

EWSHOT PARISH COUNCIL

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF EWSHOT PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2026 AT 7PM
IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr G Bredin (Chairman), Cllr E Jennings, Cllr D Morgan-Jones, Cllr T Stuart and Cllr C Turner.

In Attendance: Cllr S Parker (Hampshire County Council – HCC). Alison Ball (Clerk).

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished everyone a happy new year.

26/001	Apologies for Absence
	Cllr T Collins (Hart District Council - HDC).
26/002	Approval of the Minutes of the meeting of Ewshot Parish Council held on 10 November 2025
	RESOLVED: To approve the Minutes of the meeting of Ewshot Parish Council held on 10 November 2025.
26/003	Review of the Actions/ Issues Log
	The Actions/ Issues Log was reviewed and updated.
26/004	Announcements from Chairman, Clerk and Members' Questions
	None.
26/005	District and County Council Report
	Cllr Parker advised that the last month had been quiet due to the Christmas break. There had been a meeting of Hampshire County Council earlier in the day to discuss postponement of the May 2026 elections as the Government had asked all councils whether elections should be delayed and whether they had enough capacity to deliver Local Government Reorganisation within the time expected. HCC had agreed that the elections should not be delayed and this view would be put into a draft letter to the Government which would be considered by the HCC Cabinet on 15 January.
26/006	Declaration of Interests and Requests for Dispensations
	None.

26/007	Public Participation
	None.
26/008	Planning
	<p>(a) 25/02260/HOU Little Hurst, Church Lane Erection of a two storey and single storey front extension and detached car port with log store.</p> <p>No response had been agreed before the deadline on 27 November.</p> <p>(b) Additional planning applications received after publication of the Agenda</p> <p>None.</p>
26/009	Highways Issues
	<p>(a) Doras Green</p> <p>Cllr Turner advised that there had been two more accidents at the Doras Green crossroads in the icy weather. He had made a report to the Safer Roads Team Leader at HCC after the first accident. The response from HCC was that the Police had confirmed attendance at the accident due to the road being blocked and that it had been recorded as a “Road Traffic Collision with no injuries and no offences committed” and that the cause recorded was “road conditions – ice on a hill”. The Safer Roads Team Leader stated in his response that HCC prioritised locations for treatment in accordance with the road casualty reduction led policy. This policy focused on areas with a history of collisions and significant road safety concerns. A check of the police casualty collision database had been carried out and these records showed that there had been four slight injury collisions in the past five years (up to 30 June), with only one of these occurring between February 2022 and June 2025. He felt that this was a difficult situation to improve on and any further traffic management measures would not necessarily improve safety at this location.</p> <p>Cllr Turner asked for advice on how to respond as he did not agree with these statistics and was aware of many more accidents.</p> <p>It was agreed that a formal letter from the Parish Council should be drafted setting out the concerns and the number of accidents that were not being recorded. Cllr Turner agreed to draft the letter and send it to all councillors for comment before submitting to HCC.</p>

	<p>Cllr Parker asked that he be provided with a copy of the letter once finalised and he confirmed he would approach Hampshire Highways about putting a grit bin at the crossroads and also for an update on the Vehicle Activated Sign.</p> <p>(b) Review of the Highways Log A meeting would be set up to discuss this informally.</p> <p>(c) SID Repair or Replacement The SID had been returned to the manufacturer for assessment to see if it could be repaired and it had been advised that repairs could be carried out that would get the SID working correctly. The cost of the repair would be £401 + VAT.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To have the SID repaired by the manufacturer at a cost of £401 + VAT.</p>
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26/010	Hart Climate Change Engagement Group/ Net Zero Engagement Group
	<p>Cllr Morgan-Jones advised that he had added information to the Parish Council website on “EPC Awareness: The First Step to a Warmer Home and Lower Bills”. This included an interactive map of the parish setting out which homes had a valid EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) and which had an outdated EPC or none at all. It was understood that 48% of houses in the parish did not have an EPC or had one that was out of date. This information was important because it would allow identification of the homes that were leaking the most heat and would mean that useful information could be provided to those home owners on how to better insulate their home and the funding available for this. Cllr Morgan-Jones had been in touch with a company that used drones to fly over an area and take thermal images so that those experiencing the most heat loss could be identified. He was waiting for further details from them including a price.</p> <p>Councillors generally felt that it was a good idea to raise awareness around this issue and acknowledged it would ultimately be for the homeowner to decide whether to carry out any remedial works or not. It was agreed that consideration should be given to how to best communicate with residents to provide information and support to encourage homeowners to seek the information and then to act to better insulate their own homes.</p>

