

## **GREAT WYRLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF GREAT WYRLEY PARISH COUNCIL held at Great Wyrley Community Centre, Landywood Lane, Great Wyrley which commenced at 7.00 p.m. on Wednesday 5<sup>TH</sup> February, 2025.**

**Present:**

**(Chairman)  
Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE**

Cllr. Mrs. O. Brazier Cllr. R. Fairclough Cllr. A. Kelsey Cllr. M. Jackson	Cllr. J. C. Jones Cllr. A. Newell Cllr. R. J. Perry
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Also in attendance were Parish Clerk (Mrs. S. McGlue) and Parish Administrator (Ms. D. May).

**101/2025 APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Cllr. Mrs. C. Whiston-Taylor, Cllr. Mrs. S. M. Wood and Cllr. D. Norris (Snr.). Cllr. R. J. Perry was to join the meeting later in the proceedings.

**102/2025 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr. M. Jackson declared an interest in any matters pertaining to Planning Applications in his capacity as a member of the Planning Committee of South Staffordshire Council. This was noted.

**103/2025 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to accept, approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2025. It was carried.

**104/2025 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that she did not have a great deal to report in terms of announcements other than to advise all present that the Parish Council had now been awarded grant funding under the Climate Change Fund towards the replacement of the lighting system in the foyer of the Community Centre with LED Lighting. This was noted.

**105/2025 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders in order to allow the members of the public in the gallery to address the meeting.

**SHAWS LANE ACTION GROUP**

A member of the public requested Cllr. Mrs. Perry to give the Shaws Lane Action Group an update on the situation relating to the imposition of a Weight Limit in Shaws Lane.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry advised the meeting that she did not have anything further to report on this matter at the present time, however, as everyone was already aware

the issue had been included in the programme. The member of the Action Group who was addressing the meeting advised all that there had been a number of issues again this week which had led to drivers needing to knock on doors of houses in Shaws Lane requesting people to move their vehicles in order to get through. This was noted.

Cllr. Mrs. Perry was asked to give some clarification as to the proposals being put forward to change the cycle of refuse collection. Cllr. Mrs. Perry explained that the contract was presently in the process of being reviewed and advised the meeting that, at the present time, there had been no discussion regarding monthly collections. There had, however, been discussion at South Staffordshire Council that it will deal with food waste in a different manner which will involve food waste caddies kept in the home and then collected on a weekly basis. This was noted.

The Chairman was also asked whether devolution would affect the existence of Parish Councils. The Chairman advised the meeting that the aim of devolution was to do away with County and District Councils and the creation of strategic authorities which would include the election of a Mayor. Mayors would then be the people responsible for directing where monies needed to be spent. However, the entire process was dependent upon what was being referred to as a numbers game and each authority needed to cover a specific amount of population to trigger this process. At the present time the District Council was still awaiting further information from the Government. Cllr. Mrs. Perry advised the meeting that she would share this information with everyone as soon as it became available. This was noted.

In conclusion, Cllr. Mrs. Perry explained that Parish Councils were not a part of this process as they were autonomous and that, unlike many other areas South Staffordshire was fortunate in this respect as it had 27 parishes. In Cllr. Mrs. Perry's personal view the changes would involve Parish Councillors having more responsibility than volunteer Councillors had had before and that the role would indeed become more intense. Cllr. Mrs. Perry reiterated that this was her personal opinion and not something which she had hard evidence to refer to. This was noted.

The Chairman then invited any other questions from the Public Gallery and on receiving no further comments reinstated Standing Orders and continued with the business to be transacted by the Parish Council.

#### **106/2025 CLERK'S REPORTS TO COUNCIL**

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE took this opportunity to give a vote of thanks to Ms. D. May. The Parish Administrator had put in a tremendous amount of work into the following agenda item. Cllr. Mrs. Perry's view was not only supported by the thanks of all Parish Councillors but also brought forward a spontaneous round of applause which the Clerk endorsed as very well deserved praise. Ms May thanked everyone for their kind words.

#### **107/2025 CLERKS' BUDGET REPORT TO PARISH COUNCIL**

##### **(a) Projected Income and Expenditure for the forthcoming Financial Year**

The Clerk had circulated a copy of the summary of the budget for the Parish Council which gave details of all income and expenditure to all Members of the Parish Council. It was noted that these figures were not the final year-end figures as it was a working document up to 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2025.

This summary gave comparisons between the figures for the previous year and the figures for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2024 to 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2025. Even though the

current figures did not represent a complete year, they gave Members a fairly accurate idea of the Parish Council's income and expenditure over the year. Please see **APPENDIX 1** for details.

Unfortunately, due to the timescales applied by South Staffordshire Council for the submission of Annual Parish Precept requests, it was impossible to have the entire year's figures to work from.

Members were advised that, for ease of reference any increase applied on normal running costs could take the form of a percentage increase across the board, rather than individual itemisation. This was, of course, entirely up to individual Members, should there be any specific category which Members felt warranted discussion then this would, of course, take place.

For clarification purposes, Members were asked to note that the Budget Summary was split into several categories, referred to as Cost Centres. These Cost Centres were set at the Inaugural Meeting of the Annual Audit and Governance Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2022 and ratified by Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2022. The Cost Centre headings remained as follows along with the sub-headings shown below to which a specific spend was allocated.

- **Administration** – this Cost Centre covered salaries for all departments and general administration functions of the Parish Council.
- **Amenities** – this Cost Centre covered grounds maintenance, play areas, bus shelters, trees etc.
- **Cemetery** – this Cost Centre covered burials, memorials, transfer of deeds, etc.
- **Community Centre** – this Cost Centre covers costs pertaining to the Community Centre.
- **Parish Activities** – this Cost Centre covered costs pertaining to events or facilities such as the Parish Assembly, the Christmas Market, the Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch, Christmas Lights etc.

It now fell to the Parish Council to review the figures shown on the detailed budget summary and set its budget for the forthcoming financial year.

Members noted that the financial year 2023/24 showed a significant deficit within the Community Centre operation. However, with the changes implemented last year the current financial picture showed that the Community Centre was now in a much healthier position.

However, albeit that the picture was looking healthier it needed to be recognised that there would be a significant increase in the National Living Wage in April, 2025 coupled with the increase in the Employers' National Insurance liability. This may well mean that Community Centre Hire Charges would need to be increased in order to make hiring out the premises over evening times and weekends remotely viable.

For information the Clerk explained that the National Living wage which currently stood at £11.44 per hour for an employee over the age of 21 was due to increase in April to £12.21 per hour. This was noted.

Members noted that the next item on the agenda would provide an opportunity to review all hiring fees, and appreciated that the information provided above should

be taken into account when a decision on any increase was being made.

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to increase its budget for the above by 3%. It was carried.

### **(b) Review of Fees and Charges – Community Centre**

Members were aware that the Parish Council had in the past levied a small increase in its fees and charges each year; normally, in order to keep in line with inflation, however, Members did not feel that when the rate of inflation was running at 10.5% that this figure could continue to be used as its guideline in 2024. However, the rate of inflation was presently running at 2.3% which was far lower than forecast and the subject required full discussion.

In order to reach a decision, the Parish Council took into account the four questions which had been posed to them which were as follows:-

**(i)** Regular night time hire from Monday to Thursday had been set at £30 per session for the last two years. The Council agreed to keep this at £30 per session for a further 12 months with the aim of an increase to £35.00 per session in the financial year 2026/27 which would reflect an increase total of 16% divided by three years of non increase which equates to average of 5% per year. The Parish Council **resolved** to take this decision on the basis that that it would greatly assist with the fact that cash was not easily available to offer change on a regular basis and that the groups could be advised of this increase in advance which would also assist with their budgets.

### **(ii) Increase to implement for standard hire charge**

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to increase the standard hire charge for use of the Community Centre by 5%. It was carried.

### **(iii) NHS Blood and Transplant Team Hire**

The Parish Council was advised that the NHS Blood Transfusion Service hired the entire Community Centre on approximately 3 to 4 times per year. The hire covered the hours of 11.30a.m. to 8.30p.m. and the charge levied was £100 per session. There had been no increase in the hire of the Community for this service for in excess of 21 years. Members were requested to make their views known on whether this set figure should continue or that a more realistic figure be set going forward. The Parish Council **resolved** to increase the charge for the coming financial year to £150.00 with a further increase to £200 to be applied for the financial year 2027/28. It was carried.

### **(iv) Grass Cutting Charges**

As all Members were aware the Parish Council offer a grass cutting service to the local Churches each of which had approximately 15 cuts per season. This service was presently charged out at £17.00 per cut. Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to increase this tariff by 3%. It was carried.

### **(c) Review of Fees and Charges – Great Wyrley Cemetery**

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to apply a 10% increase in the standard Cemetery fees rounded up to the nearest 50p. It was carried.

The following agenda item had formed part of the Audit and Governance Committee which had taken place immediately prior to the meeting and the following information reflected the proposals put forward by the Audit and Governance Committee. This was noted by Members.

**(d) Earmarked Items for consideration for Financial Year 2025/26**

As Members were aware, each year the Parish Council earmarked funds to cover projects which it wished to pursue in the future.

As Members observed there were a number of projects which had been on this list for some time, however, the majority of these projects were now coming to fruition and expected to be completed shortly. There was an explanation of the current position for each project laid out in the following table:-

<b>ONGOING PROJECTS</b>		
<b>Memorial Wall at Great Wyrley Cemetery</b>	<p>This project had now been completed and the Parish Council was presently looking at how the system would operate and setting the charges for the individual memorials. The Clerk submitted a report to the Parish Council in this regard in November of last year and the Cemetery Working Party will be meeting with a local stonemason in due course.</p> <p>The Parish Council agreed to earmark the sum of £2,500 to fund the remainder of the works required.</p>	<b>£2,500.00</b>
<b>Olympic Torch Commemoration</b>	<p>This project had constantly fallen foul of every plan put in place. Accordingly, the project had the benefit of a District Council Officer adviser lead who had contacted two alternative local suppliers and Members agreed to retain the earmark sum for the coming financial year.</p>	<b>£2,000.00</b>
<b>Roof to the Community Centre</b>	<p>The roof to the Community Centre was still not presenting a problem at the present time, however, Members may still felt it would be prudent to retain the £4000 already earmarked. As there will still be a cost element to meet when the existing roof finally fails. It was now well over its guarantee period. Members also agreed to look into the possibility of Solar panels for the roof.</p>	<b>£4,000.00</b>
<b>Wyrley Brook Project</b>	<p>Members were aware that £5,000 of this budget item was originally included in earmarked funds to go towards the funding of a joint contract with DEFRA, Severn Trent and Staffordshire County Council.</p> <p>Written confirmation was still required as to whether this funding was going to be required as the project had now become one of far larger scale and was expected to be financed by DEFRA. In the event that the funding was no longer required the Parish</p>	<b>£10,000.00</b>

	<p>Council <b>resolved</b> that it should be put towards the Great Wyrley Brook Project and expended on a much more localised function.</p> <p>With regard to the situation outlined above it would now appear that the business plan approved by DEFRA to carry out the changes to Wyrley Brook has been put back for another twelve months on the basis that a good deal of the funding has now been diverted to deal with the issue of the illegal disposal of waste into the sea and other associated water courses.</p> <p>On the basis that a considerable amount of remedial work has now been carried out to Wyrley Brook, the Parish Council <b>resolved</b> at the December meeting of the Parish Council that it was to reform its Wyrley Brook Working Party and put the earmarked funds towards a localised enhancement project. Do Members wish to allocate the entire £7000 to this purpose or add to it. The Parish Council <b>resolved</b> to add an additional £3000 to the reserves for this project.</p>	
<b>Replacement Boiler to the Community Centre</b>	<p>When the earmarked funds were allocated in January 2024 the Parish Council <b>resolved</b> to decrease the allocation of £12,900 to £7,500. The Community Centre Boiler is still functioning perfectly well and Members may wish to consider decreasing the earmarked funds further to reflect the current situation whilst still recognising that replacement may still be required as the boiler is now over ten years old.</p>	<b>£7,500.00</b>
<b>Unforeseen Expenses</b>	<p>Of the £10,000 earmarked for unforeseen expenses last year £7,239.55 still remains. The spend of £1,614.45 funded the much needed refurbishment and repairs to the Chairman's Chain of Office. Bearing in mind that unforeseen means exactly that and there are no guarantees that this sum may not be called upon I would suggest that this figure remains available and used as and when required for the foreseeable future.</p>	<b>£7,239.55</b>
<b>Emergency Tree Works</b>	<p>As the Parish Council has been made aware that all the trees in its ownership are only subject to an inspection every three years to ensure stability and the safety of the public the Parish Council may feel that based on the expenditure incurred for this purpose during the last three years that an amount of £7,000 should remain in earmarked funds.</p> <p>This budget has not been utilised in this financial year, so the balance stands at £5,750.00. As £1,250.00 was required from this budget in February, 2024. It still needs to be recognised that changes in weather</p>	<b>£5,750.00</b>

