

# **Bampton Town Council**

## **DRAFT MINUTES**

These minutes will be agreed at the next meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> September and might be subject to slight amendment.

### **The minutes of a meeting of Bampton Town Council held in St Michaels Community Hall on Monday 7th July 2025 at 7.00 pm.**

**Present:** Cllr's S Fouracres (Chair), B Boyles, R Brooker, N Bull and R Grabke.

**In attendance:** County Cllr S Lodge, District Cllr's C Adcock & M Stratton, 23 members of the public and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

Prior to the commencement of the formal meeting there was a presentation on the Mid Devon Housing development at School Close from Ben Penney, Project Manager and Commercial Services Manager MDDC, and Johnny Clover, Zed Pods project manager for the School Close site.

Introductions were made and the responsibilities of the team involved were explained. MDDC is the client, is providing funding, has oversight and is also the planning authority. Zed Pods have the ownership of the design and the design and planning team work side by side. They also manage the contracts. Renelec are responsible for the groundworks and Dragonheart Homes are responsible for delivery of the modular units.

The site was identified by local needs and the planning linked to the housing needs of Bampton. It was explained the scheme will provide 18 high quality energy efficient 2-storey homes with additional parking spaces, communal green and improved connection to an existing landscape. Homes comprise of 10 x 1 bed 2 person homes; 2 x 2 bed 4 person homes; 2 x 3 bed 6 person homes and 4 x 4 bed 8 person homes. They will replace 12 homes that were demolished due to concrete cancer.

Using modular construction minimizes traffic as everything is included and there is less disruption to surrounding residents. Up to 60% fewer operatives are required and it is claimed there are 40% fewer carbon emissions than traditional construction. Build time is claimed to be 50% less. The homes have a 50 year warranty but life expectancy is claimed to be 60 years. The first Zed pod units were built in 2016. Energy bills will be very low due to superior environmental and thermal performances. The homes will meet accessibility standards.

Applications for the homes will have to be made through Homefinder and applicants will need a local connection.

There was concern about the disruption and blocked roads caused by the delivery of the units. The necessary permissions have been obtained from the DCC Highways Department. It was confirmed that the units are being delivered via Black Cat. They are not being taken via the centre of Bampton.

It was pointed out that West Street had been surface dressed just before work had started and there was concern about damage to the surface.

A member of the public asked why there is parking in Market Close for School Close. It was explained that this is unallocated parking to give more parking for everyone.

Members of the public questioned why ten one bedroom units were being constructed. A Housing Needs Survey had been carried out at the start of the process and the need for this number of one bedroom properties was identified.

The presenters were asked if there would be a speed limit in School Close. This will be DCC's decision. MDDC can give them information. It was felt that some parents who use the road exceed the speed limit and there is a need for education.

It is claimed that the development will have more green space and this was questioned because gardens will be smaller. The site is being opened up and there will be more communal and open space. A biodiversity assessment had to be completed as part of the application for planning approval. Planting on the site will increase biodiversity gain.

There was concern that it would not just be local people moving into these homes. Banding for applicants was explained. If there are not enough applicants who are banded as high priority then applicants in lower bands will be able to bid. Concern was raised by a Mid Devon Housing tenant about their lack of support for residents. The tenant did not know who their housing officer was or who to complain to.

There was also concern about damage to surrounding properties. There was assurance that damage would be repaired. Neighbours were told that site hoarding would be erected but this couldn't be done as it would have to be removed to get deliveries onto the site.

There was a complaint about lorries going onto pavements at the end of the road and causing damage to the curbs. It was asked whether there was a banksman. It is impossible at times for lorries to avoid going onto the pavements. Damage will be repaired. There were also complaints about mud.

The email address for further enquiries is [project@zedpods.com](mailto:project@zedpods.com) This is the best way to communicate. Contact can also be made by phone during office hours. The workers on site are not the best people to contact if there are any concerns.

Mr Penney, Mr Clover were thanked for their presentation and they and 13 members of the public left the meeting.

The formal meeting commenced at 8.05pm.

**38/07/25. Apologies and Acceptance for Absence.** Apologies were accepted from Cllr's L Bull, L Brock and R White. Cllr D Whiteway was not present and did not send his apologies.

**39/07/25. Declarations Of Interest.** No declarations.

**40/07/25. Public Discussion.** A member of the Bampton in Bloom Committee thanked Bampton Town Council for all they had done to support them ahead of the Hidden Gardens weekend. Cllr Brooker was thanked for taking on the refurbishment of the railway bench.