26/011	Biodiversity
	<p>Cllr Jennings advised that there would be a meeting in February with four landowners and the Woodland Trust to discuss potential works within the woodland areas to improve biodiversity. She hoped that following this meeting the landowners would agree to the work being carried out by volunteers and she would look to find local volunteers to get involved.</p>

	There would also be a meeting in March with the Surrey Wildlife Trust to discuss a project to improve the links between the existing woodlands. The focus would be on door mice and making sure suitable connections existed between the woodlands to allow the door mice (and therefore other creatures) to move between habitats. Once gaps had been identified landowners would be approached to see what could be done in terms of planting to fill in the gaps.
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26/012	Fibre Optic Rollout
	<p>Cllr Morgan-Jones advised that there was nothing to report at the current time as he had been unable to get an update from City Fibre despite making contact with them on a couple of occasions. He would continue to try to contact the Chief Executive.</p> <p>There was a discussion about properties in the village that had ultra-fast broadband and how this was possible. It was also noted that a homeowner had been approached about the installation of cables across his property which suggested that things were progressing.</p>

26/013	Farnborough Airport
	<p>It was noted that Farnborough Airport had submitted a new planning application with full details on the Rushmoor Borough Council website. This application maintained the current number of total flights at the same amount (50,000 annually) but requested that 13,500 of these be on non-weekdays compared to the 8,900 currently allowed. It also maintained current operating hours of 8am to 8pm. It was noted that the previous planning application had not been withdrawn and was therefore running at the same time as the new application. It was noted that any objections to the previous application did not automatically carry over to the new application and if residents had objections to the new proposals these needed to be submitted by 16 January.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Parish Council should submit a formal objection to the application. Cllr Turner agreed to draft wording for this and circulate by email for comments before submission.</p>

26/014	Tree Survey Results
	The annual Tree Survey had been carried out in September 2025 which had recommended work to four trees. One of the trees that needed work was the oak tree at Broomhill that was the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). An application had been made to HDC requesting permission to carry this work out. A decision had been due by 1 December but nothing had been received. Quotes had been sought and received from three companies for the work set out in the survey

	and for some additional work to the trees in and around the play area. It was agreed to delay a decision on this until permission for the work on the tree with the TPO had been received.
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26/015	Tennis Court Cleaning
	<p>During the budget setting for 2025/2026 it had been agreed to set aside funds for annual maintenance of the tennis court. A local company had been out to the court and recommended that it be cleaned with a high pressure hose to remove the moss spores and that other debris be removed by hand. Three quotes had been received for this work. The cheapest quote was received from a company based in West Sussex and were suggested by another contractor, the Parish Council had not used this company previously. It was agreed to accept the second lowest quote as this was only slightly more than the lowest quote and was from a local company that had been used before and were known to be reliable and do work to an excellent standard.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To accept the quote from Housden Courts for the cleaning of the tennis court at a cost of £720 + VAT.</p>

26/016	Grass Cutting 2026
	<p>A three year agreement with NJL Boxgreen for grass cutting had come to end at the end of the 2025 cutting season and the Clerk had asked them to quote for 2026 and future years. NJL Boxgreen had proven to be a reliable company over the last four years that had done a good job. A quote for 2026 had been received and a commitment had been made to only make annual increases based on RPI.</p> <p>The Clerk asked whether quotes should be sought from other companies.</p> <p>It was agreed that NJL Boxgreen had been doing a very good job and before they took on the contract there had been a period of uncertainty resulting in the ad hoc use of expensive contractors to make sure the grass did not get too long. Councillors were keen to continue to use NJL Boxgreen. It was noted that the quote for 2026 was a 6% increase on 2025 which councillors felt was reasonable.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To appoint NJL Boxgreen as the grass cutting contractor for 2026 and future years, for a minimum of three years, based on the quote of £310 per cut plus £50 per weed kill with a minimum of 13 cuts and two weed kills during the season with a RPI price adjustment on each annual anniversary.</p>

