

MINUTES OF THE SMANNELL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 19TH MAY 2025 AT APRIL'S FARM, SMANNELL, HAMPSHIRE

Cllrs. Present: Cllr. Marianne Black, Cllr. Paul Dunning (Chair), Cllr. David Martin, Cllr. Erica Mason, Cllr. Sue Rogers

In attendance:

Borough Cllr. Phil North – Test Valley Borough Council

Jenny Brain – Community Engagement Officer – Test Valley Borough Council

Members of the public

Representatives in connection with Bloor Homes

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr, Stephen Jenkins – Smannell Parish Council

Cllr. Rob Price – Smannell Parish Council

County Cllr. Kirsty North – Hampshire County Council

2. PRESENTATION – BLOOR HOMES – PROPOSED SMANNELL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT – ANDY MARTIN (CONSULTANT)

A presentation was made by Andy Martin and other representatives on a proposed Smannell housing development. Bloor Homes is proposing to deliver up to 190 new homes in a sustainable location including affordable homes for local people. The new homes will be delivered with sustainable transport options to the local centre and the wider Andover area with a new vehicular access off Smannell Road, located to the northern end of the built development area. The combined site measures approximately 23.5 hectares (HA) and lies immediately to the northeast of Andover. The Site has, and continues to be, promoted for inclusion in the emerging Test Valley Local Plan.

Bloor Homes are proposing to submit an outline planning application to Test Valley Borough Council, for land abutting the east of Smannell Road and north of Finkley Road alongside a separate Change of Use application for land to the west of Smannell Road. The application has not yet been submitted but is expected towards the end of May 2025. It was explained to all present, that 94 local residents attended the recent drop-in event and there were nearly 100 feedback forms returned.

It was explained that the proposed new homes will be accessed via a new vehicular entrance off Smannell Road, located to the northern aspect of the new housing area.

The public raised a number of issues, concerns and questions in relation to the proposed development focusing essentially on transport and road matters with the potential of congestion becoming a factor and that as the roads are of a rural nature, cars cannot pass each other with ease now let alone with the impact of further traffic. Issues of flooding were also raised.

The Chair thanked the representatives from Bloor Homes for their presentation.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None recorded

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None recorded.

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5. TO RESOLVE THE FULL COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD – 3 MARCH 2025

The Chair reviewed the Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 3 March 2025. Members unanimously RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of this meeting as a true and correct record. The Chair signed the Minutes accordingly.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD – 3 MARCH 2025

The Chair reviewed all the action points that were raised from the meeting held 3 March 2025, which had been carried out.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

The Parish Clerk advised members of all correspondence received, which were noted without further comment.

The Parish Clerk made reference to an email request from a parishioner requesting an additional dog bin/dual purpose bin to be sited between the road and Doles Wood in Little London. Members stated that there are already three out of four dual purpose bins including one outside the playing field situated at strategic points in the parish and questioned the benefit of a further dog/dual purpose bin being procured. There is a cost implication for the unit cost of a bin, which is approximately £600.00 plus the regular add-on costs for emptying and cleansing and could not justify this further expenditure. Members therefore did not agree to obtaining a further dog/dual purpose bin but did agreed that the parish council should write to local professional dog walkers seeking a £100 contribution towards a fifth dog waste bin within the Parish.

8. TO RESOLVE THE FINANCIAL EXPENDITURE OF THE PARISH COUNCIL FOR MARCH/APRIL 2025

The Parish Clerk advised members of the expenses of the Parish Council for March/April 2025, amounting to £3,091.76 as scheduled below and the Parish Clerk advised members of the latest financial position of the Parish Council.

£4.25 – Lloyds Bank – Invoice 452262902 dated 10 March 2025 - £4.25 (VAT - £0.00)
£4.25 - Bank Charges from 10 February 2025 to 9 March 2025

£167.45 – Paul Dunning – Expenses Refund – Travis Perkins Invoice 03B23900 dated 17 March 2025 – Green Treated Fencing - £115.50 (VAT - £23.10) £138.60 – Wickes – Invoice 03-4299 dated 1 March 2025 – Cuprinol and Sandpaper - £18.33 (VAT - £3.67) £22.00 – Wickes Invoice 01-1969 dated 20 February 2025– Wood Filler - £3.74 (VAT – 0.71p) £4.25 – Enham Alamein Post Office Invoice 308542 dated 10 January 2025 - £2.60 (VAT - £0.00)

