

To all members of the Town Council

Minutes of the ANNUAL MEETING of the TOWN COUNCIL on Tuesday 26 May 2026 at 7.30pm held in the Community Hall.

Councillors present: K Anderton, Bateman, Coulter, Crawford, Dunn (arrived 7.30pm), Fradley, Hood, Jones, Taylor, Wright.

In the Chair: Cllr Hood (Vice Chair) until the election of Chair at 7.37pm, agenda item 26/01, after which the meeting continued with Cllr Coulter as Chair.

Officers present: Town Clerk.

Somerset Councillors present: Cllr Trimnell.

Members of the public: 1.

Public session started at: 7.30pm.

Sue Ehmann, Somerset Bus Partnership representative and Bus Champion, spoke briefly about the Glastonbury link buses to Castle Cary bus station. Sue overviewed the bus provision locally from Bruton to Wincanton, where Bruton is poorly served. Councillors observed that the bus timetable is poor and does not coordinate with other services. Whilst not requesting any support from Bruton Town Council at this time, Sue will be continuing to champion improvements in the bus service locally

Public session closed at: 7.35pm

Meeting started at: 7.35pm.

MINUTES

26/01: Election of Chair and Town Mayor for the year 2026/27.

To nominate and elect a councillor to the office of Chair and Town Mayor. The newly elected Chair will sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Nominations for Chair and Town Mayor: Emma Coulter (proposed by Cllr Dunn and seconded by Cllr Hood).

It was RESOLVED [9-0-1] [for-against-abstain] to elect Cllr Coulter as Chair and Mayor.

Cllr Coulter signed the declaration of office, and took over as Chair of the Annual Town Council Meeting.

Councillors thanked Cllr Hood for deputising for the past couple of months as Chair.

26/02: Election of Vice Chair and Deputy Town Mayor for the year 2026/27.

To nominate and elect a councillor to the office of Vice Chair and Deputy Town Mayor.

Nominations for Vice Chair and Deputy Mayor: Cllr S Anderton (proposed by Cllr Hood and seconded by Cllr Fradley).

It was RESOLVED [8-0-2] that Cllr S Anderton is Vice Chair and Deputy Mayor.

26/03: Apologies for Absence (LGA 1972 s85(1)).

Apologies were received from Cllrs S Anderton and Baker.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to receive and approve the apologies and the reasons given.

There were no other apologies.

26/04: 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 26/024, payments for May 2026.

26/05: 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 28 April 2026.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 28 April 2026 as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

Cllr Coulter signed the minutes.

26/06: Reports from Somerset Councillors:

a. Lucy Trimnell:

- Cllr Trimnell detailed concerns over enforcement within Somerset. Enforcement is not being carried out over the county due to the staff shortages in the planning department, although recruitment is ongoing. Emails remain unanswered.
- Bruton School for Girls (BSG) site has experienced increased instances of anti-social behaviour. A discussion followed about the police contacting the Town Council asking for support with engaging with the BSG site owners. Cllr Trimnell is concerned about the escalation of anti-social behaviour and the advice is to call 999 to ensure that any incidents are reported and recorded.

- b. Tom Power: sent apologies.

26/07: Reports - to receive reports from:

- a. Members representing the Council on outside bodies:

- Cllr Jones reported that the Local Community Network (LCN) meeting took place in Charlton Hawthorne recently. The LCN Officer team had a positive recommendation regarding recent liaison work in Bruton.
- Cllr Hood mentioned that complementary tickets had been received from the Choral Society for the performance scheduled on 12th June. These are in the Community Office if a councillor wishes to use them.
Good Company: A director, Katie Sharp, has stood down in order to set up a CIC which provides support for parents of students with SEND needs. The recent offer submitted for the field to be used as an open green space for the community has not been accepted, as the buyer for the adjacent property has also submitted an offer. Once the sale is finalised, discussions are planned to work out how the open space can still be used as a community space. Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group: one of the planned talks is 'preparing your home for extremes of weather', and is likely to take place in November.

- b. Town Councillors: None.

- c. Chair: None.

26/08: Request for Support from Quicksilver Community Group.

A request from Quicksilver Community Group has been received, for the Town Council to consider representations to Somerset Foundation Trust and Integrated Care Board against the plans to close the Hyper Acute Stroke Unit at Yeovil District Hospital. To discuss and to decide upon any action.

Councillors discussed this request, and the general feel was that the request should be supported. A medical event of this severity requires a rapid response. Conversations of this nature have been taking place over many years.

It was RESOLVED [9-0-1] to write a letter of support as requested.

26/09: Minutes and Recommendations from Committees and from those Working Groups that report to the Full Council:

- a. Planning & Consultation Committee – [to receive the minutes](#) from the meeting held on 30 April 2025 if available, and to note or approve any recommendations and decisions as required.

This agenda item was not required.

- b. Town Committee – [to receive the minutes](#) from the meeting held on 19 May 2026 (if available) and to note or approve any recommendations and decisions as required.

To change the Community Office electricity supply, when the contract expires on 30 September, to a British Gas 2 year contract.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to take out a 2 year contract with British Gas from 1 October 2026.

Digital display policy. To agree the draft Digital Display Policy, and to review this policy after 12 months to ensure that the policy is relevant.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to adopt the Digital Display Policy.

The proposed contract and associated paperwork for the Walls Contract, which focusses on the immediate works required to walls at the churchyard and Jubilee Park. To consider a 12 month contract in the first instance with a view to extending the contract when reviewed.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to approve the Walls Contract and associated paperwork.

To consider a capital budget (suggested £5000) for Town Committee to be able to agree items that are not covered by a current budget line, only requiring referral to Full Council if the proposal is over £1000.

It was recognised that there are more details required for this proposal to be considered. The recommendation is to refer this to finance and resources in June.

- c. Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group – to receive [an update](#) from the last meeting (11 May 2026).

The meeting notes from the last meeting have been circulated.

- d. BruBowl Working Group – to receive an update from the last meeting.

- There was a working group meeting earlier this evening. The costs for bottling the apple juice have been covered by the funds raised from selling the juice.
- The Rural England Prosperity Fund is not available this year to submit an application. An application has been submitted to the Clarks Foundation.

26/10: Strategic Planning. To receive updates and consider the next steps for the following:

a. County Fields.

The Town Clerk provided an update of the progress so far with County Fields. A Heads of Terms for a lease for the land has been received from Somerset Council.

- There has been some debate about the Memorandum of Understanding for the trees planted by Somerset Council, and questions posed by the clerk during a recent meeting with the Somerset Council surveyor are hopefully to be answered during the next meeting with the Surveyor, scheduled in June.
- The map for the Heads of Terms shows a piece of ground that has been added by Somerset Council which will provide access from Frome Road to the proposed cycleway/footpath, which is excellent news.
- Cllrs S Anderton and Hood are to arrange a walk around the field area with the Town Clerk.
- The Heads of Terms and also the engagement of a solicitor will be discussed by Finance and Resources Committee in June.

26/11: To review Bruton Town Council Committee and Working Group Terms of Reference.

To review the Terms of Reference for committees and working groups and adopt any recommendations.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for committees and working groups were previously circulated, and all remained unchanged apart from the following items:

- Finance and Resources committee: Specific Responsibility 7, to report to Full council rather than Strategic Planning Committee.
- General Principals: to remain unchanged. It was suggested that the document needed to be extended to cover Working Groups (or a separate document written for Working Groups).
- Town Committee. The only working group currently reporting to Town Committee is Abbey Ponds Working Group.

On all committees make the quorum 'a third of the committee membership, with a minimum of three members'.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree the Terms of Reference for Committees and Working Groups including the amendments as listed above.

26/12: To appoint Councillors to Committees, Working Groups and as representatives to outside bodies.

The list of current committee and working group members and representatives to outside bodies has been circulated for consideration.

- a. To appoint councillors to committees and as representatives to outside bodies.
 - Cllr Fradley to the Appeal Panel.
 - Cllr Bateman to Finance and Resources Committee. Once Chairs of committees have been elected, the membership of the Finance and Resources Committee to be reviewed to fill any vacancies that may arise from changes in Chairs.
 - Cllr K Anderton to Planning and Consultation Response Committee.
 - Cllr Taylor to be a representative on the Jubilee Park Pavilion and Youth Club Trust.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree the membership of Committees, and as representatives on outside organisations as circulated and including the amendments as above.

- b. To appoint councillors (and members of the public as appropriate) to working groups.

The membership of working groups is to remain unchanged.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree the membership of Working Groups as circulated, unchanged.

A full list of the committee members, working group members and the representatives on outside bodies can be found as an appendix at the end of these minutes.

26/13: To confirm the proposed meeting schedule for the next 12 months.

A proposed schedule of meetings (Full Council and Committees) for the next 12 months, as circulated.

The proposed schedule of meetings for the municipal year 2026/2027 as circulated by the Town Clerk was reviewed:

Full Council: 30 June, 28 July, 25 August (only if required), 29 September, 27 October, 24 November, 19 January 2027, 23 February, 30 March, 27 April, 18 May 2027. The Annual Town Council Meeting will be on 18 May 2027 which is the first meeting after an election takes place on 7 May 2027, and is required to take place within 14 days of that election.

