

TABLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Extraordinary Planning Meeting

Held on Monday 17th August 2026 at 7PM

Venue: Mere & Tabley Community Club

Contact: clerk@tableyparishcouncil.co.uk

-
- **Present:** Councillors (Chair), H. Gurney-Smith (HGS), (Vice Chair) A Greenway (AG), T Jackson (TJ), N Wythenshawe, K Newport (KN) & B Hartley, S Wharfe (SW), D Bailey (DB)
 - **Remote attendance:** Ms. S Booth (Parish Clerk)
 - **MOPS:** 18
-

Part A (Public)

Welcome and housekeeping procedures were completed.

1. Opening of the Meeting

1.1 Declaration of the Meeting Open

The Chair welcomed those present and declared the Extraordinary Planning Meeting open. The Clerk had to attend remotely.

1.2 Apologies for Absence and Confirmation of Quorum

Apologies were received from Cllr S Carson, who had intended to attend but was unable to do so.

RESOLVED: That the apologies be accepted and the meeting was confirmed as quorate.

2. Declarations of Interest

- Cllr DB declared an interest in Agenda Item 5.
- Cllr SW declared an interest and confirmed that they would abstain where appropriate.
- Cllr BH provided clarification regarding their involvement in discussions concerning the proposed solar development, including attendance at relevant meetings.

The Clerk advised Members that concerns previously raised regarding declarations of interest and Members' ability to participate in Item 5 had been referred to the Cheshire East Monitoring Officer for clarification.

Cllr Hartley raised concerns regarding the handling of information relating to the proposed solar development and the EIA/planning process.

The Chair reminded Members that any representations or correspondence submitted by an individual councillor must clearly distinguish their individual views from the corporate position of Tabley Parish Council. Members were reminded that they should not imply that they are speaking or making representations on behalf of the Parish Council unless specifically authorised to do so by resolution of the Council.

3. Public Participation

In accordance with the published agenda, members of the public were invited to make representations in relation to Crown Estate Land and Cheshire East Local Plan, with speakers normally allocated between three and five minutes at the discretion of the Chair.

3.1 Item 4 - Crown Estate Land and Cheshire East Local Plan

Members of the public raised questions and concerns regarding the Local Plan process, the availability of information, consultation timescales, the identification of land for potential development and the possible impact upon Tabley and surrounding areas.

Questions were also raised regarding how and when residents could submit representations to Cheshire East Council.

3.2 Item 5 -Proposed Tabley Hill Solar Farm

Although the published agenda stated that no further public participation would normally be taken on this item, the Chair exercised their discretion to permit a number of members of the public to provide further points of information and raise questions relevant to the proposed solar farm and the EIA process.

Discussion took place regarding the fact that Tabley Parish Council had not received the EIA documentation through the usual circulation process. The Clerk also clarified that the substantive planning application for the proposed solar farm had still not been received by the Parish Council, although the meeting had originally been convened with provision to consider the proposed development should the relevant planning information have been received.

Members of the public questioned what action the Parish Council intended to take in light of the EIA information now available and asked whether the Council would make representations at this stage rather than await receipt of the substantive planning application.

The Chair closed the public participation session and proceeded to the formal business of the Council.

4. Crown Estate Land and Cheshire East Local Plan

Members considered the current Cheshire East Local Plan consultation and discussed the potential implications for Tabley and the surrounding area.

Members raised concerns regarding the potential scale of future development, loss of agricultural and rural land, the future of Crown Estate/Tabley Estate land, infrastructure capacity, highways and traffic, drainage, environmental and landscape impacts, protection of the Green Belt and the cumulative impact of development across neighbouring parishes.

Members also emphasised the importance of protecting Tabley's rural and historic character, including the historic setting of Tabley House and surrounding heritage assets, and ensuring that parish councils and local communities are meaningfully involved in the identification and assessment of potential development sites.

Concern was expressed regarding the consultation period, particularly as it had taken place predominantly during July and August and was due to close on 1 September 2026. Members considered that this provided limited time for parish councils to consider the documentation, engage with residents and neighbouring councils and formulate a corporate response.

