



BRADNINCH TOWN COUNCIL
AGENDA

**The Guildhall
Bradninch
Exeter, Devon**

Minutes of the Bradninch Town Council Meeting
Monday 8th September 2025, 7pm, The Guildhall, Bradninch

Present: Cllr S Birley (Chair), Cllr P Andrews, Cllr J Blythe, Cllr P Chambers, Cllr S Crawford, Cllr S Glendinning, Cllr S Lefebvre, Cllr L Mottram, Cllr E Ottery, Cllr L Taylor, Cllr M Taylor, Cllr I Wild.

In attendance: Mrs A Marshall (Clerk), C/Cllr J Buczkowski and 2 members of the public.

A minutes silence was held to remember residents Jon Williams (Baloo) and Carole Saunders who will be greatly missed by all who knew them. A social media post relating to Jon had been published by the Town Council.

Standing Orders suspended.

Public Open Session: The Treasurer of Bradninch Bowling Club referred to last month's meeting minutes, in connection with complaints about car parking to the front of the Bowling Club being coned off, and asked for more information. Cllr Ottery explained that a complaint had been received from a resident who had struggled to park near the Recreation Ground with her family due to the parking area at the front of the Bowling Club being coned off. It was acknowledged that on cricket match days parking in the vicinity is difficult. It was confirmed by the Council that no parking areas by the sports clubs should be cordoned off for specific club use. The Chairman of the Cricket Club had agreed to remind members to park on the edge of the cricket field on match days. New signs were put forward by the Bowling Club for Council consideration stating 'Bowling Club and Recreation Ground parking' to be stuck to bollards and placed at the front of the club. See below for the Council's response.

Town Trust: Cllr Chambers, as a Town Trust Trustee, reported that the Guildhall Caretaker had recently retired and, as a result, a new 'self-service' system had been introduced where, for example, Guildhall users put out and put away chairs and tables as required. A new website had been created allowing room hire bookings to be made, tickets to be purchased and events to be viewed. It was confirmed that bookings can still be made through contact with the Town Trust following Cllr Birley's comment that some residents were finding the on-line booking system complicated. Cllr Wild had successfully used the on-line system to purchase tickets without issue. The Town Trust (and the Town Council) is looking forward to being involved with the community buildings project which will look into how to make the most of town facilities. New Town Council Representative on the Town Trust, Rosie Walker, was now in place. It was noted that there is still a vacancy in this regard and anyone interested can find out more by contacting the Clerk on clerk@bradninch-tc.gov.uk. Cllr Chambers agreed to look into the lack of available tables for this evening's Council meeting.

Devon County Council, Mid Devon District Council and the Police: C/Cllr Buczkowski had circulated a report to full Council which will be posted on the Council's website at www.bradninch-tc.gov.uk. D/Cllr L Taylor would be circulating a report shortly. Police reports can be found on-line at www.streetcheck.

Town Mayor: The monthly 'Mayor's Musings' can be found on the Council's website
Standing Orders resumed.

25/63 Apologies for absence: None.

25/64 Declarations of Interest relating to items on this agenda: None at this time.

25/65 Confirmation of Minutes: RESOLVED to agree and sign the Full Council meeting minutes of 14th July 2025, the Planning Committee meeting minutes of 21st July 2025 and the Recreation and Amenities meeting (annual property inspection) minutes of 30th July 2025 as correct records.

25/66 Town Warden: RESOLVED to pay the claimed expenses for July and August. The recommendations were considered -

a) New Mayors Board emblem – RESOLVED that the quote for £300 for a wood Eagle emblem for the new Mayor's Name Board should be accepted.

b) Picnic table vandalism – RESOLVED to ask the Town Warden to make the table safe with wooden slats.

c) Youth Shelter vandalism – the site had been cleared of fire debris and made safe. RESOLVED to remove the stakes and tape surrounding the shelter footprint and to re-consider further action for the site once new equipment had been decided upon. See below for more information.

d) Drop kerb off Millway – RESOLVED to request double yellow lines to protect the drop kerb.

25/67 Finance and Governance: Cllr Glendinning reported that –

a) Bank balance – the bank balance as at 30th August 2025 stood at £32,537.44 and it was confirmed that the Council was on track, year to date, with spending as at July end. A full budget review will take place by the Finance Committee in September.

b) Payments and receipts – RESOLVED to make the listed payments and to note the receipts. Town Warden overtime of 6 hours for August approved.

c) Employee salary increases – RESOLVED to approve the national annual salary increases for both employees with effect from 1st April 2025, backdated as appropriate.

d) External audit completion – Council was delighted to hear that the annual internal and external audits had been completed with no issues raised. The Clerk was thanked for her continued high standard of work and Cllr Glendinning was thanked for his valuable ongoing support with finance matters.

25/68 EDF (Recreation Ground lighting): A quote from National Grid to instal a meter was considered. A quote for solar lighting, instead of electric, was also considered. Due to the high costs involved it was RESOLVED to enquire as to whether a source could be taken from the Tennis Club spot lights electrical supply as this would seem a much cheaper option. Full costings for this option, should agreement from the Tennis Club be gained, would be obtained for Council consideration.

25/69 MDDC Section 106 funding for Townlands Play Park: RESOLVED to accept the recommendations for two new recycled plastic benches put forward by Cllr Crawford. Section 106 funding (£1,442.00) would be applied for to cover the costs of the benches. RESOLVED that Cllr Ottery would confirm suitable wording for a memorial plaque. RESOLVED that the Clerk should enquire as to whether S106 funding had been received by the Council for the two new builds in Passmore Road.

25/70 Stagecoach Bus Service: Cllr L Taylor reported that there had still been no response from the face to face meeting with Stagecoach representatives earlier in the year. C/Cllr Buczkowski's report stated that the data collection project is now in place and encouraged residents to use the QR codes and website with paper forms also available. Cllr M Taylor had evidenced elderly passengers not understanding how to use QR codes at bus stops. Cllr Mottram had evidenced the card reader not working on buses recently meaning that data was not being correctly recorded. Following the meeting with Stagecoach when it was agreed that the new timetables would be reviewed it was now apparent that this did not happen as they were issued without amendment. Council members voiced their disgust at the substandard service being provided by Stagecoach and the lack of communication. RESOLVED to write to Stagecoach with the Council's comments and to ask why Mr Knight had yet to provide any meeting feedback, although this had been promised. Cllr Crawford reported that elderly residents were feeling isolated due to the inconsistency of the current bus service, and scared of not being able to get back home. Cllr Ottery asked whether the Stagecoach contract could be ended as the company clearly did not appear to be fit for purpose. She added that it should account for the continued poor service being provided. C/Cllr Buczkowski advised that DCC has no control with regards to whether Stagecoach continues to be used as the bus transport provider in the area with the matter being made more difficult as there is currently no viable alternative.

25/71 Burial Working Group: Cllr Birley reported that he had not been able to secure any grant funding for Churchyard wall repairs due to the Churchyard being 'closed'. Cllr Wild reported that a burial meeting was pending and that the authorised clearing of the brush at the Churchyard had been completed.

25/72 Allotment Working Group: Cllr M Taylor thanked to the Town Warden and a resident for making the fantastic 'seed swap' cabinet which is now available for allotment holders to use. The following recommendations were considered –

a) Allotment Management training – training at a cost of £40 RESOLVED for Cllr M Taylor.

b) Allotment Tenants questionnaire regarding use of glyphosates – the questionnaire had been emailed to all allotment holders and replies were being collated. For review at the October meeting.

c) Notifications RESOLVED to complete the following -

i) Enquire as to whether the tenant of plots 5a and 5b wish to give up a plot.

ii) Send eviction notices to the tenants of plots 11a and 8b as the plots are not being kept in good order.

iii) Send a final warning to the tenant of plot 23a due to the continued uncultivated state of the plot.

iv) Enquire as to the owner of the apple tree on plots 21a/21b and ask for it to be cut back.

v) Advise the tenants of plots 28a and 4b that cultivation is required on both plots, not just strimming.

vi) Send a request to cultivate notice to the tenant of plot 30a.

vii) Town Warden to prune the corner apple tree (and the tree noted in iv if ownership is not established).

