

**Minutes of the Annual Assembly of Gnosall Parish Council  
Held in the Grosvenor Centre, on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025  
Beginning at 7.30 pm**

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Present: see attached list

**1 To receive apologies**

Received from Parish Councillor Aaron Reeves, Borough Councillor Mark Winnington, Michelle Farmer, Maggie Hughes (over 82's teas), Allan Mills (retired Cllr), Dave Clarke, Barry Witts.

**2 To receive the minutes of the last meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024**

The Chair informed those attending that the approved minutes of the Annual Assembly held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024 are on the parish council's website. Copies were also available in the room. Questions or comments were invited but there were none.

**3 To receive the Parish Council's Annual Report for the year 2024/25**

The Chair explained that the Annual Report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 contained a detailed summary of the Council's work during the year 2024/25. All those attending received a copy of the report, which will be published on the Council's website. The Chair thanked Councillor Chris Haycock for compiling the Annual Report and thanked fellow councillors and staff for all the work they had undertaken during the past year. The Chair thanked Jayne Cooper who resigned as Chief Officer in January and welcomed Jayne's replacement, Jennifer Marshall, who started in post on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2025.

**4 To receive reports from the Borough and County Councillors**

Unfortunately, no Borough or County Councillors attended this year's Annual Assembly, and no reports were received.

**5 To receive any questions from electors**

A question was raised regarding the omission of the financial breakdown in this year's Annual Report. The Chair explained that the omission was due to the Annual Meeting being earlier than usual and that there had been insufficient time to produce the End of Year Accounts, but that these would be available in the May Full Council Meeting.

A question regarding the Boundary changes and how it would affect the Parish of Gnosall was raised. The Chair advised that historically Gnosall had been linked with Stone, but that under the revised boundary proposals, this would change following the May Elections and Gnosall will then be linked with Eccleshall, and that this will bring a change in County Councillors.

Councillor Haycock informed the assembly that following new requirements from central government and on the advisement of the National Association of Local Councils

(NALC), that the Parish Council were undertaking a migration from the existing website and email domains, to a gov.uk domain. This would provide better security and ensure the councils compliance with central government legislation. This development has been outsourced to Parish Online who specialise in Council domains. The new website aims to disseminate the statutory information obligations of the council in a clear and navigable manner.

Both the existing and new websites will remain live while the migration takes place. Cllr Haycock expressed his thanks to Robert Alker, who created and managed the existing website.

A question was raised regarding the historical archive of groups like the Heritage Group, who are currently hosted on the Gnosall Parish Website. Cllr. Haycock advised that the historical data of all groups on the existing website would be available via a link on the new website for a period of 12 months and offered to assist all groups with a long-term solution going forward.

There were no further questions.

## **6 To present awards to long serving former Parish councillors and staff**

The Chair advised the assembly that 2025 got off to a challenging start, losing a Chief Officer and 6 Councillors in a matter of weeks.

The Chief Officer's resignation was not the only staff change and the Chair noted that long-term Handyman, Roger Arrowsmith, had retired following a significant birthday. His meticulous work will be missed and the Chair expressed thanks for his service on behalf of the Council. His successor is Kevin Baldwin.

The Chair also thanked Robert Alker for his years of dedicated service as 'Webmaster'. A volunteer, Bob established and administered the Council's webpage for many years. He will continue to host services for GLEAN and other local organisations.

Following the resignation of a significant number of long-standing Councillors, the council decided to mark the service of councillors with more than 10 years of service. Although councillors are elected, it is an unpaid, often misunderstood and under-appreciated role and the Chair noted that there some councillors who hadn't served that length of time but warranted a mention for their service to the Council none the less.

