

Minutes of the East Knoyle Parish Council

Convened at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 7th January 2026 at East Knoyle Village Hall

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

Apologies: Councillor Eric Bruner

Public Open Forum

No public in attendance.

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd December 2025

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

Matters arising

None outstanding - all other matters covered in agenda items.

Planning Application – taken as AOB due to late arrival

No new planning applications received.

Cllr Ambrose raised a query regarding the building works at Bay Tree House. Cllr Wayman observed it was likely to be a Permitted Development which as such would not be referred to EKPC. She committed to research and revert..

To receive a report from Bridget Wayman (Wiltshire Council)

Cllr Wayman noted that Wessex Water will be undertaking essential works in Milton which would necessitate road closure(s)

Cllr Wayman briefed Councillors on her continuing efforts in respect of the proposed online booking and charging at the Shaftesbury Household recycling centre.

Cllr Wayman shared with Councillors the outcome of the latest WC full cabinet Budget meeting and highlighted the increasing cost pressure that needed to be addressed.

Highways – Cllr McCarthy

Nothing material to report. Salt bins had been checked and were at least half-full. Gritting had been occurring.

Chairs Report – Cllr Staunton

- a) In advance of the 4 Grants of Access expiry dates the Chair facilitated a discussion regarding their renewal. Councillor discussion focused on the Grant for the Fox+Hounds and whether it should be renewed given the pub's closure. There were mixed opinions expressed and the matter will be revisited at the next EKPC meeting.
- b) World book day will be on Thursday 5th March and the Parish Council discussed how it could recognize and support this day. Cllrs Bateman and Ambrose fully supported the Parish Council holding an event. Proposal was to have a Book reading for Children to be held at the Village Hall on the morning of Saturday 7th March. Cllr Bateman agreed to contact Winstones for ideas and support. Budget for the hire of the Hall and refreshments was set at £100. Cllr Bateman proposed, seconded by Cllr Ambrose that EKPC proceed with this event as a means of visibly supporting the community. EKPC then voted on and approved this event and the budget. Parish Clerk was asked to book the Village Hall.
- c) Cllr Staunton, on behalf on Cllr Bruner raised the matter of the proposed Fire Beacon. Cllr Tait noted that as this was an unbudgeted item and funding had not been secured it would need to be paid for as of April 2026. All Councillors supported the acquisition of a Fire Beacon which would be stored in the KHG shed and Cllr's Tait and Bruner were asked to liaise with the selected local supplier to commission the works on the understanding it would be invoiced as of 1st April
- d) Chair expressed his disappointment that the proposed Beer festival had been cancelled for economic risk reasons. Cllr Bateman recommended that the Parish Council explore further options as such an event would be well received. Parish Council will continue to assess what could be feasible as was keen to support such an event.
- e) Chair noted that there remained 3 vacancies on the Parish Council which needed to be filled. Cllr Bateman said she was in active discussion with a potential candidate and would look to broker a chat with the Chair prior to the next EKPC meeting. Cllr Ambrose also noted she was continuing to talk with a possible candidate. Parish Clerk was asked to include a recruitment note in the upcoming EK newsletter

Finance Committee Report

Cllr Tait noted the 2025/26 Actual versus Budget analysis which showed that expenditure was tracking as forecast.

Cllr Tait presented to fellow Parish Councillors the proposed precept for 2026/27. This proposed precept was £15,789 which represented a 4.66% increase versus the current year. After discussion Cllr Tait proposed and Cllr Middleton seconded the proposed precept be submitted to WC. This was then voted on and unanimously.

The Parish Clerk was tasked with formally submitting the Precept request by the submission date of 20th January 2026.

Parish Clerk presented payments due for approval – Proposed Cllr Tait, seconded Cllr Bateman

Village Hall – Cllr Bateman

Nothing to report

Common Lands – Cllr Ambrose

Cllr Ambrose noted that after consultation with the Clarow group there was no objection to the proposed re-routing of FP26. Parish clerk has asked to respond accordingly.

Post Office and Village Shop

Cllr Tait briefed the PC that the shop had remained open except for Christmas day thanking the volunteers for their continuing support. Sales for £2025 had exceeded £300k which had been positively influenced by the new Loyalty scheme.

KHG/Playground – Cllr Staunton

Cllr Staunton noted that 1 quote had been received and another one requested for the pruning of the Oak tree. Works would be undertaken as of 1 April.

The requisite playground equipment repairs and maintenance have been instructed and will be actioned by 2 contractors during January. The Playground will remain open although certain pieces of equipment will be cordoned off for health and safety reasons. These works will have fully addressed the recent Rospa report observations and recommendations.

Cllr Staunton noted that a locksmith would be required to repair the vandalised lock, cost would be between £100 and £200.

Cllr Staunton noted that additional work would be required to initially clear the KHG boundary wall of vegetation with a view to assessing any further actions.

Cllr Staunton raised the football pitch, both standard and grass length as raised by Cllr Bruner who advocated a more structured and formal regime to improve the quality of the pitch. Councillors discussed options but agreed that, for cost reasons, the current grass-cutting and maintenance would be continued.

Correspondence Received

None.

Urgent Items

None

Any other Business.

There being no other business the East Knoyle Parish Council finished at 8.50 pm

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 4th February 2026 at 7.30pm East Knoyle Village Hall

Approved: Garry Staunton...Chair

Date: 4th February 2026.....