



BRADNINCH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES

The Guildhall
Bradninch
Exeter, Devon

Minutes of the Bradninch Town Council Meeting
10th July 2023, 7pm, The Guildhall, Bradninch.

DRAFT minutes subject to amendment.

Present: Cllr S Crawford (Chair), Cllr E Ottery (Vice Chair), Cllr S Birley, Cllr J Blythe, Cllr S Glendinning, Cllr L Mottram, Cllr M Taylor, Cllr L Taylor, Cllr I Wild. **In attendance:** Mrs A Marshall, Clerk, and 3 members of the public.

Standing Orders suspended.

Public Open Session:

a) A member of the public asked for the speed bumps alongside the Recreation Ground to be lowered to prevent damage to vehicles. The Chairman confirmed that this matter had already been considered by the Council, the results are as follows: *Recreation and Amenities Committee meeting minutes, May 2023, A resident had asked for the speed bumps alongside the Recreation Ground to be reduced in height to avoid damage to vehicles. Following consideration it was RESOLVED not to take any action due to the complications and costs involved in reducing the bumps and as they were in place to slow vehicles down, which they do successfully, in order to protect children using the Recreation Ground and the public when using the sports facilities.*

b) The same resident commented on the terrible state of the footpath leading from the Cemetery to Hele Road and asked for the route to be made good. The Chairman reported that the hedges had now been cut back by Devon County Council (DCC), following a request from the Town Council, and that the path would be made good as soon as responsibility for it had been determined. DCC and the Duchy of Cornwall are continuing to deny responsibility for the footpath and the Town Council is continuing to push for a resolution. Once a decision has been made, plans can move forward regarding work to the footpath.

c) A second member of the public spoke about the Council's new website and stated his disappointment in finding that information from local organisations had been deleted, including that relating to the Hele Society. The Chairman confirmed that the new website continues to be 'work in progress' and asked for users to bear with the ongoing work. Once members of the Council had completed the website training current content could be updated and additional content could be added. Links to the Hele Society information from the old website would be sent to the resident. The broken email link from within the new website would be addressed.

Police Matters: Cllr Crawford had made contact with PC Legg and would meet with him shortly to discuss local matters. Local on-line crime data remains unavailable currently.

News from Devon County Council and Mid Devon District Council: Reports and newsletters circulated.

Town Mayor: Report circulated. Cllr Crawford would book two Mayor's coffee morning's at the Guildhall and a quiz night at the Cricket Club, dates would be advised in due course.

Standing Orders reinstated.

23/50 Apologies for absence: Received and accepted from Cllr Chambers, family matter, Cllrs Lawson and Andrews, work commitments.

23/51 Declarations of Interest relating to items on this agenda: None reported at this time.

23/52 Confirmation of Minutes: It was RESOLVED to sign the meeting minutes of the Full Council meeting of 12th June 2023 and the Finance Committee meeting of 11th April 2023 as correct records.

23/53 Finance:

a) Bank balance – noted as being £41,203.64 as at 30th June 2023.

b) Clerk's overtime – RESOLVED to award the Clerk 5 hours overtime in connection with setting up the new SCRIBE accounting system.

c) Pension scheme – noted that the Clerk had joined the Council's pension scheme from 1/4/2023.

d) Receipts and payments – the receipts for June were noted. Cllr Glendinning declared an interest in the payroll payment due to being the payroll manager. It was RESOLVED to make all payments listed for July

except for the invoice from R&R Services for weed spraying and removal. Although the spraying had taken place there were still a lot of dead weeds to be removed and as this was part of the contract, and had been noted on the invoice, the matter required investigation prior to the invoice being paid. RESOLVED that all invoice from R&R Services should go directly to the grounds maintenance contractor so that work could be checked prior to the invoice being presented to Council for payment. RESOLVED that the grounds maintenance contractor, who had sub-contracted R&R Services, would be asked to liaise with R&R services to sort out the weed removal. RESOLVED that Cllr Ottery, on behalf of the Council, would confirm to the Clerk when the weeds had been successfully cleared in order that the invoice could be paid.

e) August invoices/salaries – RESOLVED to provide delegated authority to the Clerk to pay essential invoices and salaries in August due to there being no scheduled Council meeting.

f) New SCRIBE accounting system - Cllr Glendinning provided an update on the new system and the reports shared were received positively by all present.

23/54 Planning Applications/Decisions received to the date of the meeting:

a) **23/00995/HOUSE** application – installation of front dormer to provide room in roof, erection of a bay window and porch to front elevation at 32 Townlands, Bradninch. It was RESOLVED to request a time extension for comments from MDDC to provide further consideration time.

b) **23/00899/PNAG** - prior notification for the erection of an extension to an agricultural building to cover open slurry store at Billingsmoor Farm, Burtterleigh. Prior approval not required.

c) **Tree Preservation Order 23/00003/TPO** - green space on the corner of Strathculm Road and Station Road, Bradninch. RESOLVED to submit no comment.

d) **Tree Preservation Order 23/00002/TPO** - Pottshayes, Hele. RESOLVED to submit no comment.

