



BRADNINCH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES

**The Guildhall
Bradninch
Exeter, Devon**

Minutes of the Bradninch Town Council Meeting
Monday 13th July 2026, 7pm, The Guildhall, Bradninch

DRAFT minutes subject to amendment

Present: Cllr S Birley (Chair), Cllr P Andrews (Vice Chair), Cllr A Bellamy, Cllr P Chambers, Cllr S Lefebvre, Cllr L Mottram, Cllr M Taylor, Cllr I Wild.

In attendance: Mrs A Marshall, Clerk. Mrs L Allaway, Assistant Clerk. Mr J Shazell, Town Warden. District Councillor J Buczkowski and 1 member of the public.

Public Open Session: Standing Orders suspended. Resident Sue Eakers reported that the updated Emergency Plan had been circulated to full Council for review at the September meeting. Sue was thanked for her ongoing work on this matter.

Devon County Council, Mid Devon District Council, the Police: C/Cllr Buczkowski was awaiting news on the Local Government Reorganisation and would forward the pending update to the Clerk for publishing on the Town Council's website later this week www.bradninch-tc.gov.uk Regarding other news, the Baulk Bridge works were progressing well and no traffic congestion issues through Bradninch had been reported to date. Council was pleased to hear that the traffic management process for this project had incorporated recommendations from the Town Council. The construction contract for the proposed new railway station at Cullompton was due to be signed off shortly and the new Cullompton link road works would commence in the near future. Cllr Andrews asked about Government spending with regards to the new motorway junction and it was confirmed that whilst the first stage of funding had been signed off, there was no guarantee that the works would actually progress. Devon County Council is confident, however, that the works will happen. C/Cllr Buczkowski reported that he is pushing for the new railway station to have good bus links to Bradninch and that different sources of funding for an improved Bradninch bus service continued to be investigated. Stagecoach, unfortunately, had the view that an improved bus service for Bradninch was not viable. There was no D/Cllr report. Police reports can be found on www.streetcheck.com Standing Orders resumed.

Mayor's Report: The monthly Mayor's Musings had been circulated and published. The Mayor reported that he would share the majority of this year's Mayors Fund allowance between local organisations with focus on 'youth'. He was organising several Mayor's bingo sessions for the winter months which would take place in the Cricket Club, proceeds would benefit local organisations.

26/42 Apologies for absence: Received and accepted from Cllr Blythe, holiday, and Cllr Glendinning, family matter.

26/43 Declarations of Interest relating to items on this agenda: Cllr Chambers - Town Trust matters due to being a Town Trust Trustee.

26/44 Confirmation of Minutes: RESOLVED to sign the full Council meeting minutes of 8th June 2026, the Recreation and Amenities Committee meeting minutes of 2nd June 2026 and the Planning Committee meeting minutes of 15th June 2026, as correct records.

26/45 Two Town Councillor Vacancies: RESOLVED to defer the decision until the September meeting to allow more time for applications to be received. Anyone interested in applying can contact the Clerk on clerk@bradninch-tc.gov.uk

26/46 Duchy of Cornwall withdrawing from Bradninch: A meeting had today taken place with Duchy of Cornwall representatives and the Council's Duchy Legal Working Group to discuss the process of purchasing the three community assets currently being rented from the Duchy by the Council (Charwell Wetlands, Bithywind Allotments, Football Field). An overview of the meeting was received. The Chairman reported that all three Asset of Community Value applications had now been accepted by Mid Devon District Council and, as a result, land valuations were expected shortly. RESOLVED that the Clerk should obtain quotes for the required legal work and investigate whether VAT could be reclaimed by the Council on land purchases. It was expected that a draft sales plan would be available for Council review at the September meeting. Once an agreement in principle had been met and all relevant checks had been made, Solicitors would be instructed to proceed with the purchases. It was anticipated that the land could be in the ownership of the Town Council by April 2027. It was noted that the Duchy would only be offering land for sale to current tenants and not to third parties. Members of the public will be able to donate funds towards the purchase of these community assets, full details to be published on the Council's website, and an information leaflet to be distributed to local households. Duchy Legal Working Group meeting minutes of 7th July had been circulated. Cllr Taylor voiced concerns about a corner of the current allotment site appearing to show as part of the proposed Hele Road development according to the site plans. It was agreed that this should be looked into.

The Community Asset Fund Working Group had met to discuss how best to set up the donation process with regards to the collection of funds towards the purchase of all three sites (Charwell Wetlands, Bithywind Allotments, Football Field). The Town Trust had offered its support in order to capture the benefit of gift aid on donations and Cllr Wild had investigated fees and options associated with on-line donations. Following full discussion and a review of information to hand, including legal advice from Devon Association of Local Councils, it was RESOLVED to use the Council's newly set up bank accounts and website page for donation collection and to accept the draft information leaflet, following amendment, created by resident Simon Tytherleigh. The Town Trust's offer to support donation collection was not taken up due to complex, expensive and time consuming legalities. Cllr Wild gave thanks on behalf of the Council to everyone involved with this process to date, their time and efforts were greatly appreciated. Cllr Chambers abstained from voting.

