

Minutes of the Town Committee meeting held at Bruton Community Hall on Tuesday 7th October at 7.30pm.

Councillors present: Buckland, Coulter, Fradley, Crawford, Baker

In the Chair: Cllr Coulter.

Officers in attendance: Assistant Town Clerk (ATC).

Members of the Public: 0

Public session started: 7:30pm.

Meeting started: 7:30pm.

Minutes

T25/33: Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1)).

To receive and approve any apologies of absence.

Apologies were received from Cllrs Anderton and Robinson

It was RESOLVED [5-0-0] [for-against-abstain] to receive apologies and approve the reasons given.

T25/34: Declarations of interest.

Declarations of Interests Members to declare any interests, including disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI) they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any written requests from members for dispensations that accord with the Localism Act 2011 s33 (b-e) (This does not preclude any later declaration).

None declared.

T25/35: Minutes of the previous meeting (LGA 1972 sch 12 para 41 (1)).

To approve [the minutes of the last meeting](#) on 22nd July 2025 as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

It was RESOLVED [5-0-0] [for-against-abstain] to accept the minutes dated 22nd July 2025 as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

The minutes were signed by Cllr Coulter.

T25/36: To receive a short-written report from the clerk and an update regarding actions from the previous meeting.

This report will be circulated and will be available on the Bruton Town Council website.

The report was noted by all.

Cllr Buckland added that the brambles behind the MUGA have now been cleared, and the wall has recently been further damaged on lower part of the wall, but this has been fixed by the grounds maintenance team, who will be sending an invoice.

T25/37 : To receive working group notes and to consider any recommendations and actions:

- a) Abbey Ponds working group notes.

No notes were available at the time of the meeting.

T25/38: GWR Grant funding – Abbey Ponds Connecting Bruton project update.

- a. The provisional start date for work to begin is 3rd November. This will begin with the relaying of the hoggin pathway through Abbey Ponds and laying of hoggin pathway through Durslade allotments, removing the steps and installing a ramp, and installing new gateways.
- A meeting took place last week with the team at Hauser & Wirth Somerset (HWS), the designer for the Abbey Ponds signage, Cllrs Jones and Buckland, TC and ATC.
- The designer gave an update and is in the process of producing some clear options for signage designs following feedback at full council.
- HWS are hoping to receive a planned schedule of works this week from the contractor for the ramp and Hogging pathway, detailing access disturbances during works. It was discussed that during the time of the Abbey Ponds footpath it will be advised for visitors to take the Dovecot route.
- The following has been planned in terms of Publicising, to begin the end of this week and then a week prior to works starting:-
 - A brief summary with an outline of planned works is in the Dove magazine, signposting readers to the BTC website for updates. HWS have included the same with a link to their website/social media.
 - Once a schedule of works has been received from the contractor officers at BTC and HWS will update the websites/social media.

- The same information will be circulated to Community Allotment owners, Wild Shed Community Sauna, HWS visitors, Good Company Bruton, King's School Bruton, BTC Councillors and Bruton Chamber of Commerce.

- b. To consider any update regarding way-finding signage.

A late report was circulated following today's meeting with Somerset Highways and was noted by all.

The ATC will contact King's School, and Network Rail to discuss permissions. It was proposed by Cllr Coulter and seconded by Buckland, that the renewed signage positions and designs are recommended and to arrange quotes as appropriate.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to approve and recommend the renewed planned way-finding signage designs external to the Abbey Ponds site, and the newly suggested positions in the town as detailed in the report.

- c. Review project spend to budget to date.

Reviewed and noted by all.

T25/39: Abbey Ponds;

- a. Stock proof fence; to consider maintenance requirements which will include removal of damaged fence and preventing cows entering the ponds area.

Following the recent hedge maintenance at Abbey Ponds, both the TC and Cllr Buckland have independently visited the site to check stock proofing needs. It has been established that the fence in the top Dovecot field needs repair, along with a length of fencing that has dropped to the ground and needs removal. As part of the lease BTC is responsible for stock-proofing the Abbey ponds land, as is the case for the lease holders in neighbouring fields.

It was proposed to arrange for the repair of the top fence in the Dovecot field and removal of the old fence along the ponds initially (depending on the quote and if there is scope in the budget for this), also include a quote for replacement, with a view to forming a future maintenance plan.

Officers to contact the neighbouring tenants to inform them of the above plans once confirmed.

The future management can be highlighted to the Abbey Ponds working group as part of their maintenance review.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to obtain a quote for repair of the section of damaged fence in the top Dovecot field, and for the removal of the section of failed fence on the Abbey Ponds boarder, with a separate quote for replacement.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to proceed with the repair of the top Dovecot field fence and removal of the section of failed fence on the Abbey Ponds boarder should there be scope in the budget for this.

- b. Hedge maintenance.

This item was deferred to the Abbey Ponds working group as part of the review for the Abbey Ponds maintenance contract.

T25/40: Memorials;

- a. Bench at Bishton Place; to discuss the options of either a reclaimed bench or to look at purchasing a new bench, and to discuss suggested positions and installation.

It was proposed by Cllr Buckland and seconded by Cllr Coulter that the family go ahead with choosing and purchasing the bench, and to make arrangements with BTC for the cost of the installation process. The position has been agreed on the patch of grass with the Man on the Bench, however, if the family would prefer the area near the stepping stones, this would also be agreed if positioned along the bridge wall.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) for the family to choose/purchase the bench and to make arrangements with BTC for the installation costs.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) for the family to be given the position options of the patch of grass with the “Man on Bench”, or, along the bridge wall in the area next to the stepping stones.

- b. To receive request for a memorial on the bench next to the Dovecot.

A group of friends who attended Sexey’s School together years ago have requested permission to install a memorial plaque on the bench next to the Dovecot. One member of the friendship group passed away some time ago, and they regularly meet at the Dovecot in her memory.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to allow the installation of a memorial plaque on the bench next to the Dovecot, provided the size and wording is previewed by BTC officers.

T25/41: Planter at Library Junction;

To receive an update (if available) from Bruton Horticulture Society.

The ATC will make contact to find out if the BHS would be happy to supply the Planters and plants as a memorial piece, with a view to arranging ongoing maintenance with an alternative local organisation, such as the Hummingbird School.

If the BHS are happy with this arrangement, Cllrs will approach the Hummingbird School with this suggestion.

The Hummingbird School have invited councillors to attend any of their Wednesday morning tours.

T25/42: Bin outside Spar.

To consider request from resident to replace the bin and to consider next actions.

It was noted that there has been an increase in litter in and around the High Street since the loss of this bin.

It was noted that a new bin may have a cost implication for emptying, and that officers have still not received a response from Street Scene to agree emptying a larger bin at this site.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) that a quote is obtained for a replacement bin.

T25/43: Patwell Street;

To consider a request for signage warning of pedestrians crossing the road at Patwell Street, and to discuss any next actions.

It was noted that there is a 20mph speed limit in place, however, there is also a short window of opportunity to cross before cars appear around the corner. It was also noted that signage may be challenging in this area, with limited options.

The ATC will make contact with Highways to explore options.

T25/44: Speed Indicator Device (SID).

To discuss how councillors wish to process the data downloaded from the SID on a fortnightly basis. To consider any proposals that arise from those discussions.

Officers to invite interest from councillors in being added to the distribution list for the SID stats and to explore how this data is being used effectively.

The data collection will continue as it is in the meantime.

T25/45: Land at Eastfields (the old play area);

To discuss options for the use of this area and consider any actions.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to recommend the use of the land at Eastfields is deferred to Strategic Planning with a view to inclusion within the Town Plan questionnaire.

T25/46: Bruton Town Council website;

To consider a request from Chamber of Commerce to have a designated page on the Bruton Town Council website.

It was noted that access to the website may cause issues, and suggested that a new page with the title "Other Bruton organisations" (or similar) is added to the BTC website, which could then include a list of links to any Bruton organisations websites.

The ATC will explore options with ZEN as part of the ongoing website plans.

T25/47: Community Office;

To consider officers request for volunteers, when based in the front office, to be able to access the internet to respond to queries. To consider the options at how best to provide this.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to get a quote for an android style tablet with a case, keyboard and stand and to be set up with an accompanying crib-sheet for volunteer use.

T25/48: Engine Shed;

To consider quote for producing scope of works for the entire repairs.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to approve the quote for producing the Engine Shed scope of works for the entire repairs.

T25/49: Grounds Maintenance Contract 2026/27.

- a. To agree the proposed ground maintenance schedule with a view to putting the contract out to tender as soon as possible, and to discuss any next actions.

The schedule was reviewed and noted by all and the ATC gave a short demonstration of how Civic.ly will work from the contractors perspective.

The ATC will add Cllrs Coulter and Fradley as users of the Civic.ly app.

Some minor alterations were agreed as follows:

- Instead of “Lengthsperson”, use “Town Ranger” and remove the duplication in the opening introduction on the General Terms page.
- Instead of “Full training” replace with “training”

In terms of the tender process, it was proposed to organise 3 set days to offer contractors the opportunity to attend for a tour of the town with Cllr Buckland and for officers to demonstrate the Civic.ly app.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to approve the Grounds Maintenance 2026/27 schedule with the above small alterations, and the process as proposed for tender.

T25/50: Allotments; Cuckoo Hill.

- a. To receive report regarding the recent works at Cuckoo Hill allotments involving the DofE students and allotment volunteers, and to consider the following:
 - Plot space (not officially a plot) to be used for a Community plot and to consider waiving any fee for this.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to approve the community plot for a named tenant, and to waive the tenancy fee.

- To consider the quote to form “A” shaped Hedge line within the allotment side to the hedge line neighbouring the field.

Since this agenda, the hedge has already been cut in the usual form and this quote is no longer relevant. The “A” shape to the hedge line has been approved for future within the new Grounds Maintenance contract.

- b. Hedge line at the back of the allotments, neighbouring properties and the Frome Road; to review second quote and select the contractor for reducing the hedge height.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to approve the quote from the same contractor that is reducing the tree height within the hedgerow, Osborne Tree Services.

T25/51: Allotments; Durslade.

To receive a short summary of a meeting about the Somerset ‘Wilder Allotments’ scheme, attended by the clerk and Town Council chair. To discuss and consider any next actions.

A report was circulated and noted by all.

In summary, the area at Durslade is confirmed as highly suitable.

There are some recommendations/permissions required to support working towards Durslade Walled Garden achieving “Wilder Allotment” status. It is important to achieve the following permissions in order to begin this process, and to recognise that this will support the project rather than guarantee its achievement:

- The officer team to work with councillors, working group members, allotment holders and other interested parties to consider the steps required and to begin to establish the aims.
- Create a BTC Allotment Policy, to reinforce elements of the tenancy agreement such as not using glyphosate, for Town Committee to consider in the first instance.
- To request permission from Hauser and Wirth, who have already been approached about this, to install additional IBC water storage, and to consider the ‘water garden and bog garden’ as described in the report.
- To explore available options to seek grant funding for specific projects, beginning with the Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) for the water garden and bog garden. Approval is required from Town Committee in order to benefit from any funding from SWT.
- Facilitating training for the compost bin management.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to support the efforts towards achieving “Wilder Allotments” status at Durslade Allotment site.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to recommend CEEWG draft an allotment policy for approval at Town Committee.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) for officers to seek permissions from Hauser & Wirth Somerset for the installation of an additional IBC water storage, to consider the water garden and bog garden at the Durslade Allotment site.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) for officers to proceed with the grant application from Somerset Wildlife Trust.

T25/52: Jubilee Park

To note that the play equipment inspection is due within 3-4 months from booking which was at the beginning of September.

Noted.

Cllr Fradley would like some support with playground inspections, and the ATC will be contacting all councillors about this.

T25/53: Town Committee Budget.

a. To note Spend to Budget for 2025/26.
Reviewed and noted by all.

b. To consider items for the budget 2026/27 (including quote for picnic bench at Bishton Green).

Proposed for both benches to be added to the budget for next year with a view to further discuss their locations at that time.

It was RESOLVED (5-0-0) to add both benches to the budget for 2026/27.

T25/54: Date of next meeting 11th November 2025.

The next meeting is on 11th November 2025. Agenda items to the Assistant Clerk by 28th October 2025..

Noted by all.

Meeting ended at 9:20pm

END OF MINUTES