

Bunbury Parish Council

MINUTES

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

Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 7.20pm

Present: Councillors: Tracy Cosgrave, Maya Fowler, Peter Gorman, Nick Parker, Richard Slater, Andrew Thomson (Chair).

In attendance: The Clerk and two members of the public.

May26-1. Election of Chair

Cllr Thomson was proposed, seconded and elected unanimously

May26-2. Election of Vice-Chair

Cllr Slater was proposed, seconded and elected unanimously

May26-3. Apologies

Cllrs Randall and Thomas had submitted apologies and the reasons were approved. The Clerk reported that two of the recently co-opted Councillors, Michael Pollen and Jane Turner had resigned and he read out their letters of resignation.

May26-4. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Considerations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensation considerations.

May26-5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on the 22nd April 2026 were a true record and that the Chair be authorised to sign them as such.

May26-6. Unitary Authority Councillor Report

Borough Cllr Posnett reported that:

- ◆ She had attended the Cheshire East Council (CEC) Mayor Making.
- ◆ CEC had agreed to a new Director of Planning role and senior Children's and Families role, as well as appointing an interim Monitoring Officer at a cost of £1,000 per day.
- ◆ CEC councillor allowance rates had been debated and increased by 3%; B Cllr Posnett had abstained in the vote and felt that the decision should be made by others, rather than the councillors themselves.
- ◆ The Cabinet system had now been established and B Cllr Posnett had been appointed Chair of the Families and Children scrutiny committee; this will be a significant amount of work.
- ◆ The Parkside planning application would go before the Planning Committee on 3rd June.
- ◆ At present Planning in Principle applications can be called-in by (CEC) councillors; the policy is changing and this will no longer be allowed.

May26-7. Public Forum

A resident reported that there was no further information about the Parkside application from officers, and that there were still very serious concerns to be addressed.

May26-8. Members' Reports & Items for Future Agendas

- ◆ Cllr Thomson reported that he had awarded the Chair's Cup to Mrs Pat Blackwood.
- ◆ Cllr Parker stated that the Chair's Cup, which was instituted about 50 years ago, represents a history of voluntary contribution in the village.
- ◆ Cllr Gorman:
 - The Newsletter had been produced and allocated to Members for distribution.
 - The Village Day Committee were concerned that the grass on the Jubilee Field should be cut in the week ahead of Village Day and that hedges should be cut.

- ◆ Cllr Slater reported that:
 - The Scouts had paid 5 years arrears of ground rent and that a rent review for the future will now take place.
 - The Tennis Club had re-discovered their septic tank and access to it has been cleared.

May26-9. Planning

a. Responses to Application Consultations

There were no applications to consider.

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

There were no new decisions to report on outstanding applications but Cllr Thomson reported that there have been indications that the new version of the National Planning Policy Framework would be published in June.

May26-10. Village Day Stall

The Clerk reported that he had only received one contribution so far and urged members to get their contributions to him as soon as possible. As previously agreed a final round-up and review of material would take place with all those contributing and/ or staffing the stall but material needed to be with the Clerk prior to that.

It was agreed that two Councillors, at least one of whom should be a well established member, would staff the stall at all times and a rota would be developed.

May26-11. Planning Authority Process re Proposed Work, including on Protected Trees

The item had two aspects. Firstly the fact that as a result of the Planning Authority failing to deal with applications in a timely fashion, applications had been approved by default. The second aspect is that at least one application concerning work on significant trees, including within a conservation area, has gone through without specific consultation and without any apparent involvement of the Council's own arboreal specialist. In discussion, both situations were considered to be highly unsatisfactory and it was resolved to write to the head of planning at CEC (David Malcolm) and the Leader of CEC complaining and expressing dissatisfaction about the apparent lack of process and to also complain that Parish Councils are no longer being consulted about significant arboreal works, even when they are proposed within conservation areas.

