

East Worlington Parish Council Minutes for 27/11/25 Meeting held at the Parish Hall

Clerk to the Council: Faye Davies clerk@eastworlingtonpc.org.uk

Meeting commenced: 19:30

Those Present: Cllrs Hurst-Bannister, Brown, Webber, District Cllr Jones, Faye Davies (clerk), and two members of the public.

1. **Apologies:** Cllr Sturla – approved.
2. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
3. **Dispensations for planning applications:** None.
4. **Minutes:** Minutes for 25/09/25 meeting approved.
5. **District and County Councillor reports:** County Cllr Hopley was not present; however, an update was provided to inform that a lot of road works will be happening over North Devon and he will update once he knows more about the potential Unitary Authority.

District Cllr Jones informed that there are going to be changes to trade waste which will likely affect small businesses. 154 option for the Unitary Authority will be in place by 2028 (154 refers to part of the 5-4-1 plan proposed by several different District Councils in Devon, specifically Appendix 5 which is a draft covering letter to the Secretary of State), and a shadow government in place for 2027.

Taw and Torridge River Champions charity has been set up, with the hope that parish councils will have a representative and be able to provide donations.

6. **Members of the public open session:** Coombe Ball Hill was dangerous due to the flood water, which negatively impacted the school. The drain between the Parish Hall and Drayford is blocked and causing flooding.
7. **Chairmans report:** The Parish Council may be eligible to apply for a landmark tree supplied via a grant; however, it was discussed that due to the Parish Council not owning any land this is not viable to apply for.
8. **Councillors reports:** No reports from Cllr Sturla or Webber. Cllr Browns report was relevant to item 20.
9. **Clerk report:** Unity Trust Bank submission for change of bank signatories is very slow but they have acknowledged receipt of the documents sent in.

- 10. First Draft Budget:** To discuss and approve the first draft of the 26/27 budget.
Cllr Brown proposed approval of the budget, which was seconded by Chair Hurst-Bannister. Budget breakdown document at the end of the minutes.
- 11. Payments for approval**
- a. War memorial repair £990 – invoice and payment approved.
 - b. Clerk Invoice £145.90 – invoice and payment approved.
 - c. Locum Clerk Invoice £271.80 – invoice and payment approved.
- 12. Planning Applications:** None received.
- 13. Rusdon Orchards Update:** It was reported by the Parish Council that this was an illegal dwelling, however North Devon District Council enforcement office informed no action would be taken. It will be assessed for banding for council tax.
- 14. Neighbourhood watch:** Parish Hall Committee has funded some new neighbourhood watch signs, thanks given from the parish council.
- 15. Parish Hall Lease Update:** There is a working group in progress for the future, and a meeting is scheduled for January.
- 16. Local Plan Update:** Plots that are logical for development can be sent to the local plan for assessment now.
- 17. Town and Parish Settlement Survey:** As part of the People and Place project, the settlement study will help inform the update to the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan which will set out the vision, strategies and policies to guide the future development of northern Devon. Cllr Brown volunteered to take on this activity.
- 18. Banking Arrangements Discussion:** There is a slight problem in which the bank is not recognising one of the signatures, new documents have been sent in but have not been accepted yet, therefore there is only one signatory available when there should be two. Therefore, the parish council agreed to remain with the current signatories, of which one of whom is a former councillor, to get these three payments approved, until the issues with the bank are sorted.
- 19. Contribution consideration towards North Lake Chapel Cemetery and the Thornham Chapel Cemetery:** The cemeteries are owned by Ringsash Methodist Circuit. The parish council has decided against a grant due to the cemeteries not being open to the public.
- 20. External Meetings attended (for information only) –** To include updates on roads/footpaths. - £160 a year from Parish Paths Partnership Scheme if joined, but this is limited on what it can be spent on. Cllr Brown created a map of the footpaths and bridleways within the parish. Post also noted to be missing by Old Smithy.

