



BRADNINCH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES

The Guildhall
Bradninch
Exeter, Devon

Minutes of Bradninch Town Council Meeting
Monday 9th March 2026, 7pm, The Guildhall, Bradninch

Draft minutes subject to amendment.

Present: Cllr S Birley (Chair), Cllr P Andrews, Cllr A Bellamy, Cllr J Blythe, Cllr P Chambers, Cllr S Glendinning, Cllr M Taylor, Cllr E Ottery, Cllr S Lefebvre, Cllr L Mottram, Cllr I Wild. **In attendance:** Mrs A Marshall, Clerk. Mr J Shazell, Town Warden. 2 members of the public.

Standing Orders suspended.

Public Open Session:

- a) The first resident asked for an update on the removal of telegraph poles in the town and was told that some had actually been removed today. The Chairman would check the situation and report back to the resident.
- b) The first resident asked for an update on the Stagecoach situation and when the bus service would be returning to half hourly visits in the town. The Chairman reported that the Town Council had tried its utmost to get the service reinstated but, to date, to no avail. This matter would be an agenda item at the April Town Council meeting.
- c) The second resident provided an update on i) grit boxes – no response from DCC to date. ii) Tawny Owl box project – issues had arisen with the electricity supply resulting in it having to be turned off, the camera would be returned to Sustainable Bradninch. Cllr Bellamy will be monitoring the boxes for nesting activity with a thermal camera. iii) Guildhall emergency generator training session – the session was well attended and included several members of the Council.

Town Trust: Cllr Chambers, as a Town Trust Trustee, reported on behalf of the Town Trust and said that repairs to some external walls and to the roof were to take place which would involve scaffolding. The scaffolding would also allow window frames and render to be inspected. The Charitable Incorporative Organisation (CIO) change over from the ordinary charity is ongoing. No meeting had taken place to discuss the annual Chamber hire agreement which expired last October.

Devon County Council, Mid Devon District Council and the Police: The monthly report from C/Cllr J Buczkowski had been circulated and would be uploaded to the website at www.bradninch-tc.gov.uk shortly. No report from D/Cllr L Taylor. Police data can be found on-line at www.streetcheck.co.uk

Town Mayor: The monthly Mayor's Musings had been circulated and published on the Council's website. Cllr Birley was sad to hear that Cllr Ottery would be leaving the Council at the end of April but understood the need for her to focus on family commitments. Stading Orders resumed.

25/166 Apologies for absence: Accepted from Cllr L Taylor, work commitment, and C/Cllr Buczkowski.

25/167 Declarations of Interest relating to items on this agenda: None at this time.

25/168 Confirmation of Minutes: RESOLVED to sign off the full council meeting minutes of 9th February 2026 and the planning committee meeting minutes of 19th February 2026 as correct records.

25/169 Town Warden: RESOLVED to agree the monthly expenses and overtime claim. The following recommendations were considered -

- a) **New recreation ground shelter** – the proposed plans were considered and it was RESOLVED to move forward with the design using engineered Oak poles and either wooden or recycled plastic seating. Quotes would be sourced for consideration.
- b) **Hele Road bus shelter** – DCC had confirmed grant funding for the new bus shelter of £3,300 including VAT. RESOLVED to move forward with the Oak construction and installation of the shelter which the Town Warden would oversee. An underground services survey would be ordered. There was no further news regarding permission or funding for a similar shelter at Westfield.
- c) **IT** – Cllr Wild was thanked for investigating this matter. Following a review of several appliances, it was RESOLVED to purchase a Nexall N90 device with Microsoft Office and additional memory for Town Warden use. The counter proposal to purchase the Galaxy equivalent was not carried. A budget of up to £400 plus VAT had been set aside.

d) Allotment access track – due to estimated costs of £1,000 to make the path good, it was RESOLVED not to move forward with this idea but to continue to restrict vehicular access to the top end of the track as required and during very wet weather. Cllr Belamy was against the idea of putting materials on the track.

e) Hele Road to Bowley Meadow pedestrian pathway – Cllr Ottery reported that a street light is not working along this path which causes a safety issue. RESOLVED to ask C/Cllr Buczkowski to look into this matter as reporting the light had not been successful. To report street light issues use <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/street-lighting/>. Regarding the path, Cllr Birley would investigate ownership prior to discussing the widening of it.

f) Wetlands bridge works – RESOLVED that the work to make the bridges safer should take place at a cost of approximately £300, funding to come from the Wetlands maintenance budget.

g) Allotment container – RESOLVED to divide the inside of the container to provide safe storage for Council owned equipment at a cost of approximately £120 plus VAT.

h) Zip wire issue – it was reported that the wooden support posts are showing signs of rot and so monitoring would increase. The independent RoSPA inspection was due and its results would point out the way forward for the Council in this regard. The Recreation and Amenities Committee would take this matter forward. Following an enquiry, it was confirmed that the zip wire seat was at the correct regulatory height. The Town Warden was thanked for keeping all the play equipment in good order.

