

MINUTES OF THE **ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY** OF THE ELECTORS OF EVERSLEY
HELD ON **THURSDAY 5TH MARCH 2026** AT EVERSLEY VILLAGE HALL AT 7.36 PM

PRESENT: Cllr Shawn Dickens (EPC Chairman) John Coles
Cllr Sandra Miller (EPC) Sharon Brookes
Cllr Philip Todd (EPC) Mike Baldwin
Cllr L Batup (EPC) Rosie Twine
Cllr S Kendrick (EPC) Sheila Young
Leonie Brown Diane Meyers
Malcolm Benjamin Morag Lamb
Chris Young Sally Pitcherd
Mandy Coles Mike Slater
June Coles Sue Slater
Mick Slater Mike Watters
Sue Slater Pat Watters
Claude Kensitt Shirley Kensitt

ALSO PRESENT: Cllr Dr Anne Crampton (HDC), Cllr Tim Davies, PC Kevan Wright, and Jo Street (Parish Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr S Stephens and Cllr E Dixon sent their apologies.

2. Approval of the minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly of Thursday 3rd April 2025

The Chairman explained that the minutes were available on the website.

No errors were reported, and it was **resolved** that the Minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman. **SD**

3. Community Awards

The following awards were presented to;

SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY – The Community Café Ladies, Susan K, Morag, Liz, Sue and Sally

From coming up with the idea of the Café in early 2025, funding the start up of it by selling old clothes on Vinted and Ebay and then giving up their time each week to provide a community refuge midweek, they are truly inspiring.

SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY – Morag Lamb

Her work to get the community cafe off the ground and running has to be recognised as it has become a very focal point in village life. If you need to find something out there will be someone there to help if not point you in the right direction. It would not have happened without Morag.

SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY – David Hughes

For his dedication to setting the new charity up for the village hall to change it to a CIO charity which gives it greater protection.

SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY – June Coles

At present, June is a one-woman personal library service and has amassed a vast amount of books and puzzles - she is about to donate them all to the 'Bus Stop Book Swap Scheme' in Eversley. She is also the unofficial taxi service for many attending local social clubs, she regularly takes friends on personal shopping trips or is happy to 'just be' that supportive person at the doctors' or at hospital appointments etc.. Incredibly, in September 2025 June, and her daughters raised £600 for Dementia UK when they completed the 'Walk 30 miles in September', no mean feat given she is currently on the waiting list for a hip replacement!

VOLUNTEERING – Andrew Miller

Over the last 2 years he has been the main pond volunteer regularly assisting in sorting out the weed and installing the new duck house.

VOLUNTEERING – Liz Batup

For her dedication in taking over the lengthy administration required to safeguard the constitution of Eversley Village Hall, her role on the Parish Council and latterly being the representative on Neighbourhood planning committee. As if that's not enough supporting a wide range of village events, such as planting bulbs at the village hall. Literally a quiet unspoken hero behind much of the community in 2025

4. A) Report from Alex Brewer MP – Member of Parliament for North East Hampshire

My thanks to Eversley Parish Council for inviting me to the Annual Parish Meeting – I'm sorry not to be able to attend but I'm happy to provide a written update.

Over recent months my team and I have been supporting the Parish Council across several long-standing local infrastructure issues. On Reading Road, we engaged directly with Thames Water to raise the recurring flooding problems affecting both the road and the adjacent footpath. Thames Water provided a detailed update confirming that significant root removal works have already been completed, with further specialist investigations planned and a commitment to maintain open communication with the Parish Council. Their work has already resulted in the first winter in more than 15 years without the persistent and significant flooding on Reading Road that residents had had to get used to. Investigations also identified two key pipes and manholes that fall under Hampshire County Council's responsibility - so I'll be continuing to monitor this and support constituents wherever I can.

We've also had some movement regarding renewed weed ingress along the adopted footpath between The Fielders and Sherlock Lea, where repairs and membrane installation were undertaken in 2024. I've written to Hampshire County Council on this and asked whether those works were covered by a contractor's warranty, and whether an inspection or remedial action can now be arranged given the deterioration reported this year. In addition, I've asked what support HCC can provide to ensure the route remains accessible for residents for many years to come – and am awaiting a response.

