

**Minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee ‘FUTURE BRUTON’ meeting,
Tuesday 10th February 2026, Bruton Community Hall**

Present: Cllrs Bateman, Coulter, Fradley and Jones, and Brian Mullis

In the Chair: Cllr Bateman

Officers present: Deputy Clerk.

Minutes

SP25/21 Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85(1)).

Councillors Buckland, Hood and Taylor had sent their apologies for being unavoidably absent

SP25/22 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).

No interests were declared

SP25/23 Minutes from the last meeting

To agree the [minutes of the last meeting](#) on 21st October 2025 as a true and accurate record.

It was RESOLVED 5-0-0 [For-against-abstain] to accept the minutes of the meeting on 21st October 2025 as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

SP25/24 Resignation of Chair and election of new Chair

To note the resignation of Cllr. Robinson from the Town Council (the Council), and to appoint a member to succeed him as Chair of the Committee.

Councillor Robinson’s resignation was noted, and it was RESOLVED 5-0-0 that Cllr.Bateman be appointed as Chair.

SP25/25 Bruton Town Plan.

To receive an update regarding the Town Plan Review, to discuss the draft questionnaire prior to its consideration by the Full Council, and to decide upon next actions.

Cllr. Jones undertook to present an initial draft of the questionnaire for review by the Full Council at its March meeting, enabling the Strategic Planning Committee to agree any final adjustments at its meeting on 21st April.

SP25/26 Strategic Plan: Appearance of the Town.

To receive an update on defining the scope, responsibilities and terms of reference of a contractor to help maintain public areas in the town, and to discuss the next steps.

The Committee considered the Town Clerk's written update on the proposal to engage a Town Ranger, in which the following points were made:

- A draft specification for the role will be reviewed by the Town Committee Chair and Officers, to be considered by the Committee and recommended to the Full Council at the end of March.
- Good Company are supporting the delivery of 'Town Ranger'-type provision up to April, and possibly beyond, so close liaison between the Council and the Company to achieve complementarity and avoid duplication would be beneficial.
- The Council has agreed a budget provision of up to £15k. for 2026/27.
- The contract will be advertised via the government's *Find a Tender* service.
- The Council will need to decide whether a contractor should be engaged for a period of (say) three years, or for just one year initially so the Council has an opportunity to re-evaluate the arrangement if necessary.

It was agreed that Cllrs. Jones and Buckland would have a meeting with the Clerk and Assistant Clerk to agree the way forward, with a view to presenting proposals for the consideration of the Town Committee at its meeting on 24th March.

SP25/27 Strategic Plan: Safe and Active Travel (walking and cycling).

To receive any updates regarding 'County Fields' and consider any further steps.

The Committee considered an update drafted by the Town Clerk which noted:

- The Council has resolved in principle to lease the County Fields for a 25-year period for an overall fee of £10k., subject to an agreement on access over land owned and controlled by Somerset Council.
- The Council has obtained quotes for its legal fees.
- Somerset Council officers are preparing Heads of Terms and working on a draft lease agreement.
- In due course the Town Council's Finance & Resources Committee will review the suggested Heads of Terms and choice of legal representatives, and put its recommendations to the Full Council.
- There is budgetary provision of c.£19k., sufficient to cover the lease, legal fees and some maintenance if required.

The Committee expressed its gratitude to the Town Clerk for what she had done and was doing to realise this long-standing aspiration of the Council. Members felt that with her in the driving seat and putting pressure on Somerset Council, there was a good chance that real progress would be made before the Committee's next meeting in April.

SP25/28 Flood/Resilience Action Plan.

To receive an update on implementation of the Plan, including the appointment of a Flood Warden and the adoption of the Somerset Ten Point Plan (as adapted).

After a short discussion it was agreed that Cllrs. Jones and Dunn and the Deputy Clerk would meet to work out the next steps.

SP25/29 Date of next meeting.

Date of next meeting: 21st April 2026.

The meeting ended at 8.18pm