



BRADNINCH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES

The Guildhall
Bradeninch
Exeter, Devon

Minutes of the Bradeninch Town Council Meeting
Monday 10th June 2024, 7pm, The Guildhall, Bradeninch

Draft minutes subject to amendment.

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

Standing Orders suspended.

Public Open Session: None.

Town Council Representative on the Town Trust: Ann Porteous reported that the Town Trust, made up of the Town Trust and Parochial Charities, now has a website in place at <https://bradeninchtt.org.uk/> where general information on the Trust and its policies can be found and meeting summaries would appear shortly.

The chair lift at the Guildhall is now operational thanks to Trustee Ron Purcell who arranged its installation and worked his way through the procedures required for the necessary listed building planning permissions. Regarding the permanent lift, the Town Trust is waiting for detailed drawings from Mike Bamforth, Architect, and an estimated cost which is needed before bids can be made for funding.

A Strategy Meeting with an external facilitator took place this month where all aspects of the Trust were explored and a strategic plan was put together covering the next five years.

The Town Trust would like to consider, with the Town Council, how best the two organisations might collaborate more effectively. Currently, the Town Council Representatives on the Trust report to the Town Council regarding recent Trust business and, while this is useful, it is thought that a more collaborative relationship could better serve the interests of the people of Bradeninch. The Trustees invite the Town Council to discuss this matter as the Trust continues to move forwards. Anne Porteous, Vice Chair, Bradeninch Town Trust.

It was noted that the Town Trust is now nearly at full membership following the recent co-option of 2 new members. There are 9 Trustees in total, 4 of which are appointed by the Town Council. There is currently a vacancy for a Town Council Representative on the Town Trust and anyone interested in applying can contact Alison Marshall at clerk@bradeninch-tc.gov.uk for more information.

Devon County Council, Mid Devon District Council, Police, pending General Election: Newsletters from C/Cllr John Berry had been circulated. It was confirmed that Councils' are now in the pre-election period, the General Election date being 4th July, and due to this there would not be a report from D/Cllr Luke Taylor this month. Residents are reminded to have identification at hand if voting. A 'hustings' will take place on 22nd July at the Guildhall, details would be posted on the Council's Facebook and website. The latest Police crime figures for Bradeninch and the surrounding area can be found on-line at 'StreetCheck'.

Standing Orders resumed.

24/27 Co-option of a Town Councillor: An application from Mr Stephane Lefebvre was read out by the Chairman and following consideration it was RESOLVED to co-opt Mr Lefebvre onto the Council. Mr Lefebvre accepted the position and would join the Council at its July meeting when the Declaration would be signed.

24/28 Town Mayor: The monthly report had been circulated. A young resident had suggested that a mini-mayor position be considered in order to keep the Council in the loop on things that are important to local young people. An example of this would be the swear words on show in the wooden shelter at the Recreation Ground (to be painted out in early July). It was RESOLVED that Council give this matter further consideration over the next month and, in the meantime, Cllr Ottery would post the idea on Facebook so that interest and feedback could be judged. Items to be further considered could include age spans, safeguarding by parents, process of election, WhatsApp group, meeting regularity, topics to be given focus. It was noted that the school has a young 'council' which could be approached. (Cllr Ottery declared an interest as her daughter had suggested the role).

- 24/29 Apologies for absence:** Received and accepted from Cllr M Taylor, away. Cllr S Glendinning, work.
- 24/30 Declarations of Interest relating to items on this agenda:** Cllr Chambers, Town Trust matters.
- 24/31 Confirmation of Minutes:** RESOLVED to agree the full Council minutes of 14th May 2024 as a correct record.

