

**UTKINTON AND COTEBROOK  
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
Rose Farm Coffee Shop on  
Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 7pm**



**MINUTES**

09.06.01	<b>Information Update from United Utilities</b> – Emma Birch, Damian Hackett and George Finnigan from United Utilities attended to give an update on the large green water tank in Utkinton. There were five members of the public in attendance and the discussions are captured in Appendix A.
09.06.02	<b>Public Open Forum:</b> One resident asked if the parish council could do anything about the bushes/trees that are becoming overgrown on the corner of Wood Lane and Utkinton Road opposite the crossroads. The Clerk will report the issues to CWaC and copy Cllr Hardy into the response. The same resident also reported regular fly tipping on the wide grass verge at the cross roads. The Clerk will report the issues to CWaC and copy Cllr Hardy into the response.
09.06.03	<b>Present:</b> Cllr Marian Atkinson, Cllr Matthew Grant, Cllr Andrew Needham, Cllr Sami Kastenieni, Cllr Stephen Moore, Cllr Graham Spencer (Chair), Cllr Graham Stewart, Cllr Caroline Stubbs, Cllr Ed Stubbs <b>In attendance:</b> CWaC Cllr Charles Hardy and Kath Lloyd, Clerk
09.06.04	<b>Declarations of Interest:</b> There were no new declarations of interest.
09.06.05	<b>Minutes of Parish Council meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025:</b> The minutes of the previous council meeting were approved as accurate and signed by the Chairman.
09.06.06	<b>Cheshire West &amp; Chester Council Matters:</b> CWaC Ward Cllr Hardy reported that he is persisting with reporting the poor state of the road along John Street and Utkinton Road and will keep the parish council updated. There were no questions or issues raised.
09.06.07	<b>Planning Applications:</b> <b>09.06.07.1</b> There were no planning applications to consider. <b>09.06.07.2</b> There were no decisions received
09.06.08	<b>Neighbourhood Plan Review:</b> The parish council agreed to establish a Working Party to review the Neighbourhood Plan, proposed by Cllr Atkinson, seconded by Cllr C Stubbs and passed unanimously. Councillors were asked to consider the Terms of Reference drafted by the Clerk and send any comments or suggestions to the Clerk by the end of June. <b>ACTION:</b> The Clerk will draft an advertisement for members of the community to join the working party which can be used at the upcoming Big Community Festival on 14 <sup>th</sup> June and then on notice boards and social media.
09.06.09	<b>Work Programme: to receive</b> updates on the following: <b>09.06.09.1</b> Planters at Cotebrook bus stop – purchased by Cllr Spencer at a cost of £75, to be collected on 16 <sup>th</sup> June and planted up by Cllr Atkinson. <b>09.06.09.2</b> United Utilities response to letter – The CEO, Lousie Beardmore, had contacted the clerk following another email from the Clerk and communication has been re-established, see Appendix A

	<p><b>09.06.09.3</b> Big Community Festival – taking place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June, all councillors are urged to contribute some time to the day from 10.30am onwards. Cllr Atkinson thanked everyone who had given up time to sell raffle tickets.</p> <p><b>09.06.09.4</b> Salt Bin – Clerk will pursue with CWaC again.</p>
<b>09.06.10</b>	<p><b>Correspondence:</b> to <b>note</b> correspondence from residents received since the last meeting:</p> <p><b>09.06.10.1 Unkept footpaths along Wood Lane</b> – The landowner was in attendance and reported that the footpaths would be cleared when the rest of the grass was cut over the summer.</p> <p><b>09.06.10.2 Poor state of Oulton Mill Road, Cotebrook</b> – the letter from the resident had been passed to CWaC highways and reported via the online system HW719273545. The following response had been received and relayed to the resident  <i>“I have checked with the local Network Steward and apparently it is just the top surface that is missing, so it would not currently be actionable in accordance with our Code of Practice for Highway Safety Inspections. We will continue to assess the area as part of our regular Highway Safety Inspections, and any actionable defects will be raised for repair.”</i></p>
<b>09.06.11</b>	<p><b>Finance Matters</b></p> <p><b>09.06.11.1</b> Council approved the accounts for payment and note accounts paid since 12<sup>th</sup> May 25</p> <p><b>09.06.11.2</b> Council noted the bank balance and cash book at the end of May 2025</p> <p><b>See Appendix B for details.</b></p> <p>Cllr Stewart asked that a plan for the future spending of the Jubilee Grant funding be created – possibly be asking the community for their priorities in the same way that the desire for the village gateway signs had been identified. Ward Cllr Hardy reminded the Council that the Spacehive funding from CWaC was still available and was ideal for larger projects.</p> <p><a href="#">Cheshire West Crowd - Home</a></p>
<b>09.06.12</b>	<p><b>Councillor’s reports and items for future agenda:</b></p> <p>Cllr Atkinson noted that she had been asked by a resident if there was a community notice board for local groups to use. The Chairman clarified that any community notices could be put onto the parish council notice boards.</p>
<b>09.06.13</b>	<p><b>Date of next meeting:</b> Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July at 7pm at Cotebrook Village Hall</p>

