

ECCHINSWELL, SYDMONTON AND BISHOPS GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ordinary meeting held at Ecchinswell Village Hall on

Wednesday 18th March 2026, commencing at 19:30 hours

Present: Cllrs Stamp (Chair), Hardy-Giles and Monteith.

In attendance: Sarah Jones (Clerk), Borough Cllr Izett, County Cllr Mellor, 1 member of the public.

Item		Action
1	<p>Apologies: Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Sadler, Debenham and Letch.</p>	
2	<p>Declarations of interest There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of previous meeting and actions arising To receive and confirm the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 11th February, and matters arising. All Cllrs agreed them as a true record, and they were signed by Cllr Stamp.</p>	
4	<p>Public participation This item was dealt with out of order, after Items 5 and 6. There was 1 member of the public present. He advised he had attended the previous month's council meeting and in view of his efforts with road signs and other areas of the parish, he was intending to stand as a Cllr. In view of the information received from him, and the long term vacancy on the council, Cllrs were able to co-opt him onto the Council straight away. He was proposed by Cllr Monteith, seconded by Cllr Hardy-Giles and invited to join the other Cllrs at the table.</p>	
5	<p>Borough Councillor's Report Borough Cllr Izett addressed the Rooksfield development which was approved at the DCC meeting on 11th February. He has spoken to the landowner and will be involved in the next stage of reserved matters. The latest Catesby development proposal is still awaiting some statutory responses, but Cllr Izett has spoken to the case officer to assess their response to this application. There is no response at the moment but Cllr Izett will follow this up. At present there is no grant funding for Neighbourhood Plans, or for reviews, but BDBC have budgeted to include a grant scheme. Parish councils can apply for grants of up to £10k. The next full Borough council meeting on 19th March will be the last one before elections take place. With nothing further to report, Cllr Izett left the meeting at 7.54pm.</p>	
6	<p>County Councillor's Report. County Cllr Mellor reported that HCC have some areas of land which can be sold but not for profit as this is not allowed. This should help finances. 12 new schools are being built at the moment but the birth rate has dropped by 7% so some schools may be undersubscribed. There are issues with building companies as some are folding, so there may be difficulty finishing certain projects. Devolution was confirmed at the meeting which took place on 17/3/26. The Local government review should give a breakdown of unities. They will be put into place but no mayors will be in position until 2028. Budget for adult and children social care is the largest cost to HCC. HCC still has one of the lowest national Council Tax levels and even with these low levels, the council is budgeted to break even in 2028, having run at a loss. Potholes and roads continue to be a big problem; the interim fixes which took place in 2021-2022 are no longer in place and more permanent fix is needed. Numerous bus services have been reinstated. There being nothing further to report, Cllr Mellor left the meeting at 7.54pm.</p>	
7	<p>Planning a) New applications: 26/00209/FUL Land At Clere House Farm Ecchinswell Road Ecchinswell Hampshire</p>	

	<p>Proposal: Temporary construction access for a period of two years No objections</p> <p>26/00404/VLA Land At Burnside Mill Lane Ecchinswell Newbury Hampshire Proposal: Discharge of S106 agreement attached to BDB/33024 to remove restriction requiring The Barn and Yard and the Mill House to remain in the same ownership and occupation</p> <p>ESBG PC Response: as with previous applications, ESBG PC object to splitting the ownership of the buildings at this property.</p> <p>b) Decisions: none</p> <p>c) The Rooksfield development. The DCC meeting at BDBC took place on the same evening as the last ESBG PC meeting (11.02.26) and the parish council have subsequently found out this planning application was approved by BDBC. The consultant involved in this development has asked ESBG PC if they would like a meeting to discuss, this will be organised.</p>	
8	<p>New Business</p> <p>a) <u>AGM and Annual Assembly arrangements</u> The items to be presented at the Annual Assembly were discussed and the relevant parties contacted by the clerk. The usual refreshments will be provided for after the meeting and this will be organised by the clerk.</p> <p>b) <u>Clerk's annual review and appraisal</u> As the clerk has resigned and is hoping to leave after the AGM in May, there is no review taking place this year.</p> <p>c) <u>Recruitment of new clerk progress</u> The job spec has been written and agreed, and the vacancy will be advertised on the HALC website, the parish council website and the noticeboards. Other local clerks have confirmed they will also advertise the vacancy on their platforms.</p> <p>d) <u>1st Quarter Safety Review</u> The quarterly safety review is not due until April so will be on the agenda for then.</p> <p>e) <u>Review of Assets Register</u> The Assets Register was updated to include the purchased two Speed Indicator Devices and was circulated, and agreed by all.</p> <p>f) <u>Litterwarden update</u> The litterwarden's additional hours in Bishops Green are helping keep the area clear and Cllrs unanimously agreed he can continue with the 6 hours per week. This will be reviewed again in June.</p> <p>g) <u>Increased sewerage lorries through Bishops Green issue</u> There has been a notable increase in sewerage lorries through the parish which appear to be removing excess liquid. Cllr Monteith will speak to contacts at Thames Water to see what information he can gather, and report back.</p>	<p>SJ</p> <p>SJ</p> <p>SJ</p> <p>SJ</p> <p>SJ</p> <p>SJ</p> <p>LM</p>
9	<p>Matters for Discussion:</p> <p>a) <u>Website upgrade progress and emails address change</u> The website designer, Chair and clerk are arranging a meeting to hopefully finalise the launch of the new website. The current email provider has been contacted to transfer the domain to the new provider, this has taken some time so the clerk will chase and ask for it to be completed urgently.</p> <p>b) <u>CIL money project idea</u> The spreadsheet will be updated and recirculated, other project ideas will be considered as requested. The solar panel quotes are being sought, and also a warm box for the defibrillator.</p> <p>c) <u>SID purchase progress</u></p>	<p>SJ</p>