It was reported that the litter bin by the Spar shop is small and couldn't contain all the rubbish on the Hidden Gardens weekend. BTC's support was requested to ask MDDC to replace it with a larger bin. In the past there was a dog bin in addition to the litter bin but this was removed and although there was some discussion about replacing it, a site couldn't be agreed. If the bin is replaced with a larger bin it would be able to be used for bags of dog poo and there will be no need for a dog bin. It was also suggested that MDDC could be asked to empty the waste bin more often when there is an event.

**41/07/25. Chairman's Report (for information only).** Cllr Fouracres said the Hidden Gardens weekend had been a terrific success and he thanked the Bampton in Bloom Committee. He reported the Millenium Green is getting considerably more use now the pump track has been added and pickleball and boules are being played there. During a recent visit to the Millenium Green he met visitors from Swindon who were using the pump track and were very appreciative about it. Two more DALC Connect webinars will be delivered by the Highways team at DCC on 2<sup>nd</sup> September and 11<sup>th</sup> November.

**42/07/25. Reports**

**a) County Councillor.** Cllr Lodge was thanked for his written report which had been circulated by email prior to the meeting. The report included information on the Council's determination to transform its SEND support; its fresh approach to highways including a £83million blitz on potholes in a new pilot scheme; surface dressing works between Tiverton and Bampton; a new long term plan approved by cabinet to improve the outcomes of Devon's most vulnerable young people; finance and the Essential Skills Devon grant scheme.

**b) District Councillor.** A written report from Cllr Adcock had been circulated by email prior to the meeting. Cllr Adcock will resend the enforcement references for New Park as the ones on the newsletter didn't work. The Ward Councillors have reluctantly agreed that application 24/01294/DPO, discharge of planning obligations, Quarryman Close should be approved, following procurement of an independent viability assessment and advice from MDDC's Area East Team Leader (Development Management). They were disappointed and felt the developers had MDDC over a barrel.

**43/07/25. To approve the minutes of the meetings held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025 and 28<sup>th</sup> June 2025 as accurate records of the meetings.** The minutes were agreed as accurate records of the meetings and they were duly signed by the Chair.

**44/07/25. Report from the Charter Fair Committee meeting on 7th July 2025.** As Cllr White had given his apologies the Fair Committee meeting had been chaired by Cllr N Bull and he reported to Council. The committee had discussed the programme of events for the day and for the evening. He congratulated Cllr White on being so far ahead with the planning of the event. There had been further discussion about the ambitions for the fair to become a charity, which would open up funding.

**45/07/25. Open Spaces Report:**

**a) To note the cleaning of the leat and any comments.** The leat was cleaned by Four Seasons Tree Services Ltd before the Bampton in Bloom Hidden Gardens weekend. An email had been sent to the Council on behalf of the Bampton in Bloom and Hidden

Gardens committees expressing their gratitude to the Council for arranging for the leat to be cleaned in preparation for the Hidden Gardens event. They felt a good job was done, and the leat looked significantly better. The condition of the leat will now be monitored to see how often it would need to be cleaned to keep it in a good condition and what this would cost.

**b) To report that the application for £15,000 funding for the finger posts as signage within the town project has been successful.** Now the £15,000 funding has been confirmed the project can go ahead. With the promised funding from Bampton Town Council, Bampton in Bloom and the Bampton Visitor and Heritage Centre £19,650 is available in total and the order has been placed. The details are now being worked through. Mr Macdonald was thanked for all of his work on the project.

**c) To consider the quote received for the replacement toilet door and charging system and other work required.** A quote of £5,550 has been received but this is just the start of what the Council would like to do. The plan is to have a toilet at each end with a replacement door and charging system. The other two toilets would only be open on occasions when an event is being held in the town. There would also be redecoration costs. This work has not been included in the 2025-26 budget and will be looked at again when the 2026-27 budget is discussed. It was confirmed that there are no plans to close the toilets.

**d) Update on repairs to the bus shelter at Petton Cross.** This has still not been repaired. Quotes will be obtained for the materials required.

**8.5. Motte & Bailey – update on plans for repairs. To agree to purchase a replacement memorial bench and agree new siting.** To be discussed at the Open Spaces Committee meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> July.

**8.6. Update on creating disabled parking bay in Station Road car park.** The materials are ready and the Council is just waiting for the contractor.

**8.7. Update on purchasing the phone boxes.** The contracts have been received and will be checked and signed by the Clerk.

