



## MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes from the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting of Minehead Town Council  
held on  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 7.30 pm at  
The Town Council Offices, 3 Summerland Road, Minehead, TA24 5BP

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.

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

**Apologies:** Councillors Beynon and Hall

**In attendance:** B Parker (Town Clerk) J Chapman (Deputy Clerk & RFO)

**2026/17.** To receive apologies for absence.

Councillors Beynon and Hall's apologies for absence were **received**.

**2026/18.** To receive disclosures of unregistered or other interests from councillors on matters to be considered at the Meeting.

Councillor Kravis declared a standing interest as a Somerset Councillor and a personal interest in Agenda Item 8 (*Minute No. 2026/24*). He remained in the room, spoke on the item, but did not vote.

**2026/19.** To Approve and Sign Minutes of the [Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026](#).

**RESOLVED** the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026 were approved and signed by the committee chair as a true and accurate record.

**2026/20.** Accounts

- i. To approve the following payments over £800:
  - Payment of **£1,125.60** inc. VAT to Rialtas for the financial year end 2026 support.

**RESOLVED** the payment of £1,125.60 inc. VAT was approved.

- ii. To receive payments made for April.

It was noted that some of the payment descriptions may be unclear to members of the public, particularly where references such as Section 106 are included, as these may appear to indicate purchases rather than funding received. It was confirmed that efforts will be made to amend the descriptions to ensure they are clearer and more easily understood.

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

- iii. To receive budget, income & expenditure reports for April.

The budget, income & expenditure reports for April were **received**.

- iv. To receive Income receipts for April.

The Income receipts for April were **received**.

**2026/21.** To receive an update from the Deputy Clerk on the implementation of the new accounting software.

The Deputy Clerk gave an update on the transition to the new accounting software. April's accounts have not yet been fully balanced, as further action is awaited by scribe to complete this process. It was noted that, despite the Council paying for the system setup, some elements have still required manual input by staff. A benefit of the new system is that it is cloud-based and will allow councillors read-only access. As with any new system, some initial teething problems have been experienced, but these are expected to be resolved shortly.

Councillors commented that the reports received to date were improved and easier to read.

**2026/22.** To discuss the process by which councillors will undertake the review of earmarked reserves and to agree a timetable for its completion.

As part of the budget-setting process for the current financial year, Council agreed to undertake a full review of the Council's earmarked reserves. The Clerk advised that, to support this, it would be helpful to agree both the method and timescale for completing the review and reporting recommendations to Council.

Members noted that the review would include a detailed examination of existing earmarked reserves to determine whether they remain appropriate; consideration of whether any new earmarked reserves should be established and identification of the funding levels required for each reserve, including anticipated project timescales. The Clerk recommended for the outcome of the review to be presented to Council as a single guidance document, setting out each earmarked reserve, its purpose, proposed funding levels (including any annual contributions required at budget setting) and indicative project start dates.

Members discussed whether the review should be retained as a standing agenda item or undertaken at a dedicated meeting and considered the appropriate timing for completing the review and reporting back to Council.

**RESOLVED** that the July 2026 Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting be dedicated to carrying out a full review of the Council's earmarked reserves.

**2026/23.** To discuss the approach councillors will take to review the Council's fees and charges for the 2026/27 financial year.

Members considered the approach for reviewing the Council's fees and charges for the 2026/27 financial year. The Clerk advised that the review would need to be completed in advance of setting the 2027/28 budget to ensure that projected income levels could be accurately reflected.

It was noted that the review should consider existing fees and charges, whether they remain appropriate and cost-reflective, and whether any new fees or amendments should be proposed. Members discussed how the review should be progressed and the appropriate timing for reporting recommendations to Council.

Members agreed that, although fees and charges form an important part of the budget-setting process, it would be more appropriate to first review and develop Council priorities and earmarked reserves, with the fees and charges review taking place later in the year.

**RESOLVED** that the review of the Council's fees and charges for the 2027/28 financial year be undertaken on or by the September meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

**2026/24.** To consider and agree the development of a Town Council Priorities document.

The Committee received a report on a draft Priorities & Direction document for Minehead Town Council. Members noted that the Council currently operates under a broad guiding document and that a new draft had been developed to provide clearer, more structured guidance to support decision-making, service delivery and longer-term planning, in line with good governance practice.

It was noted that the document is intended to be realistic and achievable, setting out what the Council seeks to achieve and the rationale for doing so, and to act as a practical reference point for Members and officers. The Town Clerk confirmed that the draft had been prepared based on previous Council discussions, decisions and emerging service responsibilities.

Members were advised that the document was presented for initial consideration and feedback, rather than as a final strategy, and were asked to consider whether it broadly reflects the Council's intended direction and to agree the next steps.

**RESOLVED** that councillors will meet informally on 2<sup>nd</sup> June at 7:30 p.m. in The Council Offices to discuss the development of the Priorities & Direction document and to consider further feedback prior to further progression.

**2026/25.** To discuss ongoing concerns raised by the Bowling Club at Irnham Recreation Ground and to consider applying for Section 106 funding for additional equipment to help address anti-social behaviour.

The Clerk reported that concerns continue to be raised regarding ongoing antisocial behaviour at Irnham Recreation Ground. Members noted issues raised by the Bowling Club relating to footballs being kicked into the bowling green, caused by the toilet block being used as a goal, as well as footballs being kicked against the wall of the indoor courts. The Amenities Team has also reported persistent incidents of antisocial behaviour, including smashed glass and littering in and around the play area.

The Clerk outlined possible measures to address these issues, including submitting a Section 106 funding application for the installation of a football goal fence; providing additional benches within the play area to support parental supervision; and obtaining quotations for the installation of a CCTV camera at the Community Centre to cover the play area, with suitable zoom and night-vision capability. It was noted that CCTV installation is unlikely to be eligible for Section 106 funding and would therefore require Council funding.

Members were asked to indicate whether officers should proceed with developing a Section 106 application proposal and obtaining CCTV quotations, or whether an alternative approach was preferred.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk prepares a proposal document setting out recommended actions, costs and proposed funding sources, for consideration by Full Council.

**2026/26.** To consider the purchase of promotional space in The Word Gets Around magazine.

The Committee received the Word Gets Around media pack and considered whether the publication should be used as a platform to promote the Council and its work. Members discussed the potential reach of the magazine and noted some uncertainty regarding readership levels; however, it was also acknowledged that the magazine is delivered directly to households and may reach residents who do not engage with other communication channels, such as social media.

**RESOLVED** by majority to commit to the purchase of a full-page advertisement; that the Clerk drafts proposed content for the page and that approval of the final content be obtained via a quorate digital vote of the Committee prior to publication.

**2026/27.** To consider hosting a nature event at Ellicombe Open Space in partnership with the National Trust in September 2026.

The Clerk reported on ongoing discussions with officers from the National Trust regarding a potential joint project to enhance environmental and community opportunities at Ellicombe Open Space. Members noted that a draft proposal has been developed involving the planting of a small number of National Trust grafted fruit trees, primarily apple and pear varieties. It is envisaged that the planting would take place as part of a community-focused event in September, incorporating activities such as community tree planting, forest-school sessions and other engagement opportunities.

It was noted that the majority of project costs are likely to be met through a grant awarded to the National Trust, although a small financial contribution may be required from Minehead Town Council. The National Trust would lead on community engagement, including consultation with residents of the nearby Mallard Road estate, to explore opportunities for local involvement and the potential for a longer-term community legacy at the site.

Members also noted that the proposal includes the possibility of a name change for the site, with a suggestion that this could be progressed through a naming competition involving local schools.

Councillors considered whether they were supportive of the proposed project and whether the Clerk should continue to work with the National Trust towards delivery.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee supports the proposed community nature event and associated tree planting at Ellicombe Open Space, and that the Clerk continues to work with the National Trust to progress the project.

**2026/28.** To receive and note a progress update on the recruitment process for existing vacant posts.

The Clerk reported that the posts of Head of Amenities and Assets and Administration Officer had been advertised both locally and online. A good number of applications had been received for both roles, and the Staffing Sub-Committee was scheduled to meet the following day to shortlist candidates, with interviews anticipated to take place shortly thereafter. The update was **noted**.

The meeting closed at 21:08

Councillor Bill Hodson  
Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee  
May 2026