

Sproston Parish Council
Meeting Tuesday 8th July 2025
Venue – The Barn, Parkside Farm, Brereton Lane, Sproston

Meeting opened at 19:27

Present: Councillor Peter Cunane (PC), Councillor Stephen Percival (SP), Councillor John Lightfoot (JL), Councillor James Townley (JT)
Cheshire West & Chester Council Mark Stocks (MS)

7 members of the public were present.

1. Apologies

Apologies given from Councillor Peter Gleave.

2. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were stated.

3. Mark Stocks Updates

Diary House Farm

Enforcement has been served with any appeal to be lodged by 7th July. If there is an appeal to the enforcement then there could be one of two routes; Public enquiry or correspondence with the officers involved. It was felt by CWAC that Mr Sherwin would appeal the enforcement and the refusal of planning.

If appeals are submitted then the expected timeframe would be hearing within three months and outcome within 3-6 months from then. An enquiry is more likely as there is a high level of interest in the case. There have been 47 official complaints. All evidence will be passed to an inspector and the inspector will more than likely visit the site. The site can continue to operate whilst in appeal.

Please report any issues with smells, noise, vibrations etc. If wagons are still going in and out from today.

For the people who requested that their details were redacted due to intimidation there is concern that if there is a public meeting then they may not turn up.

Centurion Way

Planning for 73 houses has been granted by Cheshire East and it is expected that CWAC will agree to the 23 houses that fall within Sproston Parish. The current government have relaxed certain planning rules and CWAC are expecting to fulfill there quota of new developments. SPC will benefit from some funding as CWAC are expecting more applications in the area to meet the build criteria set out by the government. If we require it, someone from CWAC could come to explain what is happening with the new planning proposals. Land that was earmarked for HS2 is still safeguarded. No new planning can be approved in those areas while that is place.

Highways Funding

The government has made an additional £30million available for highway maintenance, highlighting pot holes, road improvements etc. Some of the funding is performance related

and if works are not carried out then the funding will be returned to Central government. There is also a local transport consultation for CWAC.

MS to meet with contractors and CWAC regarding the drainage issue on Broad Lane.

Hopefully there will be some resolution.

Pathways can be cleared and/or maintained and we are able to request this from CWAC. There is an opportunity of get contractors to carry out any local work and then we can bill the council. MS to investigate what that could potentially be for. The pavements along the A54 are due to be resurfaced. SPC have requested a timescale for these.

With regard to Broad Lane, Willis's could do the work and we could bill CWAC for the full amount. It is seriously affecting the farm and if not resolved by winter could close the milk herd down.

Devolution

When the councils combine there will be a mayoral election in May 2026 but this could be delayed until 2027. It will allow additional £20m funding for things such as planning, highways, education, infrastructure and skills & training.

4. Previous Minutes

Peter Cunane signed and seconded by John Lightfoot.

5. Planning Applications

JJ Vehicles have put in retrospective planning for a prefabricated store/garage. CWAC have emailed saying that the building is in contravention of planning rules as it is forward from the building line. It was commented that it seems to be acceptable to build it first and then put in retrospective planning. SPC feel that it would be better if all applicants followed the correct process.

6. A54 Resurfacing & Highways

The A54 resurfacing has been completed. Generally we are all happy with the work though some grids are still blocked and now have tarmac down them. We expect more traffic over the next few years due to the Centurion Way building and also the Middlewich bypass has now been approved by government, though funding is still not fully available as it still has to go through budgeting. The substation on the A54 is being upgraded to increase the capacity for the new site.

A member of the public requested Horse riding signs on Brereton Lane and also pedestrian signs as children use it to get to the bus stop.

SPC would like a speed reduction on Brereton Lane but the police won't agree to it as we don't meet the criteria. Clerk to contact Ian Rutherford at CWAC to ask how we go about getting 'average speed' cameras through Sproston on the A54. Potentially we could part fund this.

JT has been out with Phil Hambleton, our local PCSO, viewing new locations for Speed Watch. We are still waiting for the black box to be fitted across the A54 to monitor the traffic.

7. Policing Report

Unfortunately Phil Hambleton was not available for the meeting but sent across the monthly crime reports. No incidences were reported in Sproston. These will be available on the website.

8. Finance

The only expense in the preceding two months was our internal audit for the AGAR from Top Cat Accountancy. The only income was from interest.

Balances – Current Account - £4,909.57 & Savings Account - £53,659.04

9. Public Speaking

SPC were asked what is happening with the marquee appeal at the Fox & Hounds. Nothing new to report as the appeal will be held in October. The positive responses far outweighed the complaints so the appeals officer could be contacting those in support to verify their support.

10. Any Other Business

Cheshire West (CWAC) have issued a notice, which will be put on the noticeboard, to ask people to Have Their Say on the local plan. SPC don't have their own local plan but fall under CWAC.

11. Next Meeting Date:

Tuesday 9th September 2025 at The Barn, Parkside Farm, Brereton Lane, Sproston at 7.30pm.

Meeting Closed 20:39

Minutes Agreed by.....

Seconded By.....

Date