£216.75 – Kevin Glyn-Davies – March 2025 Salary – Gross payment - £216.75 – Zero PAYE – Net payment - £216.75

£361.15 - ElanCity – Invoice SAJ-UK/2025/02382 dated 10 March 2025 – 3 year extended warranty for Speed Indicator Devices - £300.96 (VAT - £60.19) £361.15

£24.00 - Paul Dunning – Expenses Refund – Tesco Invoice 4DQ8 dated 1 April 2025 2 x Master Lock Excel 45mm padlocks - £20.00 (VAT - £4.00) £24.00

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£40.42 - Paul Dunning – Expenses Refund – Travis Perkins Invoice 04A93400 dated 17 April 2025 Post Hole Digger - £33.68 (VAT - £6.74) £40.42

£438.00 - J. Humphry Associates – Invoice 18736 dated 28 April 2025 – Preparation of Annual accounts for 2024/2025 - £365.00 (VAT - £73.00) £438.00

£173.55 - Kevin Glyn-Davies – April 2025 Salary – Gross payment - £216.75 – PAYE £43.20 – Net payment - £173.55

£390.00 - G & A Knowles – Invoice 1308481 dated 25 April 2025 – Annual Website Hosting Provision - £390.00 (VAT - £0.00) £390.00

£450.00 - Lightatouch – Invoice 250407 dated 7 May 2025 – Internal Audit Provision 2024/2025 - £450.00 (VAT - £0.00) £450.00

£66.52 - Dave Martin – Expenses Refund – ScrewFix Invoice A21545895899 dated 2 May 2025 – Copper Adaptor, stopcock - £39.61 (VAT - £7.92), 47.53, ScrewFix Invoice A21547556096 dated 2 May 2025 – Red Coupler - £5.41 (VAT - £1.08) £6.49, Wickes Invoice 01-3978 dated 2 May 2025 – Smart pipes - £10.42 (VAT - £2.08) £12.50

£79.58 - Paul Dunning – Expenses Refund – Tesco Invoice YAF038562688 dated 3 May 2025 – Industrial Connectors - £3.32 (VAT – 0.67p) £3.99, Tesco Invoice 0031010 dated 3 May 2025 – Petrol for equipment at Little London Playing Field - £16.12 (VAT - £3.22) £19.34, JAX First Aid Supplies Invoice 98921 dated 24 April 2025 – First-Aider Vests - £33.93 (VAT - £6.78 £40.71, Huws Gray Invoice SAB11654 dated 2 May 2025 – Cuprinol, wire nails - £12.95 (VAT - £2.59) £15.54

£680.09 - Clear Councils – Invoice LCO01452 dated 3 May 2025 – Annual Insurance Renewal - £680.09 (VAT - £0.00) £680.09

Members RESOLVED the financial expenditure schedule for the parish council amounting to £3,091.76

9. TO RESOLVE APPROVAL OF THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF THE SMANNELL PARISH COUNCIL FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR END 31 MARCH 2025, TO COMPLETE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2024/2025 AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/2025 AND ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT

The Parish Clerk advised members of the legal audit requirements in the completion of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/2025. Every smaller authority that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 must now complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. The Parish Clerk explained that the Parish Council MUST approve Section 1 Annual Governance Statement before approving Section 2 Accounting Statements and both documents must be approved and published on the Smannell Parish Council Website before 1 July 2025.

The Parish Clerk presented the Internal Audit report as prepared by Tim Light (Internal Auditor) for members consideration. No matters of concern have been raised from the internal audit.

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Members RESOLVED approval of the unaudited accounts of the Smannell Parish Council as at 31 March 2025, which were previously circulated to all. Members carefully considered Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement and RESOLVED to complete this with 'Yes' statements accordingly. The Chair and the Parish Clerk signed this section as required. Members then considered Section 2 Accounting Statements and RESOLVED agreement for this to be signed by the Chair and the Parish Clerk as necessary. Members RESOLVED the Annual Internal Audit Report accordingly.

10. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE LLPF AND EVENTS TEAM AND ACTIVITIES

A report was prepared and circulated to all members by Cllr. Marianne Black.

