

**Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL MEETING on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026  
at 7.30pm to be held in the Community Hall.**

**Councillors present: Cllrs Anderton, Bateman, Coulter, Crawford, Dunn,  
Fradley, Hood, Jones, Taylor and Wright.**

**In the Chair: Cllr Hood (Vice Chair).**

**Officers present: Town Clerk.**

**Somerset Councillors: Cllr Trimnell and Cllr Powell (arrived approx. 7.40pm).**

**Members of the public: 3.**

**Public session opened: 7.30pm.**

**Public session closed: 7.30pm.**

**Meeting started at: 7.30pm.**

Beau Lotto and Dave Strudwick from Hummingbird Learning Laboratory sent their apologies, and requested to be able to provide the update at the April Full Council meeting.

Cllr Hood confirmed that Cllr Buckland is still in office as Chair, and will remain as so until such time as the Town Council is informed otherwise by Cllr Buckland. Cllr Hood as Vice Chair, will deputise for Cllr Buckland, including chairing full council meetings if Cllr Buckland is not present.

**MINUTES**

**25/148: Apologies for Absence (LGA 1972 s85(1)).**

None received.

**25/149: 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).

Declarations of interest were received from:

Cllr Dunn declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 25/159vi, Packhorse Fair 2026, grant funding.

Cllr Coulter declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 25/160, Bruton School for Girls.

**25/150: Minutes of the previous meeting (LGA 1972 sch 12 para 41 (1)).**

To receive, approve, including slight amendment, and sign [the minutes of the last Town Council meeting](#) held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

The clerk explained that contrary to the agenda, an amendment was not required.

**It was RESOLVED [7-0-3] [for-against-abstain] to approve the minutes of the full council meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.**

Cllr Hood signed the minutes.

**25/151: Reports from Somerset Councillors:**

a. Lucy Trimnell.

- Somerset Council are still taking some time to deal with potholes, please keep reporting them.
- Cllr Trimnell has submitted a written question to tomorrow's Somerset Council Executive Committee meeting, regarding the continued lack of response from the Highways Portfolio holder to written questions submitted by Cllr Trimnell at Somerset Council meetings. She has suggested that there is a members drop in service arranged to encourage better engagement.
- Cllr Trimnell has also raised the issue of the footpath from Crown Green through the archway to Bishton Way, and the concerns about the retaining wall to the river. To date, there has been no response from Highways regarding possible remedial action.
- Tomorrow the Climate and Ecological Vision comes to the Somerset Council Executive Committee for consideration.

Cllr Hood raised that the monthly report from Cllr Power reads a little partisan, and as an opposition report rather than impartial.

Cllr Coulter echoed the concerns about the retaining wall alongside the river from Crown Green.

b. Tom Power.

- Cllr Power provided an update about various Planning Enforcement issues; he is trying to liaise with the department. Please notify Cllr Power if there are any enforcement issues that need addressing.

**25/152: Reports** - to receive reports from:

a. Members representing the Council on outside bodies.

- Cllr Anderton attended a Local Community Network Highways Working Group recently. It was a little chaotic, with the main topic being drains and gulleys. A large amount of funding for cleaning gulleys has been received by Somerset Council, which is positive. There is a some misunderstanding about the Enhanced Highways Maintenance Scheme Pilot and a new scheme being introduced which allows for town, parish and city councils to buy additional Highways services from Somerset Council. Cllr Anderton did raise some issues/complaints about works not carried out which did have a positive result.
- Cllr Wright attended a library committee meeting. The library is providing GCSE revision sessions on 25<sup>th</sup> April and 2<sup>nd</sup> May, to support local students. If councillors would like to support, please contact Cllr Wright. The Library committee are keen to be included with S106 funding applications into Somerset Council, at the planning application stage, as the library would benefit from financial support.

b. Town Councillors.