## APPENDIX A

**09.06.01 Information Update from United Utilities – Emma Birch (EB), Damian Hackett (DH) and George Finnigan (GF) from United Utilities attended to give an update on the large green water tank in Utkinton. There were five members of the public in attendance plus Cheshire West and Chester Ward Cllr Charles Hardy and 9 Parish Councillors.**

Cllr Spencer introduced the United Utilities team and thanked them for attending the meeting at short notice. DH shared graphics of the plans for landscaping and planting around the water tank and reported that there were discussions ongoing with the manufacturers regarding the potential to either line the inside of the tank or paint it. United Utilities are taking steps to purchase the land on one of the sides of the tank to enable the desired planting. He gave a reassurance that this update does not replace the need for a full and well publicised public meeting in the near future where he would hope to bring more definite proposals.

At this point, EB offered her full apologies on behalf of United Utilities for the poor communication with this project, she acknowledged that residents had not been kept updated sufficiently and promised that she would make every effort to ensure improved communications in the future. There followed a short question and answer session:

Q: I attended the first (and only) public meeting when we were told about the pipeline and plans changed but we were not informed or consulted – what guarantee is there that the same thing won’t happen again?

*A: We can only apologise again for the previous poor communication and assure you that it won't happen again.*

Q: You've said that the Environmental Agency wouldn't allow the pipeline to go ahead but how hard did you challenge that decision?

*A: We did try very hard but the environmental impact was overwhelming and took precedence over other arguments.*

Q: It has been quoted that this was a solution for a "once in 30 years" occurrence of flooding – my own analysis of the data available shows that the risk is much less – what data has been used to suggest the need for this?

*A: All the available local data from the Met Office has been used.*

Q: Have you considered reducing the size of the tank by removing the top level?

*A: The top level of the tank cannot be removed without damaging the infrastructure of the whole installation. Although planting and landscaping won't hide the tank completely, it will minimise the visual impact.*

Q: Could it be painted a different colour to make it less obvious, a darker green or a grey maybe?

*A: We are considering all options and talking to the manufacturers.*

Q: I have not seen any evidence of any calculations to justify the installation of a tank of this size – I'd like to see them so that I can get them independently verified.

Q: Was the size of the tank customised for Utkinton or was it just the same as everywhere else?

*A: The size of the tank is based on the calculations for the Utkinton catchment, it is specific to the site and not a generic design.*

Q: Is this scheme anything to do with separating sewage and rainwater?

*A: The tank is to provide capacity during storm conditions*

Q: What happens if you can't buy the land you need to adjacent to the tank?

Q: I lease and farm part of that land and I am certain that the landowner will be very reluctant to sell any of it.

Q: Cllr Atkinson attended a recent public meeting regarding the Vyrnwy Aqueduct which was poorly organised and felt that United Utilities need to look at their Communications policies business wide as poor communication seems to be a recurring theme.

Q: Residents are sick of the months of construction work and disruption every day – can we see a project plan with timescales showing when all the work will be completed?

At 7.30pm, Cllr Spencer drew the item to a close and thanked the United Utilities team and the residents for attending the meeting. A short break would take place before the main parish council meeting started which everyone was invited to observe.

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**APPENDIX B**

**CLERK'S REPORT 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

**1. ACCOUNTS FOR APPROVAL (Blue shaded are from Community Events Fund, not from parish council precept)**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>DETAILS</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>TOTAL £</b>
Kathryn Lloyd	Clerk's salary June 2025		374.40
SJC Chartered Accountants	Internal/local Audit	39	234
Audlem Printers	1600 booklets & 4 PVC banners (to be taken from Community Events)		635
County Loos	3 porta loos (to be taken from Community Events)	62	372
Sum Up	Purchase of solo sum up & cradle	15.80	94.80
Cllr M Grant	Reimbursement of purchase of raffle tickets (to be taken from Community Event)		110.34
Cheshire Events Co	Inflatable Assault Course (to be taken from Community Events)		456

**2. Cashbook Reconciliation**

**Bank Reconciliation at 31st May 2025**

Cash Book	Balance b/fwd	9,065.78
Plus	Receipts	15,961.87
Less	Payments	£5,652.70
		<b>£19,374.95</b>
Bank	Current a/c	£0.00
	Deposit a/c	£19,374.95
Less unrepresented cheques		
		<b>£19,374.95</b>

**JUBILEE FUND**

**Bank Reconciliation at 31st May 2025**

Cash Book	Balance b/fwd	£7,968.20
Plus	Receipts	£6,402.09
Less	Payments	£8,769.20
		<b>£5,601.09</b>

**To note:**

- The Big Community Festival on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June needs volunteers to marshal the car parking, help with setting up and clearing away and on the front entrance. Parish Councillors are asked to commit as much time as they can.
- The Parish Council stall on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June will be a Bottle Tombola, kindly organised by Mrs Carol Spencer – again, volunteers are welcome and Councillors are asked to consider donating as many bottles as possible.