

## **WESTFIELD PLAYGROUP - Annual General Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Thursday 17 September 2026

**Time:** 18:00

**Venue:** Westfield Church Hall

### **Present**

Abby Lee – Vice Chair

Amy Sutton

Annie Nijhuis – WCA Chair

Brett Edwards – Chair

Hayley Ann – Trustee

Kellie Edwards – Staff

Molly Leatham – Trustee

Natalie Chapman – Staff

Nikki Edwards – Manager

### **1. Welcome**

The Chair, Brett Edwards, welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting and explained the format and purpose of the meeting.

### **2. Overview of the Meeting**

The Chair outlined the agenda for the meeting and explained that the AGM would provide an opportunity to review the previous year, consider the Playgroup's financial position, confirm the Committee and Trustees for the coming year, and discuss plans and priorities for the future.

### **3. Minutes of the Previous AGM**

The summary minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting were presented to those attending.

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate reflection of the previous AGM.

**Proposed:** Hayley Ann

**Seconded:** Molly Leatham

The minutes were therefore approved.

### **4. Introduction to the Trustees**

The Trustees introduced themselves and gave a brief explanation of their involvement with Westfield Playgroup and how they had become Trustees.

### **5. Accounts**

The Chair presented the accounts summary for the financial year ended 31 August 2025.

The accounts showed income of £75,262 and expenditure of £86,610, resulting in a deficit of £11,348. Staffing remained the principal expenditure, with wages accounting for approximately £71,800.

The deficit reduced reserves from £73,624 to £62,276. It was noted that the Playgroup remained in a positive cash position at the year end, with £62,276 held across its current and deposit accounts.

The accounts had been independently examined and no matters requiring attention had been reported by the examiner.

The Committee recognised that financial sustainability would remain an important priority, particularly in light of increased premises costs and the need to ensure that income remains sufficient to support the continued provision of safe, high quality early years services.

## **6. Independent Examination / Auditors**

The Chair explained the proposal that Westfield Playgroup should continue to use Hastings Voluntary Action for its financial independent examination/audit arrangements.

The proposal was agreed.

**Proposed:** Abby Lee

**Seconded:** Hayley Ann

## **7. Trustees and Committee Elections**

All existing Trustees stood down in accordance with the AGM process.

The following appointments were then proposed and agreed:

### **Brett Edwards – Chair**

Proposed by Annie Nijhuis

Seconded by Abby Lee

### **Hayley Ann – Trustee**

Proposed by Brett Edwards

Seconded by Natalie Chapman

### **Molly Leatham – Trustee**

Proposed by Kellie Edwards

Seconded by Amy Sutton

### **Abby Lee – Vice Chair**

Proposed by Amy Sutton

Seconded by Kellie Edwards

The above appointments were therefore confirmed for the coming year.

## **8. Constitution**

The Chair explained that, because of the temporary arrangements associated with the use of the Community Hall and the subsequent return to the Church Hall, the proposed new Constitution had not yet been submitted to the Charity Commission.

It was confirmed that the proposed Constitution would be placed on the Westfield Playgroup website again for a period of three months from 28 September 2026. Following this period, and subject to any necessary amendments, it would be finalised and submitted to the Charity Commission.

## **9. Manager's Report**

Nikki Edwards presented the Manager's Report.

The report reflected on the considerable disruption experienced since the Playgroup had been required to leave its usual premises, including the move to the Community Hall, reduced capacity and the practical challenges associated with operating from temporary accommodation.

It was noted that the Playgroup had continued to provide learning and development opportunities for the children throughout this period, with the staff team adapting to the circumstances and working hard to maintain the quality of provision.

The Playgroup had returned to the Church Hall in September 2026 and the children had settled well into the larger environment. The return had also enabled the Playgroup to increase its available capacity and begin welcoming new children.

The meeting was also advised of the forthcoming maternity leave arrangements for Amy and the development of Natalie into the Deputy and SEN lead roles.

The anticipated Ofsted inspection was discussed, with the Playgroup awaiting contact regarding a visit.

Looking ahead, the Manager highlighted plans for Christmas activities and the possibility of developing provision for younger children, including under-twos, subject to further advice, consideration of the available space and assessment of the implications for the Playgroup.

## **10. Chair's Report**

The Chair presented the summary version of the Chair's Report.

The report reflected on a year of significant change, including the disruption caused by the loss of the usual premises, the move to the Community Hall, changes within the staff team and financial pressures.

The Chair acknowledged the considerable contribution made by the management and staff team in maintaining the quality and consistency of provision throughout this period and thanked them for their commitment to the children and families.

The meeting was advised that the Playgroup was considering opportunities to develop provision for younger children and potentially move towards five-day provision. It was emphasised that any such development would need to be properly planned, financially viable and appropriate for the children.

Financial sustainability was identified as an important issue, particularly given increased premises costs and the fact that fees had not been increased for several years. The Committee would continue to consider funding opportunities, including discussions with the local authority, alongside a review of the Playgroup's fee structure.

The Chair also discussed the relationship with the Church concerning use of the hall, including costs, repairs, access and proposed arrangements involving other users of the building. The Committee's position remained that safeguarding and the safety of the children must remain central to any such arrangements.

The Chair highlighted the need to strengthen the Committee by encouraging more parents and members of the local community to become involved. Greater Committee involvement in governance, fundraising, events and practical support was identified as a priority.

The full Chair's Report would be made available to parents following the AGM.

### **11. Volunteers and Committee Recruitment**

The Chair opened a discussion regarding the recruitment of additional volunteers and Committee members.

The Committee had already taken a number of steps to encourage involvement, including promotion through the website, letters, WhatsApp messages and discussions with parents and members of the local community.

Those attending were asked to speak to parents and others within the local community to identify anyone who may be interested in supporting or joining the Committee.

It was recognised that increasing Committee involvement would help strengthen governance, provide additional practical support and broaden the range of skills and experience available to the Playgroup.

### **12. Any Other Business**

AN and BE agreed that it would be beneficial to meet and discuss future plans for a coordinated approach from both the WCA and WPG – BE will send an invite across to AN for Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2026

WPG representatives were invited by AN to attend the next WCA meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2026 at 19:30.

### **13. Close**

There being no further business, the meeting was concluded.