- Cllr Anderton confirmed that the submission for the Town of Culture, created with the help of a number of people, was submitted that morning.
- Cllr Jones raised the issue that the arcade gate, at the Community Office, was frequently being left open. The Clerk responded that officers were dealing with the issue, the Museum Committee were installing a key box near to the gate entrance, containing a key, for volunteers to use when exiting the building.
- Cllr Crawford has been approached again regarding a bin outside the Spar, and when this is going to be replaced. The Clerk provided a short summary of actions taken by officers to date, and it was unlikely that Somerset Council were going to replace the bin.
- Cllr Hood followed up about requests for a road sign for St Catherines Hill (no apostrophe) to be installed. Cllr Trimnell will follow this up.

- The new office printer is being installed on 9<sup>th</sup> April. Cllr Hood has offered to purchase the existing printer for £150 which has been accepted by the Clerk.

c. Chair. None.

**25/153: Clerk's Report.**

To receive [a short report from the Town Clerk](#) to update on ongoing matters. The report is available on the town council website.

**Noted.**

**25/154: Casual Vacancy to be filled by co-option.**

To consider any applications received from those interested in filling the casual vacancy on the Town Council. The successful candidate will sign the declaration of acceptance and join the meeting as a councillor for Bruton Town Council.

Two applications were received to fill the casual vacancy. Candidates were offered an opportunity to briefly address councillors and any members of the public present.

Cllr Hood queried whether Cllr Anderton, as a close relative of a candidate, should declare a non-pecuniary interest and withdraw. Cllr Anderton stated that he did not see the need.

Cllr Hood asked for guidance from Cllr Jones (in his capacity as CEO of Somerset Association of Local Councils). Cllr Jones explained that this was a matter for the town clerk, and for Cllr Anderton's conscience. The clerk explained that she had consulted her guidance, which was silent on this specific question.

Cllr Hood said that he would not press the issue.

In line with Standing Order 3t, the vote was conducted as a paper ballot.

**It was RESOLVED [6-4-0] to co-opt Katie Anderson as a Councillor on Bruton Town Council.**

Cllr K Anderton signed the Declaration of Office and joined the meeting.

Items 25/156 and 25/157 were moved forward to be dealt with before item 25/155.

**25/156: Events Working Group.**

To discuss the need for the Events Working Group.

Cllr Dunn gave an overview about the current Events Working Group. The group seem to be managing very well as an independent group. Councillors can assist at the Christmas Event if they wish to.

The Chamber of Commerce leads on the Christmas Event. Cllr Taylor is currently the Town Council representative on the Chamber of Commerce. Cllr Taylor confirmed that he would feed back any information pertaining to the Christmas Event to councillors at full council meetings.

Bruton Town Council currently directly leads on Remembrance Sunday.

**It was RESOLVED [11-0-0] that the Council Events Working Group is now dissolved.**

**25/157: Strategic Planning Committee.**

To consider the need for a Strategic Planning Committee, and to decide up on any next steps.

Three years ago, the town council committee structure was reviewed. Strategic Planning Committee was formed to consider the future of Bruton from a wider aspect with a view to creating a five year plan for the town council. The Committee has not been as successful as was intended.

Cllr S Anderton overviewed that a mechanism for a wider debate about a long term vision (5 years) is still essential. The town survey, when completed, will provide data and information, which can be used to create the vision for the next five years and beyond. A committee is not necessary to discuss this sort of vision. Careful consideration is required to ensure that the outcomes of the Town Plan, when finally undertaken, are looked at carefully.

Cllr Fradley suggested a regular agenda item on the town council agenda, to update about items previously considered by Strategic Planning Committee (for example County Fields).

**It was proposed and RESOLVED [11-0-0] that the Strategic Planning committee is abolished. It was RESOLVED that the draft minutes from the last Strategic Planning Committee (10<sup>th</sup> February 2026), previously circulated, are**

**agreed as a true record of that meeting, and for Cllr Bateman to sign the minutes as such.**

**25/155: Council Committees.**

As a result of the recent councillor co-option, to consider any additional members to committees and working groups as required.

The clerk overviewed the benefit of considering an additional member on the Planning and Consultation Response Committee as a priority. Committees will be reviewed at the Annual Town Council Meeting in May.

