



BRADNINCH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES

The Guildhall
Brad n i n c h
Exeter, Devon

Minutes of the Bradninch Town Council Meeting
Monday 8th June 2026, 7pm, The Guildhall, Bradninch

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

In attendance: Mrs A Marshall, Clerk, and 3 members of the public.

Standing Orders suspended.

Public Open Session:

1. Community Asset Fund - resident Simon Tytherleigh reminded the Council of the resolution passed at the recent Annual Parish Meeting to set up a community asset fund to receive donations towards the purchase of the allotment site, football field and nature reserve, from the Duchy of Cornwall. He enquired why this had not yet been done. He had investigated the process, had created a draft flyer into which a QR code could be added to link directly to a dedicated webpage on the Council's website. This webpage would provide information and terms and conditions regarding the fund, and information on how to donate or subscribe. A dedicated Council bank account would be required with emphasis on demonstrating transparency and accountability for the funds. Mr Tytherleigh volunteered to be on a working group to put together draft information for the webpage, rules, regulations and terms and conditions of the scheme, and to finalise the flyer. The slogan 'a gift from this generation to all that come after us' was suggested. Mr Tytherleigh said that the Town Council would seem the most accountable and transparent way forward regarding the management of donations, despite the Town Trust being able to reclaim gift aid. The Chairman gave thanks to Mr Tytherleigh for the work put into this project to date, and for volunteering to help take the matter forward. See item 26/32 below.

2. Highways and flooding – it was confirmed to resident Sue Eakers that the Council's Highways contact was still Ricky Cowtan. Sue reported that the drain on Cullompton Hill had now been repaired and that the grant funding from the Devon Emergency Resilience Fund had been agreed at £979.56 for the purchase of flood water barriers for Hele. The Chairman thanked Sue for her ongoing support to the Town Council.

The Town Trust: Anthony Richards, Chair of the Town Trust, spoke on the advantages of the Town Trust collaborating with the Town Council with regard to the management of community facilities, especially in light of the proposed purchase of community assets from the Duchy of Cornwall. He reported that the Trust held resources that could, subject to Charity Commission approval, be invested in such a project. The Trust owns and manages the Guildhall, available for community use, but the building has its limitations and so may not be the ideal place to invest significant funds in the future. The Trust would be interested in hearing the Council's opinions on whether a collaboration with regards to the building may be a good idea for the community. Due to the Duchy's withdrawal from the town, now seemed to be an excellent time for both organisations to work together on considering and developing the best possible community facilities for the future including locations, ownership and management. The support of the community regarding any future developments or changes would be key. In the meantime, whilst funding from townsfolk is being considered for land purchase for community use, the Trust, as a charity, is able to reclaim gift aid on donations which could be beneficial. The Town Trust looks forward to working closer with the Town Council and to hearing its views on these matters. With regards to the Trust in general, it was reported that over £50,000 is currently being invested in the Guildhall with work starting next week.

Mr Richards made reference to a letter he had sent to the Duchy of Cornwall, copied to Councillors, on announcement of the Duchy's withdrawal from the town. In the letter he had offered the Town Trust as a potential asset in discussions over the future of local recreation fields. As a Town Council Representative on the Town Trust,

and as some members of the Town Council had appeared to be unhappy with the letter, Mr Richards offered his resignation and hoped that this issue would not cause a bigger wedge between the two organisations. Cllr M Taylor suggested that residents had a long standing issue with the Town Trust as it was known for ignoring local opinion and only having its own agenda. Having closed meetings and not issuing meeting minutes was not helpful either. Cllr Birley reported that the above matters would be considered in full at the July Council meeting and that a response to the Trust would follow. He added that now is the time for the two organisations to work closer together for the benefit of the community and for the future of Bradninch. He would not be backing Mr Richards offer to resign. Regarding the letter, it was suggested that some Councillors felt that the Trust should have consulted the Council prior to approaching the Duchy, not doing so gave the impression that the Council was irrelevant in this matter although it is actually the current tenant of all three community assets and so will have first option on the purchase of the sites.

Devon County Council, Mid Devon District Council, the Police: No report from MDDC or DCC. Police crime statistics can be found on-line at streetcheck.co.uk

Mayor's Report: The Mayoral Musings covering May had been circulated and published.

Standing Orders resumed.

26/28 Apologies for absence: None.

26/29 Declarations of Interest relating to items on this agenda: None at this time.

26/30 Confirmation of Minutes: RESOLVED to sign off the Full Council minutes of 11th May 2026, and the Finance Committee minutes of the same date, as a correct records.

