

ENGLISHCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Serving Barrow, Englishcombe, Haycombe, Inglesbatch, Kilkenny & Nailwell.

Draft Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Englishcombe Parish Council held on Wednesday 7th May 2025 at 19:30 at The Tithe Barn, Englishcombe.

Councillors: Cllr Will Pow (Chair), Cllr Robert Law, Cllr Anne Corlett and
Cllr Mycroft Croisdale-Appleby.

In attendance: J Turner (Locum Parish Clerk/RFO).

Absent: None.

Members of the Public: Four.

<u>07-05-2025-01</u>	<u>To elect a Chairman to Englishcombe Parish Council for the ensuing year and to receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.</u> Cllr Will Pow was proposed and this was seconded. RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to elect Cllr Will Pow as Chairman to Englishcombe Parish Council for the ensuing year. Cllr Will Pow duly signed the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office as witnessed by the members present.
<u>07-05-2025-02</u>	<u>To elect a Vice-Chairman to Englishcombe Parish Council for the ensuing year.</u> Cllr Robert Law was proposed and seconded. RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to elect Cllr Robert Law as Vice-Chairman to Englishcombe Parish Council for the ensuing year.
<u>07-05-2025-03</u>	<u>To receive questions from the members of the public present.</u> A resident raised a question over the payment in the previous financial year for Locum Clerk services from August 2024 – March 2025 and whether it had been accounted for properly. The Locum Clerk responded stating that the invoice had a timesheet accompanying it which had been approved by the Council, fully audited and reconciled. The amount had been redacted in the minutes as it was an individual staff payment, in line with best practice. The Locum Clerk stated that he is a 'Locum' and that the Parish Council are finding it increasingly hard to recruit a permanent Clerk. The Locum Clerk confirmed there is a services agreement in place between himself and the Parish Council. A resident raised a question over the fact that the Parish noticeboard was hard to see due to the panels being dirty. The Chairman confirmed that this would be looked at. A resident raised a question over the Public Rights of Inspection to the Annual Accounts for the 2024-2025 financial year. The Locum Clerk confirmed that this would be agreed at this very meeting and would be publicised. A resident raised an issue with the surfacing from Innox Grove to Salem Chapel and that the drains were now full of dirt. The Chairman advised the resident to log this on 'Fix My Street'.
<u>07-05-2025-04</u>	<u>To receive any applications for co-option onto the Parish Council.</u> None received.
<u>07-05-2025-05</u>	<u>To receive any apologies for absence.</u> The Parish Council noted apologies from Cllr Nick Spicer (working). Cllr Matt McCabe was also

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	<p>unavailable to attend.</p> <p>Cllr Lucie Scurlock had informed the Chairman and the Clerk of her intention to resign for personal reasons and the Parish Council wished her all the best. The Clerk would inform Bath and North-East Somerset Council of this vacancy.</p>
<u>07-05-2025-06</u>	<p><u>To consider any Declarations of Interest and to approve any dispensations for this meeting.</u> Owing to circumstances beyond his control, Cllr Nick Spicer applied for a dispensation to be able to still sit as a Parish Councillor despite him not being able to attend all of the meetings. RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to approve the dispensation as per the letter of request for a non-specified length of time.</p>
<u>07-05-2025-07</u>	<p><u>To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council Meeting of Englishcombe Parish Council held on Wednesday 5th March 2025 and to note the Clerk's report.</u> RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record. There was no Clerk's report as all actions were covered by the agenda.</p>
<u>07-05-2025-08</u>	<p><u>To appoint representatives to following organisations or outside bodies:</u></p> <p><u>08.1</u> <u>Avon Local Council's Association (1).</u> RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to appoint Cllr Will Pow as a representative.</p> <p><u>08.2</u> <u>Millstream, Orchard and Wheelwrights sub-committee (1).</u> RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to appoint Cllr Robert Law as a representative.</p> <p><u>08.3</u> <u>Unity Trust Payment Approvals (2).</u> RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to appoint Cllr Anne Corlett and Cllr Mycroft Croisdale-Appleby as the two approvers.</p> <p><u>08.4</u> <u>Bank Reconciliation Approvals (2).</u> RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to appoint Cllr Anne Corlett and Cllr Mycroft Croisdale-Appleby as the two approvers.</p>
<u>07-05-2025-09</u>	<p><u>To consider the re-adoption of the following policies and procedures on an Annual Basis:</u></p> <p><u>09.1</u> <u>Standing Orders.</u> <u>09.2</u> <u>Financial Regulations.</u> <u>09.3</u> <u>Equality and Diversity Policy.</u> <u>09.4</u> <u>Safeguarding Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy.</u> <u>09.5</u> <u>Code of Conduct for Members.</u> <u>09.6</u> <u>NALC Model Grievance Policy.</u> <u>09.7</u> <u>NALC Model Disciplinary Policy.</u> <u>09.8</u> <u>Risk Register.</u> <u>09.9</u> <u>Risk Management Strategy.</u> <u>09.10</u> <u>Publication Scheme.</u> <u>09.11</u> <u>Freedom of Information Policy.</u> <u>09.12</u> <u>GDPR and Privacy Policy.</u> <u>09.13</u> <u>Health and Safety Policy.</u> <u>09.14</u> <u>Complaints Policy.</u> <u>09.15</u> <u>Reserves Policy.</u> <u>09.16</u> <u>Planning Applications Procedure.</u></p>

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<p><u>09.17</u></p> <p><u>09.18</u></p> <p><u>09.19</u></p> <p><u>09.20</u></p>	<p><u>Scheme of Delegation.</u></p> <p><u>Retention Policy.</u></p> <p><u>Financial Procedures.</u></p> <p><u>Business Continuity Plan.</u></p> <p>RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to approve all of the policies a one year period.</p>
<p><u>07-05-2025-10</u></p>	<p>To consider the Internal Audit Report for the financial year ending 31st March 2025 and to note any recommendations arising from this report.</p> <p>The Parish Council noted the report from Auditing Solutions LTD and the below recommendations:</p> <p>Review of Corporate Governance</p> <hr/> <p>R1 A consistent value for formal tender action should be recorded in both Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, ideally set at between £3,000 and £5,000.</p> <hr/> <p>Review of Expenditure and VAT</p> <hr/> <p>R2 As specified in the adopted Financial Procedures, all invoices and other payment supporting documentation should be signed / initialled and dated by the approving councillor(s), the documents also identifying the cashbook reference number.</p> <hr/> <p>R3 As recommended last year, ideally a suitable certification stamp containing detail as indicated in the body of the report should be acquired and affixed to every invoice / payment document with the Clerk and payment approving members signing off / initialling the certificates appropriately.</p> <hr/> <p>R4 The potential omission of VAT on the November 2024 invoice referred to in the body of the report should be reviewed and, if the omission is confirmed, it should be added to the next VAT reclaim.</p> <hr/> <p>Assessment and Management of Risk</p> <hr/> <p>R5 The Council should expand the existing Risk Assessment document to include detail of all potential risks to which it may be exposed together with an assessment of the potential likelihood for their materialising and the impact (financial and / or political) should any come to fruition.</p> <hr/> <p>Asset Registers / Inventories</p> <hr/> <p>R6 The 2024-25 asset values at Section 2, Box 9 of the AGAR should be recorded as indicated in the body of the report with the prior year value recorded at that same value and annotated as "Restated".</p> <p>The Locum Clerk confirmed that all actions had now been actioned and recommendation 4 would be actioned at the next possible opportunity.</p>
<p><u>07-05-2025-11</u></p> <p><u>11.01</u></p> <p><u>11.02</u></p> <p><u>11.03</u></p>	<p><u>To consider and approve annual accounts and procedures:</u></p> <p><u>To resolve that there are no conflicts of interest with BDO LLP.</u> RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to declare that there are no conflicts of interest.</p> <p><u>To resolve that Englishcombe Parish Council are exempt from the External Audit process for the financial year ending 31st March 2025.</u> RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to resolve that Englishcombe Parish Council meet the exemption criteria and the certificate was duly signed.</p> <p><u>To note the Internal Auditor's report section of the AGAR for 2024/2025.</u> The report was noted.</p>

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11.04

To receive and approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2024/2025.

RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to approve the Annual Governance Statement with positive assurances given in all boxes except for box six.

11.05

To receive and approve the Accounting Statements for 2024/2025 and to receive any explanations of significant variances.

RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to approve the accounting statements.

11.06

To note the period of public rights and publication of the Annual Governance and Accountability return.

The Parish Council note the period of public rights and publications of the Annual Governance and Accountability return will commence on Monday 9th June 2025 and will end on Friday 18th July 2025.

11.07

To note the end of year Financial Report for the financial year ending 31st March 2025.

The Council noted the end of year report prepared by the Locum Clerk, as below. An analysis on for the previous financial year was given as a budget vs actual report and the Council noted that they remain in a healthy position.

Englishcombe Parish Council	
End of Year Balance Sheet	To 31st March 2025
	£
Cashbook Opening Balance	19,032
Plus Receipts in Year	11,006
Less Payments in Year	19,486
Cashbook Closing Balance	10,551
Represented as	
Earmarked Reserves	
EMR CIL Monies	2,728
EMR MWC Fund	2,832
General Reserve Fund	4,991

11.08

To review Englishcombe's Parish Council Earmarked Reserves.

The Council noted that they had two earmarked reserves for CIL Monies (£2,728) and Millstream and Wheelwright committee fund (£2,832).

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<u>07-05-2025-12</u>	<p><u>To appoint Auditing Solutions LTD as Internal Auditor for the financial year ending 31st March 2026.</u></p> <p>The Locum Clerk declared his interest and took not part in this section of the meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to appoint Auditing Solutions LTD for the current financial year.</p>																																										
<u>07-05-2025-13</u>	<p><u>To confirm insurance arrangements for the 2025/2026 financial year.</u></p> <p>The Council noted the following insurance arrangements:</p> <p>Long-term agreement with Zurich Municipal to 1st June 2025.</p>																																										
<u>07-05-2025-14</u>	<p><u>To carry out the Annual Review of Arrangements with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.</u></p> <p>The Council noted the report and were happy with the arrangements, as below.</p> <p>Agreements Held:</p> <table><tr><th>Organisation</th><th>Type</th><th>Rent P.A</th><th>Start Date</th><th>End Date</th></tr><tr><td>Wheelwrights Workshop.</td><td>Duchy of Cornwall Lease</td><td>£350 plus RPI p.a</td><td>25/03/2013</td><td>24/03/2033</td></tr><tr><td>The Orchard</td><td>Duchy of Cornwall Lease</td><td>£150 plus RPI p.a</td><td>29/09/2011</td><td>28/09/2032</td></tr><tr><td>Lye Services</td><td>Litter Picking of Lanes</td><td>£260 pcm</td><td>01/04/2022</td><td>ROLLING</td></tr></table> <p>Contracts and Subscriptions Held:</p> <table><tr><th>Organisation</th><th>Contract For</th></tr><tr><td>Avon Local Council's Association</td><td>Yearly subscription for legal advice, online training and references.</td></tr></table>	Organisation	Type	Rent P.A	Start Date	End Date	Wheelwrights Workshop.	Duchy of Cornwall Lease	£350 plus RPI p.a	25/03/2013	24/03/2033	The Orchard	Duchy of Cornwall Lease	£150 plus RPI p.a	29/09/2011	28/09/2032	Lye Services	Litter Picking of Lanes	£260 pcm	01/04/2022	ROLLING	Organisation	Contract For	Avon Local Council's Association	Yearly subscription for legal advice, online training and references.																		
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<u>07-05-2025-15</u>	<p><u>To carry out the Annual Review of Englishcombe Parish Council's Asset Register.</u></p> <p>The Parish Council reviewed the asset register with no additions or disposals made.</p>																																										
<u>07-05-2025-16</u>	<p>Englishcombe Parish Council Finance:</p> <p><u>16.1 To approve the expenditure report for May 2025.</u></p> <p>RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to approve the expenditure report and authorise payments as below, with the payment being made digitally with Unity Trust Bank.</p> <table><tr><th colspan="2">Payments for May</th><th>Net (cost to council)</th><th>VAT</th><th>Gross</th><th>Our Ref</th><th>Legal Power to Incur Expenditure</th></tr><tr><th>Payee</th><th>Invoice Detail</th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th><th></th></tr><tr><td>Auditing Solutions LTD</td><td>Annual Internal Audit Report 2024-2025.</td><td>£ 460.00</td><td>£ 92.00</td><td>£ 552.00</td><td>05-25-001</td><td>Local Government Act 1972, s226</td></tr><tr><td>J Turner</td><td>Locum Clerk Services (April 2025 - June 2025 / 70 hours)</td><td>£ 1,750.00</td><td>£ -</td><td>£ 1,750.00</td><td>05-25-002</td><td>Local Government Act 1972ss. 101, 111 and 112</td></tr><tr><td>David Rushgrove</td><td>Repairs to gate and fence at Millstream.</td><td>£ 103.80</td><td>£ 20.75</td><td>£ 124.55</td><td>05-25-003</td><td>Public Health Act 1875, s 164; Open Spaces Act 1906, ss 9 and 10; Commons Act 1899</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Total for May 2025</td><td>£2,313.80</td><td>£112.75</td><td>£2,426.55</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <p><u>16.2 To note the cashbook for Quarter 1 of the Financial Year.</u></p> <p>The Parish Council noted the cashbook to the end of April 2025.</p> <p><u>16.3 To note the bank reconciliation and bank statements for Quarter 1 of the Financial Year.</u></p>	Payments for May		Net (cost to council)	VAT	Gross	Our Ref	Legal Power to Incur Expenditure	Payee	Invoice Detail						Auditing Solutions LTD	Annual Internal Audit Report 2024-2025.	£ 460.00	£ 92.00	£ 552.00	05-25-001	Local Government Act 1972, s226	J Turner	Locum Clerk Services (April 2025 - June 2025 / 70 hours)	£ 1,750.00	£ -	£ 1,750.00	05-25-002	Local Government Act 1972ss. 101, 111 and 112	David Rushgrove	Repairs to gate and fence at Millstream.	£ 103.80	£ 20.75	£ 124.55	05-25-003	Public Health Act 1875, s 164; Open Spaces Act 1906, ss 9 and 10; Commons Act 1899	Total for May 2025		£2,313.80	£112.75	£2,426.55		
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	The Parish Council noted the reports to the end of April 2025. These were duly signed.
<u>07-05-2025-17</u>	<p><u>To consider any planning applications received.</u></p> <p>None received.</p>
<u>07-05-2025-18</u>	<p>To receive updates from members on ongoing Parish matters:</p> <p><u>18.1 Bath and Northeast Somerset Councillor Report.</u> No report received.</p> <p><u>18.2 Parish Council Chairman's Report.</u> No report received.</p> <p><u>18.3 Rural Public Transport and Roads.</u> No report received.</p> <p><u>18.4 Little Padleigh Hill Hedge Trim and Passing Bays</u> Cllr Robert Law provided an update on the passing bays he had reported but Bath and North East Somerset Council responded saying it wasn't on the schedule of works to be completed.</p> <p>A vote of thanks was given to Cllr Anne Corlett for her assistance with closure of Little Padleigh Hill and the role she played in obtaining signage for the Parish.</p> <p><u>18.5 Parish Website and Communications</u> The Locum Parish Clerk provided an update. Residents seemed to have an issue with accessing the new website which the Clerk will look into. The Locum Clerk stated that he is happy to maintain a mailing list for which agenda, minutes and meeting dates are circulated but residents would need to contact him via email to be added. Cllr Mycroft Croisdale-Appleby stated that he would assist with arranging a QR code for the noticeboard so that parishioners can access the website a little easier. The Council noted that the residents felt they hadn't been engaged with or communicated to appropriately, to which the Clerk will issue some wording for circulation.</p> <p><u>18.6 Installation of Defibrillators and First Aid Courses.</u> Cllr R Law provided an update. Funding has been obtained through our BANES Councillors and will be utilised. Communication will be shared with residents soon.</p> <p><u>18.7 Millstream, Orchard and Wheelwrights sub-committee.</u> A vote of thanks was given to all who help maintain the various areas of land and the work they do is hugely appreciated by the Parish Council.</p> <p>The Parish Council are still working with the Duchy of Cornwall on issues surrounding The Old Schoolhouse and a possible conversion of the Wheelwrights into a useable community space.</p> <p>Cllr Mycroft Croisdale-Appleby has volunteered to assist the sub-committee in his capacity as a resident.</p> <p>Cllr Mycroft Croisdale-Appleby will also be going to take a look at a Sycamore tree in the Orchard as it may be in need of pruning.</p>

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<u>18.7i</u>	<p><u>To consider the draft Licence Agreement for the Orchard.</u></p> <p>The Parish Council considered the licence agreement drafted by the Locum Clerk. It was agreed that the arrangement should be offered out to both parties who were interested and the Locum Clerk will arrange this prior to the next meeting.</p>
<u>07-05-2025-19</u>	<p><u>To note that next Meeting of Englishcombe Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 2nd July 2025 at 7:30pm.</u></p> <p>This was noted.</p> <p>It was further RESOLVED, unanimously, that Englishcombe Parish Council will meet on the following dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wednesday 2nd July 2025 at 7:30pm• Wednesday 3rd September 2025 at 7:30pm• Wednesday 5th November 2025 at 7:30pm• Wednesday 7th January 2026 at 7:30pm• Wednesday 4th March 2026 at 7:30pm• Wednesday 13th May 2026 at 7:30pm <p>The Parish Council noted that the Annual Assembly of Parishioners will be held on Wednesday 6th May 2026 at 6:45pm.</p> <p>It was further RESOLVED, unanimously, to hold another Assembly of the Parishioners and this would be held at The Old Schoolhouse on Wednesday 4th June 2025 at 7:30pm.</p> <p><u>The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 20:18.</u></p>