

Delamere & Oakmere Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF DELAMERE AND OAKMERE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 14th APRIL 2025 AT 7PM

Present: Councillor C Topping, Councillor A Bell, Councillor F Goodier, Councillor J Edwards and Councillor H Dilliway-Nickson.

Also, present Clerk, Mrs J Monks and one member of the public.

1 Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair of the Parish Council, Councillor C Topping welcomed everyone to the Parish Council meeting. Councillor D Rutter sent his apologies for the meeting. Cheshire West and Chester Ward Councillor T Lush sent their apologies for the meeting.

2 Chair's Annual report

The Chair's annual report from Councillor C Topping was as follows;

I am delighted to give my report reviewing the past year in which I have had the privilege to serve as chair of Delamere & Oakmere Parish Council.

It was an easy job for me to take over from Cllr. Edwards last May – not only because he did an excellent job during his most recent year in the chair, but also because of the, albeit small, but nevertheless dedicated and good people who make up our parish council. It has been a very enjoyable year in office.

A highlight of the summer months was when, on 6 June 2024 at 21:15 hrs, our community came together to light a beacon at the top of Old Pale to mark the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings. It was part of our nation's tribute to those who served in the armed forces all those years ago. We are grateful for support of Forestry England, Delamere Station House and Alexander Caravans in putting on this event.

The Forest Live concerts once again brought thousands of people into our village, regrettably causing disruption and inconvenience for some of our residents; this year we anticipate even more of the same with an increased number of concerts and slightly larger crowds. We continued to work with Forestry England to improve traffic and crowd management and limit the unfavourable impact it has on our community.

During the year we maintained our ongoing discussions with United Utilities regarding the Vyrnwy Aqueduct Modernisation programme. As the works progressed, we found them responsive and helpful regarding our concerns, and they kept us well informed about progress and plans.

Delamere & Oakmere Parish achieved a first last year by installing our very own village Christmas tree. We were again aided by Forestry England who supplied the tree, and were supported with funding from local businesses and residents, and our ward councillors. The Christmas market and Big Switch On event to kick off the festive season was a great success and enjoyed by over 200 community members.

During the year we welcomed a new councillor in Heidi Nickson and we continued to reach out to others in our community to join us and strengthen our team.

This spring we responded to the limitations of the service provided by Cheshire West & Cheshire Council regarding the maintenance of our roads and pathways by signing up to their Highways Volunteer Scheme. This will enable us to improve our community ourselves with their guidance, safety advice and equipment. Many parishioners responded to our request on social media to join a working group and the project will commence as the summer unfolds. Hopefully we will have the village shipshape in readiness for our parish Summer Party taking place at the Abbey Arms on 2 August.

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of our dear colleague Councillor Derek Wheeler in March this year. He was a longstanding and much respected member of both the Parish Council (of which he was a member for over 40 years) and our community and will be sadly missed. Our condolences go to his family.

The Delamere & Oakmere News is an important feature in our community, and I offer our appreciation to Cllr. Andrew Bell for his diligent hard work in delivering a great publication time and time again

Finally, a big thank you to all councillors and community members who have contributed to and supported all our efforts, and to our clerk Joanne Monks who guides and supports us in all we do. Long may the parish council thrive.

3 Open discussion

No members of the public wished to speak at this point.

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Also, present Clerk, Mrs J Monks and one member of the public for public speaking time.

1 Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair of the Parish Council, Councillor C Topping welcomed everyone to the Parish Council meeting. Councillor D Rutter sent his apologies for the meeting. Cheshire West and Chester Ward Councillor T Lush sent their apologies for the meeting.

2 Member's Code of Conduct and declarations of interest

Councillor F Goodier declared an interest in relation to Delamere Community centre as she was on the committee.

3 Public Speaking Time

A member of the public addressed the Parish Council with regards to the car parking on Stoneyford Lane and confirmed that they were happy with the current double yellow lines on Stoneyford Lane as this was being enforced by Cheshire West and Chester Council Enforcement team.

4 Minutes of the last Parish Council meeting

RESOLVED that;

The minutes of Delamere and Oakmere Parish Council on Monday 17th March 2025 were approved.

5 Progress Reports and Outstanding Items

The clerk stated that she had asked Cheshire West and Chester Council to paint the Cheshire Railings opposite Delamere school, on Station car park and near to the Fishpool. The Rural Locality Team stated that they would have to check the ownership of the fields and if the fields were privately owned the Parish Council would have to contact the owners directly regarding this. The clerk was asked to chase this up with Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Cheshire West and Chester Council have informed the Parish Council that they are due £7,386.58 from the planning application 22/03741/FUL for the redevelopment of equestrian buildings into eight dwellings of Sandy Brow Stables and further amount of £7,386.58 will be due in October 2025.

6 Planning

The planning applications that had been received up to Monday 14th April 2025 were considered.

RESOLVED that;

No objections were to be made to 25/00575/S73, Junction of Chester Road and Hogshead Lane Oakmere Northwich. Erection of purpose-built agricultural building including office, Storage and welfare facilities - Application to vary conditions 2 (approved plans) and 3 (materials) of planning permission 20/01480/FUL to replicate the building constructed.

7 Finance

The clerk reported that the current bank balances were as follows and bank statements showing these amounts were presented and signed by the Chair.

Current Bank account balance is £24,752.67 as at 31st March 2025.

Income received; £44 advertising income and £7,386.58 community infrastructure levy payment from Cheshire West and Chester Council.

RESOLVED that;

the following payments be authorised;

March 2025 debit card payments are as follows;

Amazon	replacement key for noticeboard	1.62	0.32	1.94
Newton Flags	VE day flag	25.50	5.10	30.60

April 2025 Payments are as follows;

Joanne Monks	Pay for April	588.92
Cheshire Pension Fund	Pension contributions for April	210.33
Joanne Monks	Clerk Expenses April	32.30
David Rutter	Gift card for Derek Wheeler	200.00
Delamere Community centre	Room hire for parish council meetings	137.50

8 Payment of Room Hire for Delamere Community Centre

RESOLVED that;

The amount of £137.50 was approved for payment for the room hire for the Parish Council meetings for the 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026. Cost of room hire is £6.25 per hour for two hours for eleven Parish Council meetings.

9 Reconciliation of bank accounts as at 31st March 2025

RESOLVED that;

Balance as at 31.03.24 £16,789.10

Balance as at 31.03.25 £24,752.67

Difference is £7,963.57

Community Infrastructure payment £7386.58

Without this difference would be £576.99.

10 Earmarking reserves

RESOLVED that;

the reserves were earmarked as follows;

Ear-Marked Reserves	Reserve brought forward	Budget 2025/2026
Contingencies (ER)	1187.30	2283.89
New Homes Bonus Fund (ER)	13285.59	13285.59
Community Infrastructure Levy (ER)	8334.31	8334.31
Xmas Fund (ER)	848.88	848.88
Total	22807.20	24752.67

The clerk noted that the earmarked contingencies should have a minimum of 25% of the precept.

The Precept for 25/26 is £17520 as such the earmarked contingencies should have a min of £4,380, but this not the case as the budget has only got £2283.89 which is the below the min level.

11 Business savings account

RESOLVED that;

A deposit of £15,000 was made to the Business savings account.

12 Banking

RESOLVED that;

Sian Roberts was to removed as an authorised signature for the bank accounts.

RESOLVED that;

Councillor H Dilliway-Nickson would be added to the bank account for an authorised person for the banking.

13 Village scene/Highways volunteer scheme

The clerk had sent the work list for the attention of the Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council, and they had returned it with comments.

The Highways Department had stated that they would not recommend or support including any children in any volunteer activities next to the Highway. They confirmed that the signing works could be completed at weekends. They also confirmed that any volunteers working under the scheme would be covered by Cheshire West and Chester Council insurance and they recommended a virtual meeting with the Lead Co-Ordinator.

The clerk was asked to arrange for a virtual meeting with Councillor F Goodier in her role as Lead Co-Ordinator.

Any volunteers under the age of 18 have been asked to contact Forest England to undertake litter picking in the forest.

14 VAT registration

RESOLVED that;

The Parish Council would not become VAT registered and would not charge for events.

15 Payroll

RESOLVED that;

The amount of £358.50 was approved for Shires Accountants to undertake the payroll for the financial year 2025/2026.

16 Signage for the village regarding litter and speed

The clerk had contacted Ashton Parish Council, as they had asked the local school to design posters and then had them printed. They did not seek any permission from the Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council as the signs were on a 30mph road. Ashton Parish Council advised that permission would be required if the roads were 40mph or over as the Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council stated that any additional signage caused distractions for drivers and would cause more accidents as the drivers were too busy looking at the signs rather than the road.

RESOLVED that;

The clerk was asked to contact the school to see if they would be interested in designing posters for litter and dog excrement for display on the noticeboards and for pedestrians.

