Minutes of the Parish Meeting of No Mans Heath and District Parish Council

held at Edge Village Hall at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 22nd September 2026

PRESENT

Chairman:	Cllr David Lithgow Smith	
Cllr Fran Lithgow Smith	Cllr Peter Guildford	Cllr Tim Harrop
Cllr David Pegram	Cllr Stephen Roberts	Cllr Sheila Whyte

Clerk - Ms Ruth Richardson
Rob Charnley, CWaC Head of Planning
Members of the Public and Parish – 13 members of the public attended the meeting

Presentation by Rob Charnley, Head of Planning, Cheshire West and Chester Council
Rob Charnley, Head of Planning at Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC), attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the current and proposed planning process, the emerging Local Plan, local housing requirements and the future challenges facing the Borough.
The following matters were covered:

- **Current Local Plan and planning system:** CWaC currently operates in accordance with the national planning framework and guidance when determining planning applications.
- **Housing requirements:** The method for calculating local housing need has changed. CWaC has historically remained ahead of its required housing supply. A significant proportion of recent development has been larger four- and five-bedroom properties.
- **Future housing numbers:** Approximately 29,000 new homes are planned across the Borough over the next 15 years, creating significant pressure to identify suitable sites for development.
- **Planning applications:** There is currently considerable pressure on the planning system, with planning and pre-application enquiries relating to more than 22,000 potential homes across the Borough.
- **New Local Plan:** CWaC had originally been preparing a new Local Plan under the previous planning system, which would have required completion by the end of 2026. However, concerns regarding available resources, together with concerns from consultants about the ability to meet this deadline, have resulted in CWaC deciding to prepare the new Local Plan under the new planning system.
- **Consultation:** The first consultation on the new Local Plan is due to commence in September 2026. Further consultations are anticipated, potentially in November 2026 and October 2027. The earliest anticipated date for the new Local Plan to be formally adopted is December 2028.
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** The current national planning framework places greater emphasis on meeting housing requirements and supporting housing development. The overall balance within the planning system is therefore currently towards the provision of additional housing.
- **Determination of planning applications:** CWaC is generally expected to approve planning applications where they comply with the relevant planning policies unless there are sufficient planning reasons for refusal. A lack of infrastructure capacity alone cannot generally be used as a reason to refuse additional housing, as contributions

towards infrastructure are addressed through mechanisms such as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 agreements.
- **Resident engagement:** Residents and communities were encouraged to engage with the planning process and participate in consultations and planning applications. CWaC's approach is to work with applicants to seek appropriate and favourable planning outcomes.
- **Green Belt and Grey Belt:** The distinction between Green Belt and Grey Belt land was explained. It was noted that there is no Green Belt within this part of the Borough and therefore this particular issue is not expected to have a direct impact on planning within the local area.
- **Neighbourhood Plans:** Neighbourhood Plans can assist communities in identifying and indicating preferred locations or sites for future development.
- **Planning Committee:** Changes have been made to the types of planning applications that are considered by Planning Committee. For example, larger housing schemes will be subject to consideration by the Planning Committee.

Matters Raised by Members and Residents
Members and residents raised concerns regarding the ability of existing local infrastructure and services to accommodate the level of proposed housing development, including:
- **Highways and traffic:** Concerns were raised regarding the capacity of the existing highway network to accommodate additional housing and the likely increase in traffic arising from new developments.
- **Public transport:** Concern was expressed regarding the limited and unreliable local public transport provision, particularly for residents of affordable housing who may not have access to a private vehicle.
- **Impact on neighbouring parishes:** Concerns were raised regarding the cumulative impact of proposed and future housing developments in Malpas on neighbouring parishes, including the potential effects on highways, traffic levels and local infrastructure within No Mans Heath and District.
- **Cross-boundary planning:** Members asked whether there would be liaison with Cheshire East Council regarding planning applications and their potential cross-boundary impacts. Rob advised that CWaC would not undertake such liaison in relation to individual planning applications.
- **Flooding and drainage:** Concerns were raised regarding the impact of further development on existing flooding, drainage and surface water issues.
- **Utilities:** Members also raised concerns regarding the capacity of existing utility infrastructure to support additional development.
- **Schools:** Residents raised concerns regarding the capacity of local schools to accommodate additional pupils arising from new housing development.

Rob acknowledged the concerns raised and reiterated the importance of residents and local councils engaging with the planning process and forthcoming consultations on the new Local Plan.