Sarah Hall's office to see if she could attend.

Clerk to liaise with Cllr Harris.

107 Risk Assessment Group

107.1 Cllr Lacey noted that due to the resignation of Councillor Greene, the group had deferred their meeting until next month.

107.2 Cllr Lacey advised that she aims to review the Risk Register prior to the next meeting.

108 Strategic Plan

Cllr Lacey updated the group on progress following a meeting with Cllr Saberi. It was noted that the cost of purchasing an Air Quality Monitor is currently being reviewed and potential costings will advise the group. It was agreed for Cllr Harris to be involved in the review of air quality.

Cllr Williams noted she had received a draft copy of the Strategic Plan and has an action to add information to the plan on behalf of the Betterment working group.

109 Finance

The Chair varied the order of business for item 109, to take place after 113.

109.1 The Clerk advised the group on the arrangements for the Budget and Precept for the upcoming year. She asked the Chairs for the working groups and committees to start setting out budgets for the next financial year, with a view to from a full draft in November.

109.2 The Finance report was issued to the group prior to the meeting.

Proposed payments:

Councillor Cooke Reimbursement for Face painter deposit- £50.00

Councillor Cooke Reimbursement for Balloon modeller deposit- £20.00

Councillor Hardie Reimbursement for Spring Bulbs- £170.99

Clerk Salary- £433.40

HMRC PAYE- £41.99

Gardenia Gardens Inv-10503- £513.00

JDH Business Services Ltd - £320.40

Wayne Aylsebury (Handyman)- £210.00

It was **Resolved** to accept the report and for the Clerk to write and send cheques for the payments.

110 Walton Roads and Bridges

Cllr Harris advised that she is trying to get updates from WBC officer Mark Tune to review the numerous traffic issues in the area. The Council shared frustration with the lack of updates from WBC. Cllr Harris to chase for an update and feedback to the group.

111 Reports from Advisory Groups

111.1 Planning

111.1.1 It was noted that the Planning Group had not yet elected a chair, or updated Terms of Reference.

The Chair noted that herself and Cllr Hardie are to be booked on to a Planning Training Course via NALC in October. The course is to cover new planning legislation and how this affects Parish Councils.

111.1.2 The following planning applications were discussed:

2025/01140/TPOA Land adjacent to 1 Walton Road- Remedial Work to Trees x3

No comment.

2025/01178/TPO 3 Lychgate.- Remedial work to trees x3 trees

No comment.

2025/01096 13 Brookwood Close. Single storey front and side extensions.

No comment.

2025/01199 10 Walton Heath Road. Application for a Certificate of Lawfulness.

WPC to make no comment on this application.

Cllr Harris noted that due to the sensitivity of this application it was not appropriate for WPC to contact neighbours of the property regarding the application.

Cllr Hewitt noted that in the upcoming Planning Training, the question on whether it is in councillors remit to contact neighbours regarding planning applications will be raised, and will feedback to the group.

2025/01256 Brantingham, Chester Road- Application for a Certificate of Lawfulness.

WPC to contact the planning officer to question whether the footprint of the original building has been extended beyond the allowable.

2025/01237 20 Walton Heath Road- Demolition of existing conservatory and construction of a single storey rear extension.

No comment.

111.2 Betterment Advisory Group

111.2.1 The contents of the report circulated to the group prior to the meeting were noted, following the Betterment Group meetings held on 12 September, 25.

Cllr Williams updated the group that the remedial works to trees on the QEII field will be taking place in October.

Cllr Harris asked if the Betterment group could review the location of the planters at the end of Park Lane, due to potential visibility issues. Cllr Harris also asked if the border of Walton/ Moore could be reviewed at the next Betterment Meeting with a view to installing a Walton Parish sign/planter.

Cllr Bennett asked if the Betterment Group could add the 2 trees at the front of the Walton Arms which require a crown lift, to their next agenda.

111.2.2 It was **Resolved** for the Betterment Group to spend up to £250 to purchase and install two planters in the style keeping with the War Memorial to hold securely remembrance cross tributes.

111.2.3 Cllr Hardie noted that he could not buy the mixed bulbs in the smaller quantities originally discussed. It was **Resolved** for the Betterment Group to spend up to an additional £55 on bulbs to be planted in winter ready for spring.

111.3 Events Advisory Group

111.3.1 The contents of the report circulated to the group prior to the meeting were noted, following the Events Group meetings held on 12 September, 25.

Cllr Cooke noted that the group was looking into hiring professional security for the Christmas Event, and she was awaiting proposals and quotations from two firms. The Security team will provide risk assessments and security measures for the event for the safety of the public. Cllr Cooke will share the security firms proposals at the November meeting.

Cllr Harris asked that the group look into WPC named Hi-Viz jackets for Councillors at the Christmas event to allow for ease of identification.

