

**Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL held on Tuesday 28th October 2025 at 7.30pm in
the Bruton Community Hall**

Councillors present: Cllrs Anderton, Baker, Buckland, Coulter, Dunn, Fradley, Hood, and Jones.

In the chair: Cllr Buckland.

Officers present: Town Clerk, and Deputy Clerk.

Somerset Councillors: apologies were received from Cllrs Trinnell and Power.

Members of the public: none.

Public session: not required.

Meeting started: 7.30pm.

MINUTES

25/086: Apologies for Absence (LGA 1972 s85(1)).

Apologies were received from Cllr Bateman, Crawford, Robinson, Taylor and Wright.

It was RESOLVED [8-0-0] [for-against-abstain] to accept the apologies and the reasons given.

25/087: Declarations of Interest.

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).

Cllr Jones declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 25/098a, Payments for October.

25/088: Minutes of the previous meeting (LGA 1972 sch 12 para 41 (1)).

To receive, approve, and sign [the minutes of the last Town Council meeting](#) held on 23rd September 2025.

It was RESOLVED [7-0-1] to approve the minutes for the full council meeting held on 23rd September 2025 as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

25/089: Reports from Somerset Councillors:

- a. Lucy Trimnell.
- b. Tom Power.

Apologies have been received from both Cllr Trimnell and Cllr Power. Cllr Trimnell forwarded a couple of short items for the clerk to read aloud.

25/090: Reports - to receive reports from:

- a. Members representing the Council on outside bodies.

Cllr Jones reported that an Local Community Network (LCN) meeting took place on 15th October, but he couldn't attend as he had a prior commitment. There are ongoing issues about resourcing of LCNs, in particular staffing levels, and also considering the ongoing consultation about how Somerset Council engages with communities. Cllr Jones has requested that a further LCN Flood Working Group meeting is convened to collate an emergency flooding plan to cover the entire LCN area.

Cllr Hood reported that Good Company Bruton has two new directors; Katie Sharp, and Marcelle Speller. It has been agreed that One Planet Bruton (OPB) do not need to be a separate CIC and will be operating under the Good Company Bruton banner.

- b. Town Councillors.

Cllr Fradley reminded councillors that it is the annual Christmas dinner on 9th December.

Cllr Coulter reminded councillors about Remembrance Sunday.

Cllr Baker notified councillors that improvement works at the Jubilee Park pavilion changing room have started. The works will take place in two parts, this tranche is a week-long, and hopefully will be completed over the Christmas period. This approach has been taken to reduce inconvenience to user groups of the pavilion building.

Cllr Hood commented that there has been some discussions via social media regarding the car park next to the Community Hall which has now been leased by Kings to the Hummingbird School. The clerk is to produce a

short website briefing about the car park, detailing the Town Council has never had responsibility for that car park (with an illustration).

c. Chair.

Cllr Buckland reported that:

- He attended the Somerset Association of Local Councils conference and AGM, which was a very enjoyable day that provided excellent networking opportunities with other councillors.
- He attended the Somerset Council Chairs awards ceremony, supporting the town council nominee.
- He has visited the youth group up at Jubilee Park. The young people like to be outside, and Cllr Buckland suggested that the MUGA floodlights can be used.
- Cllr Buckland, with the clerk, met with Guy Braga (Somerset Wildlife Trust) and two representatives from OPB to discuss a Wilder Allotments scheme for Durslade Community Gardens.
- He met with Matt Radley, the new head of Kings school. It was a positive meeting, and Matt is keen to develop a relationship between the council and both Kings and Sexeys schools. It has been suggested that there is an independent member of Kings school staff as a liaison with BTC. Kings are very keen that their fundraising is also directed at local organisations to Bruton.
- There is an appetite for a youth council, with both Kings and Sexeys schools working together -This will open an excellent line of communication, and a termly meeting has been suggested.

25/091: Clerk's Report.

To receive [a short report from the Town Clerk](#) to update on ongoing matters.

Councillor Hood queried why Mill Dam is included in the Grounds Maintenance, as the town council is not responsible for the footpath. This has been added to the Grounds Maintenance some years ago, as the area was not being tended to by Somerset Council, who do have responsibility for that area.

Community Governance Review: Cllr Jones suggested that it would make sense to consider the Community Governance Review within a Strategic Planning meeting, and consider suggesting some formal/informal discussions take place looking forward.

25/092: Minutes and Recommendations from Committees and from those Working Groups that report to the Full Council:

- a. Planning and Consultation Response Committee – to receive the minutes from the meeting held on [9th September](#) and [30th September 2025](#).
Cllr Fradley overviewed the two meetings briefly. There is one item that is to be discussed as an agenda item later in this meeting.
- b. Town Committee – [to receive the minutes](#) from the meeting held on 7th October 2025 and to note or approve any recommendations and decisions as required:
 - i. T25/44 Speed Indicator Device (SID) Data.
To invite interest from councillors to be added to the current distribution list for the data. To explore how the data is used.
The volunteer who has managed the SID data previously has stepped down from doing so. Particular software is required to view the data, which is a free download. The data will continue to be downloaded, and perhaps put a request out on social media, the website, and The Dove, for volunteers to get in touch. The data is useful, and includes speeding vehicles and volume of traffic.
- c. Finance and Resources Committee – [to receive the minutes](#) from the meeting held on 14th October 2025 (if available), and to note or approve any recommendations and decisions as required:
 - i. To note that it was proposed that officers investigate options and framework for a loan. This is also an agenda item for Strategic Planning Committee, 21st October 2025.
Noted.
 - ii. To note that the Town Meeting on 12th November is being advertised, with questions invited from residents.
Noted.
- d. Strategic Planning Committee- to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 21st October 2025 (if available), and to note or approve any recommendations or decisions as required:
 - i. SP25/16 Town Ranger.
To recommend a Town Ranger as a contractor rather than an employed position.
A group comprising of Cllrs Hood, Buckland and Robinson to work with the Town Clerk to devise a contract and service specification for the position, highlighting communication with key stakeholders, and the ability to have a flexible approach.

Cllr Hood reported that Good Company are supporting an individual who is undertaking some tasks tidying up around the town (weed removal, litter picking and similar tasks), approximately 5 hours per week.

- e. Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group –The next meeting is on 4th November.
- f. BruBowl Working Group – to receive an update from the working group, meeting held on 6th October 2025.

There was a £10k donation, that has been received and transferred to the Brubowl savings account. The next meeting is on 17th November.

- g. Events Working Group – to receive any updates and consider any recommendations from working group meetings held.

Remembrance Sunday and Hostile Vehicle Management. The clerk detailed some information received from Bradsons (event management company) who recommended to apply the existing risk assessment. Bradsons will liaise with Somerset Council (Events Traffic Management) and will update any of their procedures accordingly. Bradsons will notify the town council if any alterations to event management arrangements are required, for either Remembrance Sunday or the Christmas Event.

The events working group have been informed that they need to apply for a grant for any funding for next year, and that the deadline is 7th November. Arrangements are progressing really well for the Christmas Event.

25/093: Show of Hands Festival Licence Application.

To consider the applicant's recent representation and the Licensing Authority's request for feedback. To consider a report provided by the Deputy Clerk, and the areas for decision highlighted within.

The Deputy Clerk reported that in a recent submission to the Licensing Authority, the Planning & Consultation Response Committee recommended refusal of the licence for three main reasons:

- noise disturbance from loud music played outdoors, going on till 3am for four nights in a row;
- the highway safety risk posed by pedestrians walking between the town and the venue along the carriageway of a half-mile section of the (fast but narrow) A359 with no footway (pavement);
- the deleterious impact on Bruton's Packhorse Fair of a four-day Festival held over the Spring bank holiday.

In response to the Committee's representation the applicant sent a letter to the Council, explaining how he was addressing those concerns, and offering to discuss them with councillors. The Somerset Council Licensing Officer had also invited the

Council to respond, and she had organised an on-line meeting on October 30th to give the applicant and interested parties a chance to share information, ideas and concerns.

Councillors made the following points:

- Bruton Town Council (BTC) had been generally supportive of previous festivals at Gilcombe Farm, so recommending a refusal of the licence represented a significant change of approach;
- in the past, BTC's major concern about festivals at Gilcombe Farm had always been road safety;
- when previous festivals at the farm took place over the Spring (late May) bank holiday, a fair number of festival attendees had also attended the Packhorse Fair, so the proposed Festival might boost rather than depress the Fair's attendance figures;
- on the other hand, there is evidence that if there were a four-day festival at Gilcombe Farm over the Spring bank holiday, businesses would switch their patronage from the Fair to the Festival, reducing the range and variety of the Fair's offering, and thereby reducing its appeal;
- it is clear from the testimony of affected families that having to endure loud music played into the small hours several nights in a row is at best disturbing and at worst distressing;
- if the Festival were a one-off event, residents might find it easier to tolerate, but the intention is to make it an annual event;
- as well as the playing of music until 3.00a.m., the applicant proposes the serving of alcohol and food until 3.30am and 4.00am respectively, claiming that these long hours "are central to the viability of the festival". This might well be the case, but it would be wrong for BTC to prioritise the commercial interests of a new venture over the right of Bruton residents to enjoy a good night's sleep;
- the applicant has undertaken to produce a Noise Management Plan, but BTC's concerns about noise are not allayed by the unknown terms of an unseen Plan, so the prospect of 'a dedicated Noise Manager', 'on-site sound monitoring', and 'a residents' phonenumber' is soothing but not satisfying;
- without extensive consultation it is impossible to gauge the level of support for, opposition to or indifference about the proposed Festival in Bruton, but there is no time for a consultation, so councillors must use their own judgement about what would be in Bruton's best interests;
- notwithstanding the reassuring words of the applicant's representation, it does not address the concerns expressed to any significant extent, so there is no good reason for the Council to overturn the Committee's recommendation that the licence be refused;