**It was RESOLVED [11-0-0] that Cllr S Anderton becomes a member of the Planning and Consultation Response Committee.**

Cllr Coulter requested to have further members of town committee, which would be addressed in the Annual Town Council meeting.

Cllr Jones left the meeting at 8.15pm.

**25/158: Somerset Association of Local Councils**

A survey has been circulated for member councils to complete and return. The survey has been circulated to councillors for comment. To delegate to town council officers to complete and return the survey on behalf of the town council.

Councillors agreed that Officers were best placed to complete and return the survey.

Cllr Jones rejoined the meeting at 8.17pm.

**25/159: Minutes and Recommendations from Committees and from those Working Groups that report to the Full Council:**

- a. Town Committee. To receive [the minutes from the meeting](#) held on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2026, and to note or approve any recommendations or decisions as required.
  - i. T25/86: A request was received from the Scouts to ask a councillor to attend to talk about the Town Council. Town Committee members happy to do so, but wanted the request extended to all councillors. Cllr Coulter is happy to attend to speak to the scouts, with Cllr Fradley.

- ii. T25/87,1: Purchase of four bleed kits to be placed at existing defibrillator spots within the town. To determine the budget to fund these items.

The budget for the bleed kits was discussed. Councillors were keen for defibrillator locations and bleed kit locations to be published and available on the town council website.

**It was RESOLVED [11-0-0] to order the bleed kits and to use the defibrillator supplies budget to fund the purchase.**

- iii. T25/87,2: Digital Screen for the front window of the Community Office. The quote for installing a digital screen to display information was discussed with councillors who resolved to recommend to full council to go ahead, but to determine the budget to fund the installation.

A debate took place about whether to consider going ahead with the digital screen now or to consider delaying to ensure that there is budget available in 2027/2028. This is a capital expenditure, rather than a net revenue expenditure, and it is legitimate for it to be funded from general reserves, in the absence of a budget provision.

**It was RESOLVED [8-0-3] to go ahead with the digital screen and to fund the purchase from General Reserves.**

- iv. T25/87,3: Abbey Ponds Grounds Maintenance Contract. To note if the contract has been awarded, and to consider the available budget provision for 2026/27 to meet the costs of the contract.

It was proposed that the contract was agreed, and the additional budget to meet the annual cost is to be taken from the Abbey Ponds Development Budget.

**It was RESOLVED [10-0-1] to agree the contract and budget as proposed.**

- v. T25/94: Town Ranger contractor, draft specification and draft contract. To agree the specification and contract as recommended by Town Committee.

Cllr Wright commented about the standard required for play area maintenance. The town clerk explained that works will be agreed in advance by officers.

**It was RESOLVED [11-0-0] to agree the contract and the specification for the Town Ranger.**

Cllr Dunn left the meeting 8.30pm.

- vi. T25/95: Packhorse Fair 2026. To consider the recommendation from Town Committee to fund the road closure and management from Earmarked Reserves 'In Year Grant Funding'.

**It was RESOLVED [9-0-1] to grant the request for funding the road closure and the insurance for the event from the 'In Year Grant Funding' Earmarked Reserve.**

Cllr Dunn returned to the meeting at 8.32pm.

- b. Planning and Consultation Response Committee.
  - i. To receive [the minutes from the meeting](#) held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2026. To note and approve any recommendations or decisions as required.  
The minutes have been circulated.
  - ii. To receive the minutes from the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026 (if available). To note and approve any recommendations or decisions as required  
The minutes are not yet available. The recommendation is to have an extraordinary meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> April.
- c. Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group –To receive an update from the [meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March](#).
  - i. A series of talks on home energy and improvement are planned and if successful repeated each year. The first will be on solar on 21 April 2026. Later talks will be on listed buildings, improvements for resilience in extreme weather, and heat pumps. To agree to meet speaker expenses/charity donation if requested by the speaker/organization.  
It is hoped that the talk about listed buildings will be delivered by the Bath Preservation Trust. Cllr Hood would like to give an appropriate donation, of up to £250.

