

Bunbury Parish Council

MINUTES

of the meeting held at The Jubilee Pavilion, Bunbury, on

Wednesday 10th December 2025 at 7.20pm

Present: Councillors: Peter Gorman, Nick Parker, Richard Slater Mike Thomas and Andrew Thomson (Chair).

In attendance: The Clerk to the Council and 15 members of the public.

Dec25-1. Apologies

Cllr Randall had submitted apologies.

Dec25-2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Considerations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensation considerations.

Dec25-3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

In item 6, the words 'and are marked as housing development sites' had been omitted. Subject to this amendment, the Council resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on the 8th October 2025 were a true record and that the Chair be authorised to sign them as such.

Dec25-4. Unitary Authority Councillor Report

Borough Cllr Posnett was unable to attend.

Dec25-5. Public Forum

A member of the public expressed frustration that Cheshire East Council (CEC) requires members of the public to sign-in to the Planning Portal in order to log comments. It was pointed out that it is possible to send comments by email although comments entered this way often do not appear on the website.

A resident commented on item 7.a.ii, to register objection in the strongest terms on the basis that the proposal is outside the settlement boundary and the previous application had been granted as an exception because it was for First Homes, whereas this application is not. The proposals conflict with the Local and Neighbourhood plans and she felt that this fact should be given significant weight in the planning balance. The proposal is for 20 houses, whereas 15 is the maximum set out in the neighbourhood plan under policy H2 and the density seems too high in any case. This is exemplified by the proposals for tandem parking, which she felt would inevitably lead to parking on the roads, and the lack of any biodiversity or landscaping plans. Sustainability is poor for Bunbury residents now that there is no bus service in the village and the proposal would cause even more problems on Bunbury Lane because of the extension of the footway - although it was noted that the footway does not appear to be within the site area and may not be within the applicant's control. There is no Demonstration of Need and it would be difficult to argue need. The resident also noted that the Affordable Housing Officer for CEC has commented that the application does not meet the need for affordable housing.

Another resident spoke to express the view, relating to previous discussion of parking issues, that parking within 10m of a junction is not itself illegal but parking dangerously is. He felt that discouraging any parking that is safe but within 10m of a junction could simply move the problem elsewhere. The same resident expressed surprise that the large clothes bank container at the village hall had not had planning permission and he felt that, within the conservation area it should do.

A further resident informed the meeting that the theatre company Rain or Shine are staging a production of *Agatha Appleton and the Peril of the Pyramids* in Bunbury Village Hall on Saturday 10th January with profits going to Bunbury Mill.

Another resident commented on item 7.a.ii, to register objection mainly on the basis of the traffic dangers that she felt would be inevitable with increased levels of traffic on Bunbury Lane associated with the proposal.

Dec25-6. Members' Reports & Items for Future Agendas

- Cllr Parker expressed thanks to Cllr Slater for his assistance in repairing the Christmas tree lights which had been damaged and reported that the heating control at the Pavilion had been replaced following the unrelated repair to an exterior light that had been causing the electricity to trip out.
- Cllr Gorman noted that 20 trees were to be the subject of works at Brook Cottage, including 10 to be felled. He felt that it was unfortunate that no plan, arborial report or impact statement had been submitted and that the Council had not been consulted.
- Cllr Slater thanked Mr Graham Edge, a resident, who had kindly assisted with repairs to the Christmas lights and also reported that the new speed camera at Spurstow had been made operational.
- Cllr Thomson reported that the large black bins in the car park had still not been emptied, despite CEC having been requested to empty them on numerous occasions.

Dec25-7. Planning

a. Responses to Application Consultations:

i. 25/3484/HOUS: Brook Cottage Sadlers Wells, Bunbury

Renovation of existing dwelling to include single-storey side extension and detached double garage.
In discussion it was noted that a number of aspects of the proposals are unsympathetic to the vernacular style of the cottage and that the proposed garage is both out of scale and mis-placed. These factors had been highlighted by CEC's Heritage Officer and the Council was in agreement with that critique and resolved to object, with a comment that the Heritage report should be given full weight.

ii. 25/4407/FUL: Land West of Bunbury Lane, Bunbury (Parkside)

Demolition of existing 1 no. residential dwelling and all other buildings, site clearance works, and erection of 20 no. dwellings and all associated infrastructure works

The Council discussed the application at length and resolved to object on the following grounds:

- a. Two appeals for speculative residential development on this site within the last 5 years were dismissed, primarily on the grounds of protecting the character and appearance of the open countryside as the site was (and still is) outside the development boundary of the adopted Bunbury Neighbourhood Plan which runs until 2030.
- b. A third appeal in July 2024 relating to the development of the site for 20 First Homes had been granted on the grounds that, at that time, First Homes had been included in paragraph 73 of the NPPF as an exception to policy but this exception no longer exists. Given that the exception upon which this appeal was upheld no longer exists, no weight should be given to this element of the planning history of the site.
- c. The landscape and character of the village would be significantly damaged by this proposal.
- d. Bunbury has, and is, continuing to deliver a range of new houses to meet its local need - the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for a minimum of 80 houses to be built in Bunbury between April 2010 and March 2030. To date 124 new homes have been built or granted consent, including a number of affordable houses.
- e. The current application is contrary to Policy H2 of the made Neighbourhood Plan which states that no more than 15 houses should be built on any one site. The Council noted that the applicants have attempted to support their proposal by suggesting that it would make a "contribution to the urban mass". Bunbury is a rural village and Policy H2 of the Neighbourhood plan is designed to help maintain its rural character while accommodating a reasonable and manageable level of development. Implementation of this proposal would exceed the 15 house maximum at the edge of the village resulting in the urbanisation of one of the main approaches.
- f. The proposed density of housing was considered to be too great for the site.
- g. The NPPF states that housing should be located in the most sustainable locations however, Bunbury has ceased to be a functionally sustainable location, despite

inaccurate information included in the application.

