



## MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes from the Meeting of Minehead Town Council held on  
Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 7.30 pm in  
the Community Centre, Irnham Road, Minehead TA24 5DW

There was a 15-minute open forum prior to the start of the Meeting for residents of Minehead to raise with councillors any matters related to the town. The following matters were raised:

The chair of West Somerset Community Land Trust reported that since the group started in 2016, hardly any social housing has been built in West Somerset. They noted that over 500 similar groups have built 2,000 community homes across the UK. The chair expressed that they have exhausted every possible site in West Somerset despite identifying several potential locations. They have explored converting existing buildings but found this not viable due to costs. The lack of government funding was cited as a challenge. It was reported that in 2023, the social housing demand was approximately 10,000 with only 2,000 social lettings available.

A member of the public who is involved with the League of Friends at Minehead Hospital stated that they are in need of secretary. Their upcoming AGM is scheduled for April, featuring a guest speaker from the Primary Care Network in West Somerset. Town councillors have been invited to attend.

There was a 15-minute presentation at the beginning of the meeting from Minehead Health and Wellbeing C.I.C.

Minehead Health and Wellbeing CIC presented their vision for a community swimming pool and gym at Irnham Recreation Ground on the site of the former football stand. The CIC, led by Bruce Lang with 40 years local government experience, has seven directors with broad expertise. They have pre-planning approval for the centrally located, publicly owned site and plan to meet formally with Minehead Swimming and Leisure in the coming weeks regarding a potential merger into one group.

Their proposal includes a modern indoor 4-lane 25m pool with retractable roof with integrated gym facilities using modular building techniques. The project aims to complement rather than compete with existing services.

Louisa Skinner (Manager of The Beach Wellness) reported a 250% increase in health referrals since COVID. Their team provides physical activity on referral services and specialised classes otherwise only available in Bridgwater and Taunton. Their current premises are inadequate for growing demand.

Director, Colin Christmas outlined swimming needs in the local area with large waiting lists at Minehead Swimming Club, 150 active open water swimmers and 300-400 child swimmers. They emphasised the importance of water safety skills in a coastal community.

Councillor questions addressed job creation, swimming coach recruitment (with a mixture of paid & volunteer coaches), ground surveys will be carried out in due course, the modular building approach, a sustainable business model and potential collaboration with other local swimming pool groups.

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*The meeting convened*

**Present:** Councillors C Palmer (Chair), Lawton, Hodson, Jewell, M Palmer, Bartlett, Sharjeel, Hall, and Bonar.

**Not present:** Councillor Kravis

**Apologies:** Councillor Beynon

**In Attendance:** B Parker (Town Clerk), J Chapman (Deputy Clerk & RFO), Somerset Councillor Chilcott and 8 members of the public.

**2025/19.** To receive apologies for absence.

Councillor Beynon's apologies were received.

**2025/20.** To receive disclosures of unregistered or other interests and to consider any prior requests for dispensations from councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting.

There were no disclosures by councillors.

**2025/21.** To receive reports from Somerset Councillors and the Local Policing Team.

There were no representatives from the local policing team present.

Councillor Chilcott gave the following updates:

- Boundary Commission review of Somerset Council ward boundaries closes March 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Somerset Waste offers an assisted waste collection service for those with specific needs.
- Rainbow Way project progressing with first residents moved into fuel-efficient homes. There is a spring completion for apartments available through Home Finder for people with a local connection.
- Somerset Council are offering online sessions available explaining care complexities and carer support.
- DEFRA deadline for registering historic rights of way has been scrapped. Recorded pathways remain protected.
- Any highway issues are reportable online with out-of-hours contact numbers provided to the clerk for publication on MTC website.
- 2025/26 school term dates have been published.
- West Somerset paper parking permit payment system changing; reminder letters are being distributed.
- A new Somerset parking policy review includes Sunday charges, overnight fees, and potential town centre meters. A scrutiny committee review showed no cross-party support.
- Somerset Council budget setting has been rescheduled to March 5<sup>th</sup>.

**2025/22.** To receive updates from councillors on Advisory groups and Outside Bodies.

Cllr Hodson reported on Minehead Swimming and Leisure's programme continuing development. Question raised about working as one group with other similar projects. With progress of this looking good. However, joint objectives will need defining.

Cllr Lawton attended plastic free community group meeting They continue to seek partners and interested participants.

Cllr Hall attended the recent town security meeting. He reported a proactive approach to unauthorised encampment removal and plans for separate discussions about traffic issues on Butlins intake days.

**2025/23.** To approve and sign the Minutes of the [Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025.](#)

**RESOLVED** the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 28th January 2025 were approved and signed by the chair.

**2025/24.** To receive the Minutes of the [Planning Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025.](#)

The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 4th February 2025 were **received.**

Cllr C Palmer and Somerset Councillor Hadley were thanked for their representation and efforts, when they attended the SC Planning meeting regarding the S106 agreement for the Hopcott housing development. Unfortunately, the amended application was approved, resulting in about one third of the originally agreed funds required to be paid by the developer for community needs.

**2025/25.** To receive the Minutes from the [Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025.](#)

The Minutes from the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 11th February 2025 were **received.**

**2025/26.** Accounts

- i. To approve the following payments over £1,500 for February (*Recommended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee*):
  - Payment of £4,000 to P. Cornish for first instalment of rebuilding works to wall at Summerland Road PC's. (*Works agreed at January's Full Council minute number 2025/12 and funded through insurance settlement*)

It was **noted** that these works were funded through the insurance settlement with no cost to MTC.

**RESOLVED** the payment of £4,000 for first instalment of rebuilding works to wall at Summerland Road PC's was approved.

- ii. To approve the following urgent payments over £1,500 for February:
  - Payment of £4,600 to P. Cornish for completion of rebuilding works to wall at Summerland Road PC's. (*Works agreed at January's Full Council minute number 2025/12 and funded through insurance settlement*)

It was **noted** the toilet renovation works, fully funded through the insurance settlement, have been completed and the facilities reopened on Tuesday February 25<sup>th</sup> as scheduled. A small

section of plastered wall requires additional drying time and will be repainted once dry. This is purely an aesthetic issue with no impact on structural integrity or water ingress concerns.

**RESOLVED** the payment of £4,600 for completion of rebuilding works to wall at Summerland Road PC's was approved.

iii. To note payments made for January

The payments made for January were **noted**.

iv. To note budget income & expenditure reports for January

The budget income & expenditure reports for January were **noted**.

To note income received for January

The income received for January was **noted**.

v. To note bank reconciliations for January

The bank reconciliations for January were **noted**.

The Chair called a brief recess and Standing Orders were suspended accordingly.

*The meeting reconvened.*

**2025/27.** To receive report on Asset and Service Devolution from Somerset Council to Minehead Town Council and to consider the recommendations.

The report on Asset and Service Devolution from SC to MTC was **received**.

The Clerk emphasised the significance of this agenda item for both Minehead Town Council and the town. The report was introduced as well-considered, though some costs remain to be fully determined. The approved budget allows for these uncertainties. The Clerk noted MTC's strong position in the devolution process, benefiting from an established amenities team and infrastructure for asset and service management.

Councillors had submitted questions in advance, with responses shared with all members prior to the meeting. Additional questions were addressed:

- Equipment Transfer: SC vehicles could be included in deal, but they form part of a complex fleet management contract that is unsuitable for MTC.
- Open Space Maintenance: MTC has the necessary equipment, but some tasks, such as seasonal tractor and flail work, would be more cost-effective if outsourced.
- Hyde Road: Included in the devolution deal as part of a larger title deed containing a number of open spaces.
- Culvercliffe Transfer: Will be a leasehold transfer, not freehold, with lease terms yet to be finalised.

Some councillors expressed a desire for more time to review the report and discuss it informally. Appreciation was given for the Clerk's efforts in compiling the report. It was also noted that the inclusion of revenue-generating assets makes the deal more favourable for Minehead compared to other towns across Somerset.

All recommendations outlined in the report were proposed and seconded.