It was noted that quotes for the hedge tree works have been requested, for consideration in October.

25/73 Recreation and Amenities Committee: Cllr Crawford reported -

a) Parking at the Rec – following the open session it was RESOLVED to accept the new signs as presented by the Bowling Club. Cllr Birley declared an interest due to being a member of the club.

b) Cricket Club septic tank – the tank needs repair/replacing and the Cricket Club had asked for clarification with regards to responsibility for this as the Lease gives no information on the matter. RESOLVED that the Cricket Club be advised that, as far as the Council is aware, anything on the Cricket Club site is the responsibility of the Cricket Club.

c) New bus shelter along Hele Road – following a resident's request for more covered bus shelters Council had been considering a new bus shelter at the Hele Road bus stop by Townlands. RESOLVED to accept the Town Warden's offer to draw up a plan and costings and to make an Oak shelter. A resident had offered funds towards the project and Highways had confirmed that planning permission would not be required should the plan be acceptable, and that grant funding would be available. Council would review the plan and costings at the October meeting.

25/74 Highways:

a) Double yellow lines in turning circles – RESOLVED to move forward with a request for double yellow lines at the Culver Close turning area but not to proceed with the Hornbeam Gardens turning area. Cllr Blythe declared an interest due to living in Culver Close. MDDC would be requested to raise the Culver Close residents consultation.

b) Potholes/pothole filling – RESOLVED to progress with a programme to fill local pot holes by way of the Town Warden (Chapter 8 qualified) and a resident who had kindly volunteered to take on a Pot Hole Warden role. Clerk to contact Highways for materials and equipment. Town Warden to provide a plan of action.

c) Wild flowers at Culver Close – Cllr Mottram is looking into this matter.

d) Culmpton Hill bus stop fly tipping – items continued to be dumped at local bus stops which the Town Warden has been removing. As this dumping of goods is classed as illegal 'fly tipping', it was RESOLVED that no further items would be removed and that residents should report dumped items to MDDC through the website

<https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/environment/street-care/fly-tipping/>, the Clerk/Town Warden would do the same.

Reporting such incidents to MDDC triggers the investigation process which could, if successful, lead to culprits being fined.

25/75 Communications:

a) Road rubbish from Hele Mill to Bradninch – email from a resident reporting rubbish along this route, including 50 tin cans which he had collected, requesting that the matter be escalated. RESOLVED to thank the resident for picking up the litter and to advise that, whilst this is a known issue, unless those littering are identified there is little that the Town Council can do to rectify the situation. Previously, a resident used to walk the route and collect the litter. The Mayor would cover the issue in his next report. Cllr Mottram would obtain information on the 'Clean Devon' campaign to raise awareness locally.

c) Owl boxes at the Wetlands Nature Reserve – email from a resident advising of available grant funding and that an application had been submitted for Owl boxes with a result pending. RESOLVED to thank the resident.

d) Thatched bus shelter commemorative plaque – Cllr Birley reported on a request from residents to keep the plaque on the shelter uncovered going forward. RESOLVED that Cllr Wild would ask the Women's Institute to consider this request in the hope that future displays would be able to work around keeping the plaque visible. Cllr Ottery voted against the decision.

e) Duchy of Cornwall rent changes – it was noted that the annual rent fees charged to the Council for the football field and allotment site would cease from this month due to a new Duchy of Cornwall 'community space' project. A request to waive the Wetlands annual rent had been submitted. RESOLVED that the relevant Committees would take these changes into account when considering future rent charges.

f) Telephone box by the Guildhall – an email from a resident had advised that the 'phone box had been locked and the connection decommissioned. Council had not been officially advised of this and was disappointed at the news as it had requested that the connection remained in place, backed by MDDC. The 'phone line had formed part of the town's Emergency Plan which would now need to be amended. Also, recent data had confirmed that the connection was still being used by the public. RESOLVED to write to MDDC asking for details as to why the connection had been decommissioned. Cllr L Taylor reported that Ofcom had made the decision to decommission but that the 'box' would remain in place due to it being 'listed'. Whilst the Council could approach Ofcom about using the box for another purpose, it would remain locked for now.