Finance and Resources Committee: 16 June, 13 October, 17 November, 12 January 2027, 13 April.

Town Committee: 21 July, 22 September, 10 November, 26 January 2027, 23 March, 25 May.

The Annual Town Forum may need to be held earlier in 2027, due to the pre-election period (possibly early March), or after the Annual Town Council Meeting takes place on 18 May 2027.

A Town Meeting, to discuss the 2027/2028 budget, is provisionally scheduled for 15 September.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree the meeting dates as listed.

26/14: To review and agree Bruton Town Council Standing Orders.

To review the [current town council Standing Orders](#), as reviewed by Finance and Resources on 14 April 2026.

Section 3, the symbols have been changed, as suggested at the last Finance and Resources Committee meeting.

Section 18c the Town Clerk's appraisal. Suggest amending it to 'a nominated councillor and report back to Finance and Resources Committee'.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] that the Town Council Standing Orders have been reviewed, as circulated, and agreed including the above amendments.

26/15: To review and agree Bruton Town Council Financial Regulations.

To review and agree the [current Financial Regulations](#), as reviewed by Finance and Resources on 14 April 2026.

Item 1.4: The Practitioners Guide now refers to Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel, and has been amended accordingly.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] that the Town Council Financial Regulations have been reviewed, as circulated, and agreed including the above amendment.

26/16: To review and agree Bruton Town Council's Code of Conduct.

Bruton Town Council subscribe to the [Somerset Code of Conduct](#). To review this, agree to any changes recommended, and adopt.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] that the Code of Conduct has been reviewed as circulated, with no changes.

26/17: To review and agree Bruton Town Council Complaints Procedure.

To review the [current Complaints Procedure](#), agree to any changes recommended, and adopt.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] that the Complaints Procedure has been reviewed, as circulated, and agreed with no changes.

26/18: To review and agree the Bruton Town Council Publication Scheme.

To review the current [Publication Scheme](#) (available on the Town Council website) and agree any changes if required.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] that the Publication Scheme has been reviewed, and agreed with no changes.

26/19: Bruton Town Council Insurance renewal.

To review and agree the Town Council insurance which is due to renew on 1 June 2026.

A The clerk had approached three sector specific insurance providers, for a quote for the Town Council Insurance Cover; the existing provider and two alternatives.

One quote had been received from one alternative insurer, which was much more expensive than the current provider. A second alternative had not provided a quote at all.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to remain with the current provider, Clear Councils, with a three year fixed tie-in, and to ensure that the premium is paid before the renewal date.

26/20: Clerk's Report.

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

The clerk summarised the report. The latest youth work report covering January to March 2026 has also been circulated to councillors.

26/21: To receive the Internal Audit report

To receive the internal auditor's report following a visit on 14th May 2026, and to note any recommendations within.

The internal audit report had been circulated to councillors, and will be published on the town council website.

The clerk noted that the town council will need to respond 'No' to Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance Statement, due to a number of reasons which include:

- A document retention policy is required.
- An annual data audit to be conducted and noted.
- Evidence of regular reviews of the town council website and the Accessibility Statement.
- The IT Policy adopted in March 2025 may need to be reviewed and be more detailed.

- The two websites: Brutontown.com and walks.brutontown.com, will both need to meet the appropriate Accessibility Regulations.

The clerk is formatting an action plan as part of her performance target setting for the next 12 months.

The £10,000 payment to South Somerset District Council in 1998 which appears on the Fixed Asset Register was discussed with the Internal Auditor, as recommended by Full Council in March. This item needs to be listed in a separate Investment Register, and not listed on the Fixed Asset Register. The clerk is to make the necessary adjustments, and to ensure that any reference to reviewing the Fixed Asset Register also ensures that the Investment Register is also reviewed.

26/22: Annual Governance and Accountability Return

To agree the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2025/26.

- a. To agree section 1 (page 4) of the AGAR- Annual Governance Statement 2025/26.

The clerk read out each of the ten statements of AGAR Section 1 2025/2026.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree to statement 1 on the AGAR.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree to statement 2 on the AGAR.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree to statement 3 on the AGAR.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree to statement 4 on the AGAR.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree to statement 5 on the AGAR.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree to statement 6 on the AGAR.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree to statement 7 on the AGAR.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree to statement 8 on the AGAR.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to respond No to statement 10 on the AGAR.

The form was signed by Cllr Coulter.

- b. To agree section 2 (page 5) of the AGAR – Accounting Statements 2025/26.