Members also discussed the benefits of engagement with neighbouring parish and town councils where potential development and infrastructure impacts cross parish boundaries.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk prepare a draft response to the Cheshire East Local Plan consultation based upon the matters raised at the meeting and circulate it to all Members for review and amendment prior to submission to Cheshire East Council.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Council raise its concerns regarding the consultation timescale and request that consideration be given to an extension of the consultation period.

RESOLVED: That Tabley Parish Council engage with neighbouring parish and town councils, where appropriate, regarding matters of common concern arising from the Local Plan.

5. Proposed Tabley Hill Solar Farm

POR: Cllr DB left the meeting prior to consideration of this item in accordance with their declaration of interest.

5.1 Although the published agenda stated that no further public participation would normally be taken on this item, the Chair exercised their discretion to permit a number of members of the public to provide further points of information and raise questions relevant to the proposed solar farm and the EIA process. Members discussed the information currently available and identified a number of matters which they considered required further examination as part of the EIA process. These included the potential impact upon agricultural land, landscape and visual amenity, wildlife and ecological corridors, heritage assets including the listed church and cemetery, access and highways, security infrastructure including fencing and CCTV, and the eventual decommissioning and restoration of the land.

Members also considered that the cumulative impact of the proposed development and other potential development within and surrounding Tabley should be properly assessed.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk urgently obtain the full EIA documentation from Cheshire East Council and establish why Tabley Parish Council had not been included within the original circulation.

RESOLVED: That the Council's observations be prepared based upon the matters raised at the meeting and circulated to all Members for review and any amendments before the Parish Council's formal response is submitted to Cheshire East Council.

Cllr DB was invited to return to the meeting following the conclusion of Agenda Item 5 and resumed their place at the meeting.

6. Planning

The Council considered the planning applications listed on the published agenda.

6.1 Application 26/2083/FUL - Gauntlet Bird of Prey Eagle and Vulture Park, Manchester Road, Knutsford

Proposal: Proposed demolition of existing structures and replacement with mixed use building ancillary to the existing business.

POR: The applicants attended the meeting and provided Members with an overview of the application, including clarification regarding the proposed use of the buildings and the nature and operation of the existing business.

Members discussed the application and acknowledged the contribution the business makes to the local area. The Council considered the facility to be a valuable local business which provides benefits to Tabley and the wider community.

RESOLVED: That Tabley Parish Council supports the application and raises no objection to the proposal.

6.2 Application 26/2764/PRIOR-6 - Land to the East of Moss Lane, Mere

Proposal: Prior approval for an agricultural general-purpose store.

Members considered the application and raised concerns regarding the positioning of the proposed building, associated hedgerow works and the justification for its location.

RESOLVED: That Tabley Parish Council submit observations to Cheshire East Council reflecting the concerns raised by Members, including the positioning of the proposed building, associated hedgerow works, justification for its location and potential drainage impacts.

6.3 Application 26/2765/PRIOR-6 - Land to the East of Moss Lane, Mere

Proposal: Agricultural determination for a new road.

Members considered the application and raised concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposed works, including:

- the removal and loss of existing hedgerow;
- potential disruption to wildlife and bird breeding;
- potential flooding and drainage impacts; and
- whether the existing lane is suitable to accommodate the proposed new access and gate.

It was also noted that works already undertaken in connection with the road had impacted upon the existing hedgerow and resulted in sections being removed.

RESOLVED: That Tabley Parish Council submit observations to Cheshire East Council reflecting the concerns raised by Members and requesting that the potential environmental, drainage, highways and hedgerow impacts of the proposal are appropriately considered.

Members also raised concerns that Tabley Parish Council may not have been receiving notification of all planning applications affecting the parish.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Cheshire East Council Planning Department to seek clarification and ensure that Tabley Parish Council is appropriately notified of applications affecting the parish.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of Tabley Parish Council will be held on Monday 7 September 2026 at 7.30pm. There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 20.45pm

Signed: _____

Chair of the Meeting

Date: _____