

# WTC Meeting Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Disclaimer: These observations are not the 'official' minutes of the meeting, they are supplied by Whittlesey Town Council, normally (1) month following this meeting and can be viewed on their website. Decisions and Voting at this meeting may be ratified and confirmed at the following months meeting.

AGENDA (Previously published on this Web-Blog)

A member of the public sent me this....

Haq Nawas promised to be brief — then (introduced each item) 6 mins & 41secs on item 3 and 6 mins 35 secs on item 4 (13mins & 16 Secs Total).

He even out-talked Cllr Dee, but still well behind CB. Overall, the "uphill" tally: CB **Gold** (26% of the 2-hour meeting), HN **Silver** (9%, in his first winter meeting), DL **Bronze** (7%); no one else exceeded 2%; absentees may not qualify in 4 years.

Cllr Dickenson total 5 word contribution.

Below (This report is from Cllr Barry Wainwright's Notes).....

**10** Members of the public in attendance.

Whittlesey Town Councillors in attendance, AM, (Alex Miscandlon), PB, (Peter Bibb), DD Dianna Dickinson (late due to traffic), AB, Alec Branton, BNW,(Barry Wainwright) CB, (Chris Boden) ED, (Eamonn Dorling) DL, (Dee Laws) HN, (Haq Nawaz), BW, (Bob Wicks) JM, (Jason Mockett

Apologies from Cll's RG, (Roy Gerstner) ) GSG, (Gurninder Singh Gill).

No apologies from SA (Saheed Arman).

**F224/2026.** To receive members' declarations of disclosable pecuniary, non-disclosable pecuniary or nonpecuniary interests in relation to any agenda items discussed later in the agenda and the Council to decide which items are to be discussed as confidential.

**DL:** Portfolio holder for planning at FDC

**F225/2026.** Street Scene Officer Report & CCTV update

Circulated via email.

No CCTV report.

**DL:** Annual unless otherwise requested.

**AM:** We will request a 3 month report

**F226/2026** Police Report and figures

Circulated via email. No questions. PCSO Dan in attendance

**F227/2026.** To confirm and sign the Minutes from the Meeting of the Council on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026.

OK.

**F228/2026.** Public Forum

To allow any member of the public to address the council. Time allowed 15 minutes in total to be split equally between the total amount wishing to speak.

**Mark Cross:** Photos give to CB, sent to CCC Highways. Sent recorded delivery. No response received.

**Stephen Hodson:** all know Manor to be redeveloped. Concerned that Local elections to take place half way through the job. Would this interfere with contracts?

Attended Eastrea Farmers Market. Very good. No venue found in Whittlesey.

**Suspend SO**

**CB:** legally any council can do what they want, but in practice there is a fixed timeline in papers before cabinet. All contractual arrangements will be in place. Unlikely to be broken by new council as too expensive.

**Resume SO**

**Alan Bessant:** Ask TC to make further intervention to the CCC Planning committee. PCC Highways object. EA assessing material stored incorrectly. Enforcement officer states storage not sustainable. EA study excludes IBA as contamination risk. Given proximity of 4/3 date, can council make substantive objection? Can hearing be delayed?

**Suspend SO**

**CB:** Update rec'd this afternoon. Most recent application documents shared with consultees. Did not contain substantially new info, sufficient time has been allowed for consideration. Officers report has been through legal review. Enough info to make a decision.

Decision taken with remarkable haste. Maybe because they are rejecting. Too late to influence report.

**Resume SO**

**F229/2026.** Agenda items for Discussion.

1. Drybread road issues- **ED**

The cycle lane lacks a demarcation line, failing to clearly separate cyclists from pedestrians on one side and motorised vehicles on the other. This oversight poses a significant safety risk for all users.

Despite the removal of soil and a grass verge, drainage has not improved. The gutter continually overflows onto the road, splashing children and their caregivers, even with modest rainfall. This unacceptable situation demands immediate corrective action to ensure the safety and comfort of all path users.

The single-track road between 203 Drybread Road via Decoy Lakes to the A605 is heavily used by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), posing significant risks. On January 23, I witnessed an articulated brick delivery vehicle with a trailer navigating this entirely unsuitable road to access the A605.

Each section west and south of Decoy Lakes stretches more than half a mile, and the limited passing places create a critical safety hazard. If two vehicles meet, one must reverse to a safe passing area, which is increasingly difficult given the road's fragility and proximity to the dykes.

With Allison Homes' ongoing development, which continues to bring in materials, it is imperative to **immediately prevent HGVs from using this road**. Failure to act could lead to dangerous situations and accidents. Please prioritise this issue.

I propose, in those areas referred to:

- Visible segregation of the cycle path.
- Improvements in the drainage system
- A ban on all heavy and wide vehicles

**DL:** Has every sympathy. Was never going to be easy. JM has been in conversation with site manager.

**BNW:** Query whether signage of the cycle lane was included in the plans approved by FDC? If so, lack of signage is a planning breach that can be enforced.

Has been involved in looking into this as was also concerned at HGV use of narrow roads. Imposing a weight limit would be very difficult as HGV access needed for farms, and would take a long time. Site manager very willing to forbid vehicles from using the single track roads, but that would double traffic through the estate and using Cemetery Road & Coronation Avenue. They have implemented a 'one way' system, where fully laden lorries come in through the estate and empty lorries leave through the single track roads. There is no good solution, but this seems the 'least bad' option.

**DL:** Thinks there was limited signage in the planning.

**HN:** Drybread Road situation was anticipated. Objections in the planning stages. Highways raised no objection. Since then many complaints. HN has also spoken with site manager. They are trying to do their best. System working against the residents and in favour of developments. New planning law changes will make the situation worse. HN visiting every other day to monitor. Highways have promised to fill in holes – done half. Wishes of town should prevail over developers.

**CB:** Let's not lose sight that ED has asked for action. Disagree with N that Highways are taking the part of developer – it's incompetence! A lesson to be learned as to how things should be set up with new UAs. But currently stuck with current system. Drainage is really poor. Not properly considered when implementing the cycle path. Appropriate for WTC to submit a request for improvement in drainage. Also need to push for improved gully cleaning. Drains are responsibility of CCC, verges of FDC. CB will examine and ask FDC to clean up.

No legal way to restrict access on the single track road in timely manner. Best resolution is to discuss with site operator. No good solution. Agree there should have been better control, but too late now. Possibility that police could help – maybe could argue western part of single track could have a weight limit. Happy to confer with ED and bring back to next meeting. Need a resolution to ask CCC to improve drainage.

**DL:** FDC are responsible for verges. Also site has responsibility for sweeping operation & wheel washes. Imperative that responses from TC highlight these concerns.

**ED:** thanks for support. Credit to Allison Homes for using a sweeper. Not all site vehicles – others directed that way by satnav.

**AM:** draft a letter on behalf of WTC, AM will sign & send in.

## 2. Double Yellow Lines - **DL**

Have several parking hot-spots. Education not working. Needs double-yellow lines. Asked all councillors for potential sites. Have spoken to people at CCC, cost approx. max £1,000 for advertising. Can't give accurate figure for painting. Ball park around £3-6k. Lines needed for enforcement. Proposal to explore this and move forward to design.

**CB:** Happy to second. No problem spending money to benefit the town.

**HN:** Thanks to DL for working on this. Enforcement is critical. But lines needed to allow for enforcement.

**Dan Met.:** can't be here all the time. Without the lines, nothing to enforce. Lines do discourage. Need to consider kerb dashes to prevent loading

Passed unanimously.

## 3. We urge CCC Highways to take immediate remedial action to alleviate residents' worries and avoid unnecessary costs- **HN**

**HN:** Roads are riddled with potholes, some really craters! Causes anxiety, distress and expense due to damaged tyres, wheels & cars. Risk of accidents. A lot of near misses and a real risk of collisions. 29+ emails to highways. Some on Drybread Road filled, others not. Some very unsatisfactory. Planned resurfacing by 5<sup>th</sup> May.

Highways & Transport committee to meet in March to decide on strategic investment for 26/27. Be good for WTC to send a letter too ask for improvements. Agree on the text circulated.

**AM:** Could HN revise it with

**BNW:** Has been in constant contact with CCC Highways through the winter. Counted last night and over 80 emails since Christmas alone. A message today from Highways admitted that M Group, the company that holds the contract from CCC for highway repairs, is totally overwhelmed. CCC have lent them two highways officers to help clear their backlog. Pothole at ARC Welding to be 'reviewed' on Tuesday.

**BW:** Already sent one formal complaint to directors. No response? Who are they accountable too.

**ED:** If we put a letter in, need to monitor the response. 5<sup>th</sup> May appears to be a date plucked out of the air.

**PB:** Couldn't agree more with the sentiment. But proposed letter needs to be rewritten – needs to be pithy & bullet pointed. Needs to be time-restricted, so it can be monitored.

**DD:** In Cambridge, even larger potholes.

**CB:** Winter is pothole season. Happens every year. This year not been too bad for weather, but why are roads so bad? CCC taken by surprise by winter. Some reported in December still not dealt with. CCC Chair “proud of highways success”. CCC now appear to be saying wait until May for resurfacing.

Audit Committee. Had Highways in front of them this week. Unable to explain how they can say directorate is working properly when roads are so bad and repairs are not being inspected. Asked to give a written response. CB has requested permission for a petition for 8 potholes – cannot be allowed to wait for action. Need to start making more noise. Before noise is made through a fatality.

**AM:** Worked with Cllr. Fisher on A605 East – four fatalities in a year. Highways officers astounded by condition of roads when shown round. Threats of corporate manslaughter removed from Social Media. Would like to see document reworded with more facts & figures.

**BW:** on formal complaint already sent – are they in breach of rules? Can County Councillors investigate.

#### 4. Sir Harry Smith Community College - **HN**

**HN:** (see document) OFSTED report – failed in all 5 categories. The future of Whittlesey?

Tried to raise & highlight the issue. Their responses in mitigation (in part) quite reasonable. RG comment that we used to have reports from headmaster at WTC meetings.

HN happy to pursue this if agreed.

**BW:** Mr Digby used to attend & brief council. Now dropped. WTC have asked previously for new briefings, but no response given. New CEO of Aspire learning and invite should now be extended to him to give presentation.

**ED:** Mr Digby was a regular attendee. On last visit, stated responsibility for performance does not fall to head, but to trustees & members. Need to be clear in who we invite.

**AM:** Recommend we send another letter to Inspire with open invitation.

**PB:** Jonathan Digby was outstanding. Should concentrate on what we can do to help and try to improve things. Would welcome a meeting, but not for chastisement, but for support.

**CB:** Need to manage expectations. Don't have legal power to intervene in improving performance. We do have a leadership role, more tempered approach may have better response.

**DL:** Digby had a lot to be proud of. Current situation is different, with high staff turnover. Appears to be drastic change in the behaviour & management of students.

**DD:** How do we improve things?

**HN:** Idea is not to bring about any punitive responses. We have no such power. More to do with liaising between the school & community.

**DL:** OFSTED reports like this is part of why they have so many supply teachers – school is not attractive to staff.

**AM:** Will write to invite to explore ways to work together.

**DL:** Would be nice ask them if they want to resurrect the student engagement.

**F230/2026.** To receive Councillor & outside body reports.

ADA (Association of Drainage Authorities.) Environment Day – attended by **AM & DL**. She will circulate a link

**F231/2026.** To report the minutes from the Finance & Policy Meeting on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

**CB:** Draft minutes circulated.

Would like to recommend we cease holding Parish Assembly meetings. WTC have organised one since formation. In recent years has been before AGM. Attendance is normally zero from public. No legal requirement to hold them. If one is legally called, by mayor, or by two councillors, or five electors, that we would make the room available.

**DL:** have found that people arrive at annual meeting and use public forum to voice any matters.

**PB:** Could we extend the public forum in AGM?

**CB/DL:** No longer call & arrange Parish meeting. Unanimous.

**CB:** British Energy has expressed an interest in providing a significant amount of pro bono work to improve energy efficiency. Have put forward Peel House, Eastrea Centre & St Andrews Hall

Two donation requests:

Whittlesey in Bloom – Asked for grant to water railing baskets. Not approved for recommendation – organisation has not accepted offers of help and reserves were sufficient.

**DL:** Has suggested they re-apply.

**CB:** They can do that, but will take another month.

**DL:** Grant application from FACT. CB & BW declare interest.

**DL/HN:** 1 abstained. 1 non-participant, otherwise passed.

**F232/2026** To report the financial documents.

To report the bank reconciliation to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025

To report the list of payments & uncashed payments.

To report the year-to-date figures

All circulated. Recommended for approval. CB/DL Unanimous

**F233/2026.** To report the minutes from the Planning Meeting on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026.  
OK

**F234/2026.** To report the minutes from Community Projects meeting on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026.  
All OK.

**F235/2026.** Consultations

Whittlesea Station Consultation extended to 1st March 2026 F236/2026. Information only.

Meeting with Stephen Rice ( Saxon Pit) - AM

Invitation from Stephen Rice to set up a committee room to hold a meeting which the WTC representatives (PB & AB) are invited. CB also present at CC rep. Chambers have been offered.

**DL:** Do we charge them?

**AM:** Yes.

**CB:** Welcome the meeting, but need to know what it is about.

**AM:** concerning the metal reprocessing in Saxon Pit

Helping Whittlesey Committee Meeting- ED

Helping Whittlesey committee meeting – document in pack

LGR consultation 4/2/2026 – 26/03.2026

**F237/2026** Invitations.

None

**F238/2026.** Date of next meeting – Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 6.30pm.

**F239/2026**– Exclusion of the press & public

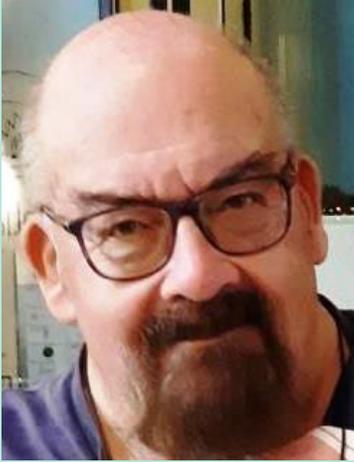
Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, it is resolved that, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of items to be discussed.

**F240/2026.** To discuss those items previously agreed at agenda item F224/2026.

1. Watering Tender/ Contract for 2026 Seasonal Hanging Baskets referred from Community Projects Committee.
2. Peel House Flats.

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Contact details are then shown for your Councillor in your area.



I am **Roy Gerstner** the **only** Councillor in Whittlesey who makes regular reports on Council, Public and Community Group meetings.  
I am aware that some Councillors post on Social Media.  
**I have done so for more than 15+ years both as a member of the public and as a Town and District Councillor.**

**I have made 9,900+ postings on this site.**  
**9.9 Million+ hits on this site.**

I have been elected as the **Independent** Fenland District Councillor for The South Ward of Whittlesey along with Gurninder Singh Gill (Conservative).

I have been elected as an **Independent** Whittlesey Town Councillor for the South Ward of Whittlesey South along with Cllr Diana Dickinson (Conservative)

Primarily I report on Council meetings & business (Both at FDC & WTC) to keep the electorate informed on both what I am actively involved with and in part other interests that I believe the electorate within Whittlesey & District may also wish to be informed.

My Web-Blog is community based and I report and comment on many events, meetings and subjects.

**I do occasionally make a mistake and more than happy to correct if it pointed out to me.**

If you have any issues or concerns outside of the Whittlesey South, you are welcome in the first instance to contact your own local Councillor.

If you contact me – I am more than happy to forward it to them. **e&oe** ©Roy Gerstner.

If you have a generic issue or wish to make a comment, I am more than happy to publish or promote any community events – (subject to meeting publishing criteria).

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FRG 2022



Whittlesey held an It's a Knockout Competition in 2019 and is looking forward hosting another event this summer. (Image: RWT Photography)

Coming later this year.



Cannabis Factory discovered Crease Bank Whittlesey this week.



Troy Batchelor, Whittlesey Businessman, jailed for 6 years – Drug Offences.