Planning for our 80th VE day event started about 6 weeks prior to the event with a number of meetings of the Little London Playing Field & Event Team. The first priority was to make sure the event was well publicised so flyers were printed and dropped by hand to every house in the Parish 3 weeks before the event, followed by a printed notice in The Oak parish newsletter and social media messages on the Little London Support Group and Smannell Parish Council Facebook pages.

The marquee was put up on Saturday 2 May with a fantastic turnout of 18 parishioners, followed by a further 10 parishioners on the morning of Monday 6 May to set up tables, chairs, decorations, bbq etc. Parish Councillors Dave Martin and Paul Dunning were instrumental in fixing some water supply issues on the morning.

The event started at 2pm with a cream tea (scones were homemade by one of our parishioners setting up a patisserie business). There was also a craft/games table for the children including 1940's games, a sweet stall, raffle with prizes donated by parishioners and a barbecue selling burgers and drinks - all to 1940's music. We had approximately 90 parishioners attending with a good number in period costume (including 16 helping to run the event). There were fete games for adults and children with the highlight being the welly wanging and tug of war, finishing with a playing of Winston Churchill's speech and raffle at 4.30pm. 25% of the proceeds of the raffle went to The Countess of Brecknock Hospice. Jenny Brain has been sent a report and photos.

Marquee Rental

The Event Team have agreed to loan the marquee to Rev Elliot for the Parish BBQ event on 19th July and Will Brooks for a private party on 21st June. The rental loan agreements have been drawn up which includes inventory of items for the marquee. Paul Dunning and I are co-ordinating inspections and oversight of the erection and putting down of the marquees.

Containers

There was one (or possibly more) attempts to break into the container between 10-17 April. Some damage has been done to the metal work and hinge as someone seems to have been trying to force open the lock but the locks held. This will be discussed at the next Event Team meeting and the possibility of a surveillance camera. A full inventory has been taken of the contents of the containers.

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Further Events

The Event Team will be meeting in the next 4 weeks to discuss a second event to take place in the summer, which may possibly be a car boot sale for parishioners (and local parishes if insufficient interest within the parish).

Works to the BBQ Area/Container

Paul Dunning and Dave Martin have been finishing works to the BBQ area with some assistance from parishioners. This has been installing lighting over the BBQ area to run off a generator, installing screening in front of the toilets, disposing of the broken portaloo, fixing the water supply into the container. Andy & Treena Hooker have also sanded down and painted 2 of the 4 picnic benches. Huge thanks to all.

11. TO DETERMINE PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Parish Clerk advised of one planning application received per the below:

25/01065/CLPN – Green Lane Farm, Green Drove - Application for a lawful application for a lawful development certificate for a proposed side extension – RESOLVED: No Objection.

12. FOOTPATHS AND ROADS

Cllr. David Martin advised members of a significant pothole that has not been rectified, which is located on the slow sign painted in the road, just along from the church. He stated he would provide details to the Parish Clerk so that this can be reported to Hampshire County Council.

Cllr. David Martin advised that there has still been no response in respect of the request for a speed limit reduction on the Smannell Road from Hampshire County Council despite the submission having been made over a year ago. The Parish Clerk stated that he has recently chased for a response and is awaiting a reply.

13. BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS

Borough Cllr. Phil North advised members and those present of his report provided below:

I want to start by thanking the Parish Council for all your help and support over the past 12-months and for everything you do to serve our communities.

Local Government Reorganisation

Last December, the Government published their White Paper on Devolution; creating more directly elected Mayors and moving some powers with the money to enact them from central government to a new Mayoral Combined Authority. At the same time the government is requiring wholesale reorganisation of Local Government. My view is that devolution is broadly positive, but that reorganisation is an unwelcome distraction. My main concern with getting rid of the two-tier system is that district and borough councils like Test Valley have previously been protected from the huge cost pressures that affect upper tier authorities. Currently, the rising cost of adult social care and children's services makes up around 85% of Hampshire County Council's budget. This has led to Hampshire having to make significant cuts to other services. Once unitarisation happens this will mean cost pressures and the risk of cuts on all local services.

