



Bampton Town Council

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Bampton Town Council held in the LARC building on Tuesday 5th May 2026 at 7.00 pm.

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

In attendance: District Cllr M Stratton, six members of the public and the Clerk, Mrs J Larcombe.

01/05/26. Election of:

Chair. Cllr S Fouracres was proposed by Cllr R Grabke and seconded by Cllr B Boyles. There were no other proposals. Cllr Fouracres was elected as Chair and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form.

Vice-chair. Cllr R White was proposed by Cllr S Fouracres and seconded by Cllr L Bull. There were no other proposals. Cllr White was elected as Vice-chair

02/05/26. Apologies and Acceptance for Absence. Apologies were accepted from Cllr's N Bull, D Manning and R White. Apologies were received from County Cllr S Lodge and District Cllr C Adcock.

03/05/26. Declarations Of Interest. No declarations of interest.

04/05/26. Appointment/Confirmation of Committees. Committees were appointed as follows:

- a) **Planning Committee.** No committee. All councillors are invited to comment on applications and should it be necessary an additional Council meeting would be called
- b) **Finance Committee.** Cllr's R Brooker, N Bull, S Fouracres and R Grabke
- c) **HR Committee.** Cllr's L Bull, N Bull and R White.
- d) **Open Spaces Committee.** Cllr's B Boyles (Co-chair), R White (Co-chair), R Brooker, S Fouracres and D Manning.
- e) **Bampton Fair Committee.** Cllr's R White (Chair), B Boyles, R Brooker, L Bull, N Bull, S Fouracres and R Grabke. Mr E Tanner, Mr P James and Mr H Saxby.
- f) **Bampton Hall Committee.** Cllr's R Brooker, L Bull, S Fouracres, R Grabke, R Jackson, D Manning, R White and Mrs J Thomas.
- g) **Christmas Trees and Lights Committee.** Cllr's B Boyles (Chair), L Bull and S Fouracres.

05/05/26. Agreement of Committee Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee, Open Spaces Committee, Bampton Fair Committee and Bampton Hall Committee had been reviewed by the committees and were recommended to Full Council. All Terms of Reference except the Christmas Trees and Lights Committee were agreed. The Terms of Reference for the Christmas Trees and Lights Committee are new Terms of Reference and will be subject to further review.
The toilets will be a Council responsibility and not Open Spaces.

06/05/26. Appointments

- a) **Flood Group.** It was agreed to appoint Cllr's R Brooker, N Bull and S Fouracres to the Flood Group.
- b) **Snow Warden.** It was agreed to appoint Cllr's R Brooker, N Bull and S Fouracres.

07/05/26. Approval of signatories for cheque payments and authorised internet bank payments. Cllr Fouracres, Cllr N Bull and Cllr Brooker were confirmed as the bank signatories.

08/05/26. Public Discussion. A member of the public complained about the poor condition of the surface of Windwhistle Lane and said it should be addressed. He pointed out that under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980, highway authorities in England and Wales have a statutory duty of care and unless something is done, he will take action. He felt the way that potholes had been repaired was very inefficient. It was explained that DCC are the Highways Authority and that while Bampton Town Council (BTC) has no responsibility for the upkeep of the highways, it can raise concerns with the highways authority and councillors have already spoken to Dominic Scotting, Neighbourhood Highways Officer, because they share his concerns about the condition of this piece of road. He is aware of the condition of the road, but it is not a main route. County Cllr Lodge mentioned it at the last meeting and said it needed more work than pothole repairs. The member of the public was encouraged to speak to Cllr Lodge. Cllr Stratton said he had spoken to Cllr a lot about this and Cllr Lodge is doing what he can. He is now encouraging everyone to potholes online as this gives an indication of the severity of the problem.

A member of the public said she had moved into Bampton in September 2025 but had known Bampton for a long time before that. She explained that she had a background in creative events and through the Rural Touring Dance Initiative, a Not for Profit organisation, is keen to promote performances from touring and dance groups in rural venues including Bampton. She would like to help raise funds and is up for collaboration and organising community embedded events. A lot of groups might benefit and contribute. As a start she is proposing to put on two performances from a dance duet with each performance lasting fifteen minutes. The School/Millennium Green and Castle Grove Nursing Home were suggested as venues. She is interested in obtaining contacts for stewards and making contact with an untapped audience. Longer term she has a plan to recruit a group to make suggestions about what can be arranged.

The Bampton Heritage and Visitor Centre trustee who is taking the lead on the development of their new website reported they are moving on quite nicely. He will let Cllr N Bull know where they are.

The community event 'Celebrate our Outdoor Bampton' will take place on Saturday 6th June from 10.00 – 12.00 at Bampton Community Hub. There will be a chance for people to meet people with similar interests, discover and join local groups and volunteer their help. BTC will have a table to raise awareness of the open space that it is responsible for and to try and get people involved with projects such as the Community Orchard.

09/05/26. Chairman's Report (for information only). Cllr Fouracres reported that Doug Parish's funeral had been well attended and a lot of the councillors had attended. He reported on a meeting of the Hall Committee held on 20th April. A survey of the site is being arranged and architects have been appointed. The project is moving on.

10/05/26. Reports

a) County Councillor. A written report had been circulated by email prior to the meeting.

b) District Councillor. A written report was circulated by email.

11/05/26. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 7th April 2026 as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and they were by signed by the Chair.

12/05/26. Report from the Charter Fair Committee meeting on 5th May 2026. As a number of the committee had given their apologies the meeting was cancelled. Most things are now organised.

13/05/26. Open Spaces Report:

- a) Report from the Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on 27th April 2026.** In addition to the items covered on the agenda the committee received an update on the work that is being carried out at Hollett Garden. The committee noted their appreciation of the work of the volunteers. The earmarking of unspent funds from the 2025-26 Open Spaces budget was discussed and a recommendation was made to Full Council.
- b) To consider acceptance of a quote to replace the gates and fencing around the Orchard as recommended by the Open Spaces Committee.** It was agreed to accept the quote from Dan Woollacott Fencing Ltd, as recommended by the Open Spaces Committee. This work involves removing brambles etc that have grown up around the fencing and will need to wait for the start of September to avoid disturbing nesting birds.
- c) To receive an update on the installation of the new play equipment.** There will be a survey later this week and work will commence on 18th May. The new surfacing will be installed week commencing 1st June.
- d) To receive an update on the installation of two new metal doors at the toilets.** The doors have been ordered and are due to be installed on 19th May. The chosen colour was cobalt blue, the same as the fingerpost signs in the town.
- e) To receive an update on the marking of two disabled parking bays in the Station Road Car Park.** One quote has been received to mark out two disabled parking bays in the car park. One bay will be by the public toilets and the other by the entrance to the play area. Fifty percent of the cost will come from the Sheila Howell Fund. Barriers will need to be used to fence off the spaces to keep them clear for marking. It has only been possible to obtain one quote for what a contractor would consider to be a small piece of work. It was agreed to accept the quote.

- 14/05/26. To consider a request for permission to develop a proposal for a new, heritage asset based on the medieval design of Bampton's Motte and Bailey castle.** Details of the 'Where's the Castle' project, which aims to create a full size section of parts of the castle surround for people to interact with, were circulated prior to the meeting. The plans had already been presented at the Bampton Community Arts and Heritage Event held in March prior to BTC, owners of the site, being consulted. The plans had also been discussed informally with the Chair following that event.
- Cllr L Bull explained nothing could be done without obtaining permission from English Heritage. On 11th June 2025 a group of councillors and the Clerk had met with Andy Crabb, Archaeologist & Heritage at Risk Project Officer for Historic England (Dartmoor NP, West Devon, South Hams and Plymouth) to discuss replacing the steps. There is a Section 17 Management Agreement for the maintenance of the site and a Volunteer Management Agreement for weed control. It was suggested that BTC should speak to the County Archaeologist and also look at Plympton Motte and Bailey. Cllr L Bull suggested also looking at the one at Barnstaple. Possible funding sources had been discussed as English Heritage would not be able to fund the work required. A report had promised but despite a reminder it had not been received.
- The project lead is aware permission has to be obtained from English Heritage and he told the meeting that once permission was obtained, he knew funding could be obtained. BTC will not be asked for any funding. Once funding is obtained the project will need to be completed within a year because of involvement from Exeter University that he is arranging. There was some reluctance from the project lead to fully involve BTC in the development and planning for the project. While councillors felt it was a great idea and were impressed by the enthusiasm and ideas for a project that has funding and will leave a legacy they do need to be involved in the planning and due diligence. English will want to deal with BTC as the land-owner when they are considering the request for the project. The parts to be built will be below the skyline.
- The success of the project where BTC worked with a group of parents and volunteers to provide new play equipment at the recreation field was noted.

Another project to provide a specially designed bench for the top of the motte has been discussed.

The Council agreed to engage with the Project Lead and English Heritage with a view to establish timelines and partnership working. Cllr L Bull, Cllr Brooker and the Clerk to be informed about any arrangements to meet with English Heritage so BTC is represented at any such meeting.

15/05/26. Planning

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

26/00601/PNCOU Prior Approval for the change of use of ground floor bakery (Class E) to form a dwelling (Class C3) with the existing first floor flat. Location: Bawdens The Bakers ,26 Brook Street, Bampton.

Cllr L Bull reported she had received a lot of comments from people who were disgusted that BTC hadn't done anything. BTC informed MDDC Planning Enforcement on the Saturday the work started but MDDC were unable to do anything until the Monday.

Comment: Bampton Town Council recommend that prior approval for this application is refused because it doesn't want to lose another retail premise and retail frontage in the town, particularly one that has wheelchair access and where deliveries can be made to the rear of the premises.

This is a retrospective application and work was well underway before Mid Devon District Council notified the Council about the application. Bampton Town Councillors have been approached by a number of members of the public who have told them they are concerned by the audacious disregard of planning protocol by the owners.

Bampton Town Council informed Mid Devon District Council Planning Enforcement immediately after work started and Councillors are concerned that an Enforcement Officer didn't take action right away to stop the work.

b) Planning Decisions: the following decisions made by MDDC were noted.

26/00219/House Erection of two-storey side extension and single-storey rear extension. Location: 4 Bowdens Lane, Shillingford. Decision: conditional approval.

26/00248/House Erection of a timber gazebo in rear garden. Location: Bowdenhays, South Molton Road, Bampton. Decision: conditional approval.

25/01805/Full Erection of 1 self-build dwelling and associated landscaping works. Location: Five Levels, Old Tiverton Road, Bampton. Decision: conditional approval.

c) Any other planning matters. None.

16/05/26. FINANCE:

a) Payments to be approved. It was resolved to make the following payments:

LARC	Hire of room for Council meeting	£24.00
Four Seasons Tree Services Ltd	Grass cutting	£803.99
DALC	Planning training Cllr Jackson	£42.00

b) To note Direct Debits & fees paid in April. Noted.

Unity Trust Bank	Monthly service fee	£7.00
Lloyds	Monthly charge for corporate card	£3.00
EDF Energy	Monthly DD for electricity for toilets	£77.35
EDF Energy	Monthly DD for electricity for pump house	£18.72
MDDC	Business rates for old lockup	£38.44

MDDC	Business rates for Charter Fair	£58.75
SSE Energy Supply	Electricity bill for Office	£150.66

c) Payments made since the last meeting. Noted.

EWJ Tanner	Rent for office	£350.00
Four Seasons Tree Services Ltd	Extra cut recreation field	£72.00

d) Receipts since the last meeting: precept - £45,000.00, Fair Stall fee £40.00 and car park £337.00

e) To note the decision of the Finance Committee to transfer £30,000 to the CCLA Investment Account. Decision noted and supported.

f) Annual accounts 2025-26. Circulated. AGAR forms to be prepared.

g) To agree to Earmark Reserves from 2025-26 budget to continue projects in 2026-27. It was agreed to earmark the following:

Open Spaces - £18050 for projects carried forward from 2025-26

Bampton Fair - £2073 (£1418 surplus from 2025-26 + £655 carry forward of £1030 stall fees minus £375 deposit for fireworks)

Hall project - £10,000

P3 Footpaths - £680 to add to existing P3 Reserves of £1,338.45

Replacement of Assets - £5,000

Total - £35,803

h) Asset Register. The updated Asset Register was circulated. With the 10 Raspberry PI Computers which have been loaned to the school added back in the Asset Register was approved. It was agreed to remove the other listed items.

17/05/26. Social Media Policy. The updated policy was approved

18/05/26. Clerks Report. Nothing further to report.

19/05/26. Date of the next Council meeting. 1st June 2026 at 7.00pm in the LARC building.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm

Signed:
Chair

Date: