



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting of Minehead Town Council held on
Tuesday 13th August 2024 at 7.30 pm at
the Town Council Offices, 3 Summerland Road, Minehead, TA24 5BP

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

Not Present: Councillors Bonar and Beynon.

Apologies: Councillor Kravis.

In Attendance: B Parker (Town Clerk), J Chapman (Deputy Clerk & RFO)

There was a 15-minute open forum at the beginning of the Meeting for residents of Minehead to speak on any matter related to the agenda. No matters were raised.

2024/54. To receive apologies for absence.

Councillor Kravis apologies were received.

2024/55. To receive disclosures of unregistered or other interests from councillors on matters to be considered at the Meeting.

No disclosures were received.

2024/56. To Approve and Sign Minutes of the [Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on Tuesday 9th July 2024.](#)

RESOLVED the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Tuesday 9th July 2024 were approved.

2024/57. To receive the notes from the Amenities Advisory Group Meeting held on Wednesday 17th July 2024.

The notes from the Amenities Advisory Group Meeting held on Wednesday 17th July 2024 were **received.**

2024/58. Accounts

- i. To recommend the following payments over £1,500:
 - Payment of **£4,296.00** inc. VAT to Arboricare Ltd for retrenchment pruning of Willow Trees at Marsh Common. (Works approved at June's Full Council Meeting Minute Number 2024/105)

- Payment of **£1635.78** inc. VAT to National Association of Local Councils for annual council membership.

RESOLVED the Payments of £4,296.00 inc. VAT to Arboricare Ltd and £1635.78 inc. VAT to National Association of Local Councils were recommended for approval.

- ii. To approve payments made for July.

RESOLVED the payments made for July were approved.

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

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

- iv. To receive Income received for July.

The Income for July was **received**.

- v. To receive bank reconciliations for July.

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

2024/59. To receive Minehead Town Council financial budget reports for the first quarter of the 2024/25 financial year.

The Deputy Clerk and RFO presented a report on the first quarter budget performance. The report was **received**.

Councillors were informed that most budget lines were tracking as expected, with minor underspends generally offset by small overspends in other areas. The report highlighted notable underspends in Devolution and Legal Fees budget lines. The Deputy Clerk clarified that expenditure is anticipated in these areas later in the year. Regarding the Devolution budget, Councillors were advised to consider earmarking funds beyond the current financial year, as the devolution process is likely to extend into future financial years.

2024/60. To discuss the management of Minehead Town Council owned assets.

The Clerk reported on a recent review of Town Council assets. The importance of achieving proper asset management was discussed and it was agreed that The Council should take the appropriate steps to achieve a comprehensive register of MTC assets.

RESOLVED In line with item 14.6 of the council's financial regulations Councillors agreed The Clerk and RFO should maintain a comprehensive register of MTC's assets.

2024/61. To discuss Minehead Town Council support for new community benches.

A report was sent to Councillors alongside the agenda. The report was **received**. It was noted that a local community group had successfully raised funds to purchase five new benches in various locations around town, some on Somerset Council owned land. These benches would be placed on existing plinths where previous benches had been removed. Somerset Council had given preliminary approval for this initiative, providing Minehead Town Council and the community

group entering into a memorandum of understanding. Minehead Town Council was requested to assume public liability for all the benches and assist with their installation. The community donors would be responsible for any ongoing maintenance and repair costs.

RESOLVED to approve the installation of the community benches at the proposed locations, using the proposed Memorandum of Understanding with Somerset Council and the Minehead Wombles Community Group.

2024/62. To discuss the ongoing management options of street lighting at Cross Farm Park.

The Council discussed concerns raised regarding the annual cost of £6,500 for street lighting electricity at Cross Farm Park. The Deputy Clerk presented a quotation for disconnecting the current lights from the national grid and proposed alternative lighting options, including solar lamp posts and solar bollards. Councillors considered the potential long-term savings, noting that the replacement costs for these alternative options could be offset by the current annual electricity expenditure. The Council agreed to further explore these cost-effective and environmentally friendly lighting solutions.

RESOLVED to recommend for the Deputy Clerk to obtain quotes for solar alternatives and present to Council to consider before the quotation for disconnection expires in November.

2024/63. To recommend that Minehead Town Council adopt a .gov.uk domain name.

Councillors were informed about a government initiative encouraging local authorities to adopt .gov domain names if they had not already done so. It was reported that the cost of this transition would be relatively modest, estimated to be in the hundreds rather than thousands of pounds. The annual cost for the domain name itself was noted as £25, with additional expenses expected for IT support to manage the transition of email addresses and the website. Members were assured that the change would not disrupt day-to-day council operations, as both the new .gov and existing .co.uk addresses would function together until the latter's expiration date.

RESOLVED that Minehead Town Council adopt a .gov.uk domain name was recommended.