- **Michelle Nicholls** joined Council in October 2023, representing the Ward of Moreton and brought her creative and design skills to bear in creating documents and publicity material as well as contributing to the committees on which she sat. She was member of the Grosvenor & Events Committee, Open Spaces & Burial Ground Committee, represented the Council on GG's Youth Club Committee and was also on Moreton Millennium Community Centre Committee.
- **Allan Mills** was co-opted to Council in May 2019, representing Moreton Ward. His extensive military and other experience brought budgetary and organisational skills to Council and these were employed in the various committees of which he was a member, these include Planning Committee, Open Spaces & Burial Ground Committee, Grosvenor and Events Committee, Resources & Personnel Committee,

Procedures & Health & Safety Committee, some of which he chaired. Allan also represented the council on GG's Youth Club Committee, the Staffordshire Police Independent Advisory group and on the Moreton Millenium Community Centre Committee and was elected Chair of Council in May 2022.

The Chair thanked both Michelle and Allan for their service.

### **Long Service Presentations.**

#### **Doug Webb**

Doug joined the Parish Council in 2014, bringing his skills as an engineer to the council, but his greatest gift was his time. Doug regularly walked the bounds with his beloved dogs, checked fences and borders, hedges and bollards, ensuring any issues were attended in a timely manner. Doug undertook the challenge of keeping the streets of Gnosall free of "dog poo", liaising with other councils and statutory bodies to ensure dog owners were aware of their responsibilities and to keep Gnosall clean.

He was also a major supporter of the GG's Youth Club and was instrumental in getting it off the ground, was instrumental in GFest's Classical Concerts. In recent years, Doug's health meant he was less mobile than in previous years, so he undertook invaluable desk-based research for the Parish Council.

Doug's award had been presented by the Chair earlier in the week as ill-health prevented Doug from attending the Annual assembly. The Chair thanked Doug for his valuable contributions to the Council.

#### **Kenneth Ingram**

Kenneth joined the council around 2012 and was Chairman of the Resources and Personnel Committee for many years, ensuring the expenditure and resources of the council was carefully monitored. His expertise in budget setting ensured that the council remained in the black and that all the council's plans could be carried out effectively.

A long-standing member of the Procedures Review committee, Kenneth was also responsible for ensuring that the Council's documentation and policies were regularly reviewed and kept up to date. Kenneth chaired the GFest Committee for several years and took great pride in the growth of activities and popularity of the event. Kenneth also served on the Grosvenor and Events committee, the Open Spaces and Burial Grounds Committee and represented the council on the Memorial Village Hall Committee.

Ill-health has limited Kenneth's ability to fulfil activities as he would wish, and the Council wished him well, thanked him for his contribution to the Council and presented him with his award.

#### **Tracey Simpkin**

An unassuming Councillor who preferred to avoid the limelight, Tracey served as a Gnosall Parish Councillor for over 26 years. Her great passion was the Open Spaces Committee, which she served on for most of her tenure. Tracey's local knowledge is impeccable and she made it her mission to keep Gnosall's Open Spaces in the best order possible.

Tracey's other great love is the Christmas Lights Switch-On, an event which Tracey has championed for years. Tracey's involvement with the council is very much a family affair, with both her late father Brian and her mother Mavis being caretakers of the Grosvenor Centre since 2004, a role which Mavis continues with the help of Tracey.

Tracey was a member of both the Resources Committee and the Grosvenor and Events Committee and excelled at organising large-scale events and occasions, a skill much valued by the council and village for years.

The Chair thanked Tracey for giving the council her time, love for Gnosall and skills for such a long time and presented her with her award.

### **Graham Payne**

Graham served on the Council for some 32 years, having in that time been a member of numerous committees including Grosvenor and Events Committee, Planning Committee, Procedure Review and Health and Safety Committee. He also represented the Council on the Gnosall United Charities and Cartwright and Hudson Foundation and on the Staffordshire Parish Council Association.

However, Graham is best known for his knowledge about the Grosvenor Centre. If you need to know anything about the centre, Graham has the answer. Graham knew the Grosvenor building when it was a school, was involved in its acquisition by the Council and was instrumental in its conversion to the Community Centre it is now. Graham, along with the Chair, developed plans to fit a permanent bar, a fantastic achievement and addition to a versatile building.