111.3.2 It was noted that Keith Fletcher from St. John's Church will be leading a Remembrance Day service at the Walton War Memorial 9:30am Sunday 9 November, 2025. The Council shared their thanks to Keith for agreeing to do the service again this year.

111.3.3 It was **Resolved** for the Events Group to spend up to £125 to purchase street furniture rosettes from the Rosettes from the Royal British Legion.

111.3.4 It was **Resolved** for the Events Group to spend up to £25 to purchase a Remembrance Day wreath from the Royal British Legion.

111.3.5 It was **Resolved** for the Events Group to spend to £120 on a Balloon Modeler for the Christmas Event.

111.3.6 It was **Resolved** for the Events Group to spend up to £140 for a Face Painter for the Christmas Event.

111.3.7 It was **Resolved** for the Events Group to spend up to £50 on chocolates for the Christmas Event.

111.4 Donations

111.4.1 It was noted that the Donations Group had not yet elected a Chair, or updated Terms of Reference. Cllr Harris advised that a meeting had been arranged for September but was cancelled as it would not have been quorate.

111.4.2 It was **Resolved** for WPC to Donate £200 to St Johns Community Church Hall to help towards their new electrical wiring in the Kitchen.

It was noted that the works had not yet taken place. The Council requested that the Church Hall provide an update once the works had taken place.

111.5 Grassed Triangle Area for Higher Walton Group

111.5.1 It was noted that the Grassed Triangle group had not yet elected a Chair, or updated Terms of Reference.

111.5.2 Cllr Hazeldine noted potential costings for the grassed area had been completed and circulated to the group for review, update to follow.

Cllr Harris noted an upcoming meeting with Neil Simpson from Walton Hall Estate to discuss potential upkeep of the area and will feedback to the group.

Cllr Hewitt to review the option of an online survey to be circulated to the local residents to gather feedback and thoughts on the grassed triangle area. Clerk to liaise with Cllr Hewitt.

Cllr Hardie action to recirculate his email to the group with his suggestions for the grassed area.

111.6 War Memorial Group

111.6.1 It was noted that the War Memorial group had not yet elected a chair, or updated Terms of Reference.

111.6.2 Cllr Lacey gave the group a verbal update noting Stage 1 of the memorial refurbishment was underway, to ensure the memorial is in good condition for the Remembrance Day Service. It was noted that Stage 2 of the Refurbishment, looking at the long-term maintenance, would require further research from herself and Cllr Allision. Update to follow in due course.

Cllr Lacey also noted that there are currently two overhanging branches at the top of the War Memorial causing moss build up, damp and dirt. Which potential could cause damage to the new refurbishment works.

Cllr Matt Scott (WBC) to liaise with the group, to discuss the possibility with WBC to cut back the overhanging branches.

112 Reports from Portfolio Holders and Outside Representatives.

112.1 Footpaths/Towpaths

The Councillor Contact tracker was noted. No comments were made.

112.2 Highways, Vegetation and Street Lighting

Verbal Report from Cllr Bennett.

Cllr Bennett noted that on Runcorn Road in Walton towards Moore, the footpath needs cutting back due to being overgrown with vegetation and causing usage issues for pedestrians. Clerk to report to WBC.

Cllr Bennett noted that a 50mph sign on the A56, on the section of road after the Old Chester Road junction, was facing in the wrong direction. Clerk to report to WBC.

Cllr Bennett noted that vegetation down Hobb Lane was very overgrown, causing access issues and damage to cars and equipment.

Clerk to follow up on previously reported issues on Park Lane.

112.3 Walton Hall Estate

Invited guest Neil Simpson and Ian Brackenbury, provided a report for Walton Hall Estate as part of Item 102.2.

113 Report on Actions taken and correspondence received since the previous meeting.

The Clerk noted the correspondence tracker sent in the agenda pack. The Clerk noted a email received from a resident concerned about hedging removal and worries of the dangers of parking within the Pesto Car park due to there being no physical boundary between the car park and the A56 road.

Cllr Hewitt advised that she had spoken to Pesto who informed that a boundary fence to the Carpark alongside the A56 will be getting installed, but Pesto couldn't confirm whether this would be a hedging or metal fencing. Clerk to update resident.

It was noted that the Council are keen to build a positive relationship with Pesto. Clerk to invited Pesto to an upcoming meeting.

114 Items for inclusion on the next agenda

Suggestions were made by the group to include Creamfields de-brief, Tree covering the War Memorial, Floodlights and Railings for the Christmas Event, Christmas Event security, online banking and grassed triangle.

115 Set date and time of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on **Thursday 6 November 2025** at St. John's Community Church Hall, Old Chester Road, Walton commencing at 7.00pm.

The Meeting closed at 21:32.