**It was RESOLVED [9-0-2] to approve a donation of up to £250 as detailed.**

- ii. Coombe Brook Action Plan. To consider the plan as circulated and to consider approval of the draft plan.  
Cllr Hood summarized the plan which promotes making space for nature, and encouraging landowners to work with the group to slow the flow of the brook. CEEWG would also like to undertake some surveys of the area, such as hedges and the brook, which would be free of charge. Cllr Hood overviewed the AI system that Wyke Farm uses to undertake wildlife surveys. Wyke Farm have offered to fund a survey system for landowners within the catchment who wished to take part. Other suggestions included involving local schools to support the surveys.

**It was RESOLVED [10-0-1] to approve the draft Coombe Brook Action Plan.**

- d. BruBowl Working Group – to receive an update from the working group, meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026.
  - i. To consider the recommendation to pay for the costs of the production of the apple juice to be sold for fundraising from the BruBowl Working Group earmarked reserve.  
Cllr Wright summarised the apple juice that may need to be paid for, but it is not clear how the costs can be met. The total cost is thought to be about £1000, but payment for the juice may be required before any further fund raising can take place.

**It was RESOLVED [11-0-0] that any payment for the apple juice can be made and is to be taken from the BruBowl Restricted Earmarked Funds.**

### **25/160: Bruton School for Girls (BSG).**

To provide councillors with an update.

Cllr Jones provided a summary of the meeting that took place on 14<sup>th</sup> March, at the village hall in Pitcombe. The purpose of the meeting was to bring community understanding up to speed with regards to the Charity Commission outcomes for the BSG trust. The meeting was organised at the initiation of Cllr Jonathan Duffy, Pitcombe Parish Council.

A conceptual outline for a cohesive community space was introduced to provide a possible vision. Cllr Duffy has since shared this with a BSG Trustee. The minutes of the meeting are available to view on the town council website. A second meeting is planned in May.

**25/161: St Peters Chapel, Redlynch:**

To consider if the Town Council wishes to make representations at a meeting due to take place, regarding the future of the Chapel.

From the church's point of view, the building is not sustainable. Cllr Hood asked councillors if felt the Town Council should be making representations about the building. It was recognised that although the building is very interesting from a historical aspect, the Town Council does not wish to make representations. Individual Councillors may attend.

**25/162: Fixed Asset Register.**

To review the Bruton Town Council Fixed Asset Register for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

The Fixed Asset Register was discussed. A few points were clarified regarding by the clerk regarding fixed asset purchase price and depreciation.

**It was RESOLVED [11-0-0] to review and agree the Fixed Asset Register for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.**

**25/163: Bank Reconciliation.**

- a. To approve the bank reconciliation for the current and deposit accounts and credit card for the period [1<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026](#).

**It was RESOLVED [11-0-0] to approve the bank reconciliation for 1<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026.**

- b. To note that Cllr Coulter attended the Community Office to check bank reconciliations from 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026, and 1<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

**Noted.**

Cllr Jones left the meeting at 9.00pm.

**25/164: Accounts for Payment.**

- a. To approve [the payments for March 2026](#).

**It was RESOLVED [11-0-0] to agree the payments for March 2026.**

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

**Noted.**

Cllr Jones rejoined the meeting at 9.01pm.

**25/165: Date of the next meeting of the Full Council:** The next full council meeting is Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026, 7.30pm at the Community Hall. Agenda items to the clerk by 17<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

**25/166: Exclusion of Press and Public**

**To consider the exclusion of press and public for the remainder of the meeting under the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings Act 1960, Section 1 (2), on the grounds that discussion of agenda item 25/167 is staff in confidence.**

**This resolution was not required as there were no press or public present.**

**25/167: Staffing.**

- a. To increase the salary scale of the Assistant Clerk by 1 scale point as a result of the Assistant Clerk achieving the qualification Certificate in Local Council Administration, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

The Clerk confirmed that a scale point rise upon successfully achieving a qualification is stated within the Assistant Clerk's contract of employment.

**It was RESOLVED [11-0-0] to increase the salary scale point of the Assistant Clerk by one point as recommended.**

Meeting closed at 9.02pm.

**END OF MINUTES**