24/32 Town Trust:

- a) Town Trust and Town Council working closer together** – it was acknowledged that recent changes on the Town Trust had already resulted in both organisations working closer together, and that regular correspondence and two-way feedback was now taking place. Cllr Ottery proposed that a meeting between the organisations be arranged so that clear definitions regarding objectives, roles, and how best to collaborate could be considered. RESOLVED. Suggestions would be considered at a future Council meeting. The working group was agreed as Cllrs Birley, Ottery, Andrews and Crawford. Cllr Ottery would liaise with Anne Porteous regarding arrangements for the joint meeting.
- b) Chamber Hire Agreement** – it was RESEOLVED to sign the Agreement as it stands. The annual review would take place in October. (Cllr Chambers declared an interest and did not vote).
- c) Applications for Town Council Representative on the Town Trust** – none received, advertising would continue.
- d) Flag flying days at the Guildhall** – it was RESOLVED that Cllr Birley would put together a list for Council consideration and it was noted that as the Guildhall is not a Government building there is no actual requirement to fly any flags. This matter was being considered following a complaint from a resident annoyed about the lack of flag flying at the Guildhall. Cllrs Crawford and Wild would look into getting the coloured light system working again.

At the request of a member of public it was RESOLVED to bring the Climate and Nature bill item forward.

- 24/33 Climate and Nature bill:** Cllr Mottram provided an overview for Council consideration and called for the Council to back the bill. Its key aims include bringing climate and nature together, cutting carbon emissions, reversing the decline in nature, taking on responsibility for overseas omissions and ecological footprints, ending fossil fuel production, supporting sustainable development and those living at low levels. Following discussion, Cllr Ottery proposed that the Council back the bill, this was RESOLVED. The Clerk would note the Council's support through the MDDC website.

- 24/34 Council annual general insurance renewal:** The insurance company had confirmed that the Churchyard walls and thatched bus shelter were insured. It was RESOLVED to renew the insurance with the same company, Clear Councils, due to a pending claim for the Churchyard walls. A three-year term was agreed due to the offer of a discounted premium at £1,768.17 for the year.

- 24/35 Duchy of Cornwall rent increases:** RESOLVED to accept the expected annual rent increases for the football field and allotment site at £408 including VAT annually for each area.

24/36 Grounds Maintenance: The Contractor had asked for the following items to be considered by full Council -

- a) Town weed spraying** – no spraying had taken place year to date (except for along West End Road) due to issues with the current sub-contractor. The contractor asked Council to consider the use of glysophate spray for the next year in order to get the weeds under control. It was RESOLVED not to grant this request due to the harm glysophate sprays can cause and as such sprays were soon to be banned. It was noted that the draft weed killing policy remained with the working group and pending. It was reported that damage was being done to pavements and walls in the town as weeds had been left to spread of late. Cllr Ottery proposed that the Council's historic vote on the use of non-glysophate sprays remains in place, and that the contractor be asked to arrange for the weed spraying to recommence twice yearly, as per the contract, without delay. This was RESOLVED.
- b) Removal of dead weeds along West End Road** - the sub-contractors had sprayed along West End Road, at no cost, and the weeds/grass had now died off. The contractor had requested that the weed removal be sanctioned as additional paid work. It was RESOLVED that, as a one off, funding would be found for the additional work of having the weeds along West End Road trimmed and removed. The contractor would be asked to arrange for the weed spraying, twice yearly, to be resumed without delay.
- c) Churchyard and Cemetery hedge height** – following a complaint, the contractor had been asked by the Burial Committee to reduce the height of the hedges to the 1.8 meters as stated in the contract. It was RESOLVED not to

agree to additional funds being spent on this work and the contractor would be invited to put alternative suggestions to the Council regarding the lowering of the hedges to the required height.

d) Removal of Ivy from the Churchyard Yew trees - it was RESOLVED that the quote received was in need of amendment which the Clerk would oversee. The Clerk was given delegated authority to assess the amended quote, in accordance with requirements, and to agree the work with a maximum budget of £385.

