



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF EAST WOODHAY PARISH COUNCIL**  
**20 October 2025**  
**19:15 East Woodhay Village Hall**

**Chairman:** Cllr Hurst (Chair)

**Present:** Cllrs D Blakeway, K Titcomb, G Dick, S Cooper, R Donoghue

**In attendance:** Cllr Samuel Carr, BDBC

**Clerk:** Amy White

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**Item 1: 65/25 Apologies**

Received from Cllrs Roots, Rand.

**Item 2: 66/25 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**Item 3: 67/25 To approve Meeting Minutes of 29 September 2025**

The Meeting Minutes of 29 September 2025 were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman, Cllr Hurst.

**Item 4: 68/25 Actions from Meeting of 29 September 2025**

Item	Action	Owner
65/24	All councillors owning statements or SOPs to work with the Clerk to confirm they are held centrally, and for the Clerk to structure this documentation for ease of future access. A spreadsheet listing the documents will be generated. Statement documentation may be more complex as it will need to link with appropriate legal documents. The owners of the statement documents need to highlight these legal links. <i>In action-</i> to keep on Action list.	All Cllrs, Clerk
45/25	Cllr Blakeway to make contact with tractor run team to determine whether EWPC could engage with them (improvement focus)- <i>Outstanding.</i>	Cllr Blakeway
46/25	Cllr Rand to work with Clerk regarding appropriate access to Dropbox from eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk accounts- <i>Actioned, Cllrs can request access to folders if and when required. Access to committee folders for each member actioned.</i>	Cllr Rand, Clerk

<b>59/25</b>	Clerk to investigate carshare service run by HCC to see if can add a stop in Woolton Hill- <b>Actioned</b> . The community transport lead at HCC has confirmed they will respond to the request in a few weeks. Clerk to ask Burghclere and Newtown clerks whether they are interested in working together re bus service. <b>Actioned</b> - some support for issue.	<b>Clerk</b>  <b>Clerk</b>
<b>60/25</b>	Clerk to send out meeting notes and consultation responses from Bewley Homes once available.	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>61/25</b>	Cllr Titcomb will liaise with the scout leaders regarding the development of the community area at Heath End recreation ground (Scribbens Reserve). <b>Actioned</b> . Scouts supportive of creation of a more useful area. <b>Action:</b> Cllrs Titcomb and Roots will put together a planting costing proposal for EWH (for CIL funding use). <b>Carry forward to November meeting.</b>	<b>Cllr Titcomb</b>  <b>Cllr Titcomb,</b> <b>Cllr Roots</b>

#### **Item 5: 69/25 Public Participation**

None.

#### **Item 6: 70/25 Borough and County Councillor Reports**

The consultation on the favoured proposal is likely to be published by the government in mid-November. Cllr Carr encouraged the council and the community to respond to this consultation. Likely outcomes should become clearer by February 2026.

Planning: Cllr Carr noted and thanked Cllr Titcomb for her email to the Planning Policy Team questioning developments proposed for East Woodhay and the 20-house allocation for Woolton Hill in the Local Plan Update. This is despite having a zero allocation in the NP, confirmed in a note from the Planning Policy Team, due to the Meadowbrook development of 65 houses. Cllr Carr advised that it is unlikely the proposed 20-house allocation will change. He also recommended that if the Oakley Farm development is approved by the BDBC Cabinet to be included in the Local Plan Update Regulation 18 consultation, the PC should challenge this with regard to the 'duty to cooperate' (there is no information/knowledge that West Berkshire has been consulted on the proposal, or whether any feedback has been received).

Oakley Farm: Cllr Carr is supporting EWPC and HPC on its opposition to the Oakley Farm proposal in the draft Local Plan.

**Action:** Clerk to send Oakley Farm flyer to Cllr Carr to share on his social media.

#### **Item 7: 71/25 7/7A Bus update**

Cllr Hurst has spoken with Cllr Thacker, who has provided an update- this is on the EWPC Facebook page.

Cllr Hurst and Cllr Dick are attending an HCC 'community-led transport engagement' meeting on Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

HandyBus has already approached East Woodhay and Highclere parish councils to help disseminate a link to parishioners; they are investigating the feasibility of extending the service to these parishes.

#### **Item 8: 72/25 Planning Update**

Please see the most recent Planning Minutes on the EWPC website.

A CIL payment of £7000 has been received for Land Adjacent to Gore End Road.

**Item 9: 73/25 Legal Matter**

Cllr Donoghue is working on the voluntary first registration on the Woolton Hill recreation ground and the Heath End recreation ground. No original documents have yet been found. Meadowbrook: Heads of Terms have now been received from BDBC for the transfer of the Meadowbrook land EWPC.