	<p>The SIDs have been delivered, and a working party of volunteers is being set up to install the devices. Trial cameras will also be purchased and installed so any vandalism will be recorded.</p> <p>d) <u>Neighbourhood Plan Review Process</u> The steering group was finalised in February as reflected in the minutes. The group have met with 3 consultants and the final choice is being made; this will then be signed off by the parish council and the project moved forward.</p> <p>e) <u>Sustainability and Environmental working party update</u> Cllr Sadler circulated information relating to the areas to be covered, and this will be discussed at the April meeting.</p> <p>f) <u>BGCA and EVH updates</u> Cllr Sadler was not present so there was no BGCA update. Cllr Hardy-Giles reported that he attended the EVH meeting. They have a new logo and website. There will be an increase in the hall hire costs due to the costs of running the hall. There is a Musical Event on Saturday 21st March. The Race Night and jumble sale were both successful events. The Panto is on track to go ahead in 2027.</p> <p>h) <u>Bus shelter grant</u> The clerk has received 2 quotes, she is seeking one more and will then apply for the grant.</p> <p>i) <u>S106 monies available and possible projects</u> Cllr Monteith advised he will look into S106 agreements and establish if there are any projects for these monies. He will report back at the April meeting.</p>	<p>MS</p> <p>LM</p>																		
10	<p>Finance</p> <p>a) Electronic payments made in March:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>S Jones Clerk's salary (February)</td> <td>£817.75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D McClelland Litter warden – (February)</td> <td>£453.46</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HMRC PAYE – DM, SJ</td> <td>£233.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D McClelland Expenses</td> <td>£ 40.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Payment to Flexinet x2</td> <td>£ 72.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Payment to Flotek x2</td> <td>£145.68</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Less payment to allotment lease (landowner)</td> <td>£ 50.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Less NI payment to HMRC</td> <td>£330.07</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>£2141.96</td> </tr> </table> <p>b) Actual/against budget The actual/against budget was circulated and agreed by all.</p> <p>The clerk confirmed she has booked the Internal Audit for May 8th and will ensure she is available to carry out the audit.</p>	S Jones Clerk's salary (February)	£817.75	D McClelland Litter warden – (February)	£453.46	HMRC PAYE – DM, SJ	£233.00	D McClelland Expenses	£ 40.00	Payment to Flexinet x2	£ 72.00	Payment to Flotek x2	£145.68	Less payment to allotment lease (landowner)	£ 50.00	Less NI payment to HMRC	£330.07	TOTAL	£2141.96	
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11	<p>Correspondence 15.03.26 – BDBC Election Office; ESG PC are subject to elections this year and the clerk will forward on the notices and information.</p>																			
12	<p>Highways and Rights of Way There are no additional issues, just to ongoing road signs and potholes although nothing new has been reported.</p>																			
13	<p>Communications – newsletter (Clerk) and other media output It was agreed the draft minutes do not need to be published this month. Items for the magazine were agreed.</p>																			
14	<p>Review of calendar items Calendar items for March 2026 were noted.</p>																			
15	<p>Date of next meeting: Wednesday 8th April 2026 at 7.30pm at Bishops Green Village Hall. There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.40pm.</p>																			

ACTIONS:

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The quarterly safety review is not due until April so will be on the agenda for then

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