26/31 Town Councillor Vacancy: An email of resignation from Cllr L Taylor, due to his pending move abroad, was read out. Whilst the resignation was accepted, all present were very sad to lose Cllr Taylor from the Town Council and as the local MDDC District Councillor. Cllr Chambers raised a vote of thanks for Cllr Taylor's service over the past 20 years and it was agreed that he would be sorely missed. The Clerk would advise MDDC accordingly and news with regards to a new MDDC contact remained pending. Anyone interested in becoming a Bradninch Town Councillor can find out more from Alison Marshall, Town Clerk, on clerk@bradninch-tc.gov.uk

26/32 Duchy of Cornwall withdrawing from Bradninch: A response from MDDC with regards to the Asset of Community Value applications for Charwell Wetlands, the allotment site and the football field remained pending. The Duchy Legal Working Group (DLWG) had met and the minutes had been circulated. The DLWG had recently met with MP Mel Stride although no new information had been gained and disappointingly, the Duchy representative had pulled out of the meeting. With reference to the earlier public open session, it was RESOLVED to set up a new website page and new bank account regarding the community asset fund (CAF). Also, a new CAF working group comprising of resident Simon Tytherleigh, Cllrs Birley and Andrews with the Clerk would be created. The aim of this group would be to finalise the draft flyer, write the webpage information, the rules and terms of business covering donations. A member of the Town Trust would be invited to join. Cllr Bellamy enquired about 'other' parcels of Duchy land that might be of interest to the community and may available to purchase, such as land abutting the three listed assets, and it was confirmed that the DLWG was looking into this together with the ownership of any roads, like Cemetery Lane, that the Duchy may own or have an interest in. Cllr Chambers declared an interest in Cemetery Lane matters due to living there. He suggested that the Duchy own Cemetery Lane and so it should be purchased by the Council in order to secure a right of way to the Cemetery. He would investigate Cemetery Lane ownership further. A letter from a resident regarding Duchy owned roads, including Cemetery Lane, was considered.

26/33 Town Warden: RESOLVED to pay the monthly expenses claim and the monthly report was noted. Updates were provided by Cllr Lefebvre following the recent Recreation and Amenities Committee meeting as follows – New bus shelter on Hele Road - the wood was being sourced and the build would commence shortly. Promised DCC grant funding had been chased. Underground utility checks were continuing.

New recreation ground shelter – the latest quotes for the proposed ‘carousel’ shelter had evidenced substantial increases in costs and so the Recreation and Amenities Committee recommended that a basic but robust metal shelter now be considered instead. Any excess insurance funds could go towards new play equipment. RESOLVED and quotes for metal shelters would be sourced.

26/34 EDF/Recreation Ground lighting/CCTV: RESOLVED to accept the Recreation and Amenities Committees recommendations for the new cable route running diagonally across the recreation ground from the tennis courts to the lamp post by the main road. The CCTV cables would be laid at the same time. This route would avoid tree roots and having to use surface mounted cables. The tennis club was in agreement with this plan. Updated costs were being sought and work would progress if still within budget. Agreed grant funding from the Police remained pending. An agreement with the Tennis Club regarding the taking over of its electricity supply remained outstanding.

26/35 Highways: Speed watch – an email from a resident asking whether the Council wished to continue supporting this facility was considered. RESOLVED to advertise for volunteers and to review the situation at the July meeting. Anyone interested in joining the local speed watch group can contact the Clerk at clerk@bradninch-tc.gov.uk

26/36 Finance and Governance:

a) Bank balance – the balance of £64,209.21 as at 31st May 2026 was noted.

b) Payments and receipts – RESOLVED to make the stated payments for June, including Clerk overtime, (see below for the LK Rural Services invoice), and the receipts were noted. RESOLVED that, in accordance with the fixed term contract, it was not possible to cover payment for a fuel surcharge on the LK Rural Services invoice. Cllr Bellamy abstained from the vote. Instead, Cllr Bellamy would discuss alternative ways forward with the contractor for consideration by full Council at the July meeting.

c) Internal Audit – the audit had been complete with no issues reported, the Clerk was thanked for keeping the finances in such good order. RESOLVED to pay the auditors invoice of £65 and to rebook them again for the 2027 internal audit.

d) Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Audit) 1: RESOLVED to sign the document.

e) Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Audit) 2: RESOLVED to sign the document and to submit all relevant audit documents to the external auditor.

f) Provision for the exercise of Public Rights: RESOLVED dates 1st July 2026 – 11th August 2026.

g) VAT re-claim return: The VAT re-claim to HMRC of £730.87 to March end was noted.

26/37 Communications:

a) Adoption of the BT phone box at the Guildhall – adoption information had been received from BT, RESOLVED to consider further at the July meeting.

c) Stagecoach – an email and a ‘phone call from residents calling for a public open meeting with Stagecoach were considered. Agreed that ongoing roadworks and road closures were not helping the Stagecoach situation, neither was DCC’s seeming inability to manage requests from utility companies effectively as several were often working in the town at the same time and often with no notice or signage. RESOLVED that C/Cllr Buczkowski should be made aware of recent issues as reported to the Clerk by Councillors, in order that he could challenge Highways with management issues, including putting out and removing signage in a timely manner and having only one lot of roadworks in place at any one time. Regarding a public open meeting with Stagecoach, RESOLVED to take current matters to DCC through C/Cllr Buczkowski initially, as if resolved this would at least help scheduled buses to turn up. The public meeting would be considered again next month and following any response.

c) Silverton Emergency Plan – a request from Silverton Parish Council to include the use of the Guildhall within its Emergency Plan was considered. RESOLVED to forward the request to the Town Trust, owner of the Guildhall, and to advise the parish council that whilst this would seem to be a good idea, limitations on numbers using the building and the lack of parking should be considered.

26/38 Planning:

a) 26/00159/FUL - Construction of earth-banked slurry lagoon, 2 silage clamps, yard extension, fencing, drainage at Honey Park Farm, Butterleigh. RESOLVED 'no further comment'.

b) 26/00651/HOUSE – Erection of annex to provide garden room and home office with storage at 9 Culver Close, Bradninch. RESOLVED 'no comment'. Cllr Wild abstained from voting. Cllr Blythe declared an interest due to living in Culver Close.

c) 26/00486/PNCOU – Approval - change of use approval – agricultural building to a dwelling at Pipers Farm, Cullompton.

d) 26/00047/TPO – Approval – reduce limb of 1 Pine tree, reduce spread of 1 Oak tree, Strathculm West, Strathculm Road, Hele.

e) 26/00501/LBC – Approval – listed building consent for renovation and refurbishment at 9 Fore Street, Bradninch.

f) 26/00421/LBC - Listed Building Consent for the repair, restoration and internal reconfiguration; repair of external masonry and removal of cementitious pointing; secondary glazing to some windows; restoration of windows; changes to flooring and finishes; kitchen relocation; works to floors; replacement of radiators; insulation and ventilation works to roof; removal of modern fabric to the second floor; installation of internal shutters to some windows; replace secondary staircase balustrade; remove one bathroom; cavity wall upgrade works at The Manor House Parsonage Street Bradninch. RESOLVED to 'support' the application.

g) 26/00086/OUT - Outline application with all matters reserved, other than the point of access, for the erection of up to 9 dwellings and landscape and drainage works Location Hele Road Bradninch. RESOLVED to call a Planning Committee meeting on Monday 15th June, 7pm, at the Guildhall to discuss this matter further. Cllr Wild abstained from the vote.

26/39 DALC training, 'Councils and AI': RESOLVED that the Clerk should attend the training.

26/40 Employees expenses: RESOLVED to pay the assistant clerk monthly expenses of £24 towards heat/light/own phone/internet for Council work whilst working from home. RESOLVED to pay the Town Warden monthly expenses of £10 for the use of his own mobile phone for Council work.

26/41 Events, comments, updates (no decision making during this item):

a) A Sustainable Bradninch talk on Crayfish would take place on 25th June at the Guildhall at 7.30pm.

b) The next Sustainable Bradninch Repair Café would take place on 27th June at the Guildhall.

c) Youth Club volunteers – anyone interested in helping out at the Youth Club at West End Hall can find out more by contacting Cllr Andrews on paul.andrews@bradninch-tc.gov.uk

d) Landunvez Twinning 50th Anniversary – the anniversary would be celebrated this Sunday at the Cricket Club.

e) Townlands grass – it was confirmed that the cutting of the Townlands triangle grass was the responsibility of DCC.

Next meeting of the Town Council: Monday July 13th 2026, 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 JUNE 2026	£	VAT	RECEIPTS MAY 2026	£
Staff salaries (gross)	3801.41	n/a	Burial income	0
Employee pension (employer/employee cont.)	1002.20	n/a	Allotment rents/deposits	70.00
HMRC/NI	792.85	n/a	Bank interest	7.92
Vodafone monthly direct debit	37.65	Inc VAT	Town Trust Vodafone	17.15
Employee expenses:			Annual rents:	
Clerk	159.09	Inc VAT	Cricket Club	400.08
Town Warden	677.18	Inc VAT	Football Club	250.00
Assistant Clerk	88.37	Inc VAT		
Bank charges	4.25	Inc VAT		
EDF recreation ground electricity	tba	Inc VAT		
LK Rural Services (invoice £1171.65)	1095.00	n/a		
J Vanderwolf, Internal Audit	65.00	n/a		

Meeting closed 20.54

Signed 13/07/2026