



Minutes from the Full Council Meeting of Minehead Town Council

held on

Tuesday 28th July 2026 at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Building, Irnham Road, Minehead TA24 5DW

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

Apologies: Councillor Bonar

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

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 expressed their appreciation for the floral displays throughout the town, commenting on how attractive and well-maintained they are. They asked that their thanks be passed on to the Town Council's Amenities Team for their efforts, noting that the displays are greatly appreciated by both residents and visitors.

2026/108. To receive Apologies for Absence [LGA 1972 s 85 \(1\)](#)

Councillor Bonar's apologies for absence were received.

2026/109. To receive disclosures of unregistered or other interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting [Localism Act 2011 S 26 - 34](#)

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.

2026/110. To receive reports from Somerset Councillors and the Local Policing Team.

There were no members of the Local Policing Team present.

Somerset Councillor Chilcott gave the following updates:

- Somerset Councillors may submit motions for consideration by Somerset Council. These are debated at Full Council and, where approved, can influence Council policy and practice. Recent examples included a motion to maximise take-up of Pupil Premium funding by moving eligible families to an opt-out rather than opt-in system, which was approved by Council. Other motions considered included improving financial management and accountability through the provision of periodic process reports to the Audit Committee, supported by an annual summary report and strengthening planning enforcement to ensure a consistent and fair approach to addressing planning breaches and their impact on local communities. Some motions were carried, while others were not approved.
- At the most recent Full Council meeting, it was reported that Somerset Council had been issued with a Best Value Notice. Councillor Chilcott explained that this is a formal notification from Government expressing concerns regarding the Council's ability to fulfil its Best Value duty to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised. The notice highlights the

seriousness of the Council's current position and the need to demonstrate improvements in governance, performance and financial management.

Somerset Councillor Hadley gave the following updates:

- Somerset Council's programme of commercial property sales is currently forecast to result in an estimated loss of £90 million.
- The Council's debt has exceeded £1 billion and is expected to increase slightly before reducing. Annual repayments and interest costs are understood to be in the region of £50 million; however, the overall borrowing remains within recommended limits.
- The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has rated Somerset Council's Adult Social Care service as "Requires Improvement". Children's Services have also been downgraded to "Requires Improvement", although services for care leavers continue to be rated as "Good".
- Planning performance remains a concern, with delays in decision-making continuing and a number of planning enforcement investigations still outstanding.
- An application has been submitted relating to the Hopcott Road housing development to vary the Section 106 Agreement. Details are available on the [Somerset Council website](#). The matter is currently scheduled to be determined under delegated officer powers; however, Councillors Hadley and Chilcott have both requested that the application be called in for committee consideration. An independent viability assessment is still awaited.
- Somerset Council has appointed a new Chief Finance Officer.
- A Harbour Board meeting was held the previous day, attended by a number of representatives from the Minehead and West Somerset area. Work is continuing on the development of a business plan for Somerset's harbours and ports.

Somerset Councillor Kravis gave the following updates:

- Expressed concern regarding the asset sales, taking the view that the disposals may not be in the Council's long-term interests. However, he noted that the action was being undertaken in response to a Government directive.
- Supports the free school meals opt out motion recently approved at Full Council.
- Reminded attendees that Somerset Council Full Council meetings include a public session, which provides members of the community with an opportunity to ask questions and have their voices heard.

2026/111. To receive reports from councillors, advisory groups and outside bodies.

Cllr C Palmer reported on the South West in Bloom judges' visit to Minehead in July. He considered the visit to have been successful and noted that the results will be announced in October.

2026/112. To approve and sign the [Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 16th June 2026](#).
LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41

RESOLVED the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 16th June 2026 were approved and signed by the chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

2026/113. To receive the [Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Tuesday 14th July 2026](#).

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Tuesday 14th July 2026 were **received**.

2026/114. To receive the [Minutes of the Planning & Licencing Committee meeting held on Tuesday 7th July 2026](#).

The minutes of the Planning & Licencing Committee meeting held on Tuesday 7th July 2026 were **received**.

2026/115. Accounts *Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015*

- i. To approve the following payments:
 - Payment of **£3,708.00 inc. VAT** to Complete Weed Control for the supply and application of herbicide to pavements and associated kerbs in Minehead. (*Targeted street weed control strategy discussed and approved at December 2025's Full Council Meeting; Minute Number 2025/216*)
 - Payment of **£6,484.21 inc. VAT** to Festive Lighting Co. Ltd for the 40% instalment towards the rental and installation of the 2026 Christmas lighting displays. (*Contractor was appointed to deliver the town's Christmas lighting scheme by Full Council in June 2026 Minute Number 2026/103*)
 - Payment of **£6,703.92 inc. VAT** to Bristol City Council for the supply and delivery of the towns summer floral displays.

A question was raised regarding the delivery costs associated with the flower order from Bristol City Council. The Clerk advised that delivery charges had been included in the overall cost and that, as Minehead Town Council had placed a smaller order, it did not meet the threshold for free delivery. It was suggested that collecting the flowers directly might be more cost-effective; however, the Clerk advised that this would be unlikely and could result in higher overall costs once travel and collection expenses were taken into account.

RESOLVED by majority, the payment of £3,708.00 inc. VAT were approved.

RESOLVED the payment of £6,484.21 inc. VAT were approved.

RESOLVED the payment of £6,703.92 inc. VAT were approved.

- ii. To receive Payments made in June.

The payments made in June were **received**.

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

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

- iv. To receive income receipts for June.

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

- v. To receive bank reconciliations for June.

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

2026/116. To consider applications for the co-option of Councillors to the Periton & Woodcombe and to the Minehead North Ward of Minehead Town Council **LGA 1972 S 87 & Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) Rules 2006 r 5**

The Council considered applications for co-option from two members of the public. Both candidates addressed Members, outlining their reasons for wishing to join Minehead Town Council.

Following the presentations, Members voted to suspend Standing Orders. The candidates and members of the public were then asked to leave the meeting to allow Members to discuss the applications and determine the matter by vote.

Upon completion of the vote, the candidates and members of the public were invited to return to the meeting. Members then voted to reinstate Standing Orders.

RESOLVED that Mr Adrian Basketfield be co-opted to Minehead Town Council to represent Periton and Woodcombe Ward, and that Ms Mandy Jeffery be co-opted to Minehead Town Council to represent Minehead North Ward.

Following the completion of their Declarations of Acceptance of Office, which were duly signed and witnessed by the Clerk as Proper Officer of the Council, the newly co-opted Members took their seats and joined the meeting as Councillors.

2026/117. To receive the vehicle workshop appraisals following diagnostic works to amenities vehicles and to consider the appropriate next steps. [LGA 1972 S 111](#)

Following completion of the diagnostic assessments of the Amenities vehicles, quotations were obtained for the required repair works. Members were provided in advance of the meeting with copies of the diagnostic reports, quotations and the Clerk's subsequent enquiries to the workshops, together with the responses received.

Members considered the quotations received for the two vehicles. The quotation for the first vehicle totalled £2,609.88 inc. VAT and was considered sufficiently comprehensive to provide confidence that the vehicle would be returned to full working order. The quotation for the second vehicle totalled £2,760.77 inc. VAT; however, there remained some uncertainty regarding the full extent of the repairs required, with the possibility that additional faults, including a battery replacement, could be identified once works commenced.

The Clerk advised that the reduced availability of the fleet was having a significant impact on service delivery. Despite these challenges, the Amenities Team had continued to maintain services to a high standard.

It was proposed and seconded that authority be delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor, to determine whether the repair works should proceed and, if so, to commission the necessary works.

RESOLVED by majority that authority be delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor, to determine whether to proceed with the repair works and to commission the necessary works as appropriate.

The Clerk advised that, based on the information available, he was minded to proceed with the recommended repairs. It was anticipated that the works would resolve the issues affecting the first vehicle, and there was optimism that the identified repairs to the second vehicle would similarly return it to service. Members were further advised that, once the vehicles had been repaired and returned to operation, a comprehensive review of the Council's fleet would need to be undertaken, with a view to establishing a proactive vehicle replacement programme.

2026/118. To receive and consider a request for the installation of a "Letters to a Loved One" letterbox at the seafront or in Blenheim Gardens.

The Clerk advised Members that a local funeral director had approached the Council with a proposal to install a "Letters to a Loved One" post box, providing a means for individuals to commemorate and maintain a connection with the memory of a loved one.