- h. The road network in the village is already often at breaking point from both practical and safety points of view. Even within the settlement boundary there are many stretches of road that are narrow and which have no pavements or footpaths. The routes from the proposed site into the centre of the village, and to the school, lack pavements or footpaths and pedestrians have to cross the main road through the village several times even to make use of those that do exist.
- i. The levels of traffic and of associated parking are already very problematic and there are several narrow bottlenecks that at times become completely impassable because of parked vehicles that have nowhere else to go. The combination of these two factors - the lack of footways and lack of vehicular traffic capacity - create a dangerous situation which would be significantly exacerbated by the inevitable additional of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic that this application would generate if granted.
- j. The application suggests that residents of the proposed houses would walk into the centre of the village but the making and widening of paths would be necessary to make this safe but this would further narrow some of the already narrowest stretches of lanes in the village.
- k. In the context of the above, the proposed access and egress point onto Bunbury Lane is also problematic because of the narrowness of the lane.
- l. The village is not functionally sustainable with no public transport, minimal shopping facilities, and very few employment opportunities. The applicant suggests the use of bicycles for access to nearby towns and services (Nantwich and Tarporley) but it was agreed that the nature of the A49 and A51 make this a dangerous proposition and would, in any case, only be an option for the very fittest of residents.
- m. The application includes the provision of some affordable housing however the Council noted that a housing needs survey has not been undertaken and the application fails to meet current CEC policy. The Council noted that the Planning Authority's own Affordable Housing Officer has criticised the proposals, making similar points in an objection to the proposal.

The Council also resolved to request that, if the Planning Authority were minded to grant consent, a Site Inspection Panel visit the site *before* any decision is made by the Planning Committee; it was felt that this would be essential for the committee's members to get a full understanding of the context and all of the relevant issues.

iii. Recycling Container at the Village Hall

Residents had complained that the container was intrusive and unsightly, especially in the context of the conservation area. It was resolved to write to the Planning Authority to ask them whether the container required permission.

iv. 25/4560/CLPUD

Proposed lawful use for proposed stable block, domestic garage and manege.

This application had come to hand after the circulation of the agenda. The council resolved to delegate the matter to the Clerk, following consultation with individual members.

b. Updates on Application Consultations considered previously or other planning matters.

- i Cllr Slater reported that he had attended the CEC Planning Committee meeting at which two of the recent Permission in Principle applications had been considered. He and others spoke to register objections but, due to the lack of current Land Supply, objections that would normally have carried weight were largely set aside and the applications had been approved.
- ii Cllr Thomson reported that he had attended a meeting about CEC's Local plan and that he would forward the information arising from the meeting when it came to hand. Cllr Thomson had been concerned to hear that it was unlikely that the plan would be completed before 2030/31. This would mean that there would be a strong pre-disposition towards plans for houses in and around settlements and in grey belt areas being approved. He further reported that the new town at Addlington may be rejected and that a further revision to the National Planning Policy Framework would be published soon.

Dec25-8. Replacement Defibrillator

The defibrillator at the Dysart Arms location had reached the end of its life and so the Council resolved to approve expenditure of up to £600 on a replacement.

Dec25-9. Traffic Management Working Group Report

In discussion it was agreed that the wording of the parking notice leaflets previously agreed should be altered - the exact detail of the wording would be considered outside the meeting but would reflect the understanding that the position in relation to parking within 10m of a junction was not an absolute legal embargo.

Dec25-10. Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported that:

The speeding cameras on the A49 and A51 had recorded 479 and 305 offences respectively. Some of the A51 offences would not be followed up because the recent roadworks had an affect on the equipment.

There were four potential candidates for co-option and these, and any other candidates, would be considered at the next meeting.

There would be a Police Surgery at Calveley Mill on the 6th January 2026 at 10am.

The local PCSO was under threat of redundancy as part of a proposed change in policing structure. The Council felt that this would be a highly regrettable and retrograde step and it was resolved to write to the Police Commissioner and the Chief Constable to express this view.

Dec25-11. Bunbury Jubilee Playing Fields Charity

The Council resolved to form a working group to consider the matter; the group would be made up of Cllrs Thomson, Slater and Gorman and the Clerk.

Dec25-12. Police Cluster Meeting

A report of the recent Police Cluster Group meeting was received and it was noted that the Council need to nominate a representative to the Group in due course.

Dec25-13. Allotments Project Update

There were no updates and the Clerk would follow up the potential grant maker.

Dec25-14. Christmas Carols Around the Tree

Plans were well in hand and the Clerk would confirm the play list with Crewe Brass Band. It was resolved to donate half of the proceeds of the collection to the Alive project's pensioner's lunch club project and half to the Nantwich Food Bank.

Dec25-15. Car Park Surface Repair

It was resolved to approve a repair to the large potholes in the car park by volunteers and to authorise up to £50 for that purpose.

Dec25-16. Finance & Governance

- a. **Receipts and Payments** - Members received the schedule of receipts and payments and approved the payments.

Dec25-17. Items for the WhatsApp Bulletin

It was agreed to that the tree of the month, planning issues and the police surgery would be included.

The meeting closed at 9.06pm

Signed as a true record, by authority of the Council

Chair:

Date: 14th January 2026