26/47 Town Warden: The monthly report was considered and the expenses claim was agreed. Standing Orders suspended for the Town Warden to speak with regards to vandalism at the recreation ground, failing equipment, the new shelter, the thatched bus shelter and EDF/CCTV matters. He reported that several small fires had been evidenced at the recreation ground of late. The rotator pole equipment needed to be removed as replacement parts are now unavailable and the tractor rocker needed to be removed temporarily so that the foundations could be made secure. The zip wire remains in place and safe but the wire is unable to be tightened further due to stress on the wooden supports. Splits had recently occurred in the wooden uprights of the adult fitness centre and the equipment had started to move, Council will need to decide on its future at some stage. C/Cllr Buczkowski recommended that all fires and vandalism, no matter how small, be reported to the Police and this was acknowledged.

26/48 Recreation Ground new shelter: Recommendations put forward by the Town Warden were considered. RESOLVED to go ahead with the purchase of the Trojan shelter once the equipment specifications had been thoroughly considered by the Recreation and Amenities Committee at its meeting later this month. RESOLVED to arrange a concrete base and equipment installation locally.

26/49 EDF/Recreation Ground lighting/CCTV: See Part 2 (below) for trench digging quotes. RESOLVED to move forward with the trench digging/cable laying project and for the Clerk to contact National Grid/EDF regarding a date and cost for disconnection of the current electricity supply to the lamp posts. RESOLVED to accept the draft Tennis Club/Cricket Club agreement. RESOLVED to accept the updated project costs taking any excess funds from general reserves.

26/50 Thatched Bus Shelter roof: Council was disappointed to hear that the thatch had appeared to have been vandalised during the music festival weekend in June. RESOLVED to report this to the Police and to commence an insurance claim to cover repairs. Cllr Mottram abstained from voting.

26/51 Finance:

a) Bank balance – the balance of £60,104.64 as at June end was noted.

b) Payments and receipts – RESOLVED to make the payments listed together with the usual monthly payroll payments, including Clerk overtime, details had been received after the agenda had been issued. RESOLVED to purchase the agreed flood prevention equipment following grant funding receipt. RESOLVED to pay the invoice just received for the Cemetery water. Cllr Bellamy had nothing to report regarding the fuel surcharge claim.

c) August payments – RESOLVED that the Clerk be given delegated authority during August, due to there being no Council meeting, to make the usual monthly business payments.

d) Submission of external audit – the submission of the external audit documents on 15th June 2026 was noted.

26/52 Communications:

a) Adoption of phone box outside the Guildhall – further to a review of the adoption package it was RESOLVED not to move forward with the adoption at this time. The Council would, however, be happy to reconsider this decision should a local organisation put forward a plan for adoption and management of the phone box at a future date. Cllr Mottram voted against this proposal.

b) Stagecoach – Standing Orders suspended for C/Cllr Buczkowski to speak. He reported that there had been no movement with regards to Stagecoach agreeing to improve the Bradninch bus service and that, unfortunately, Stagecoach had confirmed that improvements to the local service were no longer being considered. Cllr Wild asked about a report published by DCC on the funding of bus services and the details of routes that are subsidised. C/Cllr Buczkowski agreed to look into the matter and added that whilst rural funding from Government towards local bus services could be increased in the future with a change in Government, it was unlikely. Standing Orders resumed.

c) Request for a new dog bin – Cllr Birley had met with a resident who had requested a new dog bin at the location of the steps leading to the Duchy school. RESOLVED that the Clerk contacts MDDC to obtain details for a new bin.

d) Speeding traffic on Cullompton Hill/Speed watch – RESOLVED to accept the Assistant Clerk's offer to take this task forward. Anyone interested in joining the group can contact Liz Allaway on asst.clerk@bradninch-tc.gov.uk

e) Noise distress – an enquiry had been received from a resident about a high pitched noise being heard around the town at night, thought to be coming from the cemetery or cricket club areas. The Town Warden would investigate.

26/53 Planning:

a) 26/00669/NMA Granted - non-material amendment to allow change in roof pitch and eaves at Hazelgrove, Bradninch. Noted.

b) 26/00651/HOUSE Granted – erection of annex to provide garden room and home office with storage below. 9 Culver Close, Bradninch.

26/54 Highways: Nothing to report.

26/55 Allotment Working Group: Recommendations were considered following an Allotment Working Group inspection of allotments on 7th June 2026. Vacant plots noted as being 4B, 11A, 23B, 25B.

a) Plot 4B – RESOLVED that the Town Warden makes good the small grass plot and that it is used as a community seating area for allotment tenants. Allotment Association would be invited to supply a bench.

b) Plot 6A – RESOLVED that a letter be sent requesting the plot is fenced.

c) Plot 5A – RESOLVED that a letter be sent requesting the plot is fenced and that cultivation takes place to meet the requirement to have 2/3rds of the site cultivated. It was noted that the plot has been cleared well.

d) Plots 7A and 10A – RESOLVED that letters be sent requesting plots are fenced and to remind tenants of the requirement to have 2/3rds of the site cultivated.

e) Plots 17A and 26A – working group will review for improvements at the next inspection.

