

ERMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the Reading Rooms on 14 April 2025 at 2.00 pm

Present: Cllrs Denis Onley (Chair), Robert Owens, Cliff Sumner, Nicholas Toms, John Dunlop, John Messham

Teresa Drew (Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)

Parishioner(s) / Visitor(s): 0

1. Apologies

Apologies received and accepted from Cllrs Ian Creese, Andrew Savery, Margaret Grafton.

2. Declarations of members' interest(s) in respect of any item on this agenda. *Members are also reminded that any change to their Declaration of Interests must be notified to the Monitoring Officer at South Hams District Council, within 28 days of the change*

Declaration – Cllr Sumner read out the following statement:

I believe I have no more to declare on the matter before us than any other Councillor around this table. However, because formal complaints have been made against me, I do not wish to prejudice the outcome of them. Neither do I want to implicate Ermington Parish Council by taking part in a meeting called to simply consider the subject of one of those complaints.

I believe there to have been a distinct lack of integrity in these complaints so I will demonstrate my integrity by not taking part this afternoon but insist that this statement is included, unabridged, in the minutes of this meeting.

Good afternoon ladies and gents.

Cllr Sumner then left the meeting at 2.03 pm.

3. Public Session

No public present

4. To agree the details of a complaint to South Hams District Council on the planning process of Planning Application - Reference: 3703/24/FUL

Discussion ensued on various points and it was RESOLVED to submit the following to SHDC Planning Department, copied to District Dan Thomas and Alison Dewynter.

Dear Cllr Brazil and Mr Whymer

Ermington Parish Council (EPC) has resolved to write to South Hams District Council to complain about the process at the Development Management Committee (DMC) meeting held on 13th March 2025 to discuss the planning application reference 3703/24/FUL (Pet Crematorium).

1. We understand that the Estates Officer's name was on the application form and that they had enabled the applicant to apply to Companies House to register the Applicant's company prior to the planning application being submitted and considered. This raises concerns that the decision was predetermined.

2. There was no discussion by Councillors on the major point in the presentation by Cllr Owens on behalf of EPC that this application was contrary to Council Policy DEV32 Delivering low carbon development.

3. The Councillors spoke at length about the lack of water or drainage to allow effective hygiene for operators handling dead animals. Their conclusion, summed up by, Cllr Abbot that this was not a planning issue but a landlord issue and that South Hams DC was also the landlord was met with hilarity by the other Councillors.

4. To agree the details of a complaint to South Hams District Council on the planning process of Planning Application - Reference: 3703/24/FUL (continued)

The reason this application went to the DMC for consideration is to ensure the whole process was fully transparent and maintained public trust. EPC considers that due process of this application was not followed due to the above, namely, it was predetermined, a serious omission in failing to discuss Council policy and a lack of responsible behaviour by some Councillors.

We look forward to your response and we are pleased to invite the Chairman of the DMC to attend our Parish Council Meeting to address these issues. Our Parish Council meetings are held on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm.

Yours faithfully

Ermington Parish Council

The meeting closed at 2.40 pm.

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(Ermington Parish Council Chair)

Date: 6 May 2025

Agenda and minutes can be viewed on the Ermington Parish website - <http://www.ermingtonparish.com/parish-council>