I'm also following up again with HCC on the ongoing flooding issues in Warbrook Lane, where the County Council maintains they cannot take enforcement action due to there being unregistered land. Local residents, including former Parish Council Chair Adrian

McNeil, strongly contest this position and argue that Hampshire should use the information already provided on historical ownership to enforce riparian duties. I'll be pursuing this matter further on the Parish Council's behalf to ensure meaningful action is taken.

Finally, an update on the much broader issue of planning. I know from speaking to residents in Eversley how important this issue is. I've been doing what I can in Westminster to make the case for community-led planning - and have been speaking in debates on the Planning and Infrastructure Bill as it came through Parliament – which I voted against as it didn't put communities at the heart of decision making. Unfortunately, the previous government didn't build enough sustainable housing for the country's needs, and the current government isn't letting planning do its job of bringing in sustainable, infrastructure-led development which protects the environment.

Last week, I asked a question to Planning Minister on the floor of the House about providing more protections Local Plans, and to give clarity to local areas who are doing the right thing and engaging with the planning processes in their areas. I know Eversley Parish Council has begun work on the Neighbourhood Plan for the area, and I've followed up with the Minister specifically on giving more protections when it comes to development – including using local examples of applications like Firgrove Farm. I'll be keeping those who have written to me about this updated in my questions here.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if there's anything I can do to help – be it in Eversley, in Westminster or beyond. You can find lots more information on my [website](#), records of my questions and contributions [here](#), and you can email me on alex.brewer.mp@parliament.uk.

b) Report from PC Kevan Wright – Hampshire Police

Thank you for inviting me to this meeting. Eversley is overall a nice area but there are a few issues. Most of the statistics below are well below the average across the Hart District area

Key statistics:

Burglary – There were two business burglaries reported in Eversley, and three residential burglaries reported. Two of the residential burglaries related to the same house.

Thefts – There were five incidents of personal theft or shoplifting over the past year, which was the same figure as the previous year. There was only one theft from a motor vehicle and one theft of a vehicle, of which this was part of a spate of thefts of Transit vans across the Hart and Rushmoor areas. The offenders have now been identified and are awaiting trial.

Anti-social Behaviour – Many of the reports related to the use of off-road motorbikes. There have been several meetings held between local landowners and Forestry England to try and cut off the areas that the motorbikes are used in, as well as some

successes in seizures of some of the vehicles used. There have been some reports of youths with catapults who have been shooting at local wildlife and items such as streetlamps. If you see any incidents of this nature, please call 999 immediately.

Assault – There were eleven incidents reported, namely relating to road rage incidents, mental health incidents and a car driven round with the occupants throwing eggs.

Drug offences – There was one incident at a location close to St Mary's Church. The Police are keeping an eye on this area.

Criminal Damage – There were eight incidents reported, namely due to the occupants' throwing eggs from a car and a resident experiencing mental health issues.

Road related – There were twenty-six collisions, nine incidents of dangerous driving, and nineteen other road related issues. These are all up from the previous year but are still below the averages seen across the Hart District.

If you can I would recommend logging your valuables on immobilise.com. This is a national register that allows you to register the serial numbers of your possessions such as TV's, mobile phones, and tools. It also allows you to upload pictures of items such as jewellery so they can be logged to. Using this service means that should they be recovered, even outside of the Hampshire Police borders then they can be returned to you and potentially the criminals identified.

Fraud is still a common problem, particularly fraudsters posing as officials. Please remember that the Police or Banking staff will never contact you asking for your details.

Romance fraud is also on the rise, with many fraudsters requesting money online either through 'befriending' you and then exhorting money to facilitate meetings or through blackmail if indecent images are received. If you have been a victim of any of these please do contact the Police.

Lastly there are some new PC's and PCSO's starting. Once they are up to speed we will try to get to the Community Café again for Cops and Coffee sessions.

c) Report from Cllr Shawn Dickens – Eversley Parish Council

Firstly I would like to introduce and thank all our members who give up their time for free. I would also like to thank our Clerk, Jo.

We had a full council up until February, so now have a vacancy for a new Councillor of there is anyone interested. I would like to thank ex-Councillor Susan Hughes who did many years on the council, and we are all very grateful.

I would also like to thank Mike our Litter Picker for his diligence, Nick Robins our main grounds contractor for his hard work around the village all year round, and Collards for their volunteer work and donations of materials for our community projects. I would also like to thank the volunteers on the Gardening Club, Community Café, Mike

Baldwin for running the Village Magazine, and all members of the working groups of the council especially the external members.

Reflecting on the past year, we have had some key accomplishments within the parish. These include the Open Spaces Committee, under Sandra Miller's guidance, doing an amazing job looking after our open spaces and four play areas.

The council has on average 40 planning applications to consider per year. Many are extensions and changes to existing properties. Our aim is to assess each application on its merits and make any comments to Hart District Council with the relevant material considerations in mind. As you are all aware we are dealing with two major applications submitted by landowners on two local farms in the village. Together they total 500 or more new homes. We have listened to residents' comments and voted unanimously against both on many factors.

We have had some projects that have moved on in leaps and bounds this year. The Neighbourhood Plan is a group of Councillors and residents who are progressing the Plan brilliantly. Thank you to all members of this group. There is a statement on our website from the Affordable Homes group as they have exhausted all sites investigations new and old. We have a site reserved at Hollybush Farm for 10 units but no way currently to progress it further. The burial grounds extension is making great progress under Cllr Sharon Stephens, and a pre-planning application has now been submitted.

Over the next year we plan to continually progress our projects, particularly the Neighbourhood Plan and the burial grounds extension. Sadly this means we have had to increase our Precept to keep these projects going for the community. We plan also to produce a newsletter, so watch this space.

We are always looking for ways to increase community engagement in our activities. Yes we have a vacancy for a Councillor, but you can just support us in joining one of our groups and donating a small proportion of your time. We will promote upcoming events or initiatives where your participation is crucial. Hopefully we will get some more village events organised throughout the year.

To conclude we will aim to be more community and resident focused. We would love to achieve a sense of unity, pride and optimism among community members, and we hope you can help us with supplying some new ideas.

Thank you all for actively listening and your participation.

d) Report from Hart District Council – Cllr Dr A Crampton

Local Government Reorganisation - There are two proposals submitted to MHCLG, HCC and East Hampshire where Hart will form a unitary with Basingstoke, Rushmoor, East Hampshire and Winchester a population of 656,000 and a wide geographic area. The districts, boroughs and existing unitaries favour for us a unitary of Hart, Basingstoke and Rushmoor with a population of about 450,000 and a more local area covered. The decision on which will be given in a few days' time, between the 11th to 17th march. Then begins the discussions on the disaggregation of Hampshire County Council and

the formation of strategy to deal with adult social services and children's services, contract merges, councils tax equalisation, staffing and so on.

Local Plan and local planning issues - The local plan has begun with a call for sites. By mid-January there were 14,000 possible houses put forward but this was before sites had been evaluated so more sites will need to come forward. When the sifting of the sites has been done, we will know if there is a significant shortfall. Not having a local plan means that sites must be considered in a positive way. Obviously, there are sites that are completely unacceptable, sites that Hart can see no problems with and there will be some that sit in between where a tilted balance will have to be applied. Tilted balance is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It does not mean automatic approval and doesn't override specific protections like SSSI and so on.

Development at Eversley centre - I have had discussions with the planning officer at Hart about the Just Build Homes putting in a large number of supporting comments on the planning application page. He assured me they don't go on numbers but on the issues raised. Cllr. Farmer and I had a meeting with the site promoters and Hart planners last September and we raised several issues with the proposal. These were the regular buses, the village shop and the inevitable increase in traffic. They also announced they would plant 300 trees but couldn't tell me how many they would destroy in building the development.

Firgrove development - I have been discussing this with members of the Yateley Society and will set up a meeting with Cllr. Southern to listen to the objections to this development. At a meeting with Berkeley, I asked about the visual impact of the 3-story apartment block on the plan and parking. They haven't provided parking at the proposed country park claiming that it will only be used by residents of the development and they will of course walk to it. I also raised the road junctions being inadequate for the increase in traffic.

Budget - Hart have set a balanced budget for this year largely through vacancies in staffing reorganisation of the senior leadership team and good interest rates, however the MTFS is showing a budget deficit of £1.m next year, and £950,000 for the following year. The short fall will be taken from reserves, but the administration presented their corporate plan refresh at the same meeting as the budget setting and this says "throughout the transition period to the new North Hampshire unitary, maintaining financial stability is crucial. To do this we will maintain a balanced MTFS ensuring the councils finances remain robust and sustainable. Reserves will be maintained to safeguard against unforeseen challenges providing a buffer that protects essential services and supports continuity for Hart's staff and residents". Clearly making no provision for the challenges that lie ahead in the MTFS would not leave the councils finances robust nor would it provide a buffer to protect our essential services which is why I voted against the budget.

e) Report from Cllr Tim Davies – Hampshire County Council

The main issue at HCC over the past year has been Local Government Reorganisation. In some ways this will be a favourable event as many residents are unclear in the

differences between HCC and HDC. HCC's preference is for one North Hampshire Unitary Council.

HCC have recently had their budget review and voted for the biggest budget increase allowed. Further savings are, however, required as the budget isn't stretching far enough, even with the increase agreed. The aging population increase is putting additional pressures on social care.

Elections are coming up in May this year. They were due to include the Mayoral elections, but these have been postponed until 2028. The Police and Crime Commissioner will stay in post until the Mayor is voted in. The Shadow Cabinet for the new unitary council elections are due to take place in May 2027 so District and County Councillors will get a two-year term this time around with the second year being shadowed by their new unitary council colleagues.

5. Other Parish Matters for discussion

a) EPC Open Spaces Report

As we look back on the past year, our efforts in enhancing the open spaces of Eversley have shown great progress and community engagement. Here are the highlights of our initiatives that we have completed and other projects that we have planned for this year.

We have planted more trees to replace the ones we have lost, especially over the dry summer. The most notable being three more cherry trees planted at Cross Green.

Thanks to the Lengthsman Scheme we have successfully cleared the pavement along the Reading Road from the Village Hall to The Street, improving accessibility for our residents.

We have invested in some new litter picking equipment to allow for more frequent community litter picks. We aim to host three community litter picks around the village this year, promoting a cleaner environment. Dates are to be confirmed soon.

EPC continues to work in collaboration with the Probation Services to tidy areas around the village. Notably overgrown footpaths have been cleared, and areas at Cross Green and Chequers Green have been cleared. Potholes at Cross Green have also been filled in. This collaboration has helped to keep our community spaces looking their best.

Plans for the Coming Year:

While we don't have large-scale projects planned for this year, our focus will be on maintaining and tidying up our open spaces.

We remain committed to keeping our open spaces beautiful and accessible for everyone in the community. Thank you to all of our volunteers and residents for your continued support and participation. Let's work together to ensure that Eversley remains a wonderful place to live and enjoy.

b) Opportunity to raise any issue for discussion

Contact with the Local Bobby It was queried at how you would get in touch with our Local Bobby. If it's an emergency, please just call 999. Otherwise please use 101 either by calling or using the online forms. The reports will filter through to the team, and they will contact you in return.

Case numbers It was queried at whether solved case numbers could be included in the statistics quoted by PC Wright. He explained that cases are taking a significant period to arrive in the Courts that updating the figures accordingly isn't practical.

Pavements and verges It was queried at whether parking can be enforced to prevent parking on pavements and verges, particularly at weekends. The Police will aim to get patrols into any relevant areas to educate the drivers in the area. If the problem persists then the Police will liaise with HCC to get parking conditions set up and enforced.

Local Government Reorganisation It was queried at how long it would take to save money, presuming that Local Government Reorganisation is being done for this basis and must also be costing a significant figure. Similar Unitary Councils that have already been set up elsewhere in the country have started seeing savings in 3 years after disaggregation costs have been removed. Anticipated figures should be available on both HDC and HCC's websites.

Potholes Residents are concerned that the number of potholes are increasing and the time taken to repair is increasing, with many repairs undertaken being patches that do not last for significant periods of time. It was explained that this winter has been exceptionally wet which has led to a significant increase in the number of potholes. It is true that a lot of patches are being done but it is felt that this is better than leaving them for a longer period of time until a proper repair can be done.

As there were no other matters, the Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and for giving up their time to attend.

The meeting closed at 9.02pm.

Chairman.....Date.....