



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes from the Meeting of Minehead Town Council held on
Tuesday 17th June 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:

A member of the public, who is part of the Patient Participation Group at the local medical centre, wanted to highlight the urgent need for more members. They emphasised the importance of achieving broader representation from across the Minehead community, as this will help shape how services are delivered in the town. Anyone interested in joining the group is encouraged to contact the surgery directly. The only requirement is that participants must be registered patients at the practice.

Another member of the public spoke about being in the process of establishing a Friends of Minehead Harbour community group. The group aims to collaborate with local businesses, partners, and community organisations to revitalise and enhance the harbour area. They explained their intentions and vision to the Council and noted their hope to officially launch the group within the next week.

The Chair took the opportunity to remind attendees that any constituted group in the town may formally request a Minehead Town Councillor to be appointed as a Council representative to sit on their organisation.

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

Apologies: Councillors Lawton, Kravis and Bartlett

In Attendance: B Parker (Town Clerk), J Chapman (Deputy Clerk & RFO) Somerset Councillor Chilcott and 4 members of the public.

2025/100. To receive apologies for absence.

Councillor Lawton, Kravis and Bartlett's apologies were received.

2025/101. 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.

No disclosures of unregistered or other interests were made, and no prior requests for dispensations were received in relation to any items on the agenda.

2025/102. To receive reports from Somerset Councillors and the Local Policing Team.

There were no representatives from the Local Policing Team Present.

Somerset Councillors Hadley and Lawrence sent their apologies.

Councillor Chilcott gave the following updates:

- A free health fair will be held by the Medical Centre this Friday at the Quaker Meeting Place, Minehead, from 12:30 PM to 5:30 PM.
- Recently spent time in town with the Somerset Bus Partnership, which was actively distributing updated timetables following the suspension of the 28A bus route.
- The Minehead to Taunton bus route is set to become fully electric soon, with a target launch ahead of the school holidays. The new buses will feature air conditioning, increased seating, additional storage and aim to improve reliability.
- Somerset Council is projecting a £101 million budget deficit for the next financial year, as outlined in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. A transformation programme will support planned savings.
- A new interim finance officer has been appointed at Somerset Council.
- An external review of pay grading at SC will be conducted to address disparities inherited from the council merger.
- Residents are reminded to dispose of vapes separately from general waste by placing them in a clear tied bag, similar to the method used for battery disposal, as part of the SafeVape initiative.
- Spark Somerset will be hosting a Voluntary Sector Forum at Crowcombe Village Hall on 16th July, from 10 AM to 3 PM.
- West Somerset House in Williton has undergone renovations. It now includes the Children's Centre, library, registry office, and a customer access point all in one location. The full reopening is scheduled for 25th June.

2025/103. To receive updates from councillors on Advisory groups and Outside Bodies.

Cllr. Hodson reported that the local swimming pool groups are now collaborating, with shared directors on each other's boards and clearly defined roles throughout the process. A public consultation has been launched, with 914 responses received to date. Early data indicates that over 90% of respondents would use the pool once a week or more, while 24% identified cost as a potential barrier to use.

2025/104. To approve and sign the Minutes of the [Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 27th May 2025](#).

RESOLVED the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 27th May 2025 were approved and signed by the chair.

2025/105. To receive the Minutes of the [Planning Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 3rd June 2025](#).

The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 3rd June 2025 were **received**.

2025/106. Accounts

- i. To approve the following payments over £1,500:
 - Payment of **£7,200 inc. VAT** to Minehead Eye Youth Services for financial contribution towards delivering Minehead Youth Club from April 2025 – March 2026.

Councillors noted that the payment discussed relates to Year 2 of a 3-year Service Level Agreement between Minehead Town Council and Minehead Eye for the delivery of youth club services in Minehead. This SLA was approved at the February 2024 Full Council meeting (Minute 2024/22).