**8.8. To consider a request from the Pickleball Group for signage at the MUGA (Times when use is limited to the group).** The key safe is now in place and members can access the equipment in the pump house. Someone has stripped the pickleball tape markings of the surface of the MUGA and a request for marking paint has been received from the group. They have also requested some netting. Members of the pickleball group, Cllr Boyles and one or two other members of the Open Spaces Committee will meet on 10<sup>th</sup> July to discuss their needs.

**46/07/25. Update on the Councils actions and proposals on projects identified in 2023/24**

**Regarding improvements in accessibility in the town to be paid from the Sheila Howells Legacy.** No response received.

**47/07/25. Planning:**

**a) Planning applications** - Mid Devon District Council has asked for observations from the Town Council on the following planning application:

25/00763/House. Retention of a single storey rear extension. Location: 3 Mary Lane, Bampton. Comment: no objections.

25/00867/TPO. Application to crown reduce 1 Yew tree by 2- 3mtrs, protected by Tree Preservation Order 01/00003/TPO. Location: Mary Foxes House, Newton Square, Bampton. Comment: no objections.

25/00888/House. Erection of an extension following demolition of existing porch.  
Location: Lower Bowdens Farm, Bowdens Lane, Shillingford. Comment: no objections.

**b) Planning decisions:** to note the following decisions made by MDDC.

25/00237/FULL. Conversion of barn to form one dwelling, to include the demolition of an agricultural building. Location: Land and Buildings at NGR 296082 122730 Court Grove Farm, Bampton. Decision – conditional approval.

**c) Prior Notification**

25/00566/PNCOU. Prior Notification for the change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E) to 2 one-bedroom flats under Class MA. Location: 24 Fore Street, Bampton. Decision: approval of prior approval.

**d) Any other planning matters.** None.

**48/07/25. Emergency Plan update:** Cllr Brooker reported he had received a response from Judi Thomas as she was unable to attend the meeting. Annex A is comprehensive but quite long, something which could be off putting, so he will produce an aide memoir. An accessible version of the plan will be put on the website and in the LARC. Flooding is the most likely emergency situation. The area gets fallen trees quite often. Every emergency situation is different. If mobile signals go down communication would be through local media. A suggestion of a mock emergency test was not felt to be practical. Cllr Brooker was thanked for his work on the plan.

**49/07/25. 20's Plenty Motion.** This month DCC will be debating their proposed policy to permit 20's Plenty where people live, work, play and go to school and the implementation of 20mph zones where the local Parish Council has passed the 20's Plenty motion. In the past BTC has asked for a 20 mph limit for Briton Street, Brook Street and West Street but this was out of its control. It was agreed to support DCC's motion.

**50/07/25. Finance:**

**a) Payments for approval.** It was resolved to approve the following payments:

LARCS – venue hire 7 <sup>th</sup> July	£42.00
Paul Russell (Trading as Parish and Town Auditing Services)	£295.00
Travis Perkins – materials to repair bench	£77.22
Jill Larcombe – refund sign purchase	£69.37

**b) Direct Debits & fees**

Unity Trust Bank – £6.00 service charge at the end of July and August.

**c) To report on payments made since the last meeting.** The following payments were noted:

Janice Caunter – toilet cleaning	£350.00
Four Seasons Tree Services Ltd	£803.99
Cove Garden Nursery – summer plants B in B	£1,039.25
Paintman – paint etc for seat refurbishment	£101.93

**d) Church Clock.** A request was received from the PCC for a contribution towards the cost of repairs to the clock. It was resolved to contribute £250.00 towards the quoted costs of £625.00 plus VAT.

**e) Bampton Twinning Association.** A request for funding towards speaker expenses for a talk on 24<sup>th</sup> September at 7pm was considered and it was resolved to contribute £150.00. The Council offered to help promote the event.

**f) Bank reconciliations.** To be shared on Teams.

**g) Internal Audit Report.** A positive report was received with just a couple of small recommendations. Bank reconciliations will be signed and Standing Orders and Financial Regulations will be updated.

**h) Annual Accounting Statement.** It was resolved to agree the amended Annual Accounting Statement.

**51/07/25. To discuss progressing the new Town Council website.** The current website is out of date and is not user friendly. Claire Kirkham of Freaky by Design produced a template for a new website but this was met with resistance by the previous Clerk. It was agreed to have a meeting to take the new website forward.

At present the Council is paying for hosting the Bampton.org website, the Bampton Visitor and Heritage Centre website, the Charter Fair website and the Bamptontowncouncil.gov.uk website. The Clerk will work out what is being spent on websites.

**52/07/25. Clerks Report.** The Clerk had nothing further to report.

**53/07/25. Date of the next Council meeting.** 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 at 7.00pm in the LARC building.

Signed:  
Chair

Date: