



**Draft Minutes**

These minutes will be agreed at the meeting due to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> April and might be subject to slight amendment

**The Minutes of a Meeting of Bampton Town Council held in the LARC building on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026 at 7.00 pm.**

**Present:** Cllr's S Fouracres (Chair), B Boyles, L Bull, N Bull, R Grabke, R Jackson, D Manning and R White.

**In attendance:** County Cllr S Lodge, District Cllr C Adcock, Ms H Nesbitt (MDDC Senior Enforcement Officer), Cllr J Levick (Chair of Oakford Parish Council), six members of the public and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

**141/03/26. Apologies and Acceptance for Absence.** Apologies were accepted from Cllr R Brooker. Apologies were received from District Cllr M Stratton.

**142/03/26. Declarations Of Interest.** None.

**143/03/26. Public Discussion.** Ms Nesbitt was attending the meeting to give an update on the action that is being taken following a huge engineering operation on a field at Oakfordbridge where lorry loads of soil have been brought in from outside the area, tipped and spread across the field. Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) had received application 26/00050/PNAG Prior approval for the construction of a new road. Location: Land at NGR 292603 121645 South of Oakfordbridge, Bampton and a decision of prior approval not required had been given. The plans submitted were for a track 600 metre long by 25 metre wide in the middle of the field. The 30 metre by 30 metre cattle holding area was not covered in the prior notification. Once MDDC had been alerted to the devastation on the field they had alerted Devon County Council (DCC) and the Environment Agency (EA). Believing the work on the field to be unlawful MDDC issued a 56 day temporary stop notice to give all agencies time to decide what to do next. If any work takes place on the field those concerned will be committing a criminal offense. The EA is not happy because this field is in a flood zone and next to the River Exe and it could have a devastating impact on the nearby fishery. Ms Nesbitt noted the public are their eyes and ears and anyone seeing lorries going onto the field or anything else happening should contact MDDC.

Ms Nesbit was asked what happens if there is torrential rain in the next 56 days and the mud washes into the river, making it muddy. She said the EA are all over it. If an enforcement notice had been issued, the owner of the field could appeal. This is why the other agencies are involved.

She was asked why the prior notification application wasn't a red flag and she explained she was in conversation with Development Management for more details. The prior notification application was for a new access road but plans do not have to be submitted with prior notification applications. Ms Nesbitt acknowledged everyone's concerns and said she was grateful to be given the opportunity to speak at the meeting. She will liaise with the Clerk.

Cllr Lodge suggested that if anyone sees anything happening on the field they should also contact him and/or Cllr Adcock.

Ms Nesbitt, Cllr Levick and one member of the public left the meeting.

A member of the public suggested setting up a Street Warden Scheme, the shape of it to be decided by the Town Council. Even though we are in normal times now there is a real epidemic of loneliness in the elderly and vulnerable and there are possible sources of funding. Volunteers could be recruited at the Volunteers Event. It was suggested that DCC Adult Social Care could be contacted for advice. Cllr L Bull noted the issues around GDPR and safeguarding. This is something to explore and Cllr L Bull and the Clerk will look this in terms of legislation. A 'job description' would need to be written and there would need to be checks to make sure volunteers are not predatory.

Two members of the public left the meeting.

**144/03/26. Chairman's Report.** Cllr Fouracres reported the library consultation has stirred some reaction and is looking more hopeful.

Works carried out under a road closure were completed by lunchtime yesterday, Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March, but the road closure signs were not removed until 6.20pm this evening, 2<sup>nd</sup> March. He questioned why the contractors couldn't have turned the signs around when they completed the work.

Cllr Fouracres has been asked to speak at the Licensing Service for the Revd Charles Wheeler. Councillors and other members of the community have also been invited to the service.

Rachel Gilmour MP is holding a surgery on 6<sup>th</sup> March, no details of the venue. He reminded Councillors about the MDDC Planning Training Session being held on Thursday March 26<sup>th</sup> from 6pm to 8.30pm. Attendance can be in person at Phoenix House or on Teams.

**145/03/26. Reports**

**a) County Councillor.** A written report had been circulated by email prior to the meeting. Cllr Lodge reported the 2026-27 DCC budget had been approved unanimously, going straight through. There will be more money for highways, children's services and libraries.

**b) District Councillor.** A written report had been circulated by email prior to the meeting. The report included a report from the Community Speed Watch group; information on free advice on changes to business rate relief; information about the MDDC budget for 2026-27 and an update on the building of modular homes in Bampton which are expected to be completed in the spring.

**146/03/26. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026 as an accurate record of the meeting.** The minutes were agreed as an accurate of the meeting and they were duly signed.

**147/03/26. Bampton Fair Committee.** Cllr White reported that the committee meeting held earlier in the evening had been a very good meeting. Everything is going ahead as planned. This year there will be more smaller acts rather than a large one.

**148/03/26. Hall Committee.** The Committee met on 12<sup>th</sup> February and reviewed the storage requirements received from the local organisations who might regularly use the planned hall. Members now need to talk to more architects to progress the plans. This project is progressing slowly but it is a big project and a new hall will cost a

lot to build. The committee needs more members from the community, particularly people who have the time, enthusiasm and experience to drive the project forward. Someone who is interested in looking and applying for grant funding would also be a great help.

- 149/03/26. Finance Committee.** Cllr Fouracres reported on the Finance Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February when the committee had scrutinised actual against budget for the year. As it had been decided to extend the lease on the office it was agreed to purchase new tables and chairs. The tables being used are on loan.
- The committee discussed the proposal to purchase new play equipment for the play area in Station Road using a five-year interest free split payment scheme. This is a unique offer and on consulting the Finance Regulations the committee referred to 5.12 *The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:*
- iv) goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.*
- Quotes had been obtained and the quote with the five year split payment scheme also offered the best value as the plans incorporated some of the existing play equipment. Councillors agreed Contract Finder did not need to be used as the payment option was only available from this company.
- The Finance Company agreed to recommend to Council that the quote from Sovereign Play Ltd with a five year payment plan is accepted.
- The Committee recommended adopting the updated Finance Regulations.

**150/03/26. Open Spaces Committee**

- a) Report.** Cllr Boyles reported on the Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February.
- The committee noted the removal of the monkey bars in the Station Road carpark for safety reasons. Much of the equipment is old and nearing end of use and for safety reasons it needs to be replaced. To raise the funding to replace the equipment this year would be difficult and would have resulted in a large increase to the precept. The committee agreed to recommend to Council the acceptance of the quote from Sovereign Play Ltd with the option to make five equal annual payments at 0% interest.
- New fencing will also be required and quotes will be obtained.
- It was agreed to award the grounds maintenance quote for 2026 – 2028 to Four Seasons Tree Services Ltd.
- A gate has been ordered to shut off two of the toilets during most of the year. Repairs will be made to toilet doors.
- An application has been made to MDDC to remove the pine tree in Hollett Garden. Permission is needed because it is in the Bampton Conservation Area.
- b) To consider acceptance of a quote for new play equipment in Station Road as recommended by the Open Spaces Committee.** Acceptance of the quote was recommended by the Finance Committee and the Open Spaces Committee. Financial Regulation 5.12 iv) was noted. It was unanimously agreed to accept the quote from Sovereign Play Ltd with payment being made in five equal annual interest free payments. There will be an approximately three months lead in period and it is hoped the new equipment will be installed in time for the summer holidays.

**151/03/25. Planning:**

**a) Planning applications** - Mid Devon District Council has asked for observations from the Town Council on planning application/s received before the meeting.

**26/00018/Full** Change of use of agricultural land to residential garden, retention of garden store, potting shed, office with decking, garage, and retention of alterations and extension to outbuilding and its use as an annex and occasional holiday let. Location: Greenstreet Cottage, Bampton. Comment: no objections.

**26/00219/HOUSE** Erection of a two-storey side extension and single storey rear extension. Location: 4 Bowdens Lane, Shillingford. Comment: no objections.

**26/00248/HOUSE** Erection of a timber gazebo in rear garden. Location: Bowdenhayes, South Molton Road, Bampton. Comment: no objections.

**26/00260/HOUSE** Erection of a single storey extension to the north west elevation, alterations to the existing entrance and associated external work. Location: Woodwaye, Ford Road, Bampton. Comment: no objections.

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

**26/00050/PNAG** Prior approval for the construction of a new road. Location: Land at NGR 292603 121645 South of Oakfordbridge, Bampton. Decision: prior approval not required.

**c) Any other planning matters.** Councillors were reminded about the invitation to the MDDC Planning Training Session on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 18:00 – 20:30 on Teams or in person at Phoenix House.

**152/03/26. Response to consultation on Local Government Reorganisation.** The consultation runs until 26<sup>th</sup> March and individuals and organisations can submit a response. Councillors did not feel they could take on any further responsibilities as they are already at capacity with the projects already being undertaken.

**153/03/26. To consider whether to sign up as an Emergency Community Hub and apply for a free kitbox.** Cllr Fouracres and the Clerk have signed up for a training session which is a requirement before an application for a free kitbox can be made. Cllr Fouracres will also attend another event on Community Resilience organised by the Community Council for Devon.

**154/03/26. Finance:**

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

LARC	Hire of room for Council meeting	£24.00
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**b) To note Direct Debits & fees paid in February.** Noted.

Unity Trust Bank	Monthly service fee	£6.00
Lloyds	Monthly charge for corporate card	£3.00
EDF Energy	Monthly DD for electricity for toilets	£77.35
EDF Energy	Monthly DD for pump house electricity	£20.87

**c) To report on payments made since the last meeting.** Noted.

Janice Caunter	Cleaning toilets	£350.00
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EWJ Tanner	Rent for office	£350.00
Richard White	Bampton Fair rent	£100.00
Sonic Fireworks	Deposit for fireworks	£375.00
Bampton Community Hub	Rent for car park for Bampton Fair 2024 & 2025	£432.00
Hi-Tec Drains	Investigating leat blockage & clearance	£474.00
JRB Enterprise Ltd	Dog poo bags	£190.98
Cllr S Fouracres	Expenses Claim	£112.60
Luke Hadley	Office window cleaning	£10.00
EDF	Electricity for office	£73.17

Cllr Boyles offered to take on the office window cleaning and her offer was accepted.

**d) Receipts since the last meeting.** Stall fees - £240 and car park/toilets – £301.

**e) To agree to pay venue hire and expenses for Community Wellbeing Event in early May.** It was agreed to give £40.00 to cover venue hire and expenses.

**f) To appoint an internal auditor for 2025-26.** It was agreed to appoint Paul Russell, Town and Parish Audit Services, to carry out the internal audit for 2025-26.

**155/03/26. To review Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.** It was agreed to adopt the updated Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

**156/03/26. To review the Internal Control Policy.** The policy was reviewed and agreed.

**157/03/26. To adopt an IT Policy and Data Protection Policy.** It was agreed to adopt the policies.

**158/03/26. Clerk's Report.** The Clerk reported she would be carrying out an audit of the data held by the Council as part of work to be able to say yes to the new Assertion 10 on the Annual Governance Statement. Cllr N Bull, Cllr R White and the Clerk will be meeting with Claire Kirkham to progress the building of a new Council website. It is hoped this can be completed without too much delay.

**159/03/26. Confirmation of the date of the next meeting.** The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2026 (Change of day due to Easter).

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

Signed:  
Chair

Date:

