



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes from the Meeting of Minehead Town Council held on
Tuesday 25th March 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:

Three members of the public discussed their desire to install a bicycle pump track in Minehead. They have been actively engaging with the community online and have received a lot of positive feedback. They have identified Culvercliffe Open Space as preferred location for the project and would like to incorporate the revitalisation of the play area in their plans. They believe this site is well-suited due to its ample parking, public toilets, and location, which ensures it does not disturb nearby residents.

The Chair acknowledged that, as Culvercliffe Open Space is part of the ongoing town council devolution process, it is difficult to provide a definitive stance on council support for the project at this stage. The legal transfer process is still ongoing, and any potential restrictions on the land are not yet clear. Councillors agreed to add the proposal to a future agenda for further discussion.

There was a 15-minute presentation at the beginning of the meeting from Minehead Eye and Somerset Primary Care Network. MTC have supported the youth set up and would like to consider support for SALC funding.

Paul Matcham from Minehead Eye and Kerry Westcott, Primary Care Network Manager, presented a business plan outlining the development of a Young Person's Health and Wellbeing Coach in West Somerset.

This initiative emerged from evaluating youth services and the challenges young people face, identifying a gap in early intervention support. Minehead Eye, which operates seven youth clubs across the area, has upskilled youth workers to provide proactive health and wellbeing support, both mental and physical, for young people aged 10-16, with a transition pathway post-16.

The model aligns with the Living Better framework, addressing the lack of trained health coaches for young people in West Somerset. It is designed to complement existing services rather than replace them, intervening early to improve long-term outcomes. It was noted that Somerset has high teenage suicide rates, and access to mental health services is often at crisis point. The initiative works in collaboration with schools and the wider community to provide accessible support beyond the school environment.

A six-month pilot has demonstrated a substantial need for the service, but funding is running out. To sustain the initiative, they sought MTC's support in submitting a grant application to SALC's Health and Wellbeing project for £35,000, alongside £13,000 in match funding from MTC from 2026/27 financial year, to secure the second year. Beyond this, they aim to establish a long-term funding structure, potentially involving contributions from other West Somerset councils and external grants.

Councillors questioned whether the early intervention model was designed to complement rather than replace or subsidise GP services. This was confirmed, and it was noted that the initiative provides a crucial early-stage intervention that is not currently available within the NHS. They also sought clarification on the age range for support, which was confirmed as 10-16 years, with a transition process into other services beyond that age. Concerns were raised about the long-term sustainability of the project and whether funding would extend beyond two years. It was acknowledged that securing additional financial support from local councils and external grants would be essential to establishing a stable, long-term model.

The meeting convened

Present: Councillor C Palmer (Chair), Hodson, Jewell, Hall, Beynon, Sharjeel, and M Palmer.

Apologies: Councillors Lawton, Kravis, Bartlett and Bonar.

In Attendance: B Parker (Town Clerk), J Chapman (Deputy Clerk & RFO), PCSO Supervisor Katherine Williams, Sergeant Naomi Baker, Somerset Councillor Chilcott and 8 members of the public.

2025/33. To receive apologies for absence.

Councillors Lawton, Kravis, Bartlett and Bonar's apologies were received.

2025/34. 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.

Councillors C Palmer and M Palmer disclosed an interest regarding a reimbursement payment detailed in item 2025/42 iii.

There were no further disclosures.

2025/35. To receive reports from Somerset Councillors and the Local Policing Team.

PCSO Supervisor Katherine Williams and Sergeant Naomi Baker from the local policing team raised the following matters:

- They emphasised that matters can be raised at any time and that they are always contactable, without the need to wait for a meeting.
- They visit the college once a week for a beat surgery and frequently lead assemblies in schools, ensuring that young people are familiar with a police presence in educational settings.

Following their updates, the representatives from the local policing team left the meeting at 20:12 to resume their patrols.

Councillor Chilcott raised the following matters:

- LCN meetings are open to the public, with a police presence available 30 minutes before each meeting for issue discussions. The next LCN meeting is on Thursday 10th April, at Minehead Community Centre, starting at 18:30. Thanks were extended to MTC for hosting at short notice.
- The LCN project in West Somerset and its collaborative approach are seen as uniquely effective in the area.
- The Boundary Commission review deadline has passed. Somerset Council submitted a request for Minehead to remain a two-councillor ward, though the final decision rests

with the commission. The next consultation stage will run from 3rd June to 11th August, when the commission will release its ward boundary plan.

- Somerset Council has issued council tax bills, with a 7.49% increase in their portion of the overall billing.
- Staffing challenges continue at Somerset Council, with decreasing staff numbers across all services.
- Car parking charges will increase across Somerset, and on-street parking meters will be introduced in Minehead. Concerns were raised about the impact on the town. Plans to introduce overnight parking charges have been scrapped for now.
- Somerset Council continues to face year-on-year overspending and budgetary pressures.

Councillors asked if the SC boundary review proposal would include Alcombe as part of Minehead ward. It was confirmed that Alcombe is included, as its inclusion is necessary for the numbers to align.

The ongoing issue with car park lights at Alexandra Road has been escalated to a managerial level for resolution.

2025/36. To consider a grant application to Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) health and wellbeing fund for a youth health and wellbeing project in Minehead, with Minehead Town Council providing match funding in partnership with Minehead Eye.

The Chair brought forward the matter in accordance with standing order 1(a). Councillors received a report and draft application with the agenda. Following a presentation with a question and answer session, no additional questions were raised. The Clerk confirmed the council's power to spend under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 Section 19(3)(a) as the project represents an enhancement to youth service provision.

RESOLVED it was approved to submit a grant application for a £35,000 SALC Health and Wellbeing Grant and to provide match funding of £13,000 from the 2026/27 budget, subject to grant approval.

2025/37. To receive updates from councillors on Advisory groups and Outside Bodies.

Councillor Hodson reported on Minehead Swimming and Leisure's progress, noting membership has now exceeded 80 people with growing funding. MSL continue working with Minehead Health and Wellbeing to develop a collaborative group arrangement.

Councillor Hall, accompanied by the Clerk, attended Minehead AFC sponsors day on Saturday 23rd March. He expressed enthusiasm about the new board's reception and noted they would like to attend a future MTC meeting for a formal introduction.

2025/38. To approve and sign the Minutes of the [Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 25th February 2025.](#)

RESOLVED the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 25th February 2025 were approved.

2025/39. To receive the Minutes of the [Planning Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 4th March 2025.](#)

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

2025/40. To receive the Minutes from the [Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 11th March 2025.](#)

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

2025/41. To receive notes from the Office Advisory Group held on Wednesday 12th March 2025 and to consider the following recommendations:

- *That the Council appoint solicitors to review the lease document and address identified questions, direct the Clerk to obtain a solicitor fee estimate for Full Council approval, ensure all due diligence is completed before presenting a recommended offer price to Full Council.*

Following discussion of the recommendation, an amendment was proposed to delegate authority to the Clerk to commence price negotiations with the property owner. The delegation included an original offer price and a maximum price threshold, beyond which full council consultation would be required. The proposed delegated authority was conditional on providing regular updates to the office advisory group. The proposal was seconded.

RESOLVED it was agreed to appoint the recommended solicitors to review the lease document and address identified questions, and to authorise the Clerk to initiate purchase negotiations within the agreed price parameters.

For price parameters see confidential notes to minutes.

2025/42. Accounts

- i. To approve the following payments over £1,500 (*Recommended by the finance and General Purposes Committee*):
 - Payment of **£1,915.00** to MS Tree Services for the pollarding of 6 trees at King George Playing Field (Work approved at January's Full Council Meeting Minute number 2025/14)
 - Payment of **£1,995.23** to Workwear Express for uniform for Amenities Team staff including purchasing of stock uniform.

RESOLVED the payments of £1,915.00 and £1,995.23 were approved.

- ii. To approve the following urgent payments over £1,500:
 - Payment of **£2187.00** inc. VAT to Phil Collins Asbestos Management for asbestos reports on 9 buildings. (*Quotation discussed and approved at February Full Council Minute number 2025/30. Two additional sites added to original quote*)

The Clerk explained that after councillors reviewed the quotation at February's Full Council meeting, he discovered two sites had been omitted from the original quotation: King George Pavilion and the Cemetery workshop. This oversight accounted for the £300 increase in the invoice. After distributing the reports to councillors earlier in the week, the Clerk confirmed that they contained only minor precautionary works, with no significant issues detected.

RESOLVED the payment of £2187.00 inc. VAT was approved.

- iii. To note payments made for February.

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

- iv. To note budget income & expenditure reports for February.

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

- v. To note income received for February.

The income received for February were **noted**.

- vi. To note bank reconciliations for February.

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

2025/43. To receive an update on Asset and Service Devolution from Somerset Council to Minehead Town Council.

Councillors were informed that the head of terms, lease agreements and transfer documents are currently under review. Due to the volume of paperwork and importance of accuracy, this process has been time-consuming. TUPE-affected staff at Somerset Council have been met, and issued letters of measures. Several vans, meeting the required criteria have been identified within the delegated spending authority, with additional vehicle details being gathered. As a result of these ongoing processes, the devolution date has been postponed to May 1st by mutual agreement with Somerset Council.

The update was **received**.

2025/44. To consider a Minehead Town Council Response to Somerset Council's parking charges proposal.

The council discussed the proposed parking meters for the Avenue and Parade in Minehead, highlighting several critical concerns. The area's status as a conservation zone, with numerous listed buildings, raised significant preservation issues. Councillors agreed that additional parking meters would potentially harm local businesses and detract from the area's historical character.

While acknowledging an upcoming public consultation period, councillors determined it was crucial to proactively communicate their objections to Somerset Council. Members were keen to ensure their concerns were formally and promptly articulated before any final decisions could be made.

RESOLVED to instruct the clerk to draft a comprehensive response letter and circulate it to councillors for review and approval via email.

2025/45. To receive information on a water supply leak to Quay West Toilets and to consider quotation for rectification works.

Councillors received a report about a water supply leak discovered at the Quay West toilets. Wessex Water had formally identified the issue and issued a 14-day repair notice to MTC. The Clerk presented several quotes for consideration. Importantly, the water supply leak was confirmed to be unrelated to the building's structural integrity and separate from the recent refurbishment project.

RESOLVED to approve Quote A, as outlined in the Clerk's report, and to authorise the Clerk to incur any additional reasonable expenses required to complete the repair works.

2025/46. To receive the updated Minehead Town Council Asset Register.

The updated Minehead Town Council Asset Register was **received**.

It was noted that the asset register will significantly expand as the devolution process progresses. Following a major review of the register in the last 12-24 months, maintaining regular updates has become critically important. Work on the asset register will continue throughout the year, including the addition of insured values alongside assets and known purchase values.

2025/47. To receive and approve the reviewed Financial, Governance, Operational and Devolution Risk Assessments for 2025/26.

The Financial, Governance, Operational and Devolution risk assessments, alongside a summary report for 2025/26 were **received**.

Councillors acknowledged that through devolution, risk management has become increasingly important with the risk, policy & procedures advisory group tasked with keeping each policy under regular review and regularly reporting back to council.

RESOLVED the Financial, Governance and Operational risk assessments alongside the newly added devolution risk assessment were approved and it was agreed they would be monitored quarterly by the risk, policy & procedures advisory group with a report on progress presented to Full Council each quarter.

2025/48. To consider Minehead Town Council Support for 2025 Minehead Bay Festival.

Councillors reviewed a report and sponsorship proposal for the Minehead Bay Festival. It was noted that MTC had supported the festival last year, which received positive feedback from the community. The Clerk confirmed that financial support for the festival had been included in the budget and that council contributions to such events are permitted under S.145 (1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED to approve Minehead Town Council's participation as a Tier 3 sponsor for the Minehead Bay Festival 2025 at a cost of £2,500, including the provision of a stand at the event.

2025/49. To appoint Per Pro Services Ltd to undertake the end of year internal audit for 2024/25 accounts and to retain their services throughout 2025/26 financial year.

With the financial year drawing to a close, an internal audit was required alongside the Annual Governance Accountability Return. The clerk explained that Per Pro Services has been working with MTC for a couple of years, were a trusted and experienced auditor and had experience of the challenges faced.

RESOLVED to approve the appointment of Per Pro Services Ltd to undertake the end of year internal audit for 2024/25 accounts and to retain their services throughout 2025/26 financial year which includes a midterm audit.

2025/50. To approve regular payments including Salaries for 2025/26 financial year.
(Recommendation from Finance and General Purposes Committee)

The Deputy Clerk & RFO provided an updated list of regular payments with the agenda, including standing orders, direct debits, and staff salaries, all entered into under council-approved contractual agreements. As these payments are covered by existing contracts and comply with financial regulations, monthly approval is not required, thereby reducing administrative workload.

Councillors were informed whether the payments were fixed or variable and were assured that any variances would be reported promptly.

RESOLVED the regular payments, including salaries, for the 2025/26 financial year were approved.

2025/51. To approve 2025/26 Insurance Policy renewal quote. *(Recommendation from Finance and General Purposes Committee)*

The Clerk presented the 2025/26 insurance policy renewal quote of £17,330.30, highlighting that the price increase stems from expanded open spaces responsibilities due to the pending devolution agreement with Somerset Council. He requested delegated authority to manage the remaining insurance budget line to address potential devolution-related insurance needs. As good practice, additional providers will be sought for consideration in the 2026/27 financial year.

RESOLVED the 2025/26 Insurance Policy renewal quote of £17,330.30 alongside the delegation of the insurance budget line to the clerk for the incurring of any reasonable costs associated with the impact of devolution on the insurance costs was approved.

2025/52. To approve the fees and charges for 2025/26 financial year. *(Recommendation from Finance and General Purposes Committee)*

Councillors noted Finance and General Purposes recommendation of exploring a more forward-looking pricing structure. While the proposed fees and charges were considered suitable for the next financial year, the ongoing devolution of assets and services would require a thorough review of the overall fee structure.

RESOLVED to approve the fees and charges for 2025/26, with a full review of the fee structure to be conducted during 2025/26 as part of the devolution process, and a revised fees and charges list to be presented for consideration from 2026/27.

2025/53. Grant applications

- i. To receive a request from Watery Lane preschool for a small grant.

Councillors noted that approval of the grant application could be made in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 S.137.

RESOLVED to award Watery Lane preschool with a small grant.

2025/54. To note the completion of allotment site transfers from Somerset Council to Minehead Town Council.

Councillors **noted** that the transfer of four allotments sites from Somerset Council to Minehead town council at Marshfield, Periton Lane, Periton Way and Orchard Road was now complete.

The meeting closed at 21:23

Cllr Craig Palmer

Chair of Minehead Town Council

March 2025.