RESOLVED the payment of £7,200 inc. VAT was approved

- ii. To approve payments made for May

Questions were submitted prior to the meeting, and responses were provided by officers and sent to all councillors via email. The queries related specifically to electricity cost charges.

RESOLVED the payments for May were approved.

- iii. To receive budget income & expenditure reports for May

The budget income & expenditure reports for May were **received**.

- iv. To receive income receipts for May

The income receipts for May were **received**.

- v. To receive bank reconciliations for May

The bank reconciliations for May were **received**.

2025/107. To reconsider a request from Minehead Coast and Development Trust for a £5,000 contribution towards tourism services in the town.

This item, originally deferred from the May Full Council meeting, was brought back to the agenda following a request for further information regarding the business model that the proposed £5,000 funding would support. A representative from the Minehead Coast and Development Trust (MCDT) was present to respond to councillors' questions.

During the discussion, councillors expressed concern over a perceived lack of detailed information within the original proposal. Members also noted a number of concerns raised about the declining availability of face-to-face tourism services in the town, with the view that the proposal appeared overly focused on digital delivery. In response, the MCDT representative clarified that while the service was originally designed for high levels of face-to-face interaction, with 6,500 in-person engagements in previous years, this number had dropped to 2,500 in the last year. At the same time, online engagement had seen a substantial increase. Based on this data, MCDT explained that continuing to pursue a face-to-face model in isolation would not be financially sustainable and that the organisation was now exploring a more collaborative and adaptive approach to service delivery, in line with wider changes occurring across the county.

Councillors raised further questions around the cost analysis of the proposal and specifically queried the distribution of physical leaflets, a key component of traditional tourist information. MCDT clarified that while the organisation does not fund the production of leaflets, it does play an active coordination role, including sourcing and updating materials. It was emphasised that the £5,000 requested would support the overall service model, with an emphasis on digital development, but that a collaborative approach to maintaining some level of in-person provision remained a priority.

Councillors highlighted further concerns that allocating the full £5,000 at this stage might limit future support for face-to-face components of the service. To address this, it was proposed and seconded that £4,000 be awarded now, with the remaining £1,000 deferred pending further discussions between MCDT and the Town Clerk to provide the Council with greater clarity regarding how the remaining funds would be used.

The clerk confirmed that financial support for tourist information services is permissible under Section 144 of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED to award £4,000 to MCDT immediately, with a further £1,000 to be considered separately by Council following additional dialogue and information sharing between MCDT and the Town Clerk.

2025/108. To receive a report on the 2024 Minehead Christmas Light Switch-On Event, to discuss the possibility of hosting a similar event in 2025 and to consider delegating authority to the Clerk for planning and expenditure related to the event.

A report was prepared in advance of the meeting. The report was **received**.

Councillors noted that the previous Christmas event had been well received by the public, with particular emphasis on ensuring public safety. It was confirmed that this year's event would take place on Friday 28th November 2025.

RESOLVED to hold the Minehead Victorian Christmas light switch-on event on Friday 28th November. Authority was delegated to the Clerk to allocate up to £5,000 (exclusive of VAT) for the planning and delivery of the event, with a maximum expenditure of £1,500 (exclusive of VAT) per individual item.

2025/109. To note the proposed date of Sunday 12th April for the 2026 Minehead EAT festival and to consider hosting an additional EAT festival in August 2026.

It was confirmed that the 2026 EAT Festival will take place on Sunday 12th April, within the Easter school holidays and one week after Easter weekend. The date was **noted**.

Council considered a proposal for an additional EAT Festival on 9th August 2026, following the success and strong community engagement of the previous event. Organisers have offered to deliver the event under the same terms as the existing agreement.

RESOLVED to approve the additional EAT Festival date, subject to a review and minor amendment to the contract, specifically regarding the food festival exclusivity clause.

2025/110. To consider delegating the Clerk with the authority of purchasing new machinery for the amenities team from the appropriate budget lines. With a limit of no more than £1,500 per item.

Councillors were informed of the need to replace or purchase several items of machinery for the Amenities Team. The Clerk requested delegated authority to proceed with purchases, limited to £1,500 per item, within the existing machinery and equipment budgets.

RESOLVED the delegating the Clerk with the authority of purchasing new machinery for the amenities team from the appropriate budget lines. With a limit of no more than £1,500 per item was approved.

2025/111. To consider the proposal to lease Town Council land adjoining Cheeky Cherubs at the Alcombe Children's Centre for the purpose of erecting a secure fenced outdoor space.

Councillors discussed a proposal to lease a small section of the King George playing field (between Alcombe Children's Centre and the footpath to the industrial estate) to the nursery at the children's centre. Though ownership would remain with MTC, as the lease exceeds 7 years, it falls under disposal of land provisions (Section 127, Local Government Act 1972). The lease would support the nursery in providing additional outdoor space, and includes fencing, grass maintenance, care of two

trees, a ransom strip, and reinstatement provisions. All legal costs will be covered by the nursery. The arrangement is expected to save MTC approximately £500–£1,000 annually in maintenance costs.

A question was raised regarding the maintenance of the ransom strip adjacent to the nursery and the need to ensure ongoing access to the rhyne. It was confirmed that the lease agreement would clearly state that it pertains to maintenance, not exclusive use of the ransom strip.

RESOLVED to approve the proposal to lease the land to the nursery, with authority delegated to the Clerk to instruct the Council's preferred solicitor to draft and finalise the lease agreement.

2025/112. To note the published boundary commission proposals for the new Somerset Council ward boundaries and to consider a further Town Council response to the consultation.

The Boundary Commission has published its draft recommendations for Somerset Council, proposing 96 single-member divisions, including new Minehead East and Minehead West wards. These proposals differ from the submission previously approved by MTC in December.

Councillors were asked whether they wanted to submit a further MTC response to these proposals.

RESOLVED that Minehead Town Council will not submit an additional response to the second stage consultation.

2025/113. To approve the purchase and installation of nine benches in The Parks, with seven funded through a Section 106 grant and two funded via external donations.

The Deputy Clerk and RFO submitted a Section 106 funding application for new benches in The Parks, supporting the ongoing improvement of areas recently devolved from Somerset Council. Seven benches would be funded through the Section 106 grant, with two additional benches funded through memorial contributions.

Councillors were reminded that the Community Funding Advisory Group is in place to identify and recommend future externally funded projects.

RESOLVED the purchase and installation of nine benches in The Parks, with seven funded through a Section 106 grant and two funded via external donations was approved.

2025/114. To consider a request from Leigh Danter's Funfair to revise the dates of the Autumn Fair, proposing that the fair be held from Monday 1st September to Sunday 7th September, with operational days running from Wednesday 3rd September to Sunday 7th September, instead of the originally scheduled dates of Monday 15th September 2025 to Monday 22nd September 2025.

Council considered a request to amend the dates of the autumn fair due to provider availability. It was noted that the revised dates would negatively impact rewilding initiatives, requiring grass to be cut in mid-August instead of early September.

RESOLVED that the request to change the autumn fair dates be declined, in order to support the continuation of rewilding initiatives.

2025/115. To note the dates for Minehead Town Council's Community Engagement Events for 2025 - 2026.

In 2024, MTC hosted monthly Community Engagement Events with limited attendance. Evening sessions had the highest turnout. For 2025/26, it was agreed that quarterly events will be held on

Tuesday evenings at 7:30 pm. These events aim to strengthen connections between the council, residents and local organisations. The dates for 2025/26 are:

- Tuesday 15th July 2025
- Tuesday 21st October 2025
- Tuesday 17th February 2026
- Tuesday 21st April 2026

The dates for Minehead Town Council's Community Engagement Events for 2025 -2026 were **noted**.

The meeting closed at 20:36

Councillor Craig Palmer

Minehead Town Council Chair

June 2025