24/37 Communications:

a) Townlands wild flower area – MDDC was in the process of consulting with residents regarding whether the wild flower patch should remain in place or not, the majority vote would prevail. A resident had asked the Town Council to advise MDDC of its support for keeping the wild flower area in place and this was RESOLVED.

b) Hen Street weeds and stream – a resident had raised concerns about the current state of the stream and weeds which could add to flooding issues if not dealt with. Whilst the grounds maintenance contract involves clearing the stream and weeds twice yearly, it was RESOLVED that the contractor should be asked to undertake an additional paid one-off clearance and as soon as possible. (Cllr Crawford declared an interest due to living in the Street).

c) Connecting the Culm – Cllr Mottram had attended an impressive presentation which she felt Bradninch residents would like to hear. She proposed that a public meeting be arranged at the Guildhall, supported by Sustainable Bradninch and the Town Council, and that the speaker be invited to give the same presentation. Sustainable Bradninch would cover costs. It was RESOLVED to support this project.

d) Millway Gardens – a resident had raised concerns about an unroadworthy vehicle permanently parked in the turning circle at Millway Gardens which was forcing emergency and delivery vehicles to back out of the road which was unsafe. It was RESOLVED that, as the vehicle was unroadworthy, the matter would be reported to the Police and copied to DCC Highways. The reasons behind reporting the issue would be safety and the obstruction of emergency vehicles due to the permanent blocking of the turning bay by an unroadworthy vehicle.

e) Parsonage Street – a resident had asked for consideration to be given to putting double yellow lines at the junction of Parsonage Street due to parking and safety issues. It was RESOLVED to obtain the deadline date for submission of double yellow line requests from C/Cllr Berry and Council was asked to consider any other areas in the town that could benefit from double yellow line consideration on safety grounds.

24/38 Highways:

a) Double yellow lines on Hele Road - Cllr L Taylor had received further concerns from residents of Hele Road regarding visibility and safety issues for car drivers at the junction of Dukes Orchard, the main issue appeared to be large vehicles parked alongside the junction. Whilst the Dukes Orchard junction splay will be made longer, Council was asked to consider double yellow lines for the area. It was RESOLVED to re-visit this matter when the new local DCC Highways Officer was in role.

b) Vehicle Activated Speed Sign (VAS) project – installation of the posts to hold the speed sign remained pending.

c) Baulk Bridge – Council's response had been submitted, a response was pending. It was noted that the work to the bridge had been postponed until 2025/2026.

24/39 Committees to Working Groups: Cllr L Taylor suggested that some existing committees could be changed to working groups and the advantages of this were discussed. It was RESOLVED that Councillors should email any queries or concerns in this regard to Cllr L Taylor prior to further discussion at the July meeting.

24/40 Footpaths: A complaint had been received with regards to the poor state of the footpath along West End Road/Back Lane/Passmore Road. It was RESOLVED to write to the land owner to request immediate attention to make the footpath usable. The footpath at Hilly Lane would also be mentioned.

24/41 Burial Committee matters:

a) Churchyard wall: The Council's insurance company had confirmed that the Churchyard walls were insured for malicious and storm damage but not for issues caused by poor maintenance. It was RESOLVED to make a claim for the repairs to the collapsed wall caused by storm damage. Cllr Wild would support the Clerk with the claim and advise the resident accordingly. Council would give consideration to creating a 'liability register' listing items that it did not own but was responsible for, Churchyard walls for example.

b) Headstone checking: A quote had been received for the independent checking of headstones for safety reasons and the Church had also provided a suggested process. RESOLVED that the Burial Committee should put recommendations to full Council for consideration regarding the way forward.

24/42 Planning:

a) 23/01838/MFUL Notice of MDDC Planning Meeting on 12th June 2024 - installation of ground mounted solar PV panels, East Wells Park, Cullompton. Noted.

b) 24/00516/PNCOU Prior Notification **Approval** – change of use from commercial to a dwelling 18 High Street, Bradninch. Noted.

c) 24/00502/HOUSE Erection of rear dormer and side extensions at Cartref, Westfield, Bradninch. It was RESOLVED to support the application.