**RESOLVED** that Minehead Town Council proceed with the asset and service devolution as outlined in the report, approving all recommendations. This includes staffing, operational, financial, legal, and administrative measures necessary for the transition. The entire devolution process will remain subject to continued due diligence.

**2025/28.** To approve the opening of an account with The Unity Trust Bank for reserve General funds and opening an account with Hinckley & Rugby Building Society for reserve Earmarked funds and to elect councillors as signatories. *(Recommended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee)*

A report outlining the reasoning behind this was **received**. Members noted the importance of risk management in the Council's banking arrangements, noting the limited financial protection offered to the public sector by banks. The need to minimise risks by allocating funds across multiple accounts and financial institutions was emphasised, while maximising interest returns and maintaining sufficient liquidity for operational requirements.

The Council was advised that the new accounts would require three digital signatories for withdrawals. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk would serve as signatories for both accounts. The Chair determined that the opening of accounts would be addressed through two separate votes and called for nominations for two additional councillor signatories for each of the new accounts.

**RESOLVED** the opening of an account with The Unity Trust Bank for reserve General funds with Cllrs Bartlett and Lawton to serve as signatories was approved.

**RESOLVED** the opening of an account with Hinckley & Rugby Building Society for reserve Earmarked funds with Cllrs C Palmer and Hodson to serve as signatories.

**2025/29.** To receive an update regarding the transfer of 4 allotment sites from Somerset Council to Minehead Town Council, and to elect two Councillors to serve as witnesses for the signing of the TR1 forms, in accordance with Standing Order 23(b).

Councillors were informed that the transfer of the four allotment sites (Marshfield Road, Periton Way, Periton Lane & Orchard Road) had taken longer than initially anticipated due to land registry registration requirements. The land registry process has now been completed and TR1 documentation requires execution by the Town Council. In accordance with Standing Orders, two Councillor witnesses are required for sealing of the deed. The Chair opened nominations for two Councillors to serve as witnesses.

**RESOLVED** That Councillors M Palmer and Lawton be appointed as witnesses to the signing of the TR1 forms.

**2025/30.** To review the Health and Safety compliance audit report for the MTC offices, conducted by MTC's health and safety contractor, and to discuss and consider the recommended actions.

The Health and safety compliance audit report was shared with councillors alongside the agenda. The report was **received**.

A Health and Safety compliance audit was conducted on February 14th at the Town Council offices between the Clerk and a consultant from the Council's Health and Safety assistance company. The audit encompassed office inspections and review of processes including risk assessments, staff training, accident reporting, induction procedures and policies. The audit

outcome was satisfactory, demonstrating good compliance levels across all areas. One urgent recommendation emerged regarding asbestos surveys for all sites. A quotation of £1,500 + VAT was presented for surveys across 8 Council owned locations including toilet facilities. While no specific budget exists for these surveys, the Clerk advised that funding could be allocated from the underspent Office building maintenance budget to complete this urgent work.

**RESOLVED** that asbestos surveys be conducted at all eight MTC sites at a cost of £1,500 plus VAT, with funding to be allocated from the under-spent Town Council Offices - General Maintenance budget line, be approved.

**2025/31.** To receive a report on the creation of or the transfer of funds into the following earmarked reserves and to consider the recommendations.

The report was **received**. The Deputy Clerk & RFO reported on the requirement to create three new Earmarked Reserves. They were for Elections (ongoing for any termly and/or called by-elections), Devolution (short-term for unforeseen expenses relating to devolution), and Town Monuments (ongoing maintenance or projects to any town monuments). Additional cost centre transfers were outlined to preserve funding for approved but incomplete 2024-25 projects beyond April 1<sup>st</sup> 2025.

**RESOLVED** to establish three new Earmarked Reserves effective April 2025. Elections EMR, Devolution EMR and Town Monuments EMR and the transfer of unspent 2024-25 funds to appropriate cost centres and EMRs to ensure completion of previously approved projects was approved.

**2025/32.** To note the Blenheim Gardens Summer bands concert dates for 2025.

The summer band concert dates for 2025 were **noted**.

The meeting closed at 21:38.

Councillor Craig Palmer  
Chair of Minehead Town Council  
February 2025.