Details of the proposal had been circulated with the agenda. Members were advised that the Town Council's involvement would be limited to granting permission for the use of Council land and agreeing a suitable location. The funeral director would be responsible for all costs associated with the installation, maintenance, operation and management of the scheme.

Whilst several potential locations had been identified, Blenheim Gardens was the preferred location. Members also considered whether the proposal would be appropriate within a conservation area and whether the installation could be considered intrusive.

Members discussed the proposal and questioned the suitability of locations such as Blenheim Gardens and the Seafront. It was suggested that a cemetery setting may be more appropriate and a proposal was put

forward that the post box be located within the cemetery. As the proposal was not seconded, no vote was taken.

Further discussion took place regarding the suitability of Blenheim Gardens, with some Members considering it to be an appropriate location, subject to any necessary permissions being obtained. Members also expressed the view that the initiative would be more appropriate if delivered collaboratively by local funeral directors rather than a single business.

It was proposed and seconded that, subject to the initiative being delivered as a collaborative project involving local funeral directors, approval in principle be given for the installation of a "Letters to a Loved One" post box within Blenheim Gardens, with the exact location to be determined and subject to any necessary planning and regulatory consents.

RESOLVED by majority that, subject to the initiative being delivered as a collaborative project involving local funeral directors, approval in principle be given for the installation of a "Letters to a Loved One" post box within Blenheim Gardens, with the exact location to be agreed and subject to all necessary permissions and consents being obtained.

2026/119. To receive a letter from the freeholder outlining repairs carried out to the rear of the offices and to consider the request for payment. [*LGA 1972 S 111*](#)

Members were advised that, following the freeholder's appointment of a contractor to undertake minor works to the freeholder's section of the building, a more significant defect had been identified in the roof of the rear extension of the building.

Owing to the nature and urgency of the issue, and during a period when the Clerk was absent, the necessary remedial works were authorised and subsequently completed. A letter from the freeholder outlining the circumstances, detailing the works undertaken and enclosing an invoice for £3,985.00, had been circulated with the agenda for Members' consideration.

Members discussed the matter in detail, including the respective liabilities of the freeholder and the Town Council. Concerns were also raised regarding the Council's legal position and its ability to determine liability based on the information currently available.

It was proposed and seconded that the matter be referred to the Council's solicitors for advice. Upon being put to the vote, the motion was not carried.

It was then proposed and seconded that the Clerk be authorised to seek an amicable resolution with the freeholder and prepare a draft response on behalf of the Council.

RESOLVED that the Clerk be authorised to seek an amicable resolution with the freeholder and prepare a draft response, with any proposed settlement and correspondence to be subject to the approval of a quorate number of councillors before being issued.

2026/120. To confirm the retention of Per Pro Services Ltd as the Council's Independent Internal Auditor for the 2026/27 financial year, including the provision of both mid-year and end-of-year internal audit reviews. [*Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 Regulation 5 \(1\)*](#)

Councillor Jewell left the meeting at 20:56

Following completion of the most recent Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), the Clerk advised that it was an appropriate time for the Council to consider arrangements for internal audit services for the forthcoming financial year.

The Clerk reported that Per Pro Services had been appointed as the Council's Internal Auditor for several years and had consistently provided a thorough and constructive assessment of the Council's governance,

financial management and internal controls. The Clerk noted that the support and recommendations provided through the internal audit process had assisted the Council in strengthening its governance arrangements and improving its financial resilience.

In addition to undertaking the formal internal audit function, Per Pro Services had provided advice and support throughout the year when required. The Clerk further confirmed that the auditor met the independence and competency requirements prescribed for local council internal auditors.

Members were asked to consider retaining the services of Per Pro Services for the forthcoming year, including both interim and year-end internal audit reviews.

RESOLVED that Per Pro Services Ltd be reappointed as the Council's Independent Internal Auditor for the 2026/27 financial year, to undertake the Council's mid-year and year-end internal audit reviews and provide associated internal audit services as required.

2026/121. To consider contributing 50% of the cost of installing a public access defibrillator on the Bandstand in Blenheim Gardens in partnership with the Minehead Community Defib Group. *Public Health Act 1936 S 234*

Councillor Jewell returned at 20:57

The Clerk presented a proposal for the installation of a public access defibrillator at the bandstand in Blenheim Gardens. Members were advised that the Minehead Community Defib Group had identified the Gardens as a suitable location and was supportive of a partnership approach to the project.

