

## EASTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of Eastham Parish Council held in Eastham Village Memorial Hall on Tuesday 27 January 2026

**Present:** Cllr P Arnold, Cllr M Adams, Cllr I Matravers and Cllr C Austin

**In Attendance:** Clerk,

1. **Apologies:** Cllr L Arnold accepted by all.  
**Resignation:** Received resignation of Cllr B Lewis with immediate effect  
Apologies would not be attending from District Councillors A Wilmott & County Councillor J Bowen
2. **Declaration of Interest:**
  - a. **Register of Interests** – Cllrs reminded to keep their registers always updated
  - b. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** – none
  - c. **Other Disclosable Interests** – none
3. **Dispensations** - To consider written requests from councillors for the council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) - **Dispensations received** - none  
**The Meeting adjourned for Public Question Time** – none  
**Meeting resumed**
4. **Reports from County Councillor and District Councillors.** Reports are appended at end of minutes
5. **Minutes** - The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 25 November 2025 were agreed by all, resolved and signed by the Chair.
6. **Finance**
  - a. i. **Regular payments as on list.** Confirming payments made below as shown
  - ii. **Payments for consideration,** includes urgent payments since last meeting, list presented at meeting -

List as presented at Meeting

898	Clerk	Dec Salary	£	356.80	reg.payment
		Payments since last meeting	£	356.80	
899	C Bunn	LM Dec & Jan	£	420.75	reg.payment
900	L Jenkins	Expenses	£	77.46	
901	Clerk	January Salary	£	356.80	reg.payment
902	WCC	Grit	£	152.72	
		Payments this meeting	£	1,007.73	
		<b>Total PAYMENTS</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>1,364.53</b>	

All payments agreed by Councillors, resolved.

- b. **Receipts received** - Payment from WCC LM Scheme £429.25
  - c. **Bank Reconciliation** - 31 December 2025 reconciled balance of £21,225.39; All Agreed, Resolved - documents signed.
  - d. **Budget Reports** – to review and agree quarterly Budget Report as of 31 December 2025, note amended handwritten figure on report. All Agreed, resolved.
  - e. **Bank** - Internet Banking update – Clerk & Councillors to submit individual online form
7. **Clerks report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting** – payments as noted in point 6 Clerks Salary
  8. **Emails and Domain/Website (.gov.uk) Digital and Data Compliance under JPAG** - update at next meeting
  9. **Planning**
    - a. Plans received since last meeting – M-25-01978-FUL St Peter & St Pauls Church Eastham
    - b. Decisions received since last meeting – none
    - c. Plans for consideration at this meeting - none

## EASTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### 10. Progress reports/ updates

- a. Roads, kerbing drains & LM report – no items reported
- b. Village Millenium Green kerbing – kerbing completed, awaiting tamping down and reseeding.

11. Rhyse Lane – Eastham Sign - Verge insufficient at point - not proceeding. All Agreed, resolved.

12. Reports on Meetings attended by Clerk and/or Councillors – none

### 13. Correspondence for Information: as circulated to Councillors,

RSN Bulletins weekly/monthly; CALC Newsletters, Health & Wellbeing newsletters,; NALC Bulletin; WMP contract, Fraud advice; HMRC bulletin; MHDC planning: SWDP Review; WCC Broadband Newsletter

### Correspondence for discussion

a. WMP Charter renewal- agreed to carry forward previous points. Operation Snap details found at <https://www.westmercia.police.uk//police-forces/west-mercia-police/areas/west-mercia/campaigns/campaigns/2019/operation-snap/>

b. Pension Regulator renewal of information – noted as received

c. SWDP Review until 7Feb 26 – no comments

14. Councillor's reports and items for the next agenda. – Items to be carried forward as noted in minutes

15. Confirm dates of next meetings 24 March and 19 May 2026 (brought forward a week)

16. Meeting closed at 8.06pm

Signed

Date

---

**Public Question Time** – Query regarding Defibrillator Pads, these have an expiry date upon them and are changed at this time, or the set have been used are replaced. The Battery also have an expiry date, the state of the battery is shown on the unit, and this is checked regularly.

**Andrew Willmott District Councillor Tenbury Ward**

**27 January 2026**

### Flood Defences, Tenbury Wells

Herefordshire has caught up with its Statutory Duty to produce Section 19 Flood Reports; there have been no S19 Reports on any of the Tenbury Floods by Worcestershire. The Environment Agency, having refused to provide their original strategic flood assessment to my District Committee, are to be called to explain to the District Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Natural flood attenuation on the Kyre continues to be funded without measured impact assessments.