24/43 Finance and Governance:

a) Internal Audit Report – the report was considered, no issues had been raised by the auditor. RESOLVED to pay the resulting invoice of £65.00

b) Annual Governance and Accountability Return Section 1 – it was RESOLVED to agree and sign the document.

c) Annual Governance and Accountability Return Section 2 – it was RESOLVED to agree and sign the document.

d) Bank balance – noted as being £21,161.24 on May 31st 2024. The ‘free funds’ figure was noted as being approximately £3,300 at May end.

e) Payments and receipts – RESOLVED to make the listed payments for June 2024, including reimbursement to the Clerk for the dry-cleaning of the Mayors robes, and to note the receipts for May 2024.

f) Payroll Manager – it was RESOLVED to sign the contract between the Council and Mr S Glendinning.

24/44 PART 2: 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, press and public to leave the meeting –

a) Town Warden role: No applications had been received for the role to date. It was RESOLVED to change the job title to ‘Town Caretaker’ and to re-publish the role on local social media, the Council’s notice board and website and in local magazines. Cllr Mottram would create a poster for the local public houses and shop.

b) Nuisance neighbours: Following consideration of residents’ concerns, and discussions with the Police, it was RESOLVED to submit a strongly worded letter to the Police regarding the issues brought to the Council’s attention and in support of Bradninch residents. Cllr L Taylor would oversee the letter on behalf of the Council. RESOLVED to return to the meeting.

24/45 Training: Councillors/Clerk were encouraged to apply for any training felt relevant to their roles. RESOLVED that the Clerk should arrange relevant training for the new member of the Council. RESOLVED that Cllr Birely could attend a DALC Chairmanship Course in September costing £36 (including VAT).

24/46 Events, comments, updates (no decision making during this item):

a) Action/Project Register – circulated and noted.

b) Recycling Depot visit - Cllr Chambers had visited the MDDC Recycling Depot in Willand on behalf of the Town Council. He was impressed with the processes being used and the organisation in general. He encouraged residents to re-visit their recycling habits in order to ensure everything that could be recycled was being put in the right bins as it was evident that much more could be recycled, saving on council tax bills.

c) Cemetery gravel and earth - Cllr L Taylor voiced concerns about excess gravel and earth being dumped against trees by undertakers as the Tree Warden had warned that this could rot the trees. He called for the matter to be considered at the next Burial meeting. Undertakers would, in the meantime, be advised where to deposit earth resulting from burials.

d) Disruption to local bus services - Cllr Crawford reported on pending bus service disruption due to road closures and called on residents to check their bus journeys before setting off.

e) Bradninch Music Festival – Cllr Crawford gave a huge ‘well done’ to everyone involved in, and who attended, the recent music festival events.

f) Townlands Play Park benches and picnic tables - Cllr Birley reported that the new equipment is being well used.

g) Local renovations and public land – Cllr Ottery reported on the nuisance caused by local builders appearing to be storing earth, rubble and building materials on public land.

h) Official portrait of the King – the free portrait had arrived and would be stored in the Guildhall chamber.

24/47 Next meeting of the Town Council: Monday July 8th 2024, 7pm, at the Guildhall. Members of the public are welcome to attend. All Council meeting agendas can be found on the website at www.bradninch-tc.gov.uk

PAYMENTS JUNE 2024	£	VAT	RECEIPTS MAY 2024	£
Staff salaries (net)	1815.82	n/a	Burial income	0
Clerk pension (employer/employee cont.)	429.31	n/a	Allotment deposit	30.00
HMRC Tax/NI	351.43	n/a	Bank interest	33.38
Vodafone monthly direct debit	32.09	Inc VAT	Town Trust Vodafone	14.55
Clerks expenses (working from home £56, ink £11.99, robe cleaning/cover £38.25, mileage £23.40)	129.64	Inc VAT		
S Crawford reimbursement -				
Mayors Quiz – Mayors Fund (paid)	120.45	n/a		
Quiz room hire – General Fund (paid)	30.00	n/a		
Town Trust – annual Chamber hire	700.00	n/a		
Clear Councils – annual general insurance 3 yr	1768.17	n/a		
J Vanderwolfe – internal audit	65.00	n/a		

The meeting closed at 9.53pm. A meeting of the Bradninch Youth Centre Trust followed directly after the close.