

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH MEETING OF RUSHTON held at JESSIE HUGHES VILLAGE HALL on TUESDAY 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 7:00pm**

**Present:** Cllrs. E Lelsie, G Sime, N. Thompson, E. Shaw, O. Vertija, P Chrisp, P Hodgson

**In Attendance:**

L. Worrall – Parish Clerk, Mr Mike Wilson, Charles Hardy

**1. Apologies for Absence**

**2. Chairman's Welcome**

Cllr. Leslie welcomed all those who were present.

**4. Minutes**

The minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025, had already been signed off and were noted.

**5. Matters Arising from the minutes of 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

None

**6. Chairman's Annual Report**

**Please note that the official Annual Report is now posted on the Parish Website**

Cllr. Emma Leslie – Chairman, presented the annual report.

It is with great pleasure that I present this year's Chairman's Annual Report on behalf of the Parish Council. This past year has been another productive and positive year for the Parish Council as we have continued to work hard to represent the interests of our residents and support the many activities taking place within our community.

Throughout the year, we have continued to work closely with residents, local organisations, Cheshire West and Chester Council, and other partners to address important local issues and ensure that the priorities of our parish remain firmly on the agenda. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow councilors, our Parish Clerk, and all volunteers and residents who continue to give their time and support to make our community such a wonderful place to live.

This report reflects not only the work undertaken by the Parish Council over the last twelve months, but also the continued strength, resilience, and community spirit that exists within the village. I hope you find it informative and a useful overview of both the progress made and the priorities for the year ahead.

**Communications**

- Work has continued on improving Parish Council communications with the development of a new Parish Council website and updated email systems to help improve accessibility and communication with residents.
- The Parish Council continues to recognise the importance of keeping residents informed and engaged with local matters and aims to further develop its communication channels over the coming year.
- Social media continues to play an increasingly important role in sharing updates, promoting events, and communicating important information to residents. The Parish Council will continue to build on this to encourage greater engagement across the parish.

- The Parish Newsletter continues to be an important communication tool within the village and the Parish Council would like to thank everyone involved in producing and distributing it throughout the year.

### **Environment and Development**

- The Parish Council recognises the importance of planning positively for the future of the village and ensuring Rushton remains a thriving and sustainable rural community for future generations.
- Discussions have begun regarding the type of development that would best support the village in the years ahead, particularly in encouraging younger families and people into the parish whilst maintaining the character and identity of the village.
- The Council continues to support the upkeep and maintenance of key community areas within the parish and remains grateful to the many volunteers who contribute their time to keeping these areas well maintained and enjoyable for residents and visitors alike.
- The Parish Council continues to work closely with Cheshire West and Chester Council and our Ward Councillor to ensure that local issues affecting the parish are raised and addressed wherever possible.

### **Road Safety**

- Highways and road safety remain one of the Parish Council's highest priorities following continued concerns raised by residents regarding speeding through the village.
- The Parish Council is committed to exploring potential traffic calming initiatives and other road safety improvements that may help reduce vehicle speeds and improve safety for residents, pedestrians, and cyclists throughout the parish.
- Close communication continues with Cheshire West and Chester Highways regarding pothole repairs, damaged or knocked-over signs, and the reinstatement of road markings throughout the village. Ensuring highways issues are reported and addressed quickly remains a key focus for the Council.
- The Parish Council will continue to monitor speeding concerns through resident feedback and available traffic data whilst working with the appropriate authorities to pursue suitable solutions where possible.
- Work will continue with Eaton Primary School and Cheshire Police to help ease traffic congestion and improve safety during school drop-off and pick-up times. The Council recognises the challenges faced during these busy periods and hopes to work collaboratively to identify practical improvements.
- The Parish Council remains committed to improving the appearance and safety of village entrance points and highways infrastructure throughout the parish.

### **Mobile Network Connectivity**

- Poor mobile phone coverage and unreliable network connectivity continue to be a significant concern for residents across the parish.
- The Parish Council will continue to work closely with our local MP, Aphra Brandreth, and relevant providers to push for improved mobile network infrastructure and better connectivity within the village and surrounding rural areas.

### **Community, Youth and Social Activities**

- Community spirit within the village continues to thrive and remains one of the greatest strengths of the parish.
- The Parish Council is delighted to see continued support for the many local groups and activities that bring residents together throughout the year. These include the Wildlife Club, Gardening Club, Women's Institute, coffee mornings, and many other

social and community initiatives that continue to make the village such a welcoming and active place to live.

- Collaboration between local organisations, volunteers, and community groups continues to play a vital role in maintaining the strong sense of community spirit within the parish.
- The Parish Council would like to thank all volunteers, organisers, and residents who continue to dedicate their time and effort to supporting village life and community activities throughout the year.

### **Finances**

- The Parish Council continues to face increasing financial pressures due to rising maintenance and operational costs across a number of areas within the parish. Careful consideration continues to be given to managing expenditure responsibly whilst maintaining important community facilities and services for residents.
- The accounts are shown at the AGM which follows this meeting.

### **Projects for Next Year**

- Our priorities for the coming year will be heavily focused on highways, road safety, and communication improvements throughout the parish.
- The Parish Council will continue to work closely with Cheshire West and Chester Highways, Cheshire Police, Eaton Primary School, and our local MP to address concerns relating to speeding, traffic management, mobile connectivity, and wider infrastructure improvements.
- We also hope to continue developing our communication platforms to improve engagement with residents and ensure parish information is more accessible and up to date.
- In addition, the Council wishes to begin shaping a long-term vision for the future development and sustainability of the village to help encourage younger families and future generations into the parish whilst preserving the unique character of Rushton.

### **Community Spirit – Help & Volunteers**

- Finally, and most importantly, without the help and support of all the volunteers who contribute so much of their time — including Parish Councillors, who are volunteers themselves — we would not have the strong sense of community that exists within the parish.
- This year also marks the centenary celebrations of the Jessie Hughes Village Hall, an important and much-loved part of village life that continues to play a central role within the community. Special thanks to the team who have put together a brilliant weekend just past and Peter Holloway for putting together a fabulous book to mark the occasion.

The meeting closed at 19.45pm.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_