23/55 Communications received to the date of the meeting:

a) DCC Freedom of Information request, mobile library service. A response from MDDC had been circulated. As it was suggested that the decision to close the service had already been made, largely due to budget constraints, it was RESOLVED to take no any further action. Books are available to 'swap' at the Guildhall and information on this can be found on the Town Trust's Facebook page. Cllr Ottery would post this information on social media.

b) D-Day 80th Anniversary 6/6/2024. It was RESOLVED to consider a beacon lighting event and Cllr L Taylor volunteered to contact the farmer and Silverton Parish Council in this regard. The matter would feature on the September meeting agenda when a working group and budget would be considered.

c) The dangers of electric charging points, email from a resident. A resident reported that a house fire had been caused (not locally) due to a faulty electric bike charger and asked the Council to consider preventative measures for Bradninch. It was RESOLVED to thank the resident for the email and to say that the Council would bear such issues in mind whenever applicable going forward. Cllr Mottram would invite the local Fire Service to the next Town Fare to raise awareness. Cllr Ottery would post a 'take care' message, regarding electric charging points, on social media.

d) Request for Mayor's Fund funding. It was confirmed that the spending of the Mayor's Fund was at the discretion of the Mayor and not for Council consideration.

23/56 Emergency Planning: The plan was receiving final 'tweaks' to allow it to be signed off and published. The induction process meeting was pending. No news had been received from the Town Trust with regards to the electrical work at the Guildhall to allow a generator to run.

23/57 DCC Highways, items and information received to the date of the meeting:

a) VAS speed sign post installation and sign design – it was confirmed that the posts to hold the speed sign should be input (by DDC) by the benches at the Hele Road bus stop and at the top of Westfield. Information with regards to the sign design was pending.

b) Townlands steps to ramp - it was confirmed that MDDC are currently investigating the matter.

c) Hen Street stream work - Cllr Crawford declared an interest due to being a Hen Street resident. The contractor would commence work as soon as the required equipment became available. Hen Street residents would be advised of start dates once known.

23/58 Footpaths/Hedges: The hedges along the footpath leading from the Cemetery to Hele Road had been cut back by DCC. The making good of the path surface remained pending due to continuing issues with confirming responsibility for this between the Duchy of Cornwall and DCC. Council members aired their frustration with the time being taken to solve the responsibility issue which was preventing the path from being made good. It was acknowledged that parts of the path had washed away making areas unusable, unsafe and unfit for purpose. The Duchy of Cornwall's representative had written to say that *although the Duchy had put the path in place, and although it was on Duchy land, it was not responsible for its ongoing maintenance which it understood to be the responsibility of DCC*. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should write a joint letter to the Duchy of Cornwall and DCC's Footpath Officer, Richard Spurway, asking for the matter of responsibility to be concluded as a matter of urgency so that the plans to make the path fit for purpose could move forward. It would be noted that the Town Council continues to receive regular complaints about the footpath and that it is very concerned about the safety of residents using the path. It was advised that a resident had recently fallen on the path and that injuries had been sustained. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk would look for any agreement regarding maintenance of the path and would obtain a quote to repair the surface.

The Clerk had been informed that DCC was responsible for cutting back the hedges along the footpath leading from West End Road to Back Lane so would ask DCC to cut the brambles and nettles back as a matter of urgency. Confirmation that £500 was available to the Town Council from the DCC P3 Scheme (Parish Path Partnerships) had been received. As the funding was to be spent on footpath matters, it was RESOLVED to ask Cllr Andrews, as the Town Council's footpath representative, to prioritise the spending of these funds. Delegated authority was given to the Clerk to make the arrangements and resulting payments for work.

23/59 Tree Warden: The Tree Warden had confirmed that some Fore Street trees were in need of pollarding and that this should be done 4 yearly. RESOLVED that the Clerk obtain quotes for the work to be done from mid-January 2024. Funding from general reserves. The Tree Warden advised that the Oak trees along Westfield were not in need of attention currently. It was, however, RESOLVED to write to the owner of the trees to advise of the regular falling debris and to ask that he has the trees inspected professionally, and pollarded if relevant, although the removal of the trees was not in question.

23/60 Committees:

a) **Burial Committee** – Cllr Wild provided an update regarding the Tree Warden's recommendations for additional Churchyard maintenance, quotes pending. He had produced a digital map of the Churchyard, circulated, to support the wilding project and a planning meeting would be called shortly. The leak on the tap at the back of the Churchyard was confirmed as being a sub-surface pipe fracture and quotes to fix this had been requested by the Clerk. Both taps would remain turned off until the leak had been mended. Cllr L Taylor had received a complaint about long grass at the Cemetery, the Clerk had emailed the contractor for information on this. RESOLVED that Cllr Mottram would join the Burial Committee with immediate effect.

b) **Recreation and Amenities Committee** – MDDC had confirmed the S106 roundabout application and also that additional funds may be available to put towards this project from the Townlands Play Park pot. Confirmation pending. The Clerk was asked to order the new roundabout.

