

WORLESTON & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held at WORLESTON VILLAGE HALL 7.10pm 7th May 2026

present: Andy Hudson (Chair), Fred Percival, Tommy Adams, Malcolm Holman, Gary Basford, Gary Vernon, Joe Foster, Fred Percival, John Thomasson, Jon Reade, Peter Jones, Clerk – Helen Exley

1.Introduction & Welcome:-

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the Annual Meeting.

2.Annual Report of the Parish Council by the Vice Chairman (on behalf of Chair), Worleston & District Parish Council.

Road Safety, Traffic and Highways

Roads and road safety have remained the main concern for residents. The Council has repeatedly raised issues around potholes, blocked drains, flooding, road surface deterioration and the condition of Main Road. Specific concerns included the pothole outside the Royal Oak, flooding near The Crescent and Reaseheath, blocked gullies, and the impact of HGV traffic through the village, particularly at night. The Council has continued to press for action from Cheshire East Highways and has encouraged councillors and residents to report defects directly so they are logged and acknowledged. Speeding on Main Road has also been a recurring issue, with requests for police speed checks, discussion of a possible 20mph limit through the village, and ongoing requests for a formal speed-limit review.

Kingsbourne Road and Local Road Closures

The delayed opening of the Kingsbourne / Kingsley Fields Road link has been discussed throughout the year, with the Council seeking updates on likely opening dates and associated safety measures. The Council also raised concerns about Main Road closures, particularly where previous closures had a serious impact on local businesses including the shop and pub. The Council supported further engagement with Cheshire East Highways to reduce disruption and seek clarity over access arrangements.

Planning and Development

Planning has continued to form a major part of Council business. The Council reviewed a wide range of applications, including domestic extensions, agricultural buildings and Reaseheath College developments.

Flooding, Drainage and Environmental Issues

Flooding and drainage have been regular concerns, particularly blocked drains and gullies on Main Road, flooding at The Crescent, and flooding around Reaseheath and Whitegate. The Council has continued to press Cheshire East Council for jetting and remedial works before winter periods. Environmental matters also featured through consultations on heritage and nature recovery strategy, and in planning objections where hedgerows, open countryside and biodiversity were considered important.

Street Lighting, Signage and Community Infrastructure

The Council has explored whether additional street lighting could improve safety at the chicane / north end of Main Road. Costings were sought for three new streetlights, but the estimated cost was high, so councillors agreed to investigate whether an existing electricity supply could be used. Reflector signs and other signage on Main Road were also raised with Highways, and some reflectors at the chicane were replaced.

Playground and Parish Maintenance

The playground has remained under review, with discussion of inspections, insurance requirements and remedial work. The site has been kept tidy, and the Council considered the timing and cost of ROSPA inspection work. Parish Compact matters were generally limited, although the Compact Grant continued to support the Lengthsman work, and local signage at Station Road was refurbished by a resident.

Community, Representation and Council Operations

The Council co-opted members throughout the year to meet vacancies. Updates came from Borough Councillor Becky Posnett on Cheshire East Council matters, devolution, budgets, waste collection, policing, planning pressure and local service issues.

3.Statement on the Parish Council accounts for Year ending 31 March 2026 by the Clerk to the Parish Council.

The Precept was increased to £4,755 for this financial year. The expenditure for the financial year has seen a slight increase on last year's figure and so the total payments for the year were £7,950. The closing reserve balance for the year ending 31/03/26 was £9,288 of which £8,114 is held on deposit for the CIL payment and solar grant payment, we received £2,548 a slight increase on the previous year's contribution. We continue to receive the CEC Grant at £1,150 which covers 95% the cost of the Lengthsman.

Careful & prompt consideration needs to be made to the spending of the CIL payment - a total of just over £3,000, to ensure that WDPC retain it for the benefit of the community. If it remains unspent, it will be reclaimed by CEC £443 by 8th June 2027 and £2,583 by 16th November 2027 – something that we don't want to do. I urge the Councillors to actively progress with investigating community projects where this can be spent.

The biggest frustration this year for me has been the email issues and now the website. The existing provider, Orangutan have provided a very poor service this year with little to no support with the ongoing issue of the email hosting. Being without a clerk & Chair email for 2 months has been challenging. We now have a new website host, who are quick to respond and efficient at problem solving. With backing from the Councillors tonight, we hope that the website will transfer over to the new provider, be updated and compliant.

Thank you again to the Chair & Vice Chair for their continuing support and to the Councillors for their help with Parish matters.

4.To invite the public to raise any matters of interest.

Meeting closed @ 7.15pm

.....Chair.....Date