Members noted that the Town Council and the Minehead Community Defib Group would each contribute 50% of the installation costs, with ownership, insurance, maintenance, inspections and ongoing management of the unit to be undertaken by the Defib Group. Provision existed within the Blenheim Gardens budget to fund the Council's contribution.

RESOLVED that the Town Council approve a 50% contribution towards the installation of a public access defibrillator at the bandstand in Blenheim Gardens, with the remaining costs and all ongoing responsibilities to be met by the Minehead Community Defib Group.

2026/122. Training and Professional Development

- i. To consider financially supporting the Town Clerk's enrolment on the Community Governance Degree programme and to approve the associated training expenditure.

The Clerk presented a report on the SLCC Community Governance Level 4 Qualification and advised that, following completion of the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA), this represented the next stage of professional development available specifically for local council officers. Members were advised that the qualification would further develop knowledge and expertise in areas including governance, finance, law, asset management and community leadership.

The anticipated benefits to the Council, including enhanced in-house expertise, strengthened governance arrangements, reduced reliance on external advice and the opportunity to apply learning directly to Council projects and priorities, were outlined.

Members noted that the total course cost would be £8,000 over two years, with a £400 deposit required to secure a place on the February 2027 intake. It was further noted that a training agreement would be entered into to protect the Council's financial investment.

During discussion, it was suggested that the Council complete its current recruitment process before committing to the qualification.

It was proposed and seconded that the Council financially support the Town Clerk's enrolment on the SLCC Community Governance Degree programme and approve the associated expenditure, subject to an appropriate training agreement being put in place.

RESOLVED that the Town Council support the Town Clerk's enrolment on the SLCC Community Governance Degree programme and approve the associated training expenditure, including payment of the required deposit, subject to an appropriate Learning Agreement being entered into to protect the Council's financial investment.

Following the resolution, the Learning Agreement was executed by the Chair on behalf of the Council and by the Clerk in acknowledgement of the terms and conditions attached to the training support.

- ii. To note the Deputy Clerk is due to commence CiLCA training in September.

Councillors noted that the Deputy Clerk had enrolled on the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) and was due to commence the qualification in September. The Deputy Clerk had elected to self-fund the course. The Clerk recommended that consideration be given to granting study leave, if required, to support completion of the qualification. Members welcomed this commitment to professional development. The update was **noted**.

2026/123. To consider and approve quotations for footpath safety works at Blenheim Gardens, Parks Walk and Minehead Cemetery.

Members received a report prepared by the Deputy Clerk and RFO regarding the condition of pedestrian paths across a number of Council-owned open spaces, including Blenheim Gardens, The Parks and Minehead Cemetery. The report highlighted a number of areas where surfaces had deteriorated and identified priority repairs required to address safety concerns and reduce future maintenance liabilities.

Members considered the Deputy Clerk's recommendations for a phased programme of repairs, together with associated quotations and funding options. It was noted that investment in priority works would improve public safety, protect Council assets and help reduce the risk of future claims and more extensive repair costs.

During discussion, Members highlighted the difficulties experienced by those with mobility and accessibility issues when crossing the cobbled bridge on Parks Walk. It was suggested that, rather than replacing the existing cobbled surface, the bridge could be resurfaced entirely. Members also questioned whether the proposed drainage works were required as an immediate priority and considered whether these works could be deferred.

Concerns were raised regarding the impact of any alterations to the bridge on the character of The Parks. However, Members acknowledged that accessibility and safety considerations arising from the condition of the surface outweighed concerns regarding the impact of any alterations on the character of The Parks. Members discussed the potential use of alternative materials, including concrete, and considered whether such options may prove more cost-effective and less complex to deliver. It was also suggested that additional detail regarding the scope of works included within each quotation would assist Members in reaching an informed decision.

It was proposed and seconded that further information be obtained, including a breakdown of the quotations and consideration of alternative materials for the bridge surface.

RESOLVED that consideration of the proposed works be deferred pending receipt of further information, including a detailed breakdown of the quotations and an assessment of alternative materials for the bridge surface at Parks Walk.

2026/124. To receive a report on the Cycle to Work Scheme and to consider adopting a defined method for its provision to employees.

Members received a report prepared by the Deputy Clerk and RFO regarding the introduction of a Cycle to Work Scheme for Town Council employees. The report outlined the available options and recommended joining the Halfords Cycle2Work scheme, which would provide employees with access to bicycles and associated equipment through a salary sacrifice arrangement.

Members enquired whether alternative providers had been considered and were advised that the proposed scheme offered the most suitable range of options and represented the preferred provider. Clarification was also sought regarding the level of additional administration that would be required of the Council.

It was proposed and seconded that the Council approve the introduction of a Cycle to Work Scheme in principle and that officers prepare a draft policy for consideration at the next meeting of the Council, including proposed eligibility criteria, expenditure limits and operational arrangements.

RESOLVED by majority that the introduction of a Cycle to Work Scheme be approved in principle and that officers prepare a draft policy, including proposed eligibility criteria, expenditure limits and operational arrangements, for consideration at the next Full Council meeting.

2026/125. To receive an update on the MMS Stronger Together SALC-funded Health and Wellbeing Project and to consider granting delegated authority to the Clerk to pay project-related invoices from the grant fund. *LGA 1972 S 137*

Members received an update from the Clerk on the delivery of the Stronger Together Project, funded through the SALC Health and Wellbeing Grant. The project had been developed in partnership with Minehead Middle School to provide positive activities and wellbeing support for pupils during the summer holidays.

The Clerk advised that, since publication of the agenda, the originally proposed cinema element of the project had required amendment as the cinema operators were unable to support an additional scheme during the summer period due to existing commitments. Alternative options had therefore been explored and a revised arrangement had been agreed with Butlin's, which would provide child day passes at a significantly reduced rate, enabling the project objectives to be achieved whilst remaining within the approved budget.

Members noted that the Minehead Eye would continue to form part of the project and that all expenditure would be funded from the existing SALC Health and Wellbeing Grant allocation.

Members noted the update.

RESOLVED that authority be delegated to the Clerk to settle invoices and make any associated payments required for the delivery of the Stronger Together Project, provided that all expenditure remains within the approved SALC Health and Wellbeing Grant allocation.

2026/126. To Co-opt Councillor Jewell on to the Planning and Licencing Committee.

In accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference, appointments of new Members to committees must be approved by Full Council.

RESOLVED that Councillor Jewell be appointed to the Planning and Licensing Committee.

2026/127. To note the completion of Councillors' quarterly spot checks of the Council's accounts and financial records.

Councillors M. Palmer and Lawton reported that they had recently undertaken the quarterly spot checks of the Council's accounts in accordance with the Council's financial controls. The Chair thanked both Councillors for their time and assistance in carrying out the review. The update was **noted**.

2026/128. To resolve to exclude members of the press and public in order to consider matters relating to current staff vacancies at Minehead Town Council. *Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960*

The Chair advised that, due to the confidential nature of the business relating to current staff vacancies, it was necessary for the Council to consider the matter in private session. Members therefore considered a motion to exclude the press and public.

RESOLVED that, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of matters relating to current staff vacancies at Minehead Town Council.

2026/129. To receive an update on current staff vacancies and resolve any actions necessary to support the filling of vacant posts.

Cllr Beynon left the meeting at 21:26, at which point a temporary recess was called. The meeting reconvened at 21:31.

Members received a confidential report regarding the recruitment of the Head of Amenities and Assets and Administration Officer posts. Members noted the outcome of the previous recruitment exercise and considered arrangements for readvertising and future appointments.

Members discussed the proposed salary ranges for the vacancies and considered the level of authority to be delegated to the Staffing Sub-Committee in relation to recruitment and appointment matters.

RESOLVED that the Head of Amenities and Assets post be readvertised with an amended salary range, and that the Staffing Sub-Committee be authorised to negotiate starting salaries within the approved salary scales for both the Head of Amenities and Assets and Administration Officer posts, where necessary to secure the most suitable candidate, with any appointments and agreed starting salaries to be reported to Full Council.

The detailed discussion and salary provisions agreed by Members are recorded within the confidential notes of this item.

The meeting closed at 21:59

Councillor C Palmer
Chair of Minehead Town Council
July 2026