

ESCLUSHAM COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes: Council Meeting Monday 12th January 2026

Present: Cllrs M. Pickering, N. Cargius, J. Kelly, Darcy Davies-Williams, S. Love, G. Richards, J. Perkins, N. Davies-Williams, P Searle, G. Bellamy, G. Blackmore, V Morgan and the Clerk M. Andrew

AGENDA

PRELIMINARIES - None

FINANCE COMMITTEE (Agenda items)

1. Apologies - Cllrs M. Pritchard, C. Luckock, C. Badwick
2. Chair's announcements - The Chair wished everyone a happy new year.
3. Declarations of interest - None
4. Ratification of minutes from the meeting of Monday 8th December 2025 - Proposed Cllr G. Blackmore, Seconded Cllr N. Davies-Williams, ratified unanimously
5. Members' Items
 - a) Budget planning 2026-2027 Information was provided during the meeting

The Chair of Finance with the Clerk shared the draft and explained the planned year-on-year variances. Following discussion/questions asked the draft budget was unanimously ratified > subject, as in previous years, to final confirmation at the March meeting. Further to this, the formal budget for 2026/27 is expected to be as the draft and will be presented to the Council for final ratification at the end of Q1 2026. Action: Clerk > be on diary to add onto the March 2026 agenda.

Precept Setting 2026/27, WCBC letter received and read out. The tax base for 2026/27 is 1487 (an uplift of 20 from 2025/26 figure of 1467). The Community Council are to set a precept for 2026/27 and advise WCBC by the 24/1.

% increase	Taxbase	2026/27	Community Charge	Increase	Per Week
2025-26	1467	129,389.00	88.20	0.00	£0.00
0%	1487	131,153.40	88.20	0.00	£0.00
1%	1487	132,464.93	89.08	0.88	£0.02
15%	1487	153,986.89	103.56	15.36	£0.30
16%	1487	155,791.30	104.77	16.57	£0.32
17%	1487	157,637.92	106.01	17.81	£0.34
18%	1487	159,528.23	107.28	19.08	£0.37
19%	1487	161,463.76	108.58	20.38	£0.39
20%	1487	163,446.15	109.92	21.72	£0.42
21%	1487	165,477.09	111.28	23.08	£0.44
22%	1487	167,558.36	112.68	24.48	£0.47
23%	1487	169,691.82	114.12	25.92	£0.50

Precept figure for 2026/27 - The Clerk advised that, when he and Cllrs Cargius and Luckock had discussed any proposed increase, albeit some weeks ago, a figure of @20% had been mooted. This was to restore the required 25% reserve and allow for the forecasted additional costs for 2026/27. Following discussion, Cllr S. Love had proposed an uplift of 20%, which was seconded by Cllr N. Davies-Williams and ratified unanimously. Using a similar calculation to the above:

20% increase > Band D charge of £109.92 X tax base of 1487 = £163,446.15 Precept request

The Clerk explained that this would result in an annual increase of £21.72p per band D property > under 22p per week increase in the Community Council portion of the Council Tax. Action: Clerk to advise WCBC that the ECC Precept request for 2026/27 is £163,446.

Financial warning Update

Potential Balance at financial year end 2025-2026 @ £18,000.00 which is less than the required 25% reserve (£32,347) required, although this is an improvement on last year when there was in the region of £2K in the account. Financial prudence is advised again with regards to S137 awards and the impact of fluctuations in variable costs such as street lighting repairs and maintenance (additional £7K above budget this year) as well as additional legal requirements such as streetlighting testing @£7000. Action> A copy of the Precept table and the financial warning update will be signed by the Chair, Vice-Chair and the Clerk and kept with the minutes.