g) First Aiders/Responders – an email had been received from MDDC requesting that local Councils consider setting up a first aider/responder system. RESOLVED not to take this matter forward due to lack of resources, and as the SW Ambulance Service already has an adequate first responder scheme set up.

h) State of the District debate 17/09/2025 – an invitation from MDDC to attend this event, which would provide local Councils with an overview of what smaller parishes may need to take on in future, had been accepted by Cllr Birley. RESOLVED.

i) **Road closure notification at Millway, SWW, 26-28/11/2025** – noted. It was agreed by all present that the continuous road closures in the town were causing increasing issues for local people and public transport. The Council had escalated the ongoing issues to no avail.

25/76 Planning: Cllr Andrews reported –

- a) **Tree Protection Orders on Westfield Oak trees** – Cllr Ottery requested that TPOs be considered for the two Oak trees which was RESOLVED. Cllr Mottram declared an interest due to living in Westfield.
- b) **MDDC Planning Training/Update** – Cllr Andrews reported on the recent training/update attended at MDDC. Details can be obtained from paul.andrews@bradninch-tc.gov.uk or the Clerk. He suggested that a Neighbourhood Plan for Bradninch could be considered as this would enable some control on future building in the town. RESOLVED that the Clerk contacts Silverton Parish Council for feedback on their Neighbourhood Plan project, to include the time, costs and processes involved together with any noted benefits to date for Council consideration.
- c) **25/0108/CAT** Notification of intention to remove 1 Ash, 1 Weeping Willow and 1 Walnut tree within a conservation area at The Manor House, Bradninch. Noted.
- d) **25/00985/HOUSE** Revised drawings. Renovation of bungalow to include ground floor extension, creation of first floor accommodation and replacement of garage at 16A Hen Street, Bradninch. Noted.
- e) **25/01004/PNAG** prior notification for the erection of an agricultural building for livestock rearing at Chapelhaies Farm, Bradninch. No objection - prior approval not required. Noted.
- f) **25/01091/FULL** Erection of a temporary agricultural workers dwelling at Russels Park Farm, Cullompton. Noted.
- g) **25/01133/HOUSE** Conversion and extension of garage to annexe and erection of shed at Loews Corner, Silverton. Noted.
- h) **25/00943/HOUSE** Renovation and extension of existing bungalow at Hazelgrove, Bradninch. Refused.
- i) **25/00940/HOUSE** Erection of garden room at 13 Culver Close, Bradninch. Approved.
- j) **25/00939/HOUSE** Erection of single storey extension following demolition of existing extension and installation of second floor dormer window at 27 Fore Street, Bradninch. Approved.
- k) **25/00922/FULL** construction of below ground slurry lagoon, Billingsmoor Farm, Bradninch. Approved.
- l) **25/01187/FULL** Erection of an agricultural building to cover open silage clamp to include solar PV to the roof at Highdown Farm, Bradninch. RESOLVED not to comment.

25/77 Footpaths: Cllr Andrews reported –

- a) **Duchy of Cornwall new footpath proposal at Charwell Wetlands** – an update from the Duchy of Cornwall had been circulated and further news on the way forward was now awaited. Council was disappointed to hear that, once again, the wire along the Charwell Wetlands fence line had been cut and that wooden posts had been sawn down to allow access to the field. Council members were disappointed at this further act of mindless vandalism that could allow cattle to escape from the field.
- b) **West Beare Lane access from the cricket field** – the Town Warden, using materials supplied by the Cricket Club, had erected a fence and gate to keep cattle from straying onto the cricket field from the road.
- c) **Footpath Wardens and the annual footpath report** – Cllr L Taylor asked whether anything could be done about the Russell Park Lane footpath which was currently impassable. RESOLVED to ask for P3 funding to clear the footpath. The annual footpath report had been compiled by the Footpath Wardens. RESOLVED to adopt and forward the report to DCC. The Footpath Wardens involved would be thanked for their excellent work. You can find the report on the Council's website at www.bradninch-tc.gov.uk or a copy can be obtained from the Clerk.

25/78 PART 2: RESOLVED to enter into private session due to the sensitive nature of the business to be discussed. In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, and the Local Government Act 1972, the public present left the meeting.

A) Recreation Ground Youth Shelter fire:

The recent burning down of the wooden shelter at the Recreation Ground was discussed. RESOLVED to submit the claim to the insurance company. Cllr Crawford abstained from voting. RESOLVED to consider replacement equipment once the insurance funds had been received.

B) Grounds Maintenance contract March 2026 – February 2029: The draft contract documents were considered. RESOLVED to approve the documents following the adding of the Fore Street grass cutting to the general schedule, the removal of the 'general town grass cutting' contract and the changing of the burial site hedge cutting months to November and January. The contract documents would be issued to at least five contractors with the aim of receiving at least three tenders for Council consideration at the January 2026 meeting. RESOLVED to return to the general meeting.

25/79 Events, comments, updates (no decision making during this item):

- a) Action/Project Register – noted.
- b) Cllr Blythe voiced concerns about poor road closure communications stating that the signage along the road from Bradninch to Cullompton was particularly confusing.
- c) Cllr Chambers reported that as Hele Road had been 'marked up' this could indicate more road works.

- d) Cllr Wild reported that The Millers Morris would be taking on a stall at the Town Fair. It was confirmed that Cllr Birley would be 'in the stocks' at the Town Fair on behalf of the Council.
- e) Cllr Crawford reported that a Hen Street resident had suggested a width restriction along Hen Street due to residents having to keep moving their parked cars to accommodate large vehicles using the road and to avoid their cars being damaged. The resident would contact the Clerk with details.
- f) Cllr Mottram reported that the next Repair Café would take place at the Guildhall on 27th September.
- g) Cllr Ottery called for help with marshalling the Bradninch Bolt, contact Emily.ottery@bradninch-tc.gov.uk if you can help.
- h) Cllr Ottery had received a suggestion for a wood carved 'baloo' to be installed at the Recreation Ground as a memorial to recently deceased resident Jon Williams. A blue plaque had also been suggested.
- i) Cllr Birley would contact the owners of a hedge along West End Road that needed cutting back for safety reasons.

25/80 Next meeting of the Town Council: Monday 13th October 2025, 7pm, at the Guildhall, members of the public are welcome to attend. Agendas and minutes can be found on the website at www.bradninch-tc.gov.uk or can be requested from the Clerk at Clerk@bradninch-tc.gov.uk

PAYMENTS AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2025		£	VAT	RECEIPTS JULY & AUGUST	£
Staff salaries (gross)	Aug Sept	2841.97 3392.92	n/a	Burial income	445.60
Employee pension (employer/employee cont.)	Aug Sept	783.49 935.22	n/a	Allotment income	0
HMRC Tax/Ni	Aug Sept	701.27 932.00	n/a	Bank interest	17.70
Vodafone monthly direct debit (monthly)	Aug Sept	34.15 34.15	Inc VAT	Town Trust Vodafone	14.23
Town Warden expenses	Aug Sept	187.86 117.08	Inc VAT		
Clerk expenses	Aug Sept	70.99 112.59	Inc VAT		
EDF	Aug Sept	307.84 pending	Inc VAT		
PKF Littlejohn	Sept	378.00	Inc VAT		
Source for Business (half yearly water Churchyard)		264.42	n/a VAT		
Mayor's Fund – WI (VJ Day) & Youth Club (pop up stall)		100.00 125.00	n/a VAT n/a VAT		
Garden Services (grounds maintenance)	July & Aug	3210.00	n/a VAT		
Bank charges	Aug	4.75	n/a VAT		
Skip Hire (Rec Youth Shelter)	July	499.20	Inc VAT		
Cornwall College (Town Warden Course)	Aug	520.00	n/a VAT		
BYCT related payments as resolved in July - J Hurst – annual boiler service		120.00	Incl VAT		
I Reed – electrical works		375.00	n/a VAT		
Alarmtec – annual fire extinguisher checks		120.60	Incl VAT		

The meeting closed at 9.50pm