	<p>conditions along with the fact that many of the trees in its ownership are aging all the time that emergency tree works will always be an issue and the Parish Council always needs to be prepared for such expenditure. On this basis are Members happy to recommend that £5,750 remain available in the budget?</p>	
<b>Commemoration of the Reign of King Charles III</b>	<p>The Parish Council presently has £2000 in earmarked funds to call upon should there be a wish to commemorate the King's Coronation. The Parish Council <b>resolved</b> to retain this amount in the earmarked funds for this purpose. This project now also has the benefit of District Council intervention and hopefully will come to fruition this financial year.</p>	<b>£2000.00</b>
<b>Memorial Gardens Maintenance</b>	<p>Following the dissolution of the FROGS Voluntary Organisation the Parish Council now has a sum of £3,605.76 to be ring fenced for maintenance works at Great Wyrley Memorial Garden. The Parish Council <b>resolved</b> last year to retain this amount in its earmarked fund for works associated with the Memorial Garden. Do Members wish to continue.</p>	<b>£3,605.76</b>
<b>Donations received from Covid vaccination patients</b>	<p>This amount represents the portion of the donations which were made by people visiting the Community Centre to have their Covid vaccinations which was split between a number of charities. The £800 was still included in the earmarked figures as it was felt that this funding could be used to fund a memorial to all the people of the village who gave their time to volunteer at the Covid Vaccination Clinic and built in to the plans for the new play area.</p>	<b>£800.00</b>
<b>Replacement Partition Doors</b>	<p>The Parish Council had already been advised that there may be a need to replace the dividing doors between The Main Hall and the Lounge area. Repairs to the doors had been carried out in house, however, the Parish Council did not feel that this should be viewed as a complete solution. A far safer divider could be utilised in this area and the amount of funds required will depend upon the type of dividing doors the Parish Council would like to see as a replacement.</p>	<b>£10,000.00</b>
<b>Replacement Chairs for Main Hall</b>	<p>The chairs which were presently being used for large events which took place in The Main Hall were now becoming desperate for replacement. Although they had survived the flood in the main, many of them were upholstered and were now both subject to rusting and various other defects.</p> <p>Precise costings would vary, however, it would seem that plastic/metal chairs rather than upholstered seats and back supports</p>	<b>£5,000.00</b>

	would be the optimum choice. Following discussion the Parish Council <b>resolved</b> to earmark an amount of £5,000 for this purpose.	
<b>Contingency Fund for Protection of Local Items of Special Interest</b>	<p>Members recalled that at the end of last year Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE suggested (in her capacity as a South Staffordshire District Councillor) that the Parish Council may wish to follow the District Council's lead and create a small contingency fund to be put in place to assist with the protection of important items within the Parish, in terms of heritage. The following items have been put forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Swan Public House</li> <li>• The Pump in Wharwell Lane</li> <li>• The Star Public House</li> <li>• The Institute on the corner of Norton Lane</li> <li>• St. Mark's Church</li> <li>• St. Andrew's Church</li> <li>• Streets Lane Chapel</li> <li>• The Old Vicarage behind St. Marks</li> <li>• The Old School</li> </ul> <p>It should also be noted that any items which were placed on this list would also be afforded some form of protection in terms of the Planning System.</p> <p>The Parish Council <b>resolved</b> to include the amount of £2,000.00 as its earmarked funding for this purpose which I would recommend remains available.</p>	<b>£2,000.00</b>
<b>BUS SHELTER STREETS LANE</b>	<p>The Parish Council had been asked to consider the installation of a bus shelter in Streets lane. The amount of funding needed for this provision would be in the region of £3000.00 dependent upon the model required.</p> <p>The Parish Council <b>resolved</b> to earmark the sum of £3000 for this purpose. The bus shelter was about to be installed.</p>	<b>£3000.00</b>
<b>ELECTIONS</b>	The Parish Council had £3299.91 remaining in the budget for election expenses. The Parish Council agreed that this amount remain in earmarked funds to cover any upcoming elections.	<b>£3299.91</b>
<b>COMMEMORATION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II</b>	The Parish Council presently had £1,600.00 in earmarked funds to call upon should there be a wish to commemorate the reign of Queen Elizabeth II. The Parish Council <b>resolved</b> to retain this amount in the earmarked funds for this purpose. This	<b>£1,600.00</b>

	project now also had the benefit of District intervention and hopefully would come to fruition the coming financial year.	
For Members information the Clerk had also set out earmarked funds for annual donations and expected expenditure other than normal running costs which had remained almost the same.		
<b>Great Wyrley Carnival Committee</b>	Donation towards Great Wyrley Carnival Event.	<b>£400.00</b>
<b>Senior Citizens Welfare Committee</b>	Annual donation towards the running of the Senior Citizens Welfare organisation. Due to the recent changes in the arrangements for the New year's Day Walk I propose that this budget be increased by £100 which represents the funding given to the previous hosts.	<b>£1200.00</b>