The clerk pointed out that Box 11 required a 'yes' response despite responding 'not applicable' when reading out statement 9 regarding trusts and charitable funds.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to agree Section 2 of the AGAR, Accounting Statements 2025/2026.

The forms were signed by Cllr Coulter, and the Town Clerk where required.

- c. To note details of variances information for 2025/26, and any other supporting paperwork to be submitted to the external auditor with the AGAR 2025/26.

Noted.

- d. To confirm the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Accounts – 3 June 2026 to 14 July (inclusive).

Noted.

26/23: Bank Reconciliations.

- a. To approve the [bank reconciliations](#) for the current and deposit accounts and credit card for the period 1 April 2026 to 30 April 2026.

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to approve the bank reconciliations for the period 1 April to 30 April 2026.

- b. To note that Cllr Fradley attended the Community Office on 5 May 2026 to sign the bank reconciliation for the period 1 March to 31 March 2026.

Noted.

Cllr Jones left the meeting for the next agenda item at 8.47pm.

26/24: Accounts for Payment.

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

It was RESOLVED [10-0-0] to approve the payments list for May 2026 as published.

Cllr Jones rejoined the meeting at 8.48pm.

- b. To note that a transfer of £25,000 from the CCLA account has been made to the town council current account to cover May payments.

Noted.

26/25: Bank Signatories.

- a. To review the current signatories on bank accounts (Unity Trust and CCLA). To decide whether to add or remove any signatories.

Bank signatories are currently Cllrs Anderton, Coulter, Crawford, Hood and Wright. The current signatories were reviewed, and no changes are required.

26/26: Date of the next meeting of the Full Council: The next full council meeting is Tuesday 30 June 2026, 7.30pm at the Community Hall. Agenda items to the clerk by 19 June 2026.

Meeting closed at 8.49pm.

END OF MINUTES

Annual Town Council Meeting 26 May 2026

Appendix 1

Committee and Working Group Members 2026/27

Committee	2026/27 Agreed
Appeal Panel	Emma Coulter. Jocelyn Crawford. Carol Fradley
Finance & Resources Committee Reports to Full Council Clerk: Town Clerk Eight members. (Chair and Vice Chair of full council, committee Chairs, and other named councillors).	Mayor: Emma Coulter Deputy Mayor: Stuart Anderton (current Chair) Chair of Planning (currently Carol Fradley) Chair of Town Committee. Russell Bateman. James Hood. Ewan Jones. Richard Wright.
Grievance and Disciplinary Panel	Stuart Anderton Grahame Baker James Buckland
Planning & Consultation Response Reports to Full Council. Clerk: Deputy Clerk Seven members	Carol Fradley (current Chair) Katie Anderton Grahame Baker Russell Bateman Karen Dunn Ewan Jones David Taylor
Town Committee Reports to Full Council Clerk: Assistant Clerk Nine members	Emma Coulter (current Chair.) James Buckland (current Vice Chair.) Stuart Anderton Grahame Baker Jocelyn Crawford Karen Dunn Carol Fradley Ewan Jones David Taylor
Abbey Ponds Working Group Reports to Town Committee	Ewan Jones (current Chair) Emma Coulter Jocelyn Crawford Mike Brownlow Ross Dixon Gordon Fry Roger Gallannaugh Ed Tickner

Committee	2026/27 Agreed
BruBowl Reports to Full Council. Clerk: Town Clerk	Richard Wright (current Chair) Ewan Jones Jocelyn Crawford Henry Brook Vicki Haselgrove Mark Hanlon.
Climate & Ecological Emergency Working Group (CEEWG) Reports to Full Council Clerk: Assistant Clerk	James Hood (current Chair) Ewan Jones Rich Clothier Charles Couzens Jane Durney Dee Mullis Nick Truman
Bruton Town Plan Working Group (formed 26/11/2024) Reports to Full Council	James Buckland Karen Dunn Ewan Jones David Taylor <i>Carol Fradley would like to be a member of this Working Group.</i> David Weston Alison Weir Charlotte Evans Mark Ruthven Jane Durney Dee Mullis

Council representatives on outside organisations 2026/27

Organisation	2026/27
Jubilee Park Pavilion & Youth Club Trust	Cllr Taylor
Bruton Community Hall	Not currently required (confirmed June 2025)
Chamber of Commerce	Cllr Taylor
Library Management Committee	Cllr Wright
Christmas Event	Cllr Taylor, as this is led by the Chamber of Commerce
Bruton Library Trustee	Cllr Anderton
Bruton Museum	Cllr Crawford
South East Somerset Local Community Network	Cllr Jones
Youth Steering Group	Cllr Jones

END OF APPENDIX 1