- While the Council's main concern is the interests of Bruton residents, the Licensing Authority may have different priorities and decide to grant the licence regardless of the Council's opposition. If that were to happen, Councillors would take the applicant at his word when he states that "I am committed to engaging constructively with the wider community throughout the planning and operation of Show of Hands". In the event of a licence being granted, the Council would want to work closely with the Festival organisers to ensure that the interests of Bruton residents remain at the forefront;
- councillors agreed that it would be appropriate for the Deputy Clerk to attend an online meeting organised by the Licensing Officer to give the applicant and other interested parties a chance to exchange information and gain a better understanding of each other's point of view.

It was RESOLVED [7-0-1] to support the recommendation of the Council's Planning & Consultation Committee that the Show of Hands Festival be refused a licence, with the rider that if a licence were to be granted, the Council would wish to work closely with the applicant in support of his commitment "to engaging constructively with the wider community throughout the planning and operation of Show of Hands".

25/094: To review Terms of Reference for Working Groups.

To review the Terms of Reference for Working Groups to include the following:

- a. To issue agenda for the Working Group meeting observing the 'three day' requirement of full council and committees.
- b. To ensure that notes from the Working Group meetings are available three working days before the meeting of the committee in which they report to.

Items a and b were discussed together. It was suggested that there are working groups that have been supported by members of the public, which means applying the terms in a and b may not be workable. To ensure that these timescales were adhered to, would require town council officer support.

Applying the three day timescale for the agenda to be issued would suggest having a schedule of meetings well in advance, but this would reduce the flexibility of a working group, and make it akin to a committee. Aiming for the three day timescale as best practice may be more sensible. It is recognised that the working groups are in place and are less formal to encourage non-councillor participation.

Meeting documents are available on Sharepoint and working group members are encouraged to access the information. It is good practice to ensure that participants in a meeting have access to items for discussion rather than attending unprepared.

A short discussion followed about how working groups would work better. The clerk highlighted that if every town council working group had officer support, then it would impact on officer time.

The question was raised about the reporting to committees and to full council, and would working groups reporting directly to full council ensure that the cascade of information and recommendations was more streamlined? One example is Abbey Ponds Working Group reporting to Town Committee. Currently the timing of the working group meeting does not fall naturally with the schedule for Town Committee, could that be improved by the working group reporting to Full Council?

It was suggested that if there was a specific difficulty that prompted this agenda item then that needs to be addressed directly, if possible.

Councillors recognised that to ensure meaningful attendance to working groups, there does need to be adequate notice of the meeting taking place.

It was resolved [8-0-0] that item a is introduced as best practice guide; that an agenda needs to be issued three working days before a scheduled working group meeting.

A decision was not made on agenda item b.

25/095: Abbey Ponds Project – ‘Connecting Abbey Ponds and Bruton’.

To receive a short report from the Town Clerk, overviewing the project and the progress so far. Part of the funding for the project is from First Greater Western Limited (GWR).

Officers were thanked for producing the report.

It was suggested that the report was published on the website, and also a copy sent to both Hauser & Wirth and to Kings.

It was also noted that any items that are Highways dependent will need highlighting to GWR, to point out that it is unlikely that some of the external way finding signage will be completed within the project timescales.

25/096: Bank Reconciliations.

- a. To approve the [bank reconciliations](#) for the current and deposit accounts and credit card for the period 1st September 2025 to 30th September 2025. Cllr Anderton will attend the Community Office to scrutinise the bank reconciliation on 30th October.

25/097: Spend to Budget

To receive and note the spend to budget, 1st April 2025 to 30th September 2025.

Noted.

Cllr Jones left the meeting at 8.42pm.

25/098: Accounts for Payment.

- a. To approve the [payments for October 2025](#).

It was RESOLVED [7-0-0] to approve the payments list as published.

- b. To note that funds totalling £15,000 have been transferred from the CCLA account to the town council current account to cover October payments.

Noted.

- c. To note that funds totalling £10315.47 have been transferred from the town council current account to the CCLA Brubowl account, which are donations received towards the Brubowl project.

Noted.

Cllr Jones rejoined the meeting at 8.44pm.

25/099: Date of the next meeting of the Full Council: The next full council meeting is Tuesday 25th November 2025, 7.30pm at the Community Hall. Agenda items to the clerk by 14th November 2025.

The meeting closed at 8.44pm.

END OF MINUTES