b) Weekend hall hire fees 2026/27

The Clerk explained that due to the salary uplift for the caretakers it is necessary to increase the hourly hall hire rate on the weekends. The minimum charge for Saturdays (£75.00 > 4 hours) and Sundays (£100.00 > 4 hours) will stay the same, but the additional hourly charges would need to be increased to overtime and energy costs. The Clerk explained that the additional hourly costs should be £25.00 p/h for Saturdays and £30.00 p/h for Sundays. This was proposed by Cllr N. Cargius and seconded by Cllr M. Pickering, ratified unanimously. Action > Clerk to implement from 01/04/2026

6. Bank Transactions

Premier A/C	Date	Exp	Inc	Balance
Transfer to c/a (online)	1-Dec-25	1,000.00		20,056.94
Transfer to c/a (online)	9-Dec-25	2,000.00		18,056.94
Interest	9-Dec-25		10.98	18,067.92
WCBC Precept	12-Dec-25		43,129.67	61,197.59
Transfer to c/a (online)	12-Dec-25	5,000.00		56,197.59
Transfer to c/a (online)	15-Dec-25	2,500.00		53,697.59
Transfer to c/a (online)	22-Dec-25	3,000.00		50,697.59
Transfer from c/a (online)	22-Dec-25		50,000.00	100,697.59
Transfer to c/a (online)	29-Dec-25	2,000.00		98,697.59
Transfer to c/a (online)	31-Dec-25	1,500.00		97,197.59
Transfer to c/a (online)	6-Jan-26	3,500.00		93,697.59

7. Cash Transactions

Petty Cash A/C	Date	Rec No	Exp	Inc	Balance	Bank
Opening Balance 1st April 2025					start 54.43	
Voucher for departing clerk	27-May-25		50.00		4.43	
Transfer from Imprest	27-May-25			130.00	134.43	
Purchase bouquet	10-Jun-25		15.00		119.43	
Chain of Office	19-Jun-25		60.00		59.43	
Katy Thomas (Bugler)	9-Nov-25		40.00		19.43	

8. Invoices/Quotations -

- WCBC Half yearly fee for inspection and maintenance = £2,236.20 (inc VAT)
- Jones Lighting - Streetlight 102 Vicarage Hill outside Pensioners bungalows £2,372
- Christmas Tree Erection and removal - £798.00
- Clerk Expenditure - £682.52

Date	Company	Purpose	Amount
03/12/2025	Amazon	Xmas Decorations	£56.99
07/12/2025	B&Q	Building Maintenance	£15.30
08/12/2025	Aldi	Chocolates	£67.05
08/12/2025	Morrisons	Boxes of Chocolates	£168.60
09/12/2025	Morrisons	Soft drinks and Gift for Linda	£55.87
09/12/2025	Bookers	Catering glasses/crackers	£82.70
09/12/2025	The Range	Hampers (Xmas gifts)	£33.10
09/12/2025	Amazon	Table Cloths (Paper)	£25.49

09/12/2025	Amazon	Xmas Decorations	£35.46
15/12/2025	B&Q	Building Maintenance	£36.81
18/12/2025	Ucheck	DBS	£58.80
22/12/2025	Post Office	Stamps	£9.15
23/12/2025	Ucheck	DBS	£37.20
		Total	£682.52

The items above were ratified unanimously to be paid by BACS.

Cllr P. Searle proposed that a review of current suppliers and costs took place for 2026/27. This was seconded by Cllr J. Kelly and ratified unanimously.

9. Statement of Accounts

	Date of Statement 04/12/2025	Current Balance/Cashbook
Business Instant Account		£93,697.59
Current Account		£3,774.65
Imprest Account		£3,000.00
Petty Cash Account		£19.43
		<u>£100,491.67</u>

FYI: Online banking now in place for real time accounting reconciliation.

The situation regarding the **Trust fund** is recorded below for information.

RPHT Current A/C	Date	Chq	Exp	Inc	Balance
Caia Park Partnership (October)	1-Dec-25			105.00	17,333.91
Aikido Class (Nov)	1-Dec-25			120.00	17,453.91
WCBC Strength & Balance Exercise Gp	2-Dec-25			200.00	17,653.91
Paige Street Dance (Nov)	3-Dec-25			80.00	17,733.91
NWP Commissioners Grant	12-Dec-25			300.00	18,033.91
Paige Street Dance (Nov)	15-Dec-25			40.00	18,073.91
Transfer replacement petty cash party	15-Dec-25			340.00	18,413.91
Transfer from Petty Cash	16-Dec-25			635.50	19,049.41
BCU Cardiac Rehab Group (Nov)	31-Dec-25			160.00	19,209.41
Esclusham CC (Q Man fee for 31/12)	31-Dec-25		1,000.00		18,209.41
Caia Park Partnership (Nov)	5-Jan-26			140.00	18,349.41

RPHT Petty Cash A/C	Date	Rec No	Exp	Inc	Balance	Bank
Zumba	2-Dec-25	3865		20.00	641.37	
John Lord Tai Chi Class (Fri)	3-Dec-25	3866		30.00	671.37	
Rachel (Child party)	3-Dec-25	3867		55.00	726.37	
Bowls	3-Dec-25	3868		30.00	756.37	
Snooker Group	3-Dec-25	3869		10.00	766.37	
Nia Pauley	6-Dec-25	3870		55.00	821.37	
Caitlyn Crawley	7-Dec-25	3871		75.00	275.00	896.37
Zumba	9-Dec-25	3872		20.00	916.37	
Bowls	10-Dec-25	3873		30.00	946.37	
Snooker Group	10-Dec-25	3874		10.00	956.37	
John Lord Tai Chi Class (Fri)	12-Dec-25	3875		30.00	90.00	986.37
Bingo Prizes (ECC to transfer £90)	12-Dec-25		90.00			896.37
Band (ECC to transfer £250)	12-Dec-25		250.00			646.37
Transfer to current	15-Dec-25					10.87
Zumba	16-Dec-25	3876		20.00		30.87
Bowls	17-Dec-25	3877		30.00		60.87
Snooker Group	17-Dec-25	3878		10.00		70.87
John Lord Tai Chi Class (Fri)	19-Dec-25	3879		30.00	90.00	100.87

RPHT
Current Account
Petty Cash Account

Date of
Statement
06/01/2026
06/01/2026

Current Balance
Cash Book
£
18,349.41
100.87
£18,450.28

10. Budget Position: 10/10/2025

RCPTS & PYMNTS BUDGET ANALYSIS - ACT PAYMENTS Y/E 31 March 2026									BUDGET ANALYSIS	
			P Cash	Current	Imprest	Bus Sav	IR&NI	Total to Date	BUDGET	Variance
Expenditure										
VH Maintenance	1.1	Employee Costs			21,230.73		183.23	21,413.96	26,500.00	5,086.04
	1.2	Power		7,601.32				7,601.32	12,000.00	4,398.68
	1.3	Repairs		993.85	0.00			993.85	1,500.00	506.15
	1.4	Waste		1,621.82				1,621.82	1,700.00	78.18
VH Capital	2.1	Plans/Equipme nt	0.00	1,033.33				1,033.33	1,500.00	466.67
	2.2	New Build/ Improvements		752.73				752.73	1,500.00	747.27
Street Lights	3.1	Maintenance		8,152.77				8,152.77	4,500.00	-3,652.77
	3.2	Power		3,988.89				3,988.89	14,000.00	10,011.11
Lights/ Signs Capital	4.1	New lights/fitings		482.75				482.75	2,000.00	1,517.25
Sch Crossing/ P'schem e	5.1	School Crossing		1,485.00				1,485.00	5,800.00	4,315.00
	5.2	Playscheme		0.00				0.00	5,900.00	5,900.00
Admin	6.1	Employee Costs		20,667.70			9,024.43	29,692.13	30,000.00	307.87
	6.2	Stationery	0.00	843.89				843.89	1,000.00	156.11
	6.3	Telephones		840.73				840.73	1,000.00	159.27
	6.4	Subs & Insurance		4,908.34				4,908.34	4,500.00	-408.34
	6.5	Expenses	0.00	402.34				402.34	250.00	-152.34
Comms	7.1	Website/Press	0.00	133.00				133.00	500.00	367.00
Admin Capital	8.1	Office Equipment		103.17				103.17	200.00	96.83
Sec 137	9.1	Donations		1,575.00	0.00			1,575.00	1,500.00	-75.00
	9.2	Gifts & parties	0.00	260.66	0.00			260.66	2,500.00	2,239.34
	9.3	Chair Allowance		500.00	0.00			500.00	1,200.00	700.00
	9.4	Cutting		0.00	3,030.00			3,030.00	3,500.00	470.00
Misc.	10.1	PWLB (loan repayment)		0.00				0.00	0.00	0.00
	10.2	Facilities		3,863.50				3,863.50	6,000.00	2,136.50
	10.3	Pension set-up costs etc		0.00				0.00	200.00	200.00
	10.4	General (inc Yth Service)	165.00	6,224.50	59.28			6,448.78	3,000.00	-3,448.78
Totals			165.00	66,435.29	24,320.01	0.00	9,207.66	100,127.96	132,250.00	32,122.04
									Check	32,122.04