Graham was a member of St. John's Ambulance, so his assistance on Health and Safety was invaluable, as were his contributions to the Health & Safety Risk Assessment Inspections, ensuring that the Council's responsibilities to the public, hirers, employees and tradesmen were fulfilled.

The Chair thanked Graham for all he has done for the Council over the past 3 decades and presented him with his award.

### **Roger Greatrex**

The final councillor to receive an award retired a few years ago when he moved out of the Parish and was therefore no longer eligible to stand for election after 18 years' service.

Roger's notable area of excellence was on the Planning Committee, where his encyclopaedic knowledge was of immense benefit in offering opinions on applications. An engineer by trade, Roger used his skills to great effect over his long career at the Council and his understanding of the principles involved and the necessary work required was unparalleled.

Two projects in particular are noteworthy. The first is the Sensory Garden, where Roger was instrumental in the design, calculations and construction of this facility, a fitting tribute for the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Roger also oversaw the refitting of the Youth Club after the disastrous Christmas Flood and continued to act as a consultant even after his tenure on Council. This resulted in the fabulous Youth Facility the Community have today.

Roger continues to act as a consultant on Council projects and the Chair thanked him for his long service and continued support and presented him with his award.

### **Jayne Cooper**

The final presentation was to the outgoing Chief Officer (Clerk) Jayne, who has dedicated the last 17 years to serving the Gnosall Parish Council and its parishioners.

Jayne's contributions to the Parish have seen the Council awarded National Association of Local Council (NALC) Gold Status twice, a testament to her expertise and dedication. A dedication which led to her being nominated by the Council for NALC Clerk of the Year in 2018, and her winning this coveted award. This nomination and award recognised Jayne's outstanding commitment to her role, her dedication, professionalism, wealth of knowledge and experience, all of which she employed on behalf of both the Council and the Parish.

Prior to her nomination, Jayne was invited to be a keynote speaker at the Staffordshire Society of Local Council Clerks in recognition of all the Council achieves on a small precept. A 15-minute slot which ended up being over an hour as the audience wanted to know how the Council set up a Youth Club after the withdrawal of LA funding, how the council support the community run library along with managing a host of other projects and achieving Gold Status.

The Chair wished Jayne all the best in her new journey and expressed the council's deep gratitude for all that she has done and accomplished on behalf of the Parish. The Chair presented Jayne with a framed papercut picture reflecting some of Jayne's many projects in her time with the Council, along with Garden Vouchers.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and invited everyone to stay for refreshments. The meeting was then closed.

**List of those present:**

Jayne Cooper, past Clerk  
Tracey Simkin, Past Councillor  
Graham Payne, Past Councillor  
Kenneth Ingram, Past Councillor  
Roger Greatrex, Past Councillor  
Gail Gregory, Chair  
Jennifer Marshall, Chief Officer  
Mary Booth, Parish Councillor  
Graham Symons, Parish Councillor  
Chris Haycock, Parish Councillor  
Chris Herbert, Parish Councillor  
Mike Sullivan, Parish Councillor  
Laura Pearson, Parish Councillor  
Martin Holmes, Parish Councillor  
Pat Alker, Parish Councillor  
Graham Symmons, Parish Councillor  
John Beswick, Parish Councillor  
Keith Parry, Parish Councillor  
Wayne Titley, Parish Councillor  
Gren Knight, Parish Councillor  
Bob Middleton, Parish Councillor  
Bob Johnson. Gnosall Heritage Group  
Jordan Archer, ACP Bar & Events  
Shirley Downe  
Valerie Gough  
S. Gough  
Chris Emsley  
Trevor Whincup  
Barbara Juniper  
Ellen Parry  
Steve Hopkins  
Patrick Fivey  
Ian Kerr  
Kieth Abbott, GPN and Gnosall Heritage Group  
Mark Smith  
Ann Andrews  
John Hewes  
Adrian Turner  
Gnosall First Responders  
Andrew Bevington