26/017	ICT Policy
	<p>Assertion 10 was a new requirement introduced by the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPPP) within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year 2025/2026. It required parish councils to confirm appropriate arrangements were in place for cyber security, including the protection of data, systems, and electronic records. As part of this the Parish Council had to demonstrate secure email use, password management, data backups, antivirus software, and member and staff awareness of cyber risks. Compliance with Assertion 10 would be part of the external audit review.</p> <p>As part of this parish councils were required to have an ICT Policy. The Clerk had drafted a policy based on the SAPPP template and this had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that further thought be given to IT use and the centralisation of file storage.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the ICT Policy as circulated.</p>
26/018	Data Retention Policy
	<p>Whilst writing the ICT Policy the Clerk had reviewed the Council's Data Retention Policy which had been approved in 2018. This policy set out the data held by the Council and time limits after which the data would be destroyed. It was still largely relevant but some minor changes were recommended that would bring the Policy in line with the most recent Hampshire Association of Local Councils template. The Policy had been circulated by email prior to the meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the updated Data Retention Policy.</p>
26/019	Grant Applications
	No grant applications had been received.
26/020	Summary of Payments and Receipts for Q3 to 31 December 2025
	<p>A summary of the figures for quarter three had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the summary of receipts and payments for quarter three.</p>

26/021	Bank Reconciliation to 31 December 2025
	<p>The RFO had produced a bank reconciliation to 31 December 2025 which had been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To accept the bank reconciliation to 31 December 2025.</p>

26/022	Budget 2026/2027
	<p>Prior to the meeting the draft budget for 2026/2027 had been circulated. This set out the actual spend to 1 December 2025 together with the predicted spend to year end, 31 March 2026. Also circulated were details of the money spent on projects during 2025.</p> <p>It was noted that the proposed budget recommended a 0% change and did not increase the amount each householder would need to pay compared to 2025/2026. There had been an increase in the Parish Council's tax base which meant that there would be a small increase in the overall precept without having any effect on the amount each household would pay. As a result the proposed 2026/2027 budget was similar to the previous year's budget but for areas likely to see an increase in prices the amount allocated had been slightly increased. This included staff salaries, utilities, insurance, subscriptions and grounds contractors.</p> <p>Despite generally increasing costs it had been possible to keep the precept as a 0% increase largely due to income in the form of interest that would be received on sums that had been invested in a one year bond.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the budget for 2026/27. Proposed by Cllr Turner, seconded by Cllr Morgan-Jones and agreed unanimously.</p>

26/023	Precept 2026/2027
	<p>The budget showed that a precept of £37,786 for 2026/2027 would be sufficient and authorisation was now sought for this amount to be set as the precept amount.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the precept as £37,786 for 2026/2027 and that Cllrs Bredin and Turner and the Clerk be authorised to complete the paperwork for submission to HDC. Proposed by Cllr Turner, seconded by Cllr Morgan-Jones and agreed unanimously.</p>

26/024	Approval of Payments		
	The following payments were approved:		
			POWER TO SPEND
	December Payroll	£613.92*	LGA 1972 s111
	January Payroll	£613.92	LGA 1972 s111
	HMRC - tax + NICs – to be taken by direct debit	£Variable	LGA 1972 s111
	Lloyds – account charge – taken on or before 18 th of each month	£4.25	LGA 1972 s111
	Castle Water, water bill: taken by direct debit on/around 21 st of each month	£Variable	LGA 1972 s111
	Scottish Power, electricity bill: taken by direct debit on or around 23 rd of each month	£25.58	LGA 1972 s111
	Larkstel – Bin emptying (December)	£226.09*	Litter Act 1983 s5-6
	Larkstel – Bin emptying (January)	£226.09	Litter Act 1983 s5-6
	Village Hall – Office rent and room hire	£470.00	LGA 1972 s111
	Information Commissioner – Annual Fee	£52.00	LGA 1972 s111
	Allen Lang Timber – Christmas Tree	£378.00*	LGA 1972 s145
	DM Payroll Services – Payroll Services October 2025 to March 2026	£90.00	LGA 1972 s111
	Gary Bredin – reimbursement for thank you gifts	£107.00	LGA 1972 s111
	Kompan – Work in Play Area	£4,883.38	LGA 1894 s8
	Wetscotec – repair to SID	£481.20	LGA 1972 s111

26/025	Date of Next Meeting		
	It was noted that the next meeting would take place on 9 February 2026.		

26/026	Any Other Business		
	None.		

The meeting ended at 7.54 pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....