

## **AVONBANK EVESHAM BRASS BAND AGM WEDNESDAY 12/5/25**

### **Attending**

Alex, Andrew M, Carole, Jim, Dan, Tim K, Steph, Geoff, Micah, Tim G, Stephen, Mark S, Josh, Will, Rachel, Rob, Ken, Mandy, Jenny and Alistair

### **Apologies**

Mike, Tina, Andrew S

### **Minutes from 2024**

The minutes from 2024 were distributed and the meeting agreed that the 2024 minutes were a true account of the meeting.

This was proposed by Rachel and seconded by Steph

### **Chair report**

Alex opened the meeting at 19:33 & read out the Chairpersons Report. As this the first year of a three-year period of office as Chairman during which we have seen significant changes. Shortly after taking on the role, we found ourselves without a Musical Director. It was agreed that we would bring in Micah to cover the summer engagements before going through an audition process. We had 7 applicants which were whittled down to the three strongest candidates. Auditions took place during the first 3 weeks of September after which all band members were given an opportunity to vote for who they considered to be the best candidate. Micah has now been in post almost 6 months during which we have seen a huge transformation within the band. We have gained four new registered players filling vacancies that at one point stood at high as seven. Simon on Flugel, Will on horn and Phil and Jenny on cornet have joined over the last 12 months. The band is also regularly supported by Mandy on cornet. During this time, we have also lost three players; Martin on Flugel, Chris on Euphonium and Val on Baritone.

Recent contest results have shown that the appointment of Micah has significantly improved the standard of playing within the band and is not only showing cohesiveness in the band room, but outside of it too.

My ambitions for the next 12 months. I would like us to take on more concerts to not only generate some income, but most importantly get the name of the band more widely known in the area and generate a following.

In terms of contesting, we need to set out how many we would like to take part in over the year. We clearly already have one lined up in September, but how many more would strike the right balance bearing in mind the costs associated with entering and additional rehearsals.

The running of the band is no mean feat. I would like to see more people take on non-committee or committee roles to spread the workload and will propose to have new opportunities when we elect the committee and non-committee roles.

Thank you to you all for all the dedication and hard work over the past 12 months. Our success as a band is a team effort and I'd like to give special thanks to the following:

Carole for the immense amount of work she has done as secretary. Organising engagements and deps is probably the most demanding position within the committee, hence my proposal to split the role. Rob for helping with the minutes.

Tim for hosting and updating the website. It is here that I'm looking for someone with a bit of flair to assist Tim in revamping the website.

Josh for the work in uploading videos onto YouTube which will help raise the profile of the band. Steph for placing regular posts on Facebook again raising the profile of the band but also updating current vacancies.

Rachel for sorting out the library. The librarian's role is another that takes up hours of work and is largely unappreciated. All I would ask you, is that when you are provided with a list of music to hand in, that you hand just the pieces on the list and in alphabetical order. It makes Rachel's job much easier.

Other members of the committee; Mark for being contest secretary, a busy job over the last 4 months and Andrew as treasurer.

Finally, to Micah. There has been a real transformation in the atmosphere in the band room over the last 6 to 9 months and is down to Micah. His enthusiasm for music and dedication to the band is second to none and it is a pleasure to be working with him. I certainly cannot think of any time in the decades that I have been playing, that has prepared me more for a contest. I look forward to continuing to work with Micah and you to drive this band forward and see us back in the 2<sup>nd</sup> section within the next 2 years.

### **Secretary's report**

During 2024/25 the band played at 15 Venues:

**Three Contests:** The Area Contest at Bedworth – Second Place

Oxfordshire Contest – First Place

The Leicester Contest – Eighth Place

**Concerts:** Massed band with Ledbury Band, Offenham School Proms, Badsey Xmas Concert, Badsey Summer Concert, The Springs Proms, Pershore Midsummer Brass, Xmas Concert at Pershore Abbey with Choir, Pershore Choir at Bengeworth.

**Four Park Jobs:** Droitwich, Evesham x 2, Bromsgrove,

**Three Small Group Jobs:** Harbourne Fayre in Worcester & Summer Fayre in Richmond Village, Mayors Civic Service in Pershore

**Two Parades:** Evesham Remembrance, Bengeworth Parade (Steph & Steve only)

**Nine Carol Playing:** Inc. Offenham Wake, The Springs, Rotory Tree of Lights, Tesco in Stratford, Tesco in Evesham, Richmond Village.

**New Members:** A warm welcome to Jenny Partington, Will Butler & Phil Milward

### **Training band report**

Stephen reported to the meeting that the Training Band had not moved on during the past year.



## Musical director's report

When I think back to when I arrived in the band room a year ago to where we currently stand, I could never have imagined the things that we have experienced and achieved as a band.

In the short time we have been together, we have delivered a number of different concert programmes to audiences across the midlands, we have achieved success on the contest stage, early than I could have envisaged or imagined and we have build a very special environment within the band room which we need to value and protect at all costs.

When I arrived, we had a number of vacancies which have now been reduced to one vacancy on Eb bass and a vacancy to cover at The National Finals on 2nd Cornet.

Attendance at rehearsals has increased and I feel that the band has made such huge gains in band sound, in team spirit, in the musical aspects such as togetherness and tuning and intonation however you have shown me a little of your true potential and I am determined to see this potential fully realised.

All these small gains have impacted the bigger picture and no more so in the measurable environments of the contest stage. In November, you held your own against a number of the 2nd section bands some of which competed in the first section, this contest was arguably our hardest contest due to the quality of bands that we were up against. This contest also highlighted the progress we had made in a short time and also the fact that we were able to hold our own against bands who had not been through the changes we had this contest was to give a huge glimpse into what has emerged this year with our 1st place at Oxford and our 2nd place at the midlands regional contest. This has resulted in you being invited to the national finals in September and this is no mean feat bearing in mind the band that you were demoted with ended up at the bottom half of the table.

What needs to happen now? The fact is we now have a full diary of concerts and events including Whit Friday and The National Finals to look forward too, it should be reminded that we do not measure our band or our environment as a result of contests but as a result of our hard work, our enjoyment and the valuing of those relationships had in the band room and how that impacts the audiences that we play to and the people we come into contact with.

Our openness, transparency and desire to work hard and improve as well as engage in high quality opportunities will help us to develop the reputation of the band.

I have a desire to work with each and every one of you to upskill you and help to unlock your full potential.

Your views, opinions, thoughts, life circumstances and ability are hugely important to me and I have a desire to keep this aspect at the of what we do. Your feedback prior to the contest was invaluable and really added an extra layer of performance enhancement to the piece. Equally the support with individuals leading sectionals has really maximised the time we have had together. I honestly feel that we have used every minute in our rehearsals to its full advantage.

You as a band have provided me with an environment where I am able to bring all my skills to the table without fear of upsetting people or equally being seen as a little crazy!

Going into 2026, The Avonbank (Evesham) Brass Band are at the top of the table and gain a chance of promotion into the second section, a position I really believe you should be in.

A lot of the narrative so far has been about contesting and I want us to see contesting in the context of who we are as a band. Contesting is pushing the band to improve, it is pushing the band to deal with nerves and this is going to impact what we do on the concert stage and how we deliver engaging concerts to the public. Contests will push and maintain our standards whilst concerts will be there this discipline and musical knowledge of shown and put into action. This dual approach will really support us however this will not become as case of doing lots and lots of contests.

We are pushing to engage with our local community to get quality gigs. I have started to collate all contacts into one location and those contacts and opportunities will start to be explored in the weeks ahead. Any ideas or opportunities please share them with us. We will strike while the iron is hot to secure quality events!

So what are the goals for the rest of 2025 - 2026. The main focus remains to regain promotion to the second section, this will ensure our standard remains high and this will impact the quality of performances and concerts that we give to the end of the year and provides an appropriate bigger goal for us to work and aim towards.

