

Town Meeting 15 September 2026

Present: Cllrs Crawford, Coulter, Fradley.

Members of the public: 3.

Officers: Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

Apologies: Cllrs S Anderton, Hood, Jones.

In the Chair: Cllr Coulter.

Meeting opened at 7.30pm.

Cllr Coulter welcomed members of the public, and briefly overviewed the purpose of the Town Meeting, that any questions or opinions are welcomed from residents, and thanked everyone for coming.

Residents asked about how the Somerset Council precept works, and if the Town Council precept has a capped level of increase per annum. The clerk overviewed the breakdown of the Somerset Council precept and how it is split between various organisations: Somerset Council, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue, and Avon and Somerset Police, and Town/Parish/City councils.

Cllr Coulter overviewed how the budget is approached, and the areas that are considered:

- Engine Shed: emergency exit for community hall, and also Brue Larder. Overview of the approach and the challenges involved.
- Closed churchyard: the aspects of works required.
- Walls maintenance: maintenance required was listed.
- War memorial: anticipated maintenance.
- Trees: surveys and that any action is reactive and not proactive.
- Town Ranger: the scheme is going well. A list was included to provide examples of the sort of tasks being undertaken.
- Youth provision: contract is currently being reviewed.
- Printer contract.
- BruBowl – is Bruton Town Council involved the project and fundraising?
- Bins were addressed, and the overflowing bins at Church Bridge.
- Staffing costs, including salaries and also office costs.
- Community Grants were overviewed, and the Town Meeting is such a lovely chance to hear what the beneficiaries have been doing for the previous 12 months, and the future.

- Reserves were explained, and that Earmarked Reserves are reviewed as part of the budget setting process.

Somerset Council devolution of assets was discussed:

- County Fields was overviewed and a brief update of progress to date.
- Riverside Walk is one of the areas being considered to be devolved to the Town Council – is this a good idea?

A question was raised about the relationship that Town Council officers have with Somerset Council; Does BTC have any influence with Somerset Council? Officers described the positive relationships that have been fostered with Somerset Council Officers in particular departments, but this isn't the case throughout the entire organisation.

A question was raised about dealing with parking and anti-social behaviour (ASB) particularly on the High Street. Officers strongly recommended reporting online, to support evidence gathering for the police to deploy resources to deal with incidents. The assistant clerk also detailed the (hopefully) monthly meetings that will take place with Town Council Officers and PCSO lead.

A question was raised about contributions from local businesses, as the town council do not benefit from the proceeds of business rates. The Abbey Ponds project was overviewed as an excellent example of organisations working together.

Cllr Coulter thanked those present for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

END OF MEETING NOTES