



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes from the Meeting of Minehead Town Council held on
Tuesday 23rd September 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 concern was raised on behalf of a resident regarding trees overhanging the entrance to North Road Car Park from Blenheim Gardens. The Clerk confirmed that a tree survey is currently being undertaken, which will identify high, medium and low priority works. High priority works will commence as soon as the survey is completed.

Present: Councillors C Palmer (Chair), Lawton, Hodson, Jewell, M Palmer, Hall, Milton, Beynon, Sharjeel, Bartlett and Kravis

Not Present: Councillor Bonar

In attendance: Ben Parker (Town Clerk), Somerset Councillors Chilcott and Hadley.

2025/152. To receive apologies for absence.

No Councillor apologies were **received**.

2025/153. 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.

Councillor Kravis has a standing declaration as a Somerset Councillor.

There were no further disclosures of unregistered or other interests from councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting.

2025/154. 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:

- Digital Slinky transport is available in most areas except West Somerset. Enquiries have been made about this and the matter will be raised at the LCN Active Travel Working Group.
- Issues reported on the 28 bus route, with passengers (including Richard Huish students) left roadside due to overcrowding. Following complaints, Somerset Council has agreed to fund a second bus on the early service until new higher capacity buses with additional storage arrive.
- Concerns raised over planning enforcement, particularly in conservation areas.
- Recent casework included queries on empty properties, potholes and street tree root trip hazards.

- Ongoing discussions regarding new bus shelters in Minehead; a meeting is arranged with the officer responsible for the project.
- A39 road closures are scheduled around Washford Cross for line marking and cats-eye reinstatement; these will take place overnight.

Councillor Hadley gave the following updates:

- Planning department remains under pressure and in special measures.
- The matter on the future of the harbour cannons remains unresolved.
- Several local licensing applications have been submitted for businesses in the town.
- The Somerset Youth Parliament nominations are open. Young people aged 11–18 can apply online via the self-nomination form.
<https://somerseyouthparliament.org.uk/elections/>

Councillor Kravis gave the following updates:

- Senior officers at Somerset Council have received a backdated pay increase, as set by an independent body, resulting in an additional unbudgeted cost
- Consultation on Sunday parking charges in SC car parks is now live.
<https://somersetcouncil.citizenspace.com/parking/copy-of-consultation/>
- Somerset Councillor Christine Lawrence has retired, triggering a by-election in the Dunster Ward.
- Junction 26 upgrade works at Chelston have been completed on schedule.
- Somerset Council's housing department recorded a £3.4m underspend last year, which will now be allocated to purchase temporary accommodation.
- A Bridgwater business recently lost its licence for employing illegal workers – the second such case in recent years.
- A Council Scrutiny meeting, intended to cover planning matters, was recently cancelled at short notice.

A question was raised regarding epicormic growth on the towns street trees. It was acknowledged that the work is required; however, no update has yet been provided other than confirmation it will be carried out.

2025/155. To receive updates from councillors on Advisory groups and Outside Bodies.

Cllr Hall attended a Marine Conservation beach clean organised by Plastic Free Exmoor. The event included a coastline litter study and was attended by 41 people.

Cllr Bartlett reported that the Old Alcombe Association has now installed their defibrillator, part funded through a grant awarded by Minehead Town Council.

2025/156. To approve and sign the Minutes of the [Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 26th August 2025](#)

RESOLVED the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 26th August 2025 were approved and signed by the chair as a true and accurate record.

2025/157. To receive the Minutes of the [Planning & Licencing Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 2nd September 2025](#)

The Minutes of the Planning & Licencing Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 2nd September 2025 were **received**.

2025/158. To receive the Minutes of the [Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 9th September 2025](#).

The Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 9th September 2025 were **received**.

2025/159. Accounts

- i. To approve the following payments over £1,500 (*Payments recommended by September's Finance and General Purposes Committee*):

- Payment of **£3,242.26 inc. VAT** to The Festive Lighting Company for Final 40% of year 2 Festive Lighting Scheme (2 year contract extension agreed in December 2023 Full Council Meeting Minute Number 7, Item. 5)

RESOLVED the payment of £3,242.26 inc. VAT was approved.

- ii. To approve the following urgent Payments:

- Payment of **£2,520.00 inc. VAT** to PKF Littlejohn for Limited assurance review of Annual Governance & Accountability Return for year ended 31st March 2025.

RESOLVED the payment of £2,520.00 inc. VAT was approved.

- An additional invoice for **£896.13 inc. VAT** was provided to councillors for their urgent review for the service of the amenities team tractor that has started displaying error codes.

RESOLVED the payment of £896.13 inc. VAT was approved.

- iii. To note payments made in August

The payments made in August were **noted**.

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

A question was raised regarding the apparent overspend in the vehicle maintenance budget. The Clerk explained that this relates to the vehicle purchased as part of the devolution agreement. The cost should have been allocated to the devolution budget, not vehicle maintenance and therefore does not represent an actual overspend.

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

- v. To note income receipts for August

The income receipts for August were **noted**.

- vi. To note bank reconciliations for August

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

2025/160. To receive a report on the completed Lychgate renovation works at Minehead Cemetery.

Councillors **received** the report confirming completion of the Lychgate renovation.

Despite unforeseen works, the project was completed successfully with new oak beams and newly installed iroko gates in keeping with the cemetery setting. The Conservation Society, who have shown interest throughout, will be invited to view the completed works, with the invitation also to be extended to councillors.

2025/161. To consider delegating the clerk the authority to spend up to £2,000 for seasonal flailing works on MTC areas. *(Recommendation from the Finance and General Purposes Committee)*

It was noted that MTC continues to contract some hedge and open space flailing each autumn, as this remains more cost-effective than carrying out the work in house, particularly since the transfer of additional land from Somerset Council. A contractor quotation was reviewed and amended to include an additional area.

RESOLVED to delegate authority to the clerk to appoint the preferred contractor and to spend up to £2,000 on seasonal flailing works.

2025/162. To consider applying for Ellicombe Open Space to be designated as a Town Green, receive an update on the grant application for perimeter hedgerow planting and review available options. *(Recommendation from the Finance and General Purposes Committee)*

The Finance and General Purposes Committee recommended applying to Somerset Council for the designation of Ellicombe Open Space as a town green, to secure long term protection against development. Councillors recognised the value of the site as a community recreational area. Discussion raised concerns about limiting the decisions of future councils and whether existing MTC ownership already provides adequate protection. It was also noted that there is strong public opposition to nearby proposed development, while a pool project had not received the same level of support when previously suggested for Ellicombe Open Space.

RESOLVED by majority to apply to Somerset Council to designate Ellicombe Open Space as a Town Green.

An update was provided on the proposed hedgerow planting at Ellicombe Open Space, along the Seaward Way boundary. The Tree Council grant scheme closed before MTC could apply, so councillors considered direct funding. An estimated £1,500 would be required, which can be met from the grounds maintenance budget. The aim is to establish a natural boundary that would eventually replace the existing fence. Questions were raised on the type of hedge, whether a hedge alone is sufficient and whether fencing on the Bircham Road boundary should also be considered. Councillors agreed the current fence remains necessary until a hedge is fully established and may require repair depending on condition.

RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Clerk to spend up to £1,500, subject to quorate councillor approval via email on the choice of hedging plants.

2025/163. To receive a report on the Burma Star War Memorial in Blenheim Gardens and to consider quotations for its refurbishment.

A report on the condition of the Burma Star War Memorial was **received**.

At over 25 years old, the Burma Star Memorial is showing signs of wear, particularly in the lettering. The Clerk has sought quotations for refurbishment. With the Town Council now responsible for Blenheim Gardens and following the recent VJ Day 80 commemoration where public concern for the memorials condition was noted, councillors agreed refurbishment was appropriate. Funds are available in the earmarked monuments reserve.

RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Clerk to spend up to £1,000 on refurbishment of the Burma Star Memorial.

2025/164. To consider a quotation for wall repairs and access widening at Periton Lane entrance of Parks Walk.

The Clerk advised that the Periton Lane entrance to Parks Walk is too narrow for ride on mower access, requiring manual mowing. A quotation has been received to widen the access to accommodate mowers and repair a section of the wall. Councillors discussed whether this is currently a high priority.

RESOLVED to defer the decision pending further information on options for the top area of Parks Walk.

2025/165. To consider delegating authority to the Clerk to appoint a contractor to carry out the annual Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) of MTC electrical equipment.

The annual PAT of MTC equipment is now due. The estimated cost is expected to just exceed the clerk's current delegated spending authority of £500. The clerk therefore requested delegated authority to commission the works.

RESOLVED to delegate the authority to the clerk to carry out all required PAT.

2025/166. To consider a request from the Minehead Chamber of Trade for MTC to accept a £6,000 donation and agree to take on the liability and upkeep of the shopper's guide signage in the town centre.

Minehead Chamber of Trade who are due to disband, requested MTC take responsibility for the four existing shopper's guide maps in the town. In support, the Chamber offered a £6,000 donation towards their upkeep. The maps require annual updates and an approximate figure of £650 + VAT for the annual updates has been obtained. The Clerk confirmed shop information could be sourced from the Minehead Business Association. Councillors expressed mixed views on their usefulness and concerns about pavement obstruction.

RESOLVED to accept the £6,000 donation from the Minehead Chamber of Trade, take responsibility for the upkeep of the shopper's guide maps, seek support from the Business Association in auditing updates and create an earmarked reserve for future costs including potential removal. It was further agreed to review the provision after 5 years.

2025/ 167. To receive the 2025 Minehead Bay Festival sponsorship report.

The 2025 Minehead Bay Festival sponsorship report was **received**.

2025/168. To note the Minehead Town Council application to the SALC health and wellbeing fund for a £10,000 grant towards the “Stronger Together: A wellbeing project for Minehead Middle School”

Following the tragic incident at Cutcombe Hill in July affecting pupils from Minehead Middle School, the clerk submitted an application to the SALC Health and Wellbeing Fund for a £10,000 grant to support a new initiative, “Stronger Together: A Wellbeing Project for Minehead Middle School.” Due to application deadlines, councillor approval was sought by email and was overwhelmingly positive. The project aims to provide longer term wellbeing support for middle school children and their families. If the grant is awarded, it will fund a range of activities during school, weekends and holidays, both complementing the curriculum and offering children a safe and structured social outlet.

The Minehead Town Council application to the SALC health and wellbeing fund for a £10,000 grant towards the “Stronger Together: A wellbeing project for Minehead Middle School” was **noted**.

2025/169. To note the Minehead Town Council Completion of the limited assurance review for the year ended 31st March 2025.

The limited assurance review for the financial year ending 31 March 2025 has been completed. The external auditor raised no concerns.

The update was **noted**.

The meeting closed at 20:56.

Councillor Craig Palmer

Chair of Minehead Town Council

September 2025