- f) Plots 21A and 25A – RESOLVED that letters be sent requesting 2/3rd of the plots be cultivated.
- g) RESOLVED that the Town Warden mends the Council's gazebo around the container and ties up the grape vine.
- h) Plot 10B – RESOLVED that the Town Warden looks to replace the tap near this site.
- i) RESOLVED that all plot holders are reminded by email to keep paths around their plots clear.
- j) Plot 30B – RESOLVED that the Town Warden obtains quotes for the placing of a new tap near this plot.
- k) Plot 23A - RESOLVED to accept the request for a new 8x4 wooden shed.
- RESOLVED that the Town Warden would cut back brambles protruding from the allotment hedges.

26/56 Town Trust: An email sent to the Duchy of Cornwall, copied to the Council, from the Chairman of the Town Trust with regards to the purchase of community land had not been received well by some members of the Council. Due to this, the Town Trust Chairman, appointed by the Town Council, had offered their resignation. RESOLVED not to accepted the resignation. Cllrs Chambers, Taylor and Bellamy abstained from voting. With regards to the Town Trust suggesting a collaboration between it and the Council, it was RESOLVED to take this matter forward with Cllr Birley making contact with the Town Trust. Cllr Mottram would join the Council's working group. Cllr Taylor enquired as to why two separate organisations, the Town Trust and Town Council, are needed in Bradninch and it was agreed that this would be discussed at the next working group meeting.

26/57 Footpaths (DCC/P3): RESOLVED to submit this year's P3 footpath maintenance claim forms to DCC. Cllr Andrews confirmed that he was overseeing the annual footpath report which would be put to Council for sign off, then submitted to DCC, at the September meeting. Cllr Mottram would report, through the on-line DCC report a problem page, the brambles along the Hele to Bradninch road. Any highways related matters can be reported using this easy and useful on-line system at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/>

26/58 IT Policy amendment – Councillor email accounts: RESOLVED to ask DALC for advice with regards to the deletion of Councillor email addresses and accounts/history following a Councillor leaving the Council. If the decision falls with the Council, RESOLVED that emails and accounts/history be deleted as soon as possible following a Cllr leaving the role. Cllr Mottram abstained from voting. Cllr Wild volunteered to oversee the deletion management. The IT policy would be amended accordingly in due course.

26/59 Events, comments, updates (no decision making during this item):

- a) **Sustainable Bradninch** - Cllr Mottram reported that there were no events coming up.
- b) **South West Water tankers on Cullompton Hill** - Cllr Bellamy reported a near miss with a tanker which was pulling out of the South West Water reservoir area on Cullompton Hill and asked residents to be aware when in the vicinity.
- c) **Christmas Lights** - Cllr Taylor asked for consideration to be given to the management/coordination of the town's Christmas Lights following the resignation of Cllr Luke Taylor. Cllr Birley would look into the requirements.

26/60 Part 2: PART 2: RESOLVED to enter into private session due to the sensitive nature of the business to be discussed below, and in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, and the Local Government Act 1972, there were no press and public in the meeting at this time –

a) **Trench digging quotes:** The four quotes were considered and it was RESOLVED to appoint Lewis Walker.

26/61 Next meeting of the Town Council: Monday September 14th 2026, 7pm, at the Guildhall (no scheduled meeting in August). 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 JULY 2026	£	VAT	RECEIPTS JUNE 2026	£
Staff salaries (gross)	3431.13	n/a	Burial income	113.39
Employee pension (employer/employee cont.)	944.63	n/a	Allotment rents/deposits	60.00
HMRC/NI	782.25	n/a	Bank interest	7.18
Vodafone monthly direct debit	37.65	Inc VAT	Town Trust Vodafone	15.69
Clerk expenses	84.84	Inc VAT	Annual rents: Tennis Club	o/s

Assistant Clerk expenses	49.65	Inc VAT		
Town Warden expenses	170.68	Inc VAT		
Bank charges	4.25	Inc VAT	Christmas Lights collection	70.80
EDF recreation ground electricity	156.81	Inc VAT	HMRC VAT reclaim	730.87
LK Rural Services (grounds maintenance)	1445.00	n/a	D&C Police grant funding	2500.00
Cloud Next (annual hosting Bradninch-tc.gov.uk)	179.98	Inc VAT	DCRF grant funding (flooding)	979.56
DALC training (Asst.Clerk)	39.00	Inc VAT		
Duchy School PTFA (Mayors Fund)	100.00	n/a		
Seated Furniture Ltd (Townlands play park)	1410.40	Inc VAT		
JRB Enterprises (dog waste bags)	39.72	Inc VAT		
Guildhall room hire (Wetlands coffee morning)	34.50	n/a		
S Glendinning (quarterly payroll)	93.00	n/a		

The meeting closed at 9.24pm and was followed by a meeting of the Bradninch Youth Centre Trust.

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