### Local Government Reorganisation

LGR - probable but not certain. The Deputy Police Commissioner was quizzed on conversations within the Force over unifying geographical responsibility within Mayoral Strategic Groups. The administration of Tenbury policing is moving from Worcestershire to Herefordshire. Tenbury Area Partnership is unlikely to run parallel with the emergence of Neighbourhood Area Committees; the current Chair, Barbara Selkirk, sadly died suddenly on Christmas eve. Non-statutory local authority activity could be available to parishes, and more especially towns.

### Neighbourhood Planning

MHDC has set aside £100,000 for NPs, Central Government having cancelled funding. The new District Plan should come into force in March, re-establishing settlement planning boundaries preventing speculative development in adjacent open countryside.

### MHDC Strategy, Post White Paper

MHDC's plans are to not increase the district's portion of Council Tax in any year up to the District Council's demise in April 2028. County's ongoing financial difficulties are producing potential problems for districts as statutory billing agents as the new financial year draws close.

### District Health Provision

NHS England published a ranking of the NHS Trusts, Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust was ranked 110<sup>th</sup> out of 134, this, and the shortage of General Practitioners (GPs form a central plank of government health strategy), will be raised at the County Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

## EASTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### **Traveller Sites**

Significant concern is expressed in Hanley, and beyond, about new traveller sites being developed in open countryside. MHDC Enforcement and Planning are being pressed to keep abreast of, and place the correct controls on, the developing situation. We await the planning officer's assessment.

### **Peer Review MHDC**

One year ago, as our new Administration was bedding in, a team comprising senior staff from leading UK local authorities visited, studied our practices and outcomes and made recommendations. They returned recently to review progress. MHDC received a glowing endorsement from the Peer Team.

### **Report for Tenbury Division Parish Councils January 2026 Worcestershire County Council Matters Worcestershire County Council finances**

As reported previously, Worcestershire County Council is more than £600 million in debt, with emergency funding (Exceptional Financial Support) being required from the government for this year of £33 million, alongside reserves of £15 million being used to balance the budget. Additionally, the government has now announced its funding formula for local authorities for the next 3 years. Unfortunately, this has resulted in Worcestershire County Council being allocated £7.1 million **less** per year by the government than anticipated, equating to £21 million over the next 3 years. This has increased the already acute financial pressures on the Council and ensures that 2026 will be even more challenging than previous years. It is therefore inevitable that Worcestershire County Council will again need to request Exceptional Financial Support from the government in order to balance the budget for 26/27. Additionally, with no further reserves available to draw on, the Council has applied to the government for permission to increase Council Tax by up to 10%. The government is likely to decide on whether to grant these requests in February, ahead of a full Council meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> February. Although 10% is the maximum option that is being asked for, it is hoped that through various measures being taken by the Reform administration that any Council Tax increase will be below that. Any increase will only be at the level necessary to balance the budget and prevent a S.114 notice being issued.

With the government also due to make a decision on Local Government Reorganisation, the coming months are perhaps the most important faced by Worcestershire for many years.

### **Tenbury Division Matters**

#### **Blocked drains and gulleys**

Before Christmas, good progress was made in our area on having blocked drains and gullies cleared thanks to local residents making efforts to report any that were blocked. I've had confirmation both from Highways and residents themselves that in Tenbury and surrounding villages work has been carried out. However, it is important that we collectively keep the pressure on, so please continue to report any blocked drains directly here:

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/travel-and-highways/report-road-or-path-issue/report-drainage-and-flooding-highway> If there is no response, or the response is slow, then please let me know so that I can chase it up by

emailing [jb Bowen4@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:jb Bowen4@worcestershire.gov.uk) This approach is working, so please keep going!

#### **Traffic**

I have been informed that the Highways Department has completed a review of its traffic management policy and has decided to make no changes at this time. I believe that this is the wrong decision and that the policy fails to take into account the needs of our rural community, particularly with the criteria for reducing speed limits failing to take into account the impact on quality of life. I will therefore continue to pursue this in 2026 as it remains one of the main issues in our villages.

**Justin Bowen**

**2<sup>nd</sup> January 2026**

Worcestershire County Councillor for Tenbury Division. Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families