**Action:** Cllr Donoghue will contact Knight Frank solicitors to obtain an estimate of the costs of the legal matters to be dealt with, and will work with the Clerk to draft emails to solicitors and BDBC.

**Item 10: 74/25 Amenities Update**

Please see the most recent Amenities Minutes on the EWPC website.

Cllr Hurst will support Cllr Titcomb in writing to the scouts with plans for the HE recreation ground. It was discussed that the Scribbens Reserve should not be used to cover any costs associated with the removal of old equipment. It was agreed that the Reserve will be spent on trees, planting and benches.

Cllr Hurst updated the council on a recent meeting attended with Henry Oliver of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape Trust, who is keen to work with parish councils.

**Action:** Clerk to create a page on the parish council website on the NWDNL and add recent presentation notes from Henry Oliver.

**Item 11: 75/25 Highways**

Cllr Dick's report and current issues log are on the Highways section of the website.

Kevin Tooze of Town and Country Fencing has now replaced Premier Grounds as the SID placement contractor. The Clerk has a copy of the public liability insurance and has purchased a new high vis jacket and traffic cones.

**Item 12: 76/25 Emergency Plan**

Cllr Dick has updated the Emergency Plan, which is now specific to East Woodhay.

*The full council approved adopting the update, which will now be posted on the website and distributed to stakeholders as appropriate.*

**Action:** Clerk to add the Emergency Plan to the website.

**Item 13: 77/25 Finance Update**

Bank reconciliation 30 September 2025:

**Natwest: £30832.32 (precept 2nd tranche received)**

**Redwood: £24439.09**

**TOTAL: £55271.41**

**a. Accounts for payment:**

The Clerk presented the accounts for payment—see the end of the Minutes for the list. Cllr Rand had confirmed invoices and payments via Scribe before the meeting.

**Item 14: 78/25 Annual Parish Meeting**

Cllr Hurst asked the council to consider a theme for next year's Annual Meeting. Ideas include volunteering, the National landscape.

**Item 15: 79/25 General Power of Competence**

The Clerk explained what the GPoC is and how EWPC will be able to adopt this power after the May elections- see below for an explanation.

**Item 16: 80/25 Items to carry forward to subsequent meeting**

Usual items; budget first draft.

**Actions from Meeting of 20 October 2025**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>45/25</b>	Cllr Blakeway to make contact with tractor run team to determine whether EWPC could engage with them (improvement focus)- <b>Outstanding.</b>	<b>Cllr Blakeway</b>
<b>61/25</b>	<b>Action:</b> Cllrs Titcomb and Roots will put together a planting costing proposal for EWVH (for CIL funding use).	<b>Cllr Titcomb, Cllr Roots</b>
<b>70/25</b>	Clerk to send Oakley Farm flyer to Cllr Carr to share on his social media.	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>73/25</b>	Cllr Donoghue will contact Knight Frank solicitors to get an estimate of costs of the legal matters to deal with, and work with the Clerk to draft emails to solicitors and BDBC.	<b>Cllr Donoghue</b>
<b>74/25</b>	Clerk to create a page on the parish council website on the NWDNL and add recent presentation notes from Henry Oliver.	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>76/25</b>	Clerk to add the Emergency Plan to the website.	<b>Clerk</b>

**General Power of Competence – Summary**

The General Power of Competence (GPC) allows local councils to do “anything that an individual can do”, unless it is specifically prohibited by law. It was introduced under the Localism Act 2011 to give councils greater flexibility and freedom in serving their communities.

**Eligibility**

A parish or town council can use the GPC if two conditions are met:

1. Two-thirds of the council members are elected (not co-opted).
2. The Clerk holds a recognised qualification (e.g., CiLCA).

**Benefits**

The GPC enables councils to:

- Innovate freely without needing specific legal powers.
- Support local businesses and community projects.
- Promote social, economic, and environmental well-being.
- Simplify decision-making.
- Generate revenue through trading or charging for services.

**Examples of Use**

- Purchasing and running a community pub to save it from closure.
- Launching a community minibus service to reduce isolation.
- Installing solar panels on community buildings.
- Supporting local markets and business pop-ups.
- Setting up a community café and training centre.
- Providing free town-centre Wi-Fi and digital training.
- Funding youth mentoring and wellbeing programmes.

**Limits**

Councils cannot raise taxes under GPC, override existing laws, or trade commercially without setting up a company. The GPC must be used responsibly and transparently.

In summary, the General Power of Competence gives councils the legal confidence to act creatively and effectively in the best interests of their communities.