25/170 Finance: Cllr Glendinning reported -

a) Bank balance – the balance as at February 28th 2026 stood at £49,774.74 with no 'free funds' available at this time.

b) Payments and receipts – RESOLVED to make the listed payments and the receipts for February were noted.

c) Finance Committee meeting dates – RESOLVED to change the meeting dates to May, September and December annually.

d) Vodafone monthly fee increases – RESOLVED to accept the increase from 1st April 2026. The Town Trust would be advised.

e) Grant Funding to local organisations – RESOLVED to accept the recommendations put forward by the working group with payments to be made in April. Funding allocation agreed as follows: Bradninch Scouts £250, Bradninch Acoustic Music Group £250, Bradninch Fireworks £250, Duchy pre-school £250, Bradninch Cricket Club £150, Bradninch Football Club £250, Bradninch Twelfth Night £100, Bradninch Bumps, Babies and Beyond £250, Landunvez Twinning £250, Bradninch Youth Club £250, Bradninch Bee Yard £250.

25/171 Flooding: Standing orders suspended for resident Sue Eakers to speak.

a) Grant funding application to Devon Emergency Resilience Fund (DERF) for flood equipment – Sue confirmed that the application had been submitted for funding to purchase sand bags and a store for Hele. The application would remain in a queue until further funding was available. It was noted that sand bags were not recommended due to water contamination and disposal issues so Sue would look into alternatives.

b) Jetting of drains - Council was dismayed to hear that the Jetter lorry had been unable to jet the drains on Cullompton Hill recently due to parked cars. A further attempt is pending. Standing Orders reinstated.

c) Mud on the road at Weeks Cross to Ash Cross – this is not, currently, a safety issue according to Highways although the situation is being monitored. RESOLVED that Cllr Andrews should look into the planning permissions given for the slurry lagoon and that if a breach appeared to have occurred, he would draft a letter to MDDC for Council consideration.

25/172 EDF/Recreation Ground lighting: RESOLVED to make the payment to Securelec for electrical equipment. RESOLVED to accept the recommendation for surface mounted cables subject to feedback from RoSPA.

25/173 Highways:

a) Road Warden/pothole filling project site meeting – response awaited from the Highways Officer.

b) Baulk Bridge works – Cllr Andrews reported on the recent meeting with DCC and said that all of the Council's requests and ideas for the mitigating of traffic through the village during the bridge closure had appeared to have been accepted. DCC would arrange traffic enforcement officers to patrol the town to help prevent parking issues. RESOLVED to respond to DCC advising that parking issues would probably be most relevant prior to the morning rush hour and following the evening rush hour. Residents would be asked to park sensibly during the bridge closure works and would be made aware of the plan to increase traffic enforcement.

c) Notification of road closures – i) Beacon Road, South West Water, 12th to 15th May 2026 and ii) Station Road, annual review of level crossing, 4th and 5th May 2026. Noted.

d) Unroadworthy car - Cllr Ottery reported that a blue car was parked on the highway at Townlands which appeared to be unroadworthy as it had no wheels. It had been reported on the gov.uk website but to no avail. RESOLVED to advise the Police.

25/174 Communications: Received to the date of this meeting -

- a) Road markings** – a letter from residents regarding the re-painting of road lines on Millway, by the Doctor's surgery, was considered. RESOLVED to investigate the ownership of the land and to make contact to request the re-painting of the lines.
 - b) Bradninch Magazine** – an email regarding increased annual fees was considered. RESOLVED to accept the increase.
 - c) Bradninch Tennis Club** – an email regarding grounds maintenance was considered and it was evident that confusion had occurred with regards to responsibility for grass cutting around the tennis courts. It was RESOLVED that the Council is responsible for grass cutting along the recreation ground side of the tennis court, including the bank, as this land is within the recreation ground. The Council is not, however, responsible for the grass adjacent to the tennis courts alongside the cricket field. Nor is it responsible for the grass at the side of the tennis courts which has, for many years, been maintained by members of the tennis club. Responsibility for this falls to either the cricket club or tennis club and should be sorted out between the two organisations. The Council would not be paying for any grass cutting of these areas.
 - d) Town Signs** – C/Cllr Buczkowski had provided costings, at approximately £2,500 each, for new signs similar to those recently installed at Cullompton. Due to the high costs involved, and the lack of budget, it was RESOLVED not to take this project on.
 - e) Grass cutting on Hele Road** – an email from a resident was considered and it was RESOLVED not to make any changes to the Council's grounds maintenance contract and to leave the responsibility for cutting this area of grass to Devon County Council.
 - f) Memorial plaque** – the wording had now been agreed for the plaque to be placed on the new corner bench at Townlands play park once purchased and installed. Cllr Ottery would continue to oversee this matter.
- Cllr Lefebvre left the meeting at 20.51

25/175 Planning: Cllr Andrews reported on the following -

- a) 26/00264/HOUSE** – erection of a conservatory at 1 Trinity Cottages, Cullompton, Devon. RESOLVED no objection.
- b) Proposed Hele Road housing development** – the Council's objection had been submitted to MDDC and a letter of explanation had been sent to the Duchy of Cornwall's planning agents. Details can be found on the MDDC website. No update to report.
- c) 26/00322/CAT** – notification of intention to pollard 1 Lime tree to 9m within the Conservation Area at 18 Hen St, Bradninch. RESOLVED no objection.
- d) 25/01802/FULL** – Approval – erection of roof terrace and patio extension to existing pavilion with external staircase at Bradninch Cricket Club.