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Although I don't support reorganisation, the government has been clear that we don't have a choice but to accept these changes. I am, therefore, of the view that it is incumbent on me and all councillors to try and make the best of the situation for the benefit of local residents. For me, that means ensuring that culture of place-based working, collaboration, agility and flexibility is at the heart of any new local authority - and recognising that bigger isn't always better when it comes to delivering efficient and effective local services. I recently took our interim submission of guiding principles (signed by all 15 Hampshire leaders) through full council and it was duly submitted to government.

Local Plan and Housing Numbers

The new government also confirmed that they've increased Test Valley's housing target by a staggering 78%. Rather than planning for 524 new homes a year, we now need to prepare a Local Plan that delivers 934 dwellings per annum. 15,878 new homes over the next 17 years. This despite solid delivery over the past decade or more. This overnight increase without any transitional arrangements means we no longer have a 5-year housing land supply and are therefore at risk of speculative development. Indeed, we are already seeing that with Bloor Homes' application for up to 200 homes between Augusta Park and Finkley.

Whilst I want to see this generation have the same opportunities as previous ones to get on the housing ladder or have access to affordable homes, my view is that new homes must be built in the right place, planned in consultation with local people and crucially include high levels of local infrastructure. We have, therefore, been working at pace to amend our local plan to accommodate the increased housing numbers, and later this summer we will be consulting with you and the public to ask for your feedback on the draft. We will need to make some tough decisions and include many more sites to try and prevent even more new development coming forward from applications and appeals in an ad hoc way, but our task has been made extremely difficult if not impossible by the new government's approach.

Town Centre Regeneration

Following our success in obtaining £18.3m from the previous government's Levelling Up Fund, planning applications for both the new theatre and the new riverside park along western avenue are in the final stages of being prepared.

This follows extensive engagement with user and access groups, Andover Vision stakeholders and the business community. You can view the draft designs at: www.thinkandovertowncentre.co.uk.

Planning permission has also been granted for the demolition of the former Tesco/Poundstretcher unit - which will commence very soon – making way for the new theatre.

Defra Fly-Tipping Stats

Figures published by government recently show that fly-tipping in Test Valley has decreased by 39.6% from 1457 to 880 incidents over the past year. Any amount of fly-tipping is unacceptable but it's good to see that Defra figures show a large reduction in Test Valley. Our zero-tolerance approach, successfully prosecuting and publicising 65 cases between 2022 and 2024, ensures that any would-be fly-tipper thinks twice before

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dumping waste in our beautiful borough.

Food waste

Test Valley has agreed to bring in weekly food waste collections from Monday 13 October 2025. This has been a long time in the making. In June 2022, we agreed plans to introduce weekly food waste collections from 2024, as well as the introduction of '1,2,3 Weekly', a new waste and recycling collection system. This would have enabled residents to recycle more at the kerbside, including a wider variety of plastics including pots, tubs and trays, cartons, aluminium foil and glass bottles and jars. Having made this decision, we began to plan for our service changes, with funding for vehicles, bins and caddies approved in April 2023. However, in October 2023, and then again in November 2024, the government made significant policy announcements, including consulting on 'Simpler Recycling'. These national policy announcements were unexpected, conflicting in policy direction, and ultimately impacted our ability to continue with our approved plans. The latest requirements from central government mean that, once again, we need to work with all our Hampshire partners, including the county council, to agree a waste collection and disposal system. In the meantime though, the requirements of the Environment Act mean we need to bring in food waste collections before April 2026. Therefore, to avoid bank holidays and to try and bed the new service in during the autumn we thought that October was the most appropriate time.

LGA Peer Review

In late November, over the period of a week, senior cross-party councillors and a team of experienced local government officers from different parts of the country came to Test Valley to review our performance. The peers reviewed a range of information and evidence and spoke to over 100 people including council staff, members and external stakeholders. The final report is published here: [Corporate Peer Challenge | Test Valley Borough Council](#). Overall, the report is fantastic. Here's some extracts from the Executive Summary:

"Test Valley Borough Council is a high-performing council that delivers effectively for its residents, with a commendable community-first approach and a strong sense of pride throughout the organisation. Officers and members consistently speak of positive working relationships, mutual trust, and a clear understanding of roles, all of which enhance decision-making and contribute to a constructive organisational culture with a place-based ethos embedded throughout.

