

**MINUTES OF WISTASTON PARISH COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD AT WISTASTON MEMORIAL HALL ON THURSDAY 17TH APRIL 2025 8.00 P.M.**

Present: Cllr. J. Moore (Chairman) D. Lucas, G. Roberts, D Millington and M Simon

In Attendance:

Sarah Turnbull (Clerk) 4 representatives of Wistaston Organisations

1 APOLOGIES

Cllrs B Squirrel, J Robinson, D Houston and P Baskerville (Park Ranger)

2 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20th April 2024, be approved, and signed by the Chairman as a true record

3 POLICE MATTERS

No Police attended the meeting.

4 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 129th Annual Parish Meeting. He reported that there are no changes to the Councillors this year and there is a new Clerk, Sarah Turnbull. The Chairman explained when asked by local people what the parish council does, that it is local within the community and whilst it does have lots of regulations it provides a service to the community including supporting voluntary groups, developing the area within the capital programme which includes the woods and playgrounds and contact can be made via the clerk if required. The local community groups are the backbone of the area and are run by volunteers, as is the council and we currently support Wistaston Sports & Leisure, the tennis club, Bowling, the Memorial Hall, Conservation Team, Litter Pickers, Community Count and the local Scout Group. Thanks were given to all the groups from the Chairman and all the Council.

The Chairman noted that Wistaston has one of the lowest precepts in the area but with the increase this year it has allowed the council to increase the grants to voluntary groups and continue to meet payments for the compulsory things they must do around the recreational areas including trees, insurance and salaries.

Congratulations from the Chairman to Kate Blakemore the CEO of a the local Wistaston based charity Motherwell Cheshire now called Her-Place Charitable Trust and this year's Wistonian of the Year.

The challenges ahead include a shortage of Councillors and reduction in PCSO's and Police presence in the area. A request that anti-social behaviour be reported to the police by members of the public as Wistaston is experiencing a higher level of crime in the area.

The projects in hand include providing the conservation group with a storage unit, replacement flowerbeds at Wells Green and in due course at Beech Drive. The Chairman ended his report with thanking all the volunteers, organisations, Councillors, Park Ranger, and the Clerk.

4 PRESENTATION OF ACCOUNTS

The Accounts for the year 2023/2024 were made available for inspection and no questions were raised.

5 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

- (i) **Borough Councillors** – Margaret Simon shared that she moved to Wistaston in 1974 and some of her roles include being a Councillor, School Governor at a High School and a College, Committee member of the bowling club, flower club, Willaston WI, Cheshire East Scrutiny Body, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service. Locally she assists residents with problems around potholes, street lighting, planning, parking, road markings, blocked gullies, street signs, bins and transferring home telephones to digital.

- (ii) **Memorial Hall & Rebuild** – The Chair, Diane Edge Robinson reported that the hall is now in the final period of moving to be a charitable trust. The highlights of the year have included the repair to the front wall of the carpark, Electric Testing completed for their 5-year check, lighting updated and repaired including LED's and grab rails in the toilets. They have had the General Elections, Donations from the councils at Wistaston and Rope PC and have been able to purchase a new PA system. The hall celebrated 75 years with displays from organisations that have used the hall and held a concert with the Crewe Concert Band. The CIO is now in the process of applying for grants and funding and a lot of work has been undertaken by the committees for this and working with the architect. The hall has had a good year with bookings and improved interest rates. The Chair ended the report with thanks for commitment of previous chairs and committee members over the last 75 years and their work the Memorial Hall.

- (iii) **Wistaston Scouts** – The Clerk read out part of a report from the Scout group which said that the Scout Group in Wistaston had returned to pre pandemic levels with excess of 100 young people and it is the largest group in the district. They continue to work towards badges including the Kings Scout Award and have held various camps for Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. The Scouts also thanked all their leaders including their wives, husbands, partners, girlfriends and boyfriends to their continued support. Thanks were noted to the Parish Council for their assistance given to the Scout Group in Wistaston.

- (iv) **Wistaston Conservation Group** – David O'Hara reported that they have had a further 8 new members join the working group that meet on Mondays. The memorial arboretum is still very popular with 60 trees planted which provides a wildlife corridor and the trees help to soak up the excess water plus a drain is to be fitted. The bird boxes are being used and new boxes for birds and bats are being made from the tree wood. There have been 70 different birds visit which is an increase on last year and a note of 10 butterfly species have been noted. The tree nursery has been moved to dryer ground and planting is in hand. The replacement flower beds have been assembled for Wells Green..

- (v) **Wistaston Jubilee Tennis Club** – Bill Heath reported that they have 2 hard courts, floodlights and toilers. They had investigated alternative arrangements with the school as part of the Memorial rebuild project but that was not possible. Remaining at the Memorial Hall with a maintenance programme including painting the courts and replacing the floodlights with LED lights at a cost of £10,000 to £12,000.
- (vi) **Wistaston Bowling Club** – Michael Simpson reported that the bowling green is in its 65th year and continue to attract new members that provides a social hub and a form of exercise. they have members ranging from age 24 – 94 with 4 sessions per week. They enter local leagues and have 9 teams. There is an Open Day planned for 7th June 2025. Grants received have been used towards the fabric and machinery of the club including a watering system which is saving water and money. All details about the club are included on their website including a safeguarding officer. They have experienced some problems with a power outage and some antisocial behaviour this year. They received a level 5 outstanding award for their green and flower beds from Britain in Bloom.

6 OPEN DISCUSSION

Cllr Millington presented a gift and card on behalf of the Council to the Chairman for his service to Wistaston Parish Council.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and for the presentation of gifts to celebrate 25 continuous years as Chairman of WPC and invited everyone for refreshments after the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.46 p.m.