### **REPLACEMENT OF PLAY AREA AT LANDYWOOD LANE**

Members took this opportunity to address the ever increasing requests for the Parish to revisit the provision of a new play area on Landywood Lane Playing Field. The Parish Council **resolved** that this project be relaunched. It was carried. Cllr. Mrs. Perry advised the meeting that s106 Agreement monies in the sum of almost £30,000 may be available for use as the foundation to this project. It was carried.

### **PROVISION OF PALISADE OR OTHER SUITABLE BOUNDARY TREATMENT FOR GREAT WYRLEY CEMETERY**

Members recalled that the provision of a new boundary treatment for the Cemetery had also been put forward for consideration at Great Wyrley Cemetery and the Parish Council **resolved** to place £5,000 in earmarked funds to go towards this project.

### **REQUIREMENT FOR NEW MACHINERY – AMENITIES**

#### **(i) REQUEST FOR NEW WALK BEHIND PEDESTRIAN FLAIL MOTOR MOWER**

The Parish Council Groundsmen had advised the Parish Council that one essential item of their equipment had recently been diagnosed as obsolete in terms of replacement components. A part had been on order for several months but there had for some reason been a delay in obtaining the part from Germany. As the machine the Groundsmen presently use was well over 25 years old, it was not unsurprising that it was now obsolete. However, it was an essential piece of equipment to be able to access the green areas between the grave plots effectively. This was noted by Members.

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** that on the basis that it was very likely that it would be impossible to repair the mower should any other parts become defective then it would be better to deal with this matter now rather than delay the inevitable. The replacement of the mower was likely to cost in the region of £8,000.00. Its purchase was authorised.

#### **(ii) REQUEST TO PURCHASE A ELIET MINOR 4S SHREDDER**

Members were made aware that the Parish Council Grounds men spent a great deal of their time clearing detritus and general brash which had fallen from the trees in the Cemetery, The Memorial Gardens, The Star Land and all the play areas.

In the past any brash arising from these works had eventually been disposed by incineration, however, this practice was not carried out very often as it usually resulted in complaints and even more importantly wasn't good practice in terms of Climate Change.

Furthermore, the Parish Council Grounds men had advised me that when tree works were carried out by an independent contractor, a large proportion of the cost incurred related to chipping and disposal of the arisings. On this basis they had suggested that should the Parish Council be in agreement it may well be, not only cost effective, but also quite a leap forward in terms of trying to reduce the Parish contribution to the hole in the O Zone layer by reducing the need to incinerate if they were to be provided with a wood chipper of their own. Should this be agreed to, the chippings could also be usefully employed in all the other green areas and particularly as an ecological contribution to the backfilling of grave spaces. The outlay would amount to £2601 which included VAT. This was noted.

The Parish Council **resolved** to purchase the item of plant as described. It was carried.

## **REQUIREMENT FOR NEW COMPUTERS – ADMINISTRATION**

The Parish Council had now been advised that Microsoft was officially ending support for Windows 10 on October 14, 2025. After that date, Windows 10 PCs would stop receiving security updates and [Office 365 apps will eventually stop working](#).

Following discussion the Parish Council **resolved** to authorise the purchase of new computer equipment for use by the Clerk and the Parish Administrator. It was carried.

### **(e) Precept Requirement for Financial Year 2025/26**

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This report set out a number of factors which Members felt should be taken into account whilst setting the Parish Council's budget for 2025/2026. As ever the Clerk took this opportunity to remind all Members that each and every Councillor had an individual responsibility for the financial soundness of the Parish Council not just as a body. This was noted by Members.

#### **2.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To ensure that all Members of the Parish Council were fully aware of the financial position of Great Wyrley Parish Council and were also abreast of any changes which may come to fruition in the future. It needed to be recognised that any changes cascading down to the Parish Council i.e. Parish Council elections or other unforeseen events which were out of its direct control would still have the potential to result in a significant increase in both expenditure and responsibility.

#### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Great Wyrley's tax base for 2025/2026 had increased from **3373.70 to 3428.00** this represents a percentage increase of 1.469% which was minimal in real terms but nevertheless still affected the precept income of the Parish Council. The increase was due to the fact that there had been an element of new housing development within the Parish during the last year and accordingly the Parish had new eligible Council Tax payers.

#### **4.0 PRINCIPAL COUNCILS LEVY**

##### **STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

At the present time there was no published indication of Staffordshire County Council budget proposals for 2025/26.

##### **DISTRICT COUNCIL LEVY - SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

South Staffordshire Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy included an assumption that Council Tax would again increase by £5 for a Band D equivalent property. This was the maximum allowable increase in Council Tax without triggering a referendum by principal authorities. This decision was yet to be ratified.

#### **5.0 GREAT WYRLEY PARISH COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL POSITION**

At the present time the financial position of Great Wyrley Parish Council could be considered as reasonably robust.

The Parish Council's finances were now relatively stable and the current balance at bank as at 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 2025 was £218,195.93 which was £35,579.25p more than on the same date in 2024. These figures reflected the balances at Quarter Three in each year.

For clarification purposes the figure referred to above included the £10,000 presently held in the Capital Account but did not include the reimbursement of VAT which would be payable shortly (which as at 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 2025 stood at £7,006.77).

Members needed to be aware that there were now five main components of expenditure from Parish Council funds which were The Community Centre, The Cemetery, Amenities Administration and Parish Council activities. These were the figures which the Parish Administrator had provided Members with under the title Detailed Budget Summary.

The Parish Council also needed to take into account that there was no longer an embargo on Local Government salary increases and Parish Council Staff should have a salary review on an annual basis. This should be carried out for all staff to keep in line with recognised guidelines. In addition the Parish Council would also need to address the issue mentioned earlier of the fact that the significant increases in the National Living Wage had in turn significantly eroded the value of the salaries being paid to members of the Parish Council's staff who were not on the National Living wage. By way of example there was now almost no difference between the salary paid to the Head Groundsman and the part time litter picker. The Parish Council also needed to be aware that from 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2025 there would be an increase in Employer's National Insurance Liability.

Albeit, there were still a number of issues to be resolved, the Parish Council's financial situation was relatively healthy. However, whereas in the past, it would have probably provided a stable platform upon which the Parish Council could exercise its option to either not change its precept requirement or levy a small percentage increase; this was not a course of action being recommended by principal authorities for the forthcoming financial year. This situation may be due to the upcoming Reorganisation of Local Government.

Parish Councils were presently being openly encouraged to raise their precept requirements for this year on the basis of a number of factors. One of those factors

relates to the suggestion that if Parish Councils had the necessary funds to put toward larger highway improvement projects it would have a far better chance of those projects coming to fruition with match funding from Staffordshire County Council. Another of those factors was that the utility market was still exceptionally unstable.

The Parish Council took these factors into account when it **resolved** to increase its precept by 5%. It was carried.

#### **108/2025 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Councillor Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that she did not have a great deal to report on this occasion other than those items she had reported on earlier in the meeting i.e. Shaws Lane Weight Restriction.

#### **109/2025 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that she did not have a great deal to report under this agenda item as she had already covered the proposals for the review of the Waste Contract earlier in the meeting. This was noted.

However, Cllr. Mrs. Perry did encourage as many Members as possible to join the Localities meeting to be held shortly as there were a number of interesting topics to be discussed. This was noted by Members.

#### **110/2025 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCILLORS**

##### **VE DAY – 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that she had been approached by a number of members of the public requesting the Parish Council to host an event commemorating the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day. All Members agreed that this was an event they would certainly wish to support and the Clerk advised Members that the Parish Council had already been registered with the Palace as being part of the Beacon Lighting Ceremony. This was noted by Members.

##### **CHAPS PRESENTATION**

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry MBE advised the meeting that the CHAPS presentation had been very well attended and Cllr. A. Kelsey kindly agreed have a Collection Tin for the project at Harrisons Club. This was noted.

##### **WYRLEY COURT OFFICIAL OPENING**

Cllr. Mrs. K. M. Perry advised the meeting that she had been in attendance at the official opening of Wyrley Court which took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> January. It had been a very enjoyable event and that she had actually been asked to officially open the event during which she had been given an opportunity to give a small talk on the history of the site which appeared to have been very much enjoyed by locals and newcomers alike. This was noted.

#### **111/2025 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

There were no reports from outside bodies on this occasion.

#### **112/2025 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

