

ERMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the Reading Rooms on 4 March 2025 at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllrs Denis Onley (Chair), Robert Owens, Ian Creese, Cliff Sumner, Nicholas Toms Andrew Savery, John Dunlop, John Messham and Margaret Grafton

Devon County Councillor Dan Thomas
District Councillor Alison Dewynter
Teresa Drew (Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)

Parishioner(s) / Visitor(s): 8

143/2024 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

144/2024 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST(S) IN RESPECT OF ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA

Cllr Dunlop declared a pecuniary interest in agenda 7.
Cllr Toms declared a personal interest – agenda item 7.
Cllr Savery declared a personal interest – agenda item 9.

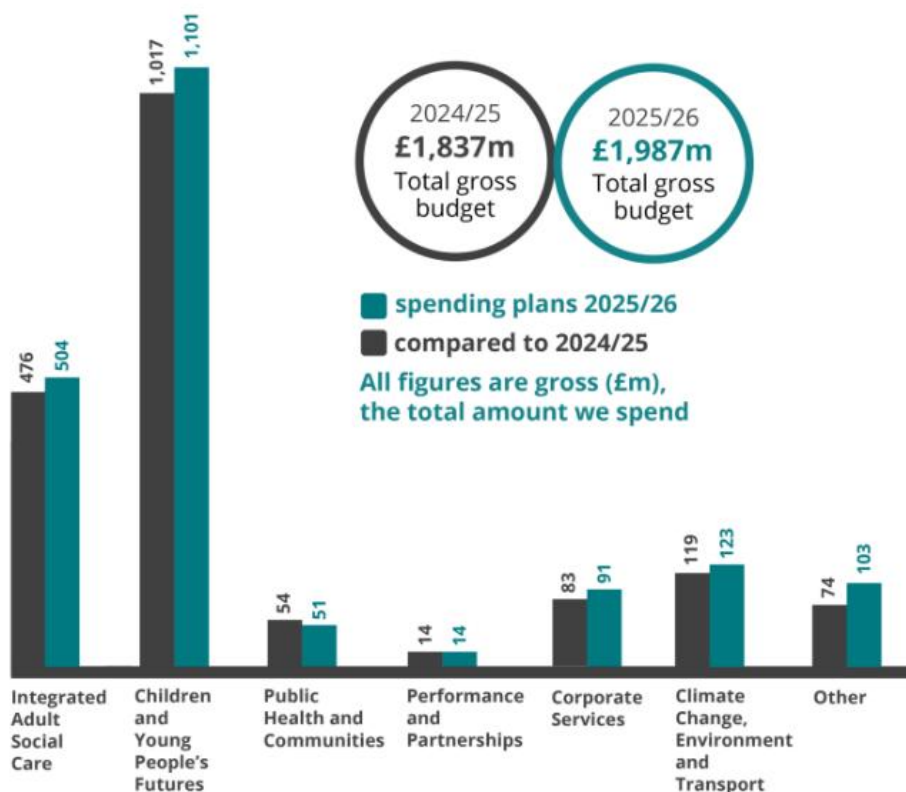
145/2024 PARISH COUNCILLOR – ONE CO-OPTION VACANCY

No applications received.

146/2024 REPORT FROM DEVON COUNTY COUNCILLOR DAN THOMAS INCLUDING ITEMS FROM PAST MEETINGS

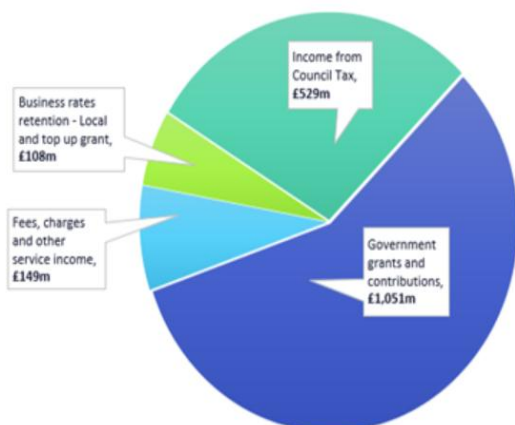
Since last month, the County has agreed its budget for 2025/26 which includes the usual 2.99% rise in council tax plus the extra 2% for integrated care.

This graph, representing spending, is quite useful:

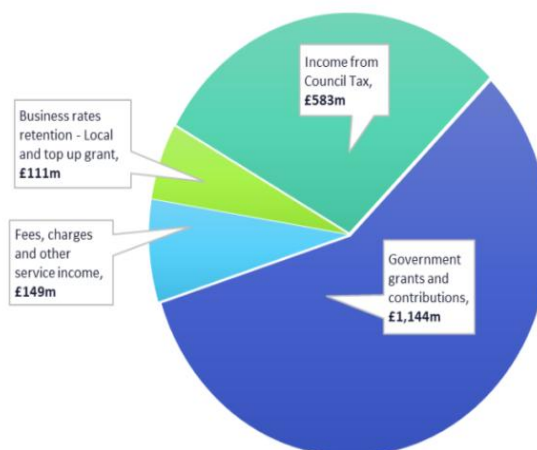


The pie charts below illustrates where the money comes from:

2024/25 Gross Income £1,837 millions



2025/26 Gross Income £1,987 million



Local Government Reorganisation latest:

It appears that Plymouth City Council wants to take over the 13 parishes to the west of the South Hams (currently in Rebecca Smith MP's South West Devon constituency). The Districts have offered a 4:5:1 unitary solution. We wait to see that the County will propose.

147/2024 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR ALISON DEWYNTER INCLUDING ITEMS FROM PAST MEETINGS

News from South Hams DC of note to PC and residents:

1. Garden waste service

Anyone living in the district can now sign up for a garden waste subscription for 2025/26.

If you sign up before 31 March 2025, you'll pay a lower "early bird" fee of £65 for a year-long subscription running from 1 April 2025 that covers collections for one brown wheelie bin. If you sign up after 31 March, the service will cost £68.

There is a maximum of two subscriptions (which would cover two bins) per household. Subscribers can put grass cuttings, hedge trimmings, cut flowers and plants, small branches, weeds, leaves, twigs, windfall fruit and vase flowers in their brown bin.

The price for the year-long subscription has risen from last year; this is to continue covering the cost of waste services.

The quickest and easiest way to sign up is on the SHDC website: www.southhams.gov.uk/gardenwaste - the website is also full of information on the service.

If you're already a subscriber to the garden waste service, there will be no changes to your service if you renew your subscription by 1 April, and you can continue to use your brown bin with no interruptions.

Those who decide not to sign up for the service can still take their garden waste to all three recycling centres in the South Hams.

Full details, including opening hours, are available online here: www.devon.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/centre/

Alternatively, people can find out more on home composting possibilities here: www.recycledevon.org/in-the-garden/how-to-compost

2. Avian Influenza – Bird flu

An Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ) has been declared for the whole of England.

This means that people who keep birds must, by law, follow strict biosecurity rules to prevent the spread of bird flu.

Biosecurity measures include for example;

- Placing bird food and water under cover to prevent contamination from wild birds
- Changing or disinfecting footwear when entering the enclosure to prevent any contamination.
- Washing hands before and after tending to birds

Bird species such as parrots and budgies that are kept entirely indoors are excluded from the order, but people who keep poultry are, regardless of how many birds they keep, included. Since 2022, one in five bird flu cases were in poultry kept in the garden as pets.

Finally, it is important that if you find a wild dead bird to not touch it, but to report it to DEFRA. They test the bird to track the extent of any bird flu outbreak. You can report to DEFRA [via this link](#) or by telephoning them on 03459 33 55 77.

3. SHDC's Response to the Local Government Finance Settlement

Please find attached a copy of the Council's consultation response to the Local Government Finance Settlement.

[Click here to download a copy.](#)

We have made the point that we strongly oppose the decision taken by ministers to cut the funding for rural authorities.

In particular, the decision to abolish the Rural Services Delivery Grant (RSDG) without any engagement or consultation with the affected authorities has been very disappointing.

4. Help for residents with damp and mould

Landlords of both social and private rental properties have a responsibility to make sure their properties are safe, habitable, and free from significant hazards. However, we are aware that not all damp and mould issues are being dealt with by some landlords. There are also some measures tenants can take if they have any problems.

Requested action:

- SHDC have a useful leaflet on where residents can find help and information on what to do if they have damp or mould issues [download it here](#).

Messages for residents:

- There are some simple things you can do to reduce or solve damp and mould problems. Information can be found at: www.southhams.gov.uk/rental-housing-standards
- Report any disrepair to your landlord in the first instance.
- If that is not possible or you are still having problems then you can report your housing issue online at www.southhams.gov.uk/report-disrepair or complete the paper part of the leaflet and return it to the Council.
- Have the confidence to speak up and raise concerns without the fear of losing your home.

5. Parking Advice for SHDC Car Parks

SHDC car parks use the PayByPhone app. SHDC are advising customers to only download the app directly through PayByPhone or through the official Android or Apple app stores.

There have been a few instances where residents have fallen victim to fraudulent PayByPhone accounts after using QR codes or downloading from unofficial websites.

Message for residents:

Customers can download the PayByPhone app at:

- The App Store - <https://apple.co/49Tv3WF>
- On Google Play - <https://bit.ly/4gRErg1>

Important advice:

- PayByPhone does NOT use QR codes to download its app
- SHDC do NOT use QR codes on any of our car park signs
- Please be alert and do not download information for PayByPhone where a QR code has been used.
-

Unitary Council which will replace the County and District Council. Each unitary council should have 500,000 residents within it. Plymouth City Council have **not gone west taking in Saltash and Torpoint but gone east taking in part of South Hams**. Plymouth is reaching out to parish councils and will try and meet each parish council separately. A lot of debates are currently taking place. The government white paper is not clear and is available on line.

The unitary does not have a mayor. Devon County Council has not released any information on their views to date. On 21 March 2025 SHDC will put their proposal forward.

Cllr Owens attended a meeting, and the white paper is not clear on the future of parish councils. The main objection is for Plymouth City Council to increase their population number. In the white paper it states all planning will be dealt with by officers and not parish councils.

By 21 March 2025 the council and District Councils must submit its plan and views, which will be then viewed by the government over a period of 6 months.

RESOLVED Cllr Owens will attend the meeting on 12 March 2025 at The Watermark in Ivybridge. **ACTION: Cllr Owens**

Discussion ensued and it was RESOLVED that Councillors were not supportive of the proposal.

148/2024 PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

Cllr Toms reported there was a deep pothole at the turning to Endsleigh Gardens. RESOLVED Cllr Grafton will report the pothole to DCC Highways. **ACTION: Cllr Grafton**

Cllrs Creese and Toms requested a meeting with Cllr Thomas and Nick Colton DCC Highways to discuss flooding at Westlake. RESOLVED Cllr Creese/Toms to arrange a meeting. **ACTION: Cllrs Creese/Toms**

Cllr Messham reported that white lining, particularly carparking areas, needs to be repainted on Chapel Street. RESOLVED that the Clerk will send an email to Cllr Thomas. **ACTION: Clerk**

149/2024 AGREE THE PRESENTATION TO BE MADE BY THE PARISH COUNCIL TO THE SHDC DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE IN CONNECTION WITH THE PET CREMATORIUM APPLICATION - GOODMAN'S PET CREMATIONS L.T.D PLANNING APP :3703/24/FUL

Cllr Dewynter stated currently the planning officer supports the planning application.

RESOLVED Cllr Owens will represent the parish council at SHDC development management when the planning application is discussed. An email had been sent to parish councillors prior to the parish council meeting, with the proposed points he will make 5 points (30 seconds on each as there is a strict 3 minute allowance) which are as follows:

1. *District Council and Parish Council policy of declaring a climate emergency and allowing an incinerator which burns oil.*
2. *The omission of details of the exhaust stack and how this would fit with the design and appearance of the estate.*
3. *Adequacy of parking and delivery of dead pets to the premises offending onlooking public and the dignity of the pet owners.*
4. *The effect of odour emitted from the burning process and possibly exacerbated by local weather conditions.*
5. *Risk of pollution, if an oil spill occurred in the proximity of an active water course which feeds directly into the River Erme.*

Cllr Grafton asked how we point out to SHDC that the planning application is fraudulent, and various parishioners have been accosted by the planning application. Cllr Dewynter pointed out that the SHDC will see all the objections. Parishioners who have been harassed have to inform the police.

Cllr Dewynter stated a piece of planning policy must be stated for a planning application to be overturned. Cllr Dewynter then explained how a SHDC planning meeting is run.

Cllr Grafton pointed out the business had been already registered at Companies House using the Unit address, which should not have been as planning had not be confirmed.

Cllr Sumner pointed out there were various points that were incorrect/false in the planning application.

150/2024 RESOLVE TO APPROVE THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF 4 FEBRUARY 2025

RESOLVED to approve the Parish Council Meeting minutes (as previously circulated to parish councillors) of 4 February 2025.

151/2024 ERMINGTON VILLAGE FUND REQUEST FOR A GRANT AND TO WORK WITH THE PARISH COUNCIL FOR EVENTS DURING THE YEAR

An email in connection with a grant from a member of the Ermington Village Fund had been circulated to parish councillors prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED to support the request to fund a contribution towards the planters/hanging baskets, easter eggs, also funds towards the cost of the summer fair subject to completion of a grant application form, and to hold discussions about moving towards the fireworks becoming a free to attend event, funded by the Council subject to the Village Fund agreeing to a quieter firework display.

152/2024

DEVELOPMENT OF THE RECREATIONAL GROUND + CREATION OF NATURE TRAIL – ERMINGTON ENVIRONMENTAL

A document had been circulated to parish councillors from Ermington Environmental. The plan is to try and restate the pathways in SHDC playing field and the path in the ground below The Spires.

Ownership of the land below The Spires is the priority, then obtaining grants.

Cllr Dunlop pointed out obtaining the land is not a problem, but it will be an ongoing liability to the parish council and a drain on finance. A parishioner and former Ermington Parish Councillor explained that he had prepared a detailed paper on the matter some time ago as an aid to discussion in the then Parish Council. The document had set out the liabilities of taking over the land including its maintenance costs as well as riparian responsibilities covering the riverbank extending parallel to the adjacent recreation ground. The land would generate no income. The Council had, as a result, rejected the offer to take ownership of the land. The parishioner agreed to circulate the paper to the Environmental Group and councillors.

RESOLVED Cllr Toms will be the parish council link to the Ermington Environmental group to look at the proposal. **ACTION: Cllr Toms**

Cllr Dewynter was asked to speak to the planning department at SHDC as to why Barretts have not done anything that was stated on the strict planning application for the land below The Spires. **ACTION: Cllr Dewynter**

153/2024

PLANNING

Planning Decisions

Planning Reference: 4091/24/ARC

Decision: Discharge of Condition Approved

Site Address: Parsonage Farm, Town Hill, Ermington, PL21 9LR

Description: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 6 (Hard & Soft Landscape Scheme) of planning consent 2026/21/FUL

Planning Reference: 0035/25/ARC

Decision: Discharge of Condition Approved

Site Address: Tallet Meadow Farm, Ermington, PL21 9NG

Description: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 5 (Hard & Soft Landscaping) to planning consent 3161/23/FUL

Planning Reference: 3012/24/FUL Full Planning Application

Decision: Conditional Approval

Site Address: Land At SX 608 544, Ivybridge

Description: Change of use of land from agricultural to mixed, agricultural and equestrian together with siting of a stable block (retrospective)

Cllr Owens wished it to be minutes that it is disappointing the planning application Planning Reference: 3012/24/FUL had been approved and SHDC had not taken note.

154/2024

FINANCE

RESOLVED the following payments:

(i) Bank balances:-

Lloyds Bank Business Account bank statement as at 9 January 2025: **£26,835.03**

Lloyds Bank Treasurers Account bank statement as at 13 February 2025: **£875.31**

NatWest Bank Business Reserve Account as at 31 January 2025: **£70,471.17**

(ii) Receipts: - £22.77 bank interest Lloyds Bank Business Bank Instant
£79.36 bank interest NatWest Business Reserve

(iii) Payments:- RESOLVED to make the following payments:-

Description	Gross	VAT	Net
Parish Clerk – February 2025 salary	£667.80	-	-
HMRC – Parish Clerk	£166.80	-	-
DB Computer Repairs – maintenance of parish council website February 2025	£45.00	-	-
Ivybridge and District Association of Local Councils – annual subscription	£7.00	-	-
Source for Business – 8 January – 12 February 2025 water bill for Reading Rooms (DD)	£24.73	-	-

154/2024 FINANCE (continued)

(iv) RESOLVED to approve the Financial Statement and Earmarked Reserves for 2024/2025

Financial Statement

Lloyds Bank Business Account bank statement as at 9 January 2025:	£26,835.03	
Lloyds Bank Treasurers Account bank statement as at 13 February 2025:	£875.31	
NatWest Bank Business Reserve Account as at 31 January 2025:	£70,471.17	
Less: any unrepresented payments: -	-£250.00	001588
	-£119.33	001603
Total Funds =	£97,812.18	

Earmarked Reserves

Repairs to Reading Rooms, Ermington	-£500
A3121 - speed reduction from 40 mph to 30 mph etc.	-£10,000

Total uncommitted Funds = £87,312.18

RESOLVED to transfer £5,000.00 from Lloyds Bank business account to treasurers account. **ACTION: Clerk**

(v) Parish Councillors reviewed spend and income to date, against budget 2024/2025 - no issues raised.

(vi) Financial Regulations requirement: *Every six months and at each financial year end, a member other than a cheque signatory shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the Council.*

RESOLVED Cllr Messham to verify the bank statements and reconciliations. **ACTION: Cllr Messham**

155/2024 ERMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT FOR YEAR ENDING MARCH 2026 AND STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

RESOLVED to make minor changes to both documents and place the revised versions on Ermington Parish Council website. **ACTION: Clerk**

156/2024 TRAVEL SURVEY = CLLR GRAFTON

Travel surveys are being received.

157/2024 FOUR RIVERS DEMENTIA ALLIANCE = CLLR GRAFTON

RESOLVED to invite a representative to be the speaker to the Annual Parish Meeting. **ACTION: Cllr Grafton**

158/2024 ERMINGTON CRICKET CLUB PAVILLION AND TOILETS – CLLR TOMS UPDATE RE. TOILETS AT ERMINGTON PLAYING FIELD

Cllr Toms has spoken to various companies, but the most complete toilet hire cost is £637 for three months and fully serviced.

RESOLVED to apply for an account at Brandons Hire and get confirmed costs. **ACTION: Clerk**

160/2024 REPORTS ON ALLOCATED AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

a) Ermington Parish Church liaison = Cllr Owens - *the repairs to the clock chiming mechanism were completed on Wednesday 5 February 2025.*

b) Community Speed Watch report = Cllr Owens –

Speedwatch – February

*Thursday 6th February 10.00am to 11.00am
Town Hill travelling up North
Traffic Volume: 77
Vehicles exceeding 24 mph: 6 (8%)
Maximum speed: 33 mph*

160/2024 REPORTS ON ALLOCATED AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY (continued)

b) Community Speed Watch report = Cllr Owens –

Speedwatch – February

Thursday 20th February 4.00pm to 5.00pm

Church Road travelling up South West

Traffic Volume: 169

Vehicles exceeding 24 mph: 5 (3%)

Maximum speed: 27 mph

Friday 28th February 10.00am to 11.00am

Church Road travelling North East

Traffic Volume: 113

Vehicles exceeding 24 mph: 7 (7%)

Maximum speed: 28 mph

c) Road Warden Scheme and maintenance of the speed cameras = Cllr Creese – *nothing to report*

d) Assessment of Parish Footpaths = Cllr Owens - *The South Hams Ramblers have contacted us about their proposed "South Hams Way" project, a 100 mile route around the South Hams. The route will be using the Erme Valley Trail, using our footpaths from Keaton Bridge to Sequers Bridge.*



e) Ermington Primary School liaison = Cllr Grafton – *nothing to report*

f) Feedback from Meet Your Councillor's Clinic on 25 January 2025 and actions = Cllr Sumner – *a meeting to take place in April 2025.*

h) Feedback from the Ermington Environmental Group = Cllr Dunlop – letter pick has taken place, next litter pick will take place on 18 March 2025

161/2024 PARISH COUNCILLORS WORKING TOGETHER – CLLR GRAFTON

Cllr Grafton is keen for an additional councillor to be sought by councillors so there is a full council of ten members.

162/2024 AGREE MAY 2025 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FORMAT, DATE AND TIME

RESOLVED to invite a Dementia representative to attend the meeting on Tuesday 6 May 2025 at 7.00 pm, venue to be confirmed.

163/2024 CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE

Some of the correspondence listed below can be viewed on the parish website: -

Parishioner – Ermington Village Fund

Keep Britain Tidy - Let Us Know How Your Council Will Support the 10th Great British Spring Clean

DCC - Temporary Traffic Notice - KEATON BRIDGE TO IVYBRIDGE ROAD, Ermington (TTRO2561881)

SHDC - Careful Financial Management Keeps South Hams District Council Resilient

Ermington Environmental - development of the recreational ground + creation of Nature Trail

SHDC - Town and Parish Council Briefing - National Planning Guidance

South Hams Ramblers - South Hams Way update

Email from planning applicant - Goodman's Pet Cremations L.T.D – Questions answered by Parish Clerk

164/2024 TO AGREE ANY ITEMS FOR APRIL 2025 AGENDA

Councillors to inform the Clerk on any agenda items by Monday 24 March 2025.

165/2024 TO CONFIRM DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AND VENUE

It was RESOLVED that the date of the next Parish meeting commencing at 7.30 pm will be held on **Tuesday 1 April 2025** in Ermington Reading Rooms.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm.

Robert Owens

(Ermington Parish Council Chair)

Date: 1 April 2025

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