25/176 Allotments: Cllr M Taylor put the following recommendations to Council on behalf of the working group -

- a) Plot inspection dates** – RESOLVED that official inspections would take place 4 times per year in March, July, October and January. Schedule to be included within the next tenancy agreement. Additional inspections to take place as felt necessary.
- b) Reconstruction of compost, chippings, fertilizer and recycling bays** – RESOLVED that the Town Warden would see to this.
- c) Letters to tenants** – RESOLVED that a new set of letters would be introduced to replace the existing letters with immediate effect. Cllr Taylor to provide draft letters.
- d) Allocation of odd trees** – RESOLVED that the trees between plots 20b and 21a would be offered to the tenant of plot 4B to be used as part of the community orchard.
- e) Vacant plots** – RESOLVED that the accumulated scrap metal, including that found on plot 30A, be removed by a local contractor at no cost to the Council. There are currently 5 vacant plots which were being advertised. RESOLVED that the outgoing tenant of plots 5A and 5B be asked to remove all rubbish. RESOLVED that the Town Warden should do a general tidy up on plot 23b. Outgoing tenant of plot 25B be asked to remove all rubbish.
- f) Request for a pond** – RESOLVED to ask the tenant for more information such as the proposed size, depth, type of liner.
- g) Tree works** – RESOLVED to make the payment for the completed works.
- h) Allotment annual fees** – RESOLVED that the Allotment Working Group would look into annual allotment related profits prior to setting new annual allotment fees.

25/177 Duchy of Cornwall Leases: Copies of the Allotment site and Wetlands site leases had been circulated. RESOLVED that the Clerk would check the expiry date of the Wetlands lease due to a discrepancy with dates. The Duchy of Cornwall had emailed to confirm that the Duchy would want to continue the leases at expiry in support of the community.

25/178 Town Trust: Nothing to report.

25/179 Assistant Town Clerk: The Clerk reported that interviews would take place by March end and that recommendations for employment would be put to full Council at the April meeting. A start date prior to April end was planned.

25/180 Events, comments, updates (no decision making during this item):

- a) Neighbourhood Planning Training** – Cllr Andrews had attended this training and reported on the huge amount of time and work involved in putting a plan together. Professional input would be needed and the general costs are high. He would not, as Chair of the Planning Committee, be recommending that the Council takes this forward.

b) Pete's Dragon - Cllr M Taylor reported that resident Lola McCormick had raised approximately £6000 by way of the Karaoke event she had organised and asked for this to be acknowledged. The funds would go to Pete's Dragon in memory of Lola's Dad, Colin McCormick. Cllr Birley would be making contact on behalf of the Council.

c) MDDC Planning training – Cllr Wild would be attending this event shortly and would report back.

d) PTFA quiz on 27th March 2026 – Cllr Ottery reported that this event would take place at the school, with profits going to the PTFA, and teams of up to 6 players (over 18's only) were now able to book their place.

e) Biochar talk – Cllr Mottram reported that this talk would take place on 12th March 2026, 7.30pm, at the Guildhall.

f) Preparedness and Emergency readiness, Climate and future planning – Cllr Mottram reported that this event was coming to town and that details would be released shortly. The talk would focus on how to keep resilient.

g) New Councillor training – Cllr Bellamy reported that his training sessions with DALC continue to be useful. It was confirmed that a request to Council to postpone a decision to provide more consideration time was appropriate.

25/181 Annual Parish Meeting: RESOLVED to hold the annual parish meeting on Monday April 20th 2026, 7pm, at the Guildhall, Bradninch. Apologies were given by Cllr Glendinning, Cllr M Taylor and Cllr Mottram due to being unable to make that date. Local organisations would be invited to attend.

25/182 Next meeting of the Town Council: Monday 13th April 2026, 7pm, at the Guildhall, Bradninch. Members of the public and press 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.

PAYMENTS MARCH 2026	£	VAT	RECEIPTS FEBRUARY 2026	£
Staff salaries (gross)	2305.94	n/a	Burial income	445.60
Employee pension (employer/employee cont.)	636.78	n/a	Allotment rents	80.00
			Allotment deposits	100.00
HMRC/NI	507.86	n/a	Bank interest	8.15
Vodafone monthly direct debit (monthly)	34.15	Inc VAT	Town Trust Vodafone	14.23
Town Warden expenses	25.82	Inc VAT	Postage refund	2.50
Clerk expenses	89.48	Inc VAT	DALC training fee refund	36.00
EDF	166.96	Inc VAT	Mayors Fund events	630.00
Garden Services final grass cutting and	450.00	n/a	Mayors Fund donation	20.00
Allotment tree works	745.00	n/a		
Bank charges	4.25	n/a		
Securelec (Rec electric)	643.08	Inc VAT		
DALC training (Cllrs Andrews and Bellamy)	60.00	Inc VAT		

Meeting closed 21.27