However, I cannot do any of this without your help. We are a team and we succeed or fail as a team not as individuals. What I need from you guys is your continued support and your dedication to the band not only in personal practice and attendance but your support to continue on our special journey.

Our hobby demands a lot of time, dedication and sacrifice and I want you to expect more from your hobby. Higher standards, more music choice, better concert opportunities, more opportunities to engage with other bands, musicians, masterclasses. When we hold our hobbies to a high expectation, we get more enjoyed, more memories and a reason to be with a brass band which makes strictly come dancing a more boring option.

The overall aim of the band is to be promoted to the second section and this goal is within site if we are able to keep driving and improving at our current rate however there needs to be some more immediate aims and goals, the main aim for 2025 will be the national final is to beat all the midlands bands and get a top ten position however it will also be to promote the band to a wider audience, to explore and get a full programme in place for 2026 and on a musical level to continue to create a band sound and real nail our rhythmic accuracy and intonation and to support this I have a number of proposals.

Composers Competition

Gigs

Contests

Outreach

Internal solo competition

To conclude, I have made a lot of requests from you all however I am also committed to improving myself and to do this I need your support.

A busy band is a happy band and the environment that we have cultivated together is special. We succeed as a team and it is the team that will make this band continue on the journey that we are on.

Thank you for your continued help, support and encouragement and here is to our future

## **Treasurer's report**

The Treasurer's report was distributed to the meeting. The Treasurer spoke about main points in the finances of the band. The bottom line was that the band spent £3,728 more than it received in income. The standout income items were Xmas and Pershore concert, £900 and £650 respectively. Arise in concert and contest expenses was noted and the treasurer had documentation for all questions put to him by the meeting.

The accounts were proposed to be accepted by Alister and seconded by Steph.

## **Officers and committee**

### **Election of chair.**

Alex is the Chair of the band and is one year into a three year term. Alex told the meeting that he was happy to continue

**Election of vice chair.** There were no volunteers for this position.

### **Election of Engagement secretary.**

It was decided to split the Secretary's role into two specific roles.

- Engagement Secretary
- Minute Secretary

Carole agreed to stay on as Engagement Secretary and Alister volunteered to be Minute Secretary, proposed by Steph and seconded by Tim.

**Election of treasurer.** Again Andrew McLure is one year into a three year term as Treasurer and agreed to stand.

**Election of social secretary.** Steph agreed to continue.

**Musical instruments care.** Dan and Mark Steventon agreed to continue.

**Building supervisor.** Ken agreed to continue with assistance from Alex.

**Librarian.** Rachel agreed to continue as librarian with rob assisting.

**Uniforms officer.** Carole agreed to continue in this role.

**Safeguarding officers.** Steph and Andrew continue in this role.

### **Any other business**

It was agreed to enter the Wychavon Entertainment Contest on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2025.

A discussion took place regarding the 2025 Whit Friday Marches and it was decided not to enter but to aim for taking part in 2026.

Alister requested that for contests we should use the original music copies rather than copies as the better quality of original manuscript made the paper less transparent.

Dan mentioned that he will be unavailable for the Cheltenham finals.

Tim K asked if the band room could have a new clock as the current clock is unreliable.

# Avonbank (Evesham) Brass Band Accounts

31/12/2024

	£	£
<b>INCOME:</b>		
Subs	2,346	
Donations and Grants	805	
Carolling	678	
Engagements	3,261	
Concerts	801	
Prize money	-	
Sundry income	50	
Instrument Sales	-	
Bandroom Hire	140	
		<u>8,082</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE:</b>		
Contest Expenses	1,604	
Sundry Expenses	1,946	
Advertising and Publicity	69	
Instruments/Repairs	444	
Insurance	780	
Music	693	
Conductor's Fees	3,800	
Concert Expenses	-	
Guest Players	256	
Bandroom Expenses	2,217	
		<u>11,809</u>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>		- <b>3,728</b> loss
		3728
		0.00