Leadership is a standout strength across the organisation. The peer team heard how both the Leader and Chief Executive are highly visible and well-respected by officers, members, and external stakeholders. Their commitment to deliberative engagement ensures that residents and members play an active role in shaping the council's vision and direction. The council's regeneration projects reflect this approach, being thoughtfully planned and executed by an experienced and capable team, with clear alignment to the council's ambitions.

The peer team observed commendable efforts to ensure cross-party working and decision making. This level of collaboration is particularly noteworthy given the political makeup of the council, where elsewhere such coordinated efforts are often challenging to achieve. The proactive approach to open communication and engagement across parties reflects a strong commitment to inclusive and holistic decision-making.

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These efforts not only strengthen internal alignment but also create a solid foundation for innovative and well-rounded service delivery to emerge.”

Test Valley's Budget

Finally, I wanted to add a word on the finances. Against a backdrop of severe financial pressure for local government, Test Valley is in a relatively good position with our modest council tax rise of 3.05% protecting front line services. That means an average bill of £168.91 for an entire year of Test Valley Borough Council services. £44 (20%) lower than the average charge for the rest of England. Not only to have your bin collected every week but to maintain the housing & homelessness, planning, licensing, countryside, parks & open spaces, environmental health, economic development and leisure services - as well as continuing with our ambitious plans to improve our town centres.

In terms of Bourne Valley matters, as well as assisting residents with individual cases, I was also pleased to:

- Use my community councillor grant to help fund a new speed indicator device, solar panel and battery pack for Enham Alamein Parish Council.
- Help Vernham Dean Parish Council to pay for a new defibrillator at the pavilion.
- Fund the Pastrow Family Benefice to put on holiday club sessions for children in the Smannell and Enham Primary School.
- Continue to support Tangley Parish Council and The Close residents to get HCC to assess the Village Green application.
- Continue to support Enham Alamein residents through the Aster merger, including meeting regularly with the Chief Executive, Rachel Credidio and Partnerships and Engagement Director, Kevin Hodder. Including lobbying and supporting the Trust to regenerate the Landale Wilson public hall.
- Champion the new Enham Community Garden by planting a tree.
- Attend the official opening of the new play equipment in Little London, funded in part by Test Valley's Community Asset Fund and Community Infrastructure Levy.
- Attend the Armistice Day service in the HBT Centenary Garden with pupils from Hurstbourne Tarrant CofE Primary School.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with you all over the coming year.

County Cllr. Kirsty North provided the following written report:

I have been privileged to serve as the Executive Lead Member for Universal Services in the County Council's Cabinet for the past year. This has involved supporting its countryside and country parks, registration service, archives and records, property and Trading Standards, waste disposal and recycling, as well as large scale highways and infrastructure projects. I remain hard at work locally and am committed to pursuing the best services for Andover North residents as we navigate the whole system changes the national Government have placed upon local government in Hampshire.

Recipients of my Devolved Budget for 2024/25 were as follows:

Enham Alamein Parish Council – Speed Indicator Device

Amber Bee CIC – External provision for local schools on mindfulness and internet safety

Tangley Parish Council – Children's Play Equipment refresh, Wildhern

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Smannell Parish Council – First Aid Training and Community Equipment
Picket Piece Village Hall – Grand Reopening Party
A-Fest Andover CIC – A Fest 2025
Hurstbourne Tarrant Parish Council – Speed Indicator Device

The devolved member's grant scheme is currently paused for review over the Summer. I expect to be able to provide an update on it in the Autumn.

Over the course of the year I have:

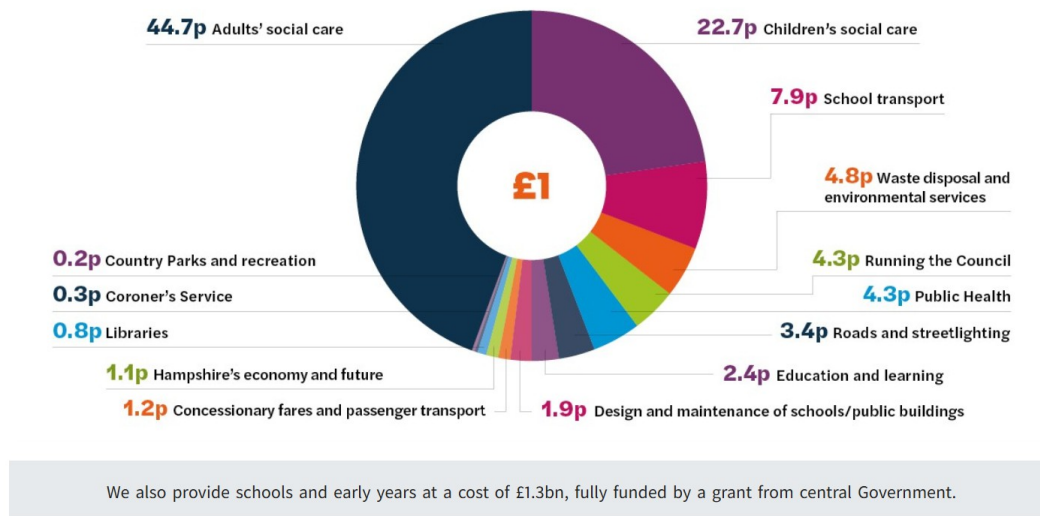
- Attended the opening celebration for Winton Academy's extension enabling the school to expand for an additional class per year group.
- Reported and chased up pothole repairs and secured resurfacing works such as Hurstbourne Hill.
- Visited Smannell Church of England Primary School
- Met Two Saints who provide homelessness support in Andover
- Held a meeting with HCC Highways, Tangleby Parish and Vernham Dean Parish to discuss local roads and the impact from Conholt Estate development, including permitting the Estate to repair the road edge where it is breaking away.
- Raised education and social care queries on behalf of residents
- Met Stagecoach to discuss bus provision and new incentives to travel by bus
- Ensured grit bins were replenished throughout the Division
- Met the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire at Enham Trust and visited their factory
- Held meetings to discuss local school performance
- Visited the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance at their Thruxton home to discuss fundraising with the Hampshire Business Awards
- Visited countryside sites and thanked volunteers for their help maintaining our countryside access, including local Miles without Stiles project in Vernham Dean
- Launched the new public transport offer; Connect Test Valley for modern bookable public transport
- Met Highways engineers to discuss improvements for walking and cycling in Andover
- Planted a tree at the new Enham Alamein Community Orchard
- Met Highways Engineers to discuss Smannell village traffic calming measures
- Attended the official opening of the renovated Picket Piece Village Hall and Social Club
- Contacted Taylor Wimpey and First Port to discuss snagging issues around Augusta Park

HCC Budget:

Hampshire County Council's budget includes £3.1billion of spending, covering the hundreds of services delivered by the council to its 1.4million residents.

Every £1 of council tax from an average band D, is spent as follows:

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Hampshire County Council's council tax is among the lowest of any county council in England. The precept for the financial year beginning 1 April 2025 is an annual charge of £1,609.83 (for a Band D property) – This is an increase of around £1.47 per week from last year. There are well known cost pressures for HCC. A large proportion of the County Council's budget is spent on providing social care, for both older and younger adults as well as children – like protecting children from harm and neglect, social care for Hampshire's growing older population, supporting adults and children with disabilities and additional needs, as well as school transport for children with special educational needs. Like other councils across the country, the costs of delivering these social care services keeps rising because of inflation and price increases by care providers, as well as demand being at record levels, especially in social care – pushing up our overall costs by an extra £188 million from April. We continue to look at best practice and efficiencies to drive down the budget in the context of ever-rising demand for care.

Borough Cllr. Phil North advised members that the matter of the Cinder Track was discussed at the recent Enham Alamein Parish Council meeting and the feasibility of obtaining grants for path improvements. There may be an opportunity in obtaining a grant for works.

Jenny Brain advised members that the Community Asset Find has re-opened for grant applications 2025/2026 and that 50% may be available from Test Valley Borough Council but must be match-funded by the remaining 50% from the parish council.

In addition, the latest SSSEN Community Fund is now open for applications that address resilience matters and parish councils can apply as long as they meet the prescribed criteria.

15. MEMBER QUESTIONS

None recorded.

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The next meeting of the Smannell Parish Council will take place on 7 July 2025 at April's Farm, Smannell, commencing at 6.30pm.

There being no further business to transact, the Chair closed the meeting at 20.10 hours.