Chair Hurst-Bannister attended an Army Day, and North Devon Focus Group, of which one of the topics was district councillor attendance to parish council meetings. The chair informed them that the Parish Council is extremely satisfied with the relationship they have with the District Councillor. Another topic was should parish councillors form clusters with other small parish councils, the district councillor informed that clerks working with multiple councils is helpful in this regard.

21. Date of next meeting - Thursday 29th January 2026 19:30 at East Worlington Parish Hall.

Meeting concluded: 21:16

Minutes signed at the 29/01/2026 meeting by the chair.

**EAST WORLINGTON PARISH
COUNCIL**

2025/2026

PAYMENTS

**Agreed
Budget**

2026/2027

All figures are estimated

Employment	5,241	1,950
Office Expenses	400	400
Computer/software/website	200	200
Donations/Grants	0	0
War Memorial	0	0
Insurance	605	700
Audit	125	250
Hire of Hall	0	0
Subscriptions	145	145
S137	0	0
Training	583	200
Grass cuts/ditches/drainage	840	840
Miscellaneous	300	300
Election	0	0
Defibrillator	500	550
Festivals/magazine	100	100
Legal fees	200	1000
	9,239	6,635

RECEIPTS

Precept	9,089	6,635
	9,089	6,635

Budget Breakdown 2026/2027

Employment: Employment has decreased from £5,241 to £1,950. This is due to the employed clerk being on a lower wage than the locum clerk. The clerks wage is £1,750.80 per annum, and a £200 increase has been added to the employment budget to account for any potential overtime that may occur.

62.79% decrease from the previous financial year

Office Expenses: Office expenses are expected to remain the same at £400 from the previous financial year due to the hours worked remaining the same.

No change from the previous financial year

Computer/software/website: This is expected to remain the same at £200 from the previous financial year due to no change in the costs.

No change from the previous financial year

Donations/Grants: This cost has remained the same at £0.

No change from the previous financial year

War Memorial: No cost has been given to this as the repair/maintenance work for the war memorial was completed during 2025/2026 financial year. No more repair/maintenance work is expected.

No change from the previous financial year

Insurance: Insurance has increased from £605 to £700; this is an estimated cost to account for inflation.

15.70% increase from the previous financial year

Audit: Audit has increased from £125 to £250. In previous financial years the locum clerk was also able to complete the internal audit, however the employed clerk is unable to complete an internal audit, therefore an outside internal auditor will be required.

72.41% increase from the previous financial year

Hire of Hall: No cost has been given and remains the same at £0 as the Parish Council is not charged for the use of the Parish Hall.

No change from the previous financial year

Subscriptions: This cost remains the same at £145 due to no price changes.

No change from the previous financial year

S137: No cost has been given as this is not expected to be used.

No change from the previous financial year.

Training: This cost has decreased from £583 to £200 due to the employed clerk already having all the relevant training, therefore a cost of £200 has been given to cover any additional training that might be available for the clerk and/or councillors.

65.70% decrease from the previous financial year

Grass cuts/ditches/drainage: This cost remains the same at £840 from the previous financial year due to no cost changes being expected.

No change from the previous financial year

Miscellaneous: This cost remains the same at £300 from the previous financial year to cover any unexpected additional costs that are not already covered elsewhere.

No change from the previous financial year

Election: No cost has been given to this, and it remains the same as the previous financial year, this is because election costs are covered by the reserves account.

No change from the previous financial year

Defibrillator: This has increased from £500 to £550. The Parish Council has a contract with Southwest Ambulance Service for a defibrillator renewal every 4 years, the last renewal cost £2,160. That total divided over 4 years equals £540 a year; however, it was decided to increase this total to £550 to cover any potential inflation costs.

10% increase from the previous financial year

Festivals/magazine: This cost remains the same as the previous financial year at £100.

No change from the previous financial year

Legal fees: This cost has increased from £200 to £1,000. This increase is to cover any potential legal fees that may occur from establishing a potential parish hall trust.

400% increase from the previous financial year

2025/2026 precept = £9,089 2026/2027 precept = £6,635

£2,454 decrease in the precept from the previous financial year.

27% decrease in the precept from the previous financial year.