2024/64. To co-opt councillors on to the following advisory groups:

- i. Councillor Jewell onto the Amenities Advisory Group.
- ii. Councillor Hall onto the Community and Events and Devolution Advisory Groups.

RESOLVED to appoint Councillors Jewell and Hall onto Advisory groups.

2024/65. To approve training needs for Minehead Town Council Staff

Councillors reviewed the list of training needs for MTC staff provided by the Clerk. This included necessary compliance training for Amenities Team members whose certifications were approaching expiration, as well as CiLCA training for the Clerk. It was noted that all training costs had been estimated during budget setting and would remain within budget.

Councillors discussed the Clerk's CiLCA training qualification, acknowledging the importance of balancing training demands with office responsibilities. A learning agreement produced by Somerset Association of Local Councils, outlining expectations for all parties involved, was presented. Councillors reviewed and agreed to their commitments, as did the Clerk.

RESOLVED the training needs for Minehead Town Council Staff was recommended for approval.

2024/66. To receive update regarding the purchase of a Clerks mobile phone.

Councillors were asked to revisit the Finance and General Purposes March resolution delegating authority to the Clerk to purchase a mobile phone. The Clerk reported on his research into suitable devices, emphasising the importance of extended security licensing for a work phone that may hold sensitive information. He explained that many second-hand phones had nearly expired licenses, and a contracted phone would best ensure ongoing security. Councillors acknowledged the necessity of a work mobile for accessing emails and calls outside the office, reflecting modern working practices. Councillors considered authorising a monthly mobile phone contract up to £20, to be financed through the phones and licenses budget line.

RESOLVED for the Clerk to research and secure a mobile phone contract, with a monthly expenditure limit of circa £20 was approved.

2024/67. To receive an update and decide upon the continuous provision of a public access defibrillator at The Community Building.

The Council discussed the future of the Public Access Defibrillator currently provided by the South Western Ambulance Service (SWAS). It was reported that SWAS would no longer offer new public access defibrillator agreements or equipment. The existing agreement between SWAS and MTC is set to expire on 15th September 2024. Two options were presented: either end the agreement and return the defibrillator, or have it gifted to MTC. The latter option would transfer responsibility for replacement parts to MTC. It was noted that batteries, lasting up to 4 years, cost approximately £400 to replace, while pads, with a shelf life of up to 2 years, cost between £100-£200 and require replacement after each use. Councillors were asked to consider the options and produce a recommendation for consideration by full Council. Councillors discussed that there is a local defib group in the town and felt that it would be useful for the town council to enquire if they could offer any operational support or advice for the maintenance of the unit.

RESOLVED Minehead Town Council will assume responsibility for the continuous provision of a public access defibrillator at The Community Building. The Council will contact the community defib group to enquire about operational support.

2024/68. To receive an update on the Autumn Funfair at Marsh Common.

An update on the Autumn Fair at Marsh Common, scheduled from 4th to 8th September in Minehead was provided. The Clerk presented a spreadsheet detailing all required documentation for the event, including insurance evidence, individual machinery risk assessments, Showman's Guild certification/registration, Amusement Device Inspection Procedure Scheme (ADIPS) certification, and an overall event management plan. It was noted that some amusements had certifications due to expire before the fair's commencement. The Clerk had communicated this with the organisers, who agreed to provide updated documents as soon as they received them.

The update was **received**.

RESOLVED that Council set a deadline to receive any outstanding documentation by Friday 30th August 2024.

2024/69. To receive an update on the Minehead Christmas Light Switch on event.

The Clerk had recently held a meeting with the local police and their public event planning officer and had discussed through the event management plan and event risk assessment. A meeting had also been held with the Senior Event Traffic Technician at SC who had both provided positive feedback on the event proposals and offered constructive suggestions. The Clerk reported that they had been advised to submit a TTRO at a cost of approximately £650 as soon as possible for the event and to ensure the event is submitted to The Safety Advisory Group at SC by mid-September to ensure enough time and sufficient planning for the event of Friday 29th November. There would also be additional costs such as a temporary event notice and street trading licences.

The update was **received**.

It was proposed that the Clerk is delegated the authority to submit the Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) and other licencing for the event.

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that £1500 is delegated to the Clerk to spend towards the planning of the Light Switch on event.

2024/70. To note the completion of repainting work in Blenheim Gardens Toilets.

The Clerk had recently appointed a local contractor to provide the toilets in Blenheim with a repaint. The work was done in the space of a matter of days with limited operational disruption.

The work was **noted**.

2024/71. To note upcoming Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) at Minehead Town Council venues.

In order to ensure workplace compliance, The Clerk had arranged for all portable appliances across all town Council sites to be tested.

The upcoming work was **noted**.

The meeting closed at 21:30

Councillor B Hodson
Chair of The Finance and General purposes Committee
August 2024