CHAIR C. Luckock

DATE 09/02/2026

FULL COUNCIL (Agenda Items)

1. Apologies - Cllrs M. Pritchard, C. Luckock, C. Badwick
2. Chair's announcements - **The Chair wished everyone a happy new year**
3. County Councillor's Report - **Due to the CC sending apologies there was no report.**
4. Declarations of interest - **None**
5. Ratification of minutes from the meeting of Monday 8th December 2025 - **Proposed by Cllr G. Blackmore, seconded by Cllr G. Bellamy and ratified unanimously**
6. Members' Items/Action List

a) NWP/ECC Police liaison meeting > 7th January 2026

Present:- CPSO Gethin Thomas , Cllrs Graham Blackmore, John Perkins, and the Clerk Mark Andrew

- 1) **Off road bikes-** there have been further reports of an off road bike being used on the footpath (both directions) in the region of Plas Angharad. Details were passed to CPSO Thomas. Bikes are still using the Bersham coal tip and causing a nuisance.
- 2) **White Van Activity -** The question was asked if there had been further reports of a white van and three males stopping suddenly in order to try and cause accuse drivers of causing an accident. This has been logged by NWP and followed up on the day, but no further activity has been reported.
- 3) **Neighbourhood Issues -** The local Police reported very low criminal activity in the area over the Christmas period. There was a disturbance at Starbuck's, but this was caused by visitors in transit.
- 4) **CCTV -** The Clerk requested that further information on the type of CCTV that could be considered to purchase for the area around the football field and the Bersham road junction.
- 5) **Liaison with Rural -** The Clerk requested that the PCSO's present contact Rural to repeat the invitation to join this meeting.
- 6) **Traffic issues -** Bryn Tirion Hall traffic is causing issues in the mornings with high traffic volume. The Clerk is looking at any planning conditions stipulated and CPSO Thomas will attend in the mornings next week to observe for himself.

b) **WCBC Playscheme 2026/27 -** Playscheme service for 2025/26 @ 3 hours per day x 4 days per week x over the 6w summer holiday = **£5,852.16**, the following comparison figures received as :

i) 3 hours per day x 4 days per week x over the 6w summer holiday (as 25/26) = **£6,132.48**

ii) 3 hours per day x 3 days per week x over the 6w summer holiday = **£4,669.44**

iii) 2 hours per day x 4 days per week x over the 6w summer holiday = **£5,167.44**

Cost of funding for 49 weeks of the year @ 3 hours per week = £10,117.76

Action> Clerk to request costing for afternoon sessions as discussions took place on last years attendance and quality.