May26-12. Strategic Planning Process

The Council had previously resolved to develop a strategic plan, to establish priorities and then develop funding and spending plans based on those priorities; this item was to establish a process whereby such a plan could be developed. In discussion it was acknowledged that, while the Council would need to finalise and approve the strategic plan, it would not be possible to develop the plan within a meeting of the Council without severely disrupting ongoing business. It was resolved that:

- ◆ Each member would make a list of things that they would like to see happen and/ or continue to happen, however optimistic or ambitious, and send it to the Clerk by 17th June 2026;
- ◆ The Clerk will synthesise those lists into a single list;
- ◆ At Village Day children would be encouraged to write a response to the question 'If I could have just one thing in or for the Village, what would it be?' on a whiteboard;
- ◆ The draft questionnaire will be finalised prior to the summer break and will then be circulated to every household with the next edition of the newsletter (late August/ early September);
- ◆ The Clerk will then add the product of those surveys to the list;
- ◆ A time-limited working group would be formed and would consider the list and start to develop a list of priorities/ ambitions for the village as the first stage of a strategic plan;
- ◆ Approximate costings would be developed alongside this stage of the process;
- ◆ From this a set of priorities would be worked up;
- ◆ The final stage would be to identify actual and potential financial resources, whether from existing income, reserves or external funding sources.

May26-13. Town Field Designation

A resident had suggested that consideration be given to seeking to have Town Field included within the Upper Bunbury Conservation Area. In discussion Cllr Parker reported that there are

covenants against development of the field. Given that information and the fact that the field is part of a defined view and part of the landscape, the Council felt that there would be no benefit to incorporating it into the conservation area and resolved not to proceed with the idea.

May26-14. Mowing at Wakes Meadow

This item was deferred to the September meeting.

May26-15. Litter Bin at Sadlers Wells Woods

After discussion of the request from the trustees of Sadlers Wells, the Council resolved not to site another litter bin in this location but, instead, to offer a donation of one of the bins no longer in service on the condition that it would be sited within the woods and that the Trustees would take responsibility for emptying it, rather than the Council.

May26-16. Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported that:

- ◆ The soft bark for the play area will be delivered in the week beginning 25th May. It was agreed that once the delivery has taken place a WhatsApp notice would go out asking for help in spreading it.
- ◆ The zip wire tensioning that had been agreed at the last meeting had been commissioned. It will take place in the next month or so.
- ◆ Further correspondence had been received in relation to the WhatsApp post about vandalism in Sadlers Wells woods. The Clerk proposed a response which, following discussion, it was resolved to adopt; Cllrs Gorman and Fowler abstained.
- ◆ All Members had been invited to a public meeting to introduce the new Strategic Mayoral Authority and what it will mean for the area and to ask questions. The meeting will take place on the 1st July at 5.30pm, until 7.30pm in Sandbach Town Hall.

May26-17. Finance & Governance

- a. **Receipts and Payments** - Members received the schedule of receipts and payments and it was resolved to approve the payments.
- b. **Annual Accounts** - The 2025/26 Accounts, including the Bank Reconciliation and Internal Audit report which had been circulated in advance, were considered by the Council and it was resolved to approve them. It was further resolved to designate £7,500 to a Play Area Reserve and £7,500 to a reserve to support the Bunbury Jubilee Playing Fields Charity as and when funds become necessary.
- c. **Annual Governance and Accountability Return**
 - i. The Council considered the Statements at Part 2, Section 1 of the Annual Return and resolved to authorise the Chair to sign it on behalf of the Council;
 - ii. The Council considered the information provided at Part 2 Section 2 of the Annual Return and resolved to authorise the Chair to countersign it on the behalf of the Council.

d. Dates for future meetings

The following dates were agreed for meetings in the 2026/27 session and for the 2027 Annual Meeting:

17th June, 15th July, 9th September, 14th October, 11th November and 9th December 2026;
13th January, 10th February, 10th March, 21st April and 19th May (Annual Meeting and APM) 2027.

May26-18. Items for the WhatsApp Bulletin

It was resolved that the Tree of the month, the Village Day Stall and a request for help with spreading the soft bark in the play area (once the exact delivery date is known) would be posted.

The meeting closed at 9.12pm

Signed as a true record, by authority of the Council

Chair:

Date: **17th June 2026**