17 Christmas

The clerk confirmed that the amount of £848.88 was earmarked from last year's event dependant costs the Parish Council may ask the Ward Councillors for a grant nearer the time.

18 Summer Event

The clerk confirmed that she had booked Glamour Events hire for five games for 2nd August 2025 at the cost of £175.00.

The clerk confirmed that she had invited the local PCSO, Cheshire West and Chester Councillor T Cooper and Cheshire West and Chester Ward Councillor T Lush and the local MP.

Councillor F Goodier confirmed that a local business had been contacted regarding the use of their car park for an event. They confirmed that they would need an agreement between themselves and the Parish Council and that any accidents would need to be covered by the Parish Council's insurance. The clerk will investigate what was previously requested.

Councillor F Goodier confirmed that the Abbey Arms would be selling a ticket to cover the cost of the food for the event and the event would be covered under the Abbey Arms public liability insurance and that they would provide first aiders for the event.

RESOLVED that;

The amount of £200, (previously £150) was approved for a DJ for the event.

The clerk was asked to apply for funds from the Ward Members budget for the cost of hire of the games, £175 and the cost of a DJ, £200.

19 Little Wood

RESOLVED that;

The clerk noted that Tarmac wanted a monthly update on the project and all the work must be completed by October 2025. The clerk was asked to submit a report stating that there was no change from the previous month due to flooding.

The clerk received an invoice from the contractor for work completed in Little Wood for £1,000 as this was previously approved by the Parish Council the clerk was asked to arrange payment.

The contractor stated that further work in Little Wood was required and the cost of this would be an additional £1,000. No estimate or details for this work had been provided.

Councillor C Topping asked the clerk to draft a letter from the Parish Council to residents regarding the condition of Little Wood.

20 Bulb planting

The clerk had circulated some costs for bulb planting on the financial report.

RESOLVED that;

The clerk was asked to contact the owners of the roundabout at the entrance of the Earlsbrook Housing Development to see if it was possible to plant some bulbs on the roundabout. The clerk was asked to contact Forest England to see if they could donate £500 for bulb planting.

21 Subscription for Mid Cheshire Footpath Society

RESOLVED that;

The expenditure of £8 was approved for the 2025/2026 subscription for the Mid-Cheshire Footpath Society.

22 Traffic accidents

RESOLVED that;

The clerk was asked to contact the Highways Department of Cheshire West and Chester Council and the local MP regarding continued accidents at the Abbey Arms junction, Fishpool junction, and the junction of the A51 and A556 requesting junction improvements.

23 Parish Council noticeboard at Little Wood

Councillor F Goodier will contact a previous Parish Councillor to see if they have the key for the noticeboard.

RESOLVED that;

The expenditure of up to £10 was approved if the key could not be located.

The clerk was asked to contact the local resident who had submitted the complaint to see if they could volunteer to put up notices on the noticeboard on Waste Lane. If this was not possible Councillor C Topping would print off the agendas and Councillor F Goodier would put up the agendas onto the noticeboards.

24 Complaints from a member of the public regarding car parking on Stoneyford Lane

RESOLVED that;

The clerk was asked to contact Cheshire Association of Local Councils to request a template legal letter regarding the vexatious emails.

25 In memory of Councillor Derek Wheeler

The clerk was asked to investigate the costs of purchasing a bench with a plaque on jointly with Delamere Community Association in memory of the late Councillor Derek Wheeler.

26 Room hire for the PCSO

RESOLVED that;

The Parish Council would pay for room hire for two hours per month for the PCSO to hire a room at Delamere Community centre for PCSO surgeries. The PCSO surgeries however would need to be advertised on the local Facebook page. The PCSO would have to book the room with the Booking Secretary of Delamere Community centre and the community centre would then have to email an invoice for payment to the clerk.

27 Annual insurance

RESOLVED that;

The amount of £300 was approved for the renewal of the annual insurance policy for the Parish Council.

28 Update from Cheshire West and Chester Councillors

There were no Cheshire West and Chester Ward Councillors present.

29 Councillor's report and future agenda items

Several issues with the new car parking charges for Delamere Station were discussed.

30 Date and time of next meeting

Annual Parish Meeting and the next Parish Council meeting is Monday 19th May 2025 at 7pm.

Chair signature.....Dated.....

Page 922

Minutes of the monthly Parish meeting of Delamere and Oakmere Parish Council held on Monday 14th April 2025.