- c) Rhostyllen Football Club - **request for support is being dealt with via a letter from the Clerk**
- d) Ceri Owens (local resident) - Please can the lighting be reviewed at the end of Esless Park (the field separating Esless Park and Heritage Garden/Station Road) . There is not one streetlight along this foot path, it is totally pitch black. **Action> Clerk to meet with Cllr J. Kelly to visit the area and review.**
- e) Café proposal - **Due to the loss of the Playgroup, the room will be available and due to there being a kitchenette a request had been made to move the café from the snooker room to the playgroup room. This would also make it available for hire at other times. Proposed by Cllr N. Cargius and seconded by Cllr V. Morgan and ratified unanimously. Action> Clerk and caretakers to clean room after it had been fully vacated and move the café over.**
- f) Bryn Tirion Hall School Traffic issues - **discussed during the Police liaison meeting and recorded as such, Action > the Clerk continue to establish what planning conditions have been set for numbers attending the school.**

ACTION PLAN:

ITEM	Resp	Status
Sep-23		
Suitable signage for car park: Hall/environs users only > re-invigorate in summer 2025	Clerk	Ongoing
Apr-24		
Liaise WCBC > 'speed bands' > Croesfoel to Packsaddle - re-visit with WCBC: look at after Bersham Rd	Clerk	Ongoing
May-24		
Finial' on P Hall roof. Cllr MP taken the 'old' one away to see what can be done: ask MP for update in Q2	Cllr MP	Ongoing
Sep-24 (RPHT)		
Obtain Q for a full re-decoration of the Bersham Room > look to get Quote asap (above is to follow)	Clerk	Ongoing
Obtain Q to 'freshen-up' the two gables along the P Hall frontage - look to get quotes in late HY1 2025	Clerk	Ongoing
Sep-24		
Gateway signage to Rhostyllen and Bersham - Cllrs SL and MP liaise with the Clerk in HY1 2025	Clerk	Ongoing
Bicycle Pump track - Cllr GB to make further investigations: by end HY1 2025	Cllr GB	Ongoing
Nov-24		
Obtain quotes for finalising work along fence line from existing wall to Bowling Club: by end summer 2025	Cllr MP	Ongoing
Jan-25		
Liaise with Ysgol Rhostyllen re poss 'Esclusham'-specific posters re dog fouling: Cllr GR conf > in hand	Cllr GR	Ongoing
May-25 AGM		
Chairs allowance (to be discussed at next budget meeting Nov 2025)	Clerk	Nov 25

7. **Planning Items & Reports**

None

Withdrawals

None

Reports/Appeals

None

Decisions

8. **Correspondence** - for attention of the Council

- a. Vic Davies on behalf of BBC (Bersham Bowling Club) - **The Clerk read the letter of thanks and request for the continuation of funding. Action > Clerk to add to S137 agenda**
- b. Steve Shaw - Power for the People - **The Clerk read the letter regards lobbying local MP's for local energy producers to provide cheap energy to local residents. Action > Clerk to circulate email to all Councillors.**

9. **Items for the Clerk**

- a) Pre-Christmas events - **Cllr J. Perkins kindly suggested some improvements for 2026 i.e. formal risk assessments to be updated and agreed prior to events taking place especially with regards to road safety, crowd control and security etc. Action > Clerk to add to agendas throughout the year as and when events are due.**
- b) Warm Space Update - **Activities are taking place with good attendance (apart from last week due to snow). Various bodies including Tenovus, Groundworks, Community Agents are attending to support.**
- c) Sub-Committees
 - i. Biodiversity and environment. Val Morgan, Mabyn Pritchard
 - ii. Parish Hall upgrades . John Perkins, Mark Pritchard, Glen Bellamy, Nat Cargius, Peter Searle, Darcy Davies-Williams
 - iii. Website improvements. Gemma Richards, Nicci Davies-Williams
- d) DBS Checks for Clerk and Caretakers - **The Clerk explained the need for the basic DBS checks to be carried out due to Parish Hall activities with children and vulnerable adults. Action > Clerk check completed, caretakes need to be carried out.**

CHAIR G. Richards

DATE 09/02/2026