

# WICKLEWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting** held in Wicklewood Village Hall on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2025

**Present:** Nick Kemp (NK) Vice Chair, Richard Goodings (RG), Danny Clarke (DC), Hilary Matthews (HM)

**In attendance:** Gemma Creasey (GC) Parish Clerk, Margaret Dewsbury (MD) County Councillor

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

The Vice Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies received from John Seville (JS) and Stephen Brown (SB)

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 8<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2024. DC proposed accepting Minutes as correct, HM seconded, all agreed.**

**3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

At the annual Parish Council meeting May 2024, the positions were elected as follows – John Seville - Chairman, Nick Kemp - Vice Chairman and Playing Field & Play Area Inspector, Hilary Matthews - Internal Financial Control Officer and Stephen Brown - Speed Awareness Monitor. The Allotments Inspector Role was deferred until the June meeting where Danny Clarke was elected to the role.

I would like to thank our Parish Clerk Gemma Creasey on behalf of myself and my fellow councillors for her excellent work during the last year and her smooth transition into a role which is new to her.

I would like to thank our Booking Clerk Sophie Scott on behalf of myself and my fellow councillors for her work during the last year.

The Council has continued through the year to maintain the Village Hall to a high standard.

The installation of an Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) to replace the existing oil central heating boiler took place as planned during May 2024. The Parish Council have received several compliments from hall users that the hall is much warmer when they enter the hall and no longer have to wait for the hall to warm up. This is due to the ASHP maintaining a low level of heat dependant on the outside ambient temperature.

Dream Team Cleaning continues to provide cleaning services at the Village Hall and the licensee of the Buck Public House at Morley continues to provide a licenced bar at the Village Hall when required.

The letting income from the Village Hall is the major income stream for the Council.

At the annual review of the hall hire rates in March 2024 a small inflationary increase was approved from April 2024. Despite the increases in hire rates, they continue to be some of the most reasonable in the area.

The Playing Field and the children's play area continues to be enjoyed by parishioners of all ages.

The bid to the National Lottery Awards for All Scheme for new play equipment did not make much progress in 2024 as the council had a change of clerk: our previous clerk had been the driving force behind the scheme. In some ways, this has been fortuitous as a new regime at Wicklewood Primary School is now keen to be involved. A meeting between the Parish Council's subcommittee, school staff, and parents is currently being arranged for early April.

The allotments continue to be enjoyed by parishioners, with all plots let.

The two Council owned agricultural fields continue to be let for commercial use under a farm business agreement.

The Council once again undertook the verge cutting in the parish, together with the areas of grass which are maintained within the village, with the County Council paying the Parish Council for taking responsibility for these activities.

The Speed Awareness Monitor (SAM 2) (flashing speed sign) continues to be moved around the pre-approved locations by Councillor Stephen Brown to record speeds and flash when vehicles are over 30mph. The readings generated are recorded on the village website. I would like to thank Stephen for moving the sign around and generating the reports.

A Community Speed Watch consisting of a group of parish volunteers continue to carry out speed watches at the police approved locations. On behalf of the parish, I would like to thank the Community Speed Watch volunteer for their work.

The Village Sign was found to be coming apart and was in urgent need of repairs. The mechanical repairs were carried out by a local resident Mr Coldham at no cost. It was also agreed to take this opportunity to repaint the artwork, which had also deteriorated, and this was carried out by a local signage company Mike Amiss Signs.

I will let the Clerk go through the financial details of the year, but I am pleased to say through careful management the Parish Council finances are in good order. However, due to the new central government's changes to National Insurance (NI) in the autumn budget impacting on our contractor's employment costs thus increasing their charges to us together with the Parish Council now having to pay NI for council employees the council reluctantly had to

increase the parish precept for 2025/26 by £1,000. This is the first time the council has had to increase the parish precept for many years. If it was not for a loan from the Public Works Loan Board, taken out to install disabled toilets in 2005 ending this year, the increase would have been higher.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for all their hard work during the year, particularly those who have special responsibilities. Nick Kemp and Danny Clarke for carrying out their regular safety inspections, Hillary Matthews for Internal Finance Control Officer and Stephen Brown for the SAM2 speed sign.

I would also like to thank John Hipperson and Richard Goodings who have actively contributed to discussions and the working of the council during the year.

**4. OBSERVATIONS ON PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2025:**

GC went through the figures, see report accompanying these minutes. End of year balance £38,728.03

**5. REPORTS FROM:**

**5.1 County Councillor** – MD had provided a written report, attached and circulated

**5.2 District Councillor** – RE will provide a written report which will be circulated.

**5.3 Wicklewood Support Fund (Poors Charity)** – Michael Gamble reported the charity's income for the year was £219.87. Xmas grants totalling £150 had been given to 3 applicants. This was the first year that the charity has not distributed all the income due to a lack of applicants. If anyone knows of any pensioners or families with school age children in need please get in contact with a trustee. Balance in COIF account is £8076.73.

**5.4 Old Village Hall Trust:** Peter Woodrow reported that current trustees are Richard Goodings (chairman nominated until Sept 28) John Lowe (nominated until July 26.) Co-operative Trustees are Rev James Lynch (until June 26) and Carole Sidwell (until December 27.) Ex Officio Trustee Rev Shirley Holt (representing Priest in charge of High Oak Benefice.) During the year grants of £275.00 were made. The balance carried forward at 1.4.25 is £11.22. Five Community Groups benefited: Wicklewood Brownies and Guides, The Village Sign Garden Group, Village Christmas Santa Event and High Oak Music Group.

**5.5 Wicklewood Primary School:** The Head of School was due to attend however he had informed GC before the meeting that his car had broken down so was unable to make it.