The S106 application for the picnic tables and benches for the Townlands Play Park was nearing completion. S106 funding for the new Townlands Play Park recycling bin had been received and the bin had been ordered.

Cllr Birley reported that the top of the small spinning pole play equipment at the Recreation Ground had been removed, the Caretaker had made the equipment safe temporarily. Also, the seat on the rotating play equipment had dropped and was in need of repair. Cllr Birley would provide recommendations to fix the problems. The springy tractor had been firmly fixed to the ground.

23/61 Insurance: Cllr Wild, following further investigation, recommended that no additional insurance was required due to current data being backed up regularly. RESOLVED to take no further action.

23/62 New Website: Cllr Wild reported that the Clerk, Cllrs Mottram and Chambers, still needed to complete the training and log on as administrators so that the new site could be updated and expanded. It was RESOLVED that local organisations would be invited to submit a Facebook or website link to up-to-date information on their organisations to be uploaded onto the Council's new website. Written information, if no link was available, would also be acceptable. Cllr Wild would look into making recommendations to Council with regards to the terms and conditions of such a process.

23/63 Councillor training: It was RESOLVED to allow the Clerk 2 hours overtime in order that she could provide a bespoke New Councillor training session for Cllrs Mottram and Lawson. The training guides from DALC were circulated and it was RESOLVED to pay the resulting invoice when received.

23/64 PART 2: It was RESOLVED to enter into private session due to the sensitive nature of the business to be discussed, see below, and in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act and the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public were asked to leave the meeting -

- a) Cricket Club Lease – it was RESOLVED to write to the Cricket Club for an update with regards to the Lease amendment following its merger with Kentisbeare Cricket Club.
- b) Clerk and Caretaker (employee) annual reviews– it was RESOLVED that the Clerk, with Cllr Birley, would oversee the annual review of the Caretaker. Cllrs Ottery and Crawford would oversee the annual review of the Clerk. Cllrs were invited to put forward any comments for the reviews.

23/65 Events, comments, updates (no decision making during this item):

- a) Action/Project Register - updated and circulated.
- b) Town Visitor Board – Cllrs Ottery and Mottram agreed to look at the suggested content sent by MDDC and report back at the next meeting. The Clerk would enquire as to the board's dimensions, recommended fixing method and recommended location.
- c) Assets of Community Value – MDDC had confirmed receipt of the applications for both local public houses, processing was pending. Cllr Wild volunteered to look into the longer-term plans for the White Lion.
- d) Traffic Management Course – Mrs M Southwood had recently become qualified to close roads for local events as and when required. Resident Mike Leonard also holds the qualification.
- e) Common land - Cllr Mottram enquired whether the Council would be interested in looking into making local unofficial common land into official common land. This would be considered.
- f) Short Mat Bowls - Cllr Birley will be setting up a new club at the Guildhall, anyone interested in joining him are invited to make contact on steve.birley@bradninch-tc.gov.uk
- g) 20 is plenty sign – further to a recent enquiry, Cllr Glendinning confirmed that the '20 is plenty' sign near the Recreation Ground is still in place and visible.

23/66 Next Town Council meeting: No meeting scheduled for August. The next meeting is scheduled to take place at the Guildhall on Monday September 11th 2023 at 7pm.

This meeting closed at 21.39 and was followed by a meeting of the Bradninch Youth Centre Trust.

PAYMENTS JULY 2023	£	VAT	RECEIPTS JUNE 2023	£
Staff salaries net	1625.63	n/a VAT	Bank interest	17.35
Peninsula Pensions	261.58	n/a VAT	Burial Fees	363.10
Employee	987.67			
Employer				
HMRC	333.71	n/a VAT	MDDC S106 funding - Townlands recycling bin	849.41
Clerk expenses (home working £56, printer ink £16.49, mileage £58.50, postage £7.80)	138.79	Inc VAT	Bowling Club annual rent	167.37
West End Hall (hall hire)	15.00	n/a VAT		
R&R Services (weed spraying)	854.86	Inc VAT		
CloudNext (monthly payment July)	11.98	Incl VAT		
I Wild (reimbursement CloudNext June)	11.98	Incl VAT		
I Wild (reimbursement defib batteries)	64.43	Incl VAT		
P Chambers (reimbursement Rec repairs)	26.28	Incl VAT		
M Southwood (reimbursement mileage)	58.50	n/a VAT		
DALC (training books)	44.00	n/a VAT		
S Glendinning (quarterly payroll)	82.50	n/a VAT		
MDDC new recycling bin	849.41	Plus VAT		
Town Trust (annual Chamber rent)	700.00	n/a VAT		