



## MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes from the Meeting of Minehead Town Council held on  
Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026 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 residents about the removal of scanning equipment at Minehead Hospital. The Council was encouraged to write a letter expressing the aspiration for local scanning provision.

This was followed by a presentation from The West Somerset Tidal Lagoon Project of up to 15 minutes, on their proposals for a new tidal lagoon for West Somerset. Chris Binnie, representing the West Somerset Tidal Lagoon project, gave a presentation highlighting the need to improve energy production in the UK and to reduce reliance on imported energy. He referred to the vulnerabilities of other renewable sources, such as wind power.

The proposal outlined a tidal range system capable of generating electricity on both the ebb and flood tides, resulting in near-continuous power generation. The stated benefits included predictable and reliable energy, proven long operational life, no waste, indigenous generation, and alignment with high national demand. The Bristol Channel and north-west England were identified as the most suitable UK locations for tidal range energy, with reassurance that the proposed West Somerset Lagoon avoids environmentally sensitive areas of the channel.

It was stated that the West Somerset Lagoon represents the lowest-cost tidal range proposal currently identified. The scheme would cover approximately 80 square kilometres, with a generating capacity of 2,500 MW, comparable to Hinkley Point. The lagoon wall would be constructed from concrete units cast at various ports, towed into position and sunk in place, minimising environmental impact. The project is currently at the preliminary study stage, with construction hoped to commence in 2033.

Additional benefits highlighted included reduced wave action, mitigation of coastal erosion, protection from storm surges, and control of sea levels within the lagoon—particularly relevant given areas of Minehead at risk of sea flooding by 2100. Environmental measures would include bird mitigation through nesting islands and fish protection strategies.

Community benefits were noted as calmer waters for recreation, provision of an all-tide floating marina, a ferry terminal, and the potential for floating solar panels to reduce pressure on agricultural land. It was further stated that tidal range energy costs are significantly lower than other generation methods, including nuclear. The project team was described as having extensive experience and specialist knowledge in the construction of comparable infrastructure.

The Chair thanked the presentation team and, due to time constraints, confirmed that councillors would collate questions and forward them to the project team for written responses.

*The meeting convened*

Initial .....

**Present:** Councillors C Palmer (Chair), Lawton, Hodson, M Palmer, Sharjeel, Beynon, Milton, Kravis and Bonar

**Apologies:** Councillors Jewell, Hall and Bartlett.

**In Attendance:** B Parker (Town Clerk), Somerset Councillor Chilcott and 3 members of the public.

**2026/54.** To receive apologies for absence.

Councillors Hall, Jewell and Bartlett's apologies were **received**.

**2026/55.** 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 disclosure as a Somerset Councillor. He also declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 12 (*Minute Number 2026/65*) Stayed in room, spoke, did not vote.

Councillor Bonar declared a personal interest in Item 13 (*Minute number 2026/66*) Stayed in room, Spoke, did not vote.

**2026/56.** To receive reports from Somerset Councillors and the Local Policing Team.

There were no representatives from the local policing team present. Somerset Councillor Hadley's apologies were **received**.

Councillor Chilcott gave the following updates:

- Has received a number of reports relating to highways and potholes and encouraged residents to report issues online, as councillor follow-ups require a customer reference number.
- Received several enquiries regarding domestic bins being left on pavements and not removed after emptying.
- Has received a number of concerns about recent street tree pruning works; an email with questions and photographs will be sent to officers shortly.
- Somerset Council has set its budget for 2026/27, and the Somerset Rivers Authority has also agreed its spending for the coming year, including natural flood management, enhanced gully clearing and drain jetting.
- Somerset Council has amalgamated its housing models from predecessor districts into a single arms-length company, bringing all council housing under one management structure.
- Somerset Council has approved the publication of its Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- A new phone line has been introduced for residents struggling with rising heating oil costs, delivered in partnership with Citizens Advice Somerset: **0808 278 7842**.
- A new Crisis and Resilience Fund scheme will be delivered by Citizens Advice Somerset over the next three years to provide immediate financial support for food, energy and housing costs.
- New electoral boundaries have been agreed; Minehead will be one of only three areas in Somerset to have a two-councillor division. The number of Somerset councillors will reduce from 110 to 96, in readiness for the May 2027 elections.
- Positive feedback has been received regarding new tree planting in the town, including the use of tree guards. With thanks extended to Minehead Town Council for funding and coordinating the works.

Questions were raised regarding road closures over the previous few days, with complaints received that the notification letters did not include dates for the closures; Councillor Chilcott advised that she would feed this back. It was noted that the [One.Network](#) website should hold details of all road closures and works across Somerset, including timescales and diversion routes. A further question was raised about whether the planned resurfacing works for The Avenue were still due to go ahead, as they were not shown on [One.Network](#). Councillor Chilcott confirmed she had not been informed that the works had been cancelled and would follow this up.

Councillor Kravis gave the following updates:

- Highlighted a shortage of educational psychologists, leading to delays in Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and difficulties in meeting the six-day statutory requirement for providing additional support following a permanent school exclusion.
- Noted the recognised link between increased physical activity among older residents and reduced pressure on health services, referencing initiatives such as Every Move Matters and Stronger for Longer for those aged 50 and over.

**2026/57.** To receive updates from councillors on Advisory groups and Outside Bodies.

Cllr Hodson reported that the Pool Group is still completing its feasibility report, which is due to be finished by mid-May and will be shared with the Town Council shortly thereafter. He also advised that he supports West Somerset College and Bridgwater Academy on pupil review panels and noted his interest in the number of children and schools requiring panel involvement.

Councillor C Palmer reported that he, along with other councillors, attended the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reopening of the railway line between Minehead and Blue Anchor and took part in a commemorative trip on the line.

**2026/58.** To approve and sign the Minutes of the [Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026](#).

**RESOLVED** the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026 were approved and signed by the chair as a true and accurate record.

**2026/59.** To receive the Minutes of the [Planning & Licencing Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026](#).

The Minutes of the Planning & Licencing Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 were **received**.

**2026/60.** Accounts

- i. To note the payments made in accordance with approved Council minutes.

The payments made in accordance with approved Council minutes were **noted**.

- ii. To approve the following payments:
  - Payment of **£7,200 inc. VAT** to Minehead Eye Youth Services for delivery of Minehead Youth Club as per SLA.
  - Payment of **£6,077.50** to Somerset Council for the business rates for The Minehead Town Council Offices.
  - Payment of **£2,547.24 inc. VAT** to Somerset Association of Local Councils for regional and National affiliation Fees.

- Payment of **£1,351.75 inc. VAT** to LBS for compost for the towns bedding displays.
- Payment of **£624.23 inc. VAT** to Western Fuel for the supply of fuel for machinery used by the amenities team.

A question was raised regarding the Council's use of compost and whether a former project could be re-established to explore the use of locally sourced materials, such as pony manure or green waste produced by local skip companies. The Clerk advised that, once in post, the Head of Amenities would oversee the development of this strategy.

**RESOLVED** the payments of £7,200 inc. VAT, £6,077.50, £2,547.24 inc. VAT, £1,351.75 inc. VAT and £624.23 inc. VAT were approved.

iii. To receive payments made for March.

A question was raised regarding the use of a soil skip. The Clerk advised that this is the result of subsoil generated through cemetery operations. While every effort is made to reuse or redistribute spoil where possible, some material is required to be removed, as it is not of a suitable quality for use elsewhere.

The payments made for March were **received**.

iv. To receive budget income & expenditure reports for March.

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

v. To receive income receipts for March.

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

vi. To receive and note the bank reconciliations for March and the financial year end.

It was noted that the bank statements were not included in this month's reconciliations, despite this having been requested at the previous meeting.

The bank reconciliations for March and the financial year end were received and **noted**.

**2026/61.** To receive a report on the final quarter of the 2025-26 financial year and overview of the years accounts

The End of Financial Year 2025/26 report produced by the Deputy Clerk was **received**.

The report outlined that, despite a challenging year characterised by asset devolution, inflationary pressures and increased operating costs, the Council achieved a balanced financial position within the budget approved by Council for the financial year.

Members noted the successful integration of devolved assets, the completion of a wide programme of projects and community initiatives, and confirmation that the Council remains in a secure and sustainable financial position, with sufficient budget provision and reserves to support planned activity in 2026/27.

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk were commended for their oversight of the Council's finances and for the transparency provided through the financial reports.

**2026/62.** To receive a report on the adoption of Revised Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and a New Scheme of Delegation and to consider the recommendations.

Council considered a report on the adoption of the NALC Model Standing Orders, NALC Model Financial Regulations, and a revised Scheme of Delegation.

It was noted that following the significant expansion of the Council's operational responsibilities and asset base in May 2025, existing delegated authorities were no longer proportionate, resulting in operational delays and inefficient use of full Council meeting time.

The report recommended adoption of the NALC Model Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to ensure continued compliance with statutory requirements, best practice and sector standards. The proposed Scheme of Delegation sought to formalise and clarify officer and committee decision-making within agreed budgets, allowing routine and non-discretionary matters to be handled efficiently while retaining appropriate councillor oversight.

During discussion, councillors considered whether the proposed delegations remained too restrictive, while also acknowledging that increased officer delegation would allow councillors to devote more time to strategic issues. It was further noted that the Council's strong checks and balances and transparent financial reporting provided confidence in the appropriate use of delegated authority.

**RESOLVED** by majority that the NALC Model Standing Orders, NALC Model Financial Regulations, and the Scheme of Delegation be adopted, subject to the following amendments and conditions:

- Delegated expenditure limits be set at £3,000 for the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- Delegated authority be granted to the Clerk for single-item expenditure up to £2,000, within the identified budget lines set out in the Scheme of Delegation.
- All adopted documents be reviewed after six months of operation.

**2026/63.** To review and approve the following policies as part of the Council's routine governance and assurance processes:

- i. Code of Conduct
- ii. Publication Scheme
- iii. Data Protection Policy
- iv. IT Policy
- v. General Reserves Policy
- vi. Annual Investments Strategy

Council considered the review and approval of a number of policies as part of its routine governance, housekeeping, and assurance responsibilities, namely the Code of Conduct, Publication Scheme, Data Protection Policy, IT Policy, General Reserves Policy and Annual Investment Strategy.

It was noted that the majority of the policies had been recently reviewed and required little or no substantive amendment, with only minor wording changes made to ensure clarity, accuracy, and consistency.

The IT Policy was presented as a NALC model document that had been adapted to reflect Minehead Town Council's systems, scale of operation, and working practices. The Clerk advised

that regular policy review is a key element of good governance and an important part of the annual audit process, providing assurance that policies remain current, compliant, and fit for purpose. This was considered particularly relevant in light of enhanced internal control expectations arising from the new Section 10 requirements.

During discussion, concerns were raised as to whether the IT Policy accurately reflected Council processes in relation to both council-issued IT equipment and the use of personal IT. The Clerk advised that there can be a tension between documenting existing practices and ensuring that policies set out compliant and appropriate standards.

It was proposed and seconded that approval of the IT Policy be deferred to allow further review by the Risk, Policy and Procedures Advisory Group, with a revised version to be considered by the Finance Committee within the next two months.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the following policies be approved:
  - Code of Conduct
  - Publication Scheme
  - Data Protection Policy
  - General Reserves Policy
  - Annual Investment Strategy
2. That approval of the IT Policy be deferred, pending further review by the Risk and Policy Advisory Group, with a revised policy to be brought to the Finance Committee within the next two months.

**2026/64.** To conduct a periodic review of the Minehead Town Council Public Interest Report Action Plan, as discussed at the December 2025 Full Council meeting (*Minute Number 2025/15*).

Council conducted a periodic review of the Minehead Town Council Public Interest Report (PIR) Action Plan, as previously discussed at the December 2025 Full Council meeting.

It was noted that following an objection to the Council's 2022/23 accounts, the external auditor issued recommendations which led to the adoption of the PIR Action Plan. The review reaffirmed the purpose of the Action Plan as the Council's formal mechanism for responding to and evidencing compliance with the auditor's recommendations, and for embedding strengthened governance, financial controls and decision-making arrangements.

Members acknowledged that the Action Plan provides an important assurance framework, demonstrating both implementation and ongoing monitoring of the auditor's recommendations. It was agreed that the Action Plan should continue to be reviewed annually, ideally in advance of the external audit, to ensure continued compliance, adherence to adopted procedures and the ability to evidence good governance and proper administrative practice.

**2026/65.** To receive and consider a sponsorship proposal from Minehead Coast and Development Trust for the Minehead Bay Festival on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2026. (*Decision deferred in March's Full Council meeting pending a further meeting with organisers and councillors which has now taken place*)

*Councillor Kravis declared a personal interest in this item. He remained in the meeting, spoke on the item, but did not vote.*

Councillors considered a sponsorship proposal from Minehead Coast and Development Trust for the Minehead Bay Festival to be held on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2026. It was noted that the matter had previously been considered at the March Full Council meeting and deferred pending further information from the organisers and a follow-up meeting with councillors, which took place in early April.

It was reported that councillors had raised a number of questions at the follow-up meeting, which were addressed by the organisers. Members discussed the event and acknowledged that it offered a wide range of entertainment throughout the day and that events of this nature are generally beneficial to the town and deserving of support.

The Clerk confirmed that sponsorship of the event was permissible under Section 145(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**RESOLVED** with one abstention that Minehead Town Council pledge £2,500 in sponsorship to the Minehead Bay Festival 2026 and participate as a Festival Partner.

**2026/66.** To consider an application from the 1st Exmoor Scout Group to use an area of unused land off Staunton Road, located behind the Harepark allotments, for scouting and associated outdoor activities.

*Councillor Bonar declared an interest in this item. He remained in the meeting, spoke on the matter and did not vote.*

Council considered a proposal from the 1st Exmoor Scout Group to use the vacant, council-owned field off Staunton Road, Alcombe, for low-impact, community-focused activities. The proposal outlined nature-based use of the land, including native tree planting, a wilderness garden, small-scale food growing and limited camping associated with scouting activities. The Scouts described benefits for young people, the wider community, and biodiversity, and confirmed that adjacent residents had been consulted and were supportive.

It was noted that the proposal included a 3–5 year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under which the Scout Group would take full responsibility for maintenance of the site at no cost to the Council, with provision for annual review and reinstatement of the land should the agreement end. Risks relating to neighbouring properties, fire safety, environmental impact and site security were identified, with appropriate mitigation measures proposed.

Questions were raised regarding toilet provision, which was confirmed as a chemical toilet to be emptied off-site and regarding campfires and associated health and safety considerations. It was confirmed that any fires would be very small and subject to appropriate management controls.

The Clerk advised that a draft Memorandum of Understanding would be prepared and circulated digitally to councillors for approval by a quorate number of members prior to issue.

**RESOLVED** with one abstention that the proposal from the 1st Exmoor Scout Group be approved in principle, subject to the preparation and approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Scout Group.

**2026/67.** To consider an application from Leigh Danter & Sons to hold an autumn funfair at Marsh Common from Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September to Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2026, with site setup and breakdown from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September to Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2026.

Council considered an application from Leigh Danter & Sons to hold the Autumn Funfair at Marsh Common from Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September to Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2026, with site set-up and breakdown taking place from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September to Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2026.

The Town Clerk reported that the 2025 event represented the most successful year to date in terms of the timely submission of all required safety and compliance documentation. Members were advised that the amended entrance and exit arrangements, routing access via Seaward Way, had operated more effectively and resulted in no complaints from residents at the lower end of Marshfield, demonstrating an improvement on previous years' arrangements.

**RESOLVED** that Leigh Danter & Sons be invited to hold the Autumn Funfair at Marsh Common in September 2026, subject to the usual conditions and satisfactory completion of all safety and compliance requirements.

**2026/68.** To note the settlement of a historic insurance matter relating to Amenities Team machinery and to consider delegating authority to the Clerk to procure necessary replacement equipment.

The Clerk advised that a long-running insurance claim submitted by Minehead Town Council had now been concluded, with a settlement figure of £11,054.16 agreed. It was explained that the settlement funds are required for the replacement of machinery, particularly equipment to support operations.

**RESOLVED** that authority be delegated to the Clerk to use the insurance settlement of £11,054.16 for the replacement of appropriate machinery.

**2026/69.** To receive a further update on fleet management following discussion at the March Full Council meeting. (*Minute number 2026/43*)

The Clerk provided an update on the Council's fleet vehicles. Since the last meeting, the amenities tractor had broken down and been taken to a workshop for assessment of the required repairs. The Clerk advised that the loss of the tractor had placed additional pressure on an already reduced fleet.

Members were further advised that arrangements were being finalised for the Council's Goupil electric vehicles to be returned to the workshop for full diagnostics, to establish the nature of the faults and associated costs, after which a decision on repair or replacement would take place.

Given the number of vehicles currently out of service and the operational need for pick-up vehicles during the summer period, the Clerk confirmed that a review of the fleet was underway. It was proposed that, rather than replacing the panel van that had been deemed beyond economical repair on a like-for-like basis, a small tipper pick-up vehicle be purchased to maintain service delivery. It was also noted that the panel van would be advertised locally as available for spares or repair.

The update on the Goupil electric vehicle diagnostics; the intention to purchase a small tipper pick-up vehicle to maintain operational capacity; and that the panel van will be advertised locally for spares or repair, were **noted**.

**RESOLVED** that delegated authority be granted to the Clerk to progress and authorise the necessary repairs to the amenities tractor as required.



**2026/70.** To receive and note the annual report for the SALC funded enhanced youth worker role at Minehead Eye.

The annual report for the SALC-funded enhanced Youth Worker role at Minehead Eye was received by Members. It was noted that the service had been highly valued during its first 12 months of operation, particularly in light of the local tragedy that occurred over the summer.

Members were reminded that the role was funded in its first year by a £35,000 grant from SALC, and that, in accordance with the funding agreement, the second year is to be part-funded by Minehead Town Council, Minehead Eye and the Living Better Project.

The update was **noted**.

**2026/71.** To receive and note the final report from Citizens Advice West Somerset and to receive an update from the clerk regarding their scheduled closure at the end of April.

Citizens Advice West Somerset had circulated an update covering the final quarter of the last financial year, which was **noted**.

The Clerk provided a further update following the announcement that Citizens Advice West Somerset will close at the end of April. It was noted that while Members had previously expressed an interest in offering additional financial support to help sustain the service, CAWS had advised that they were unable to accept further funding for governance and viability reasons. Members noted CAWS's explanation of its grant-dependent funding model and its gratitude for the Council's support.

It was further noted that contact has been made with Citizens Advice Somerset, who will provide the service locally going forward, and that an initial meeting has been arranged between the Clerk their Chief Executive to explore options for maintaining a Citizens Advice presence in Minehead.

Councillors expressed their disappointment at the loss of Citizens Advice West Somerset and their hope that Citizens Advice Somerset will be able to meet local needs.

**2026/72.** To receive and note an update on the installation of photovoltaic (PV) panels and a controlled-temperature system at the Community Building, funded through a Section 106 developer contribution linked to planning application 3/21/13/084 (Ellicombe Meadow).

Council received and noted an update on the installation of photovoltaic (PV) panels and a controlled-temperature system at the Community Building, funded through a Section 106 contribution linked to the Ellicombe Meadow development. It was noted that the installation has been completed and remained within the approved budget.

Members noted that additional battery storage will be required to maximise the effectiveness of the system, including overnight use and that further administrative steps are needed to enable the resale of surplus energy. It was also noted that the air-conditioning is expected to increase use of the Community Building during the summer months by improving comfort and accessibility.

**2026/73.** To receive an update on Minehead Town Council's Community Engagement Events and to consider and approve the dates for the 2026/27 municipal year.

Council received an update on the Community Engagement Events and considered dates for the 2026/27 municipal year. It was noted that events would take place on a roughly quarterly basis,

held on Tuesday evenings at 7.30 pm. Attendance levels were noted as remaining modest, with increasing involvement from local community groups, resulting in a more community-led format.

Councillors acknowledged the value of the events as a community engagement tool and noted the importance of keeping their format under review.

**RESOLVED** the 2026/27 dates for the community Engagement events were approved.

The meeting closed at 21:53

Councillor Craig Palmer  
Minehead Town Council Chair  
April 2026.