



**Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting of Minehead Town Council  
held on  
Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2026 at 7:30 p.m. in the Minehead Community Centre, Irnham Road,  
Minehead TA24 5DW.**

**Present:** Councillors Jewell (Committee Chair), C Palmer, Basketfield, Hodson, Kravis, Lawton, Milton, M Palmer and Sharjeel.

**Apologies:** Councillor Bartlett, Beynon, Bonar, Hall, Jeffery and Maycock

**In attendance:** B Parker (Town Clerk) J Chapman (Deputy Clerk & RFO) and 2 members of the public

A member of the public wished to raise concerns regarding the lack of public toilet facilities within the town. It was noted that this had resulted in a number of individuals using the toilet facilities at Jubilee Café, leading to repeated drainage issues due to the volume of use. The member of the public advised that the drainage infrastructure was not designed to accommodate public usage levels and expressed the view that the provision of additional public toilets should be a priority in supporting the visitor experience.

A member of the public also raised concerns regarding rough sleeping within the seafront shelters and on benches along the seafront. It was noted that the shelters had been used by a number of individuals throughout the summer period. While acknowledging that rough sleeping is a national issue, the member of the public expressed the view that the matter was particularly noticeable in Minehead and raised concerns regarding perceptions of safety for residents and visitors.

Councillors discussed the issue of rough sleeping and acknowledged the need for partnership working with Somerset Council, as the authority with responsibility for rough sleeping and homelessness services.

*The members of the public left the meeting at 19:36.*

**2026/19.** To receive Apologies for Absence [LGA 1972 s 85 \(1\)](#)

Councillor Bartlett, Beynon, Bonar, Hall, Jeffery and Maycock apologies for absence were received.

**2026/20.** 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.

**2026/21.** To approve and sign the [Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2026.](#)

**RESOLVED** the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2026 were approved.

**2026/22.** Accounts

- i. To recommend the following payments over £3,000:
  - Payment of **£6,484.21 inc. VAT** to Festive Lighting for 40% rental and 40% installation of Christmas lights. Christmas 2026. Second invoice of three.  
(Discussed and approved at June 2026 Full Council Meeting; minute number 2026/103).

A question was raised as to whether the matter needed to be referred back to Council, given that the expenditure had already been approved. The Clerk confirmed that, while the payment could have been processed under the existing approval, the invoicing arrangement had been split across a number of invoices and it was therefore considered appropriate to bring the matter to councillors' attention in the interests of transparency.

**RESOLVED** the payment of £6,484.21 inc. VAT was recommended to Full Council for approval.

- ii. To receive payments made for August.

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

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

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

- iv. To receive income receipts for August.

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

- v. To receive bank reconciliations for August.

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

**2026/23.** To consider a quotation for the upgrade of the drainage infrastructure serving Jubilee Gardens Café.

Councillors considered a quotation obtained by the tenant for works to upgrade the drainage infrastructure serving the café. Members were advised that the tenant had raised concerns regarding the capacity of the existing drainage system, which was experiencing difficulties due to the volume of use associated with public use of the café toilets. Following a review of the lease, councillors noted that responsibility for the maintenance, repair and any required upgrades to the drainage infrastructure rested with the tenant. Councillors further noted that the lease requires the toilet facilities to be made available for public use and permits the tenant to levy a charge for their use.

Whilst acknowledging the lease position, councillors recognised the wider issues arising from the limited provision of public toilets along this section of the seafront and the pressures this places on the café facilities. Members expressed a willingness to explore a mutually beneficial solution and suggested that, should the Council consider making a contribution towards the works, assurances would be sought from the tenant regarding the continued availability of the toilets for public use.

Following discussion, it was proposed and seconded that negotiations be delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Mayor.

**RESOLVED** that negotiations regarding the drainage improvements at the café be delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Mayor.

**2026/24.** To consider the purchase of a replacement storage safe for the storage of fuel canisters.

Councillors considered a quotation for the provision of replacement fuel storage facilities at the depot. Councillors noted their responsibilities under health and safety legislation and the need to ensure that fuel was stored safely and in accordance with relevant regulations and good practice.

During discussion, councillors queried whether delivery costs could be avoided by collecting the unit directly, noting that one of the suppliers was based locally. The Clerk advised that this option could be investigated but would be dependent on the size and weight of the unit and whether suitable transport

arrangements were available. It was further noted that the supplier may offer a discount for new customers, and councillors requested that this be explored prior to purchase.

**RESOLVED** that authority be delegated to the Clerk to purchase a replacement fuel storage facility up to a value of £2,910.00, subject to investigating the feasibility of collection to reduce delivery costs and exploring any available new customer discount.

**2026/25.** To confirm the date and venue for the informal councillor session to review earmarked reserves.

Following discussion at the Committee's August meeting, councillors considered arrangements for an informal session to review the Council's earmarked reserves in advance of the budget-setting process. It was noted that the previously proposed date of 15<sup>th</sup> September coincided with a Climate Emergency briefing which a number of councillors wished to attend. The Clerk advised that the review of earmarked reserves would form an important part of the budget-setting process and should take place in sufficient time to inform the development of the Council's budget.

Councillors discussed alternative dates and meeting arrangements. It was proposed and seconded that the informal earmarked reserves review session be held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2026 at 7:00 pm at the Council Offices. It was further proposed that the Planning Committee meeting scheduled for that evening be brought forward to 6:00 pm to accommodate the session.

**RESOLVED** that an informal councillor session to review the Council's earmarked reserves be held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2026 at 7:00 pm at the Council Offices, and that the Planning Committee meeting on that date be rescheduled to commence at 6:00 pm.

**2026/26.** To agree the approach to be taken in reviewing fees and charges for the 2027/28 financial year.

During the 2025/26 budget-setting process, councillors expressed a desire to undertake a more detailed review of the Council's fees and charges prior to setting the 2027/28 budget. The Chair invited councillors to consider how this review should be undertaken and reminded members that any recommendations would need to be developed sufficiently in advance to inform the budget-setting process.

Following discussion, councillors agreed that the October meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee would be dedicated to a detailed review of the Council's fees and charges for 2027/28.

**RESOLVED** that the October 2026 meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee be dedicated to reviewing the Council's fees and charges for the 2027/28 financial year.

**2026/27.** To consider quotation for seasonal tractor mounted flail works in Town Council areas.

Councillors considered a quotation for tractor-mounted flail works to large grassed areas and hedgerows across Town Council land. Councillors noted that the contractor had undertaken these works on behalf of the Council for a number of years and had consistently provided the most economically advantageous quotation.

Councillors further noted that, whilst elements of grass cutting within rewilding areas could be undertaken by the Council's in-house Amenities Team, the use of a specialist contractor for large-scale flailing and hedge cutting remained the most efficient and cost-effective approach. The nature of the work, the extent of the areas involved, and the uneven ground conditions within certain locations were all factors considered. Councillors recognised that the contractor's specialist machinery and expertise enabled the works to be completed more efficiently and with reduced operational risk, whilst also minimising wear and tear and the potential for damage to the Council's own equipment.

**RESOLVED** to approve the quotation of £2,150.00 for the flailing of Town Council land, as detailed within the submitted quotation.

**2026/28.** To consider whether the informal car park adjacent to the Community Centre should remain available for use and, if not, to agree a phased approach for its closure and user notification.

Councillors considered the current informal parking arrangements on the site of the former grandstand at Irnham Recreation Ground, adjacent to the Community Centre. Concerns were raised regarding the continued use of the area for parking without formal designation, together with the potential loss of income to the Council's Alexandra Road Car Park following its transfer into Town Council ownership.

Councillors also considered the role the area plays in supporting users of the Community Centre and the potential impact that the removal of free parking provision may have on accessibility and use of the facility. The need to balance legal, financial and community considerations in any future decision relating to the site was acknowledged.

During discussion, councillors recognised that any decision to close the area to parking was likely to be unpopular with some users. It was noted that the parking arrangement had developed informally over time and concerns were raised that its continued use may be inconsistent with the recreational purposes for which the land was originally provided under the Luttrell estate covenants. Councillors discussed the need to regularise the position and provide users with adequate notice of any changes.

It was suggested that the informal parking area be closed, with advance notice given to users and a closure date set for 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026. Councillors also discussed the potential for the Town Council, as owner of Alexandra Road Car Park, to explore discussions with Somerset Council regarding parking fees and charges in order to support Community Centre users.

It was proposed and seconded that the informal parking area adjacent to the Community Centre be closed with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026.

**RESOLVED** that the informal parking area adjacent to the Community Centre be closed with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026.

**2026/29.** To review the current advisory groups and invite expressions of interest from councillors wishing to join them.

Following a review of the Council's current advisory groups, councillors considered the effectiveness of the existing arrangements. It was noted that a number of advisory groups had not met for some time and that councillors were often addressing issues through informal member discussions and briefings as required.

Councillors also discussed the potential future development of the Council's committee structure, particularly in service areas such as amenities, recognising that this may be more feasible once current staffing vacancies have been filled and appropriate officer support is available.

Members acknowledged the value of informal discussions in enabling councillors to explore issues, share information and develop ideas prior to formal consideration by the Council or its committees.

It was proposed and seconded that the current advisory group structure be withdrawn, with councillors continuing to engage through informal discussions, briefings and working arrangements as required and that future governance arrangements be kept under review.

**RESOLVED** by majority that the Council's current advisory group structure be discontinued, with councillors continuing to engage through informal discussions and briefings as required, and that future governance arrangements be reviewed as the Council's committee structure develops.

**2026/30.** To note the Local Government Services Pay Agreement for 2026.

Councillors noted that agreement had been reached on the 2026 national pay award for Local Government Services ("Green Book") employees.

Councillors reviewed the revised pay scales, which reflected a 3.3% increase in pay. Councillors further noted that the award would be backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026. It was acknowledged that provision for the anticipated pay award had been included within the Council's 2026/27 budget-setting process and that sufficient funds had therefore been allocated within the approved staffing budgets to accommodate the increase without requiring any additional budget provision.

The Local Government Services Pay Agreement for 2026 was **noted**.

The meeting closed at 21:20.

Councillor Ben Jewell  
Chair of The Finance and General Purposed Committee  
September 2026