

Minutes of the East Knoyle Parish Council

Convened at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 1st October 2025 at East Knoyle Village Hall

Present: Councillor Garry Staunton, Councillor Ian Tait, Councillor Ann Ambrose, Councillor Ann White, Councillor Hugo Middleton, Councillor Eric Brunner, Councillor Rob McCarthy, Councillor Deb Bateman, EK Parish Clerk, Councillor Wayman Wiltshire Council

Apologies: None

Public Open Forum

Ms S Tranter-Coombs, Mr M Brown and Mr P Eggington were in attendance. Ms Tranter-Coombs read a letter to the Parish Council conveying concerns regarding antisocial behaviour on a the area of Common Land known as The Dips which was causing both noise and environmental issues. Seeking redress from the Parish Council. Mr Brown then read out a statement asking for Parish Council regarding the same issues at The Dips on behalf of himself and local concerned residents. Mr Eggington addressed the Parish Council in respect of the prior practice of the Village Hall being able to claim back its Vat payments on large capital items to the benefit of the Community. Also recommended that the Parish Council looked to submit Vat claims currently rather than annually.

Vice Chair suggested, and fellow Councillors agreed it would be best to address both these Public concerns now rather later in the agenda.

Vice Chair noted that The Dips had been an ongoing concern for sometime with irregular incidents. A Police Crime number had been raised. With this in mind he and a number of fellow Councillors had attended the site with a group of concerned residents to view firsthand the impacted area at The Dips to assess options and agree a way forward.

As a result of this site visit the Parish Council agreed that the physical damage needed to be repaired, This would involve the removal of debris and returning the site to its natural state. Both Cllr's Ambrose and Bateman insisted that any works were sympathetic to the landscape and no further damage resulted to remaining habitats. Cllr McCarthy volunteered to project manage the proposed remedial works using an available local contractor at a cost of no more than £200. Works could be undertaken immediately. Vice Chair proposed, seconded by Cllr McCarthy that this programme of remedial works be commissioned. Unanimously approved.

Cllr Tait on behalf of the Finance Committee said that EKPC, having just completed its 2024/25 Agar audit was in a position to continue the prior Vat practice with the Village Hall. He also said that quarterly as opposed to annual Vat claims would be investigated.

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 1st October 2025

Draft minutes were recommended for approval. Proposed Cllr Tait seconded Cllr McCarthy – unanimously approved and signed as a true record.

Matters arising

None outstanding - all others matters covered in agenda items.

Planning Applications

PL/2025/06739. Proposed works to trees in a conservation area. Councillors supported this application. Proposed Cllr Middleton, seconded Cllr White

PL/2025/07438. Proposed works to trees in a conservation area. Councillors had no objection to this application subject to a comment that felled tree be replaced with native species. Proposed Cllr Middleton, seconded Cllr Tait

PL/2025/07168. Proposed change of use to extend residential curtilage. Councillors supported this application. Proposed Cllr Middleton, seconded Cllr Bateman.

PL/2025/07316. The construction of an agricultural building to cover an open farm machinery area. Councillors had no objection subject to the wider site being landscaped to reflect local environment and improve views as befits such a prominent site. Proposed Cllr Middleton, seconded Cllr Bateman.

PL/2025/07053. Proposed works to trees in a conservation area. Councillors unanimously supported this application. Proposed Cllr Tait, seconded Cllr McCarthy

To receive a report from Bridget Wayman (Wiltshire Council)

Cllr Wayman noted that the new top surfacing works to Friars Lane were a material improvement.

Cllr Wayman said she was arranging a joint meeting with Sedgemoor and Semley Parish Councils to discuss any potential next steps with regard to the ongoing A350 traffic safety concerns of the East Knoyle Parish Council. Cllr's White and McCarthy agreed to attend this meeting on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Wayman indicated she would report back at the next East Knoyle Parish Council meeting.

Cllr Wayman re-iterated the need for better landscaping at Kemps Barn given it was a permanent site and would liaise with Planners accordingly.

Highways – Cllr McCarthy

Cllr McCarthy noted that small works continued to be undertaken by the Parish Steward, including patching Tuckmore Lane.

Cllr Brunner noted that the water taste at the lower end of Milton was seemingly different from that at the top end. This had been reported to Wessex Water.

Wiltshire Council will clear up to 5 nominated gully's in early November. Cllr McCarthy will provide details of priority gully works.

Vice Chairs Report – Cllr Staunton

- a) Cllr Staunton informed Councillors that Sue Entwistle had now also resigned as a Parish Councillor. He noted for the record his appreciation of her time

and effort supporting the work of the Parish Council and that he was personally sorry to see her leave.

- b) The proposed dates for the East Knoyle Parish Council meetings were agreed and the Parish Clerk was tasked to book the Village Hall accordingly and post these dates on public sites.
- c) Councillors discussed the community grant funding available from Wrens Shop. 2 ideas were discussed, a metal Fire Beacon for use at national beacon events and a concrete table tennis table at KHG Playground. Cllr Brunner agreed to work it Cllr Tait on a Fire Beacon proposal whilst Cllr Bateman along with the Parish Clerk would look into the concrete table tennis table options.
- d) The Parish Council fully discussed the findings of the recent KHG Rospa report. Initial focus would be on fully addressing the reported amber risks. Parish Clerk was tasked to identify maintenance solutions. Cllr Brunner offered his help in this regard.
- e) Cllr Staunton made himself available to be appointed Chair of East Knoyle Parish Council. No other Councillors put themselves forward. The election of Cllr Staunton as Chair was therefore proposed by Cllr Tait, seconded by Cllr Ambrose and unanimously approved.
- f) There were no expressions of interest from Councillors becoming Vice Chair. This appointment will be kept open until a candidate is forthcoming.

Finance Committee Report

Cllr Tait presented the Budget analysis which showed that expenditure was tracking as predicted.

The Parish Clerk noted that he had been approached by Cllr Brunner and the Chair of the Fox+Hounds group with a view to their possibly using the Open Space Charity. The Parish Council agreed to defer the closure of the Open Space Charity until such time as legal opinions could be obtained in respect of this Community vehicle. Parish Clerk to file the annual nil return with the UK Charity Commission.

Cllr Tait indicated that he would be approaching East Knoyle Village Hall with a view to them refunding the Parish Councils Agar audit fees for 2024/25.

Finance Committee and Parish Clerk will investigate moving to quarterly rather than annual filing of Vat claims.

Finance Committee noted that they were still looking for a voluntary, local Accountant to comply with the legal requirement to audit EKPC accounts.

Parish Clerk briefed the Parish Council that he had received a request from St Mary's Church for a £450 grant to support ground works in the churchyard. This was on annual request. Proposed by Cllr Ambrose, seconded by Cllr Brunner, unanimously approved.

Parish Clerk presented payments due for approval – Proposed Cllr White, seconded Cllr Staunton

Village Hall – Cllr Ambrose

Cllr Ambrose said that she had agreed that Cllr Bateman would take over this role. She noted that communications with the Village Hall Committee were now more proactive and that Community interests would be enhanced through better website links.

Common Lands – Cllr Ambrose

Cllr Ambrose noted that the agreed tree works to improve the Windmill vista would be happening during October. The exact timing of these works was weather dependent but would open the views over the Blackmore Vale.

Cllr Ambrose expressed her thanks to the team that had installed a new bridge over the river Lodden pertaining to FP21.

Post Office and Village Shop

Cllr Tait briefed the PC that Wren;s Shop would be celebrating its 20th Anniversary in 2026 and was investigating how best to recognize this significant milestone.

He noted that a new line in artisan bread sourced from a local baker had been added to the Shop's product range which was proving to be very successful.

KHG/Playground – Cllr Staunton

Cllr Staunton updated Councillors that subsequent to the dead branch being removed from the KHG landmark Oak tree material fungal infections had been identified. As such a QRTA Tree survey would be requested to ensure the right balance between maintaining a healthy tree and safety concerns.

An action plan was being developed to clear the various minor points included in the Rospa report. Cllr Brunner was looking into repairs to the goal crossbars.

Correspondence Received

None..

Urgent Items

None

Any other Business.

There being no other business the East Knoyle Parish Council finished at 9.15 pm

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 12th November 2025 at 7.30pm East Knoyle Village Hall

Approved: Garry Staunton.....Chair

Date: 12th November 2025.....