



# Bampton Town Council

## DRAFT MINUTES

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

### **The minutes of a meeting of Bampton Town Council held in the LARC building on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2026 at 7.00 pm.**

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

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

**33/07/26. Apologies and Acceptance for Absence.** Apologies were accepted from Cllr's L Bull, N Bull, R Jackson and D Manning.

**34/07/26. Declarations Of Interest.** Cllr R Grabke declared a personal interest in item 45/07/26 as the owner of the properties concerned is her father.

**35/07/26. Public Discussion.** Britain in Bloom thanked Bampton Town Council for helping to make their Hidden Gardens Weekend such a success and for paying for vegetation to be cleared from the leat. Fewer tickets were sold this year (365 in 2026 and 420 in 2025) but it was thought this was probably due to the heatwave. Everyone was complimentary about the gardens on display and the refreshments were appreciated. Councillors had no objection to the bunting being kept up. Concern was expressed about safety following an incident with a car mounting the low wall on the river side of the Riverside carpark. Fortunately no one was hurt and no one was on the level below the wall or sat on the seat there at the time of the accident. Cllr Grabke said she had only heard of one other similar issue in fifty years. However, cars are getting bigger. Insurance companies will get involved and the Riverside Hall Trustees will need to decide what measures need to be taken following the incident.

A member of the public complained about someone putting out a lot of 'free to take items' onto the pavement outside of the butchers in Brook Street when they were closed on the Saturday afternoon and Sunday of the Hidden Gardens Weekend. Some of the items were felt to be rubbish and putting the items out in this way detracted from the tidy appearance of the town. If done sensibly this was not felt to be an issue. It was suggested that the person concerned could be approached before the next Hidden Gardens Weekend and asked not to do it then. Cllr Lodge didn't think Highways would do anything about people putting out 'free to take items' on the pavement but he will inquire.

A member of the public complained about weeds and overgrown vegetation around the town and noted the gullies outside of the LARC are full of rubbish. He suggested employing someone to cut back brambles and tidy up and put himself forward for the work. The Clerk advised that if the Council decided to pay someone to do the work they would need to advertise and give people the chance to apply. Cllr Lodge advised that once there are trained Road Wardens the Council could get volunteers to help with the weeding.

**36/07/26. Chairman's Report (for information only).** The Chair noted that Neil and Anna would be retiring from Bampton Pharmacy on 10<sup>th</sup> July and on behalf of the Council he thanked them for all they had done for the community. There is a book at Bampton Fresh in which members of the community and users of the pharmacy can write messages for them.

**37/07/26. Reports**

**a) County Councillor.** A written report was circulated by email prior to the meeting and contained updates on the 'Spot a carer campaign'; highways and parking improvements that Cllr Lodge is looking at across the division; the heatwave and impacts on roads and new open plus technology that is being introduced in some libraries across the county, but not Tiverton or Bampton just yet. This is not to say it will not happen in the future.

He was delighted to report that almost all towns and parishes in his division have now either signed up to or are signing up to the Road Warden scheme. This will ensure that positive steps can be taken to improve our local roads and more. It is his intention to bring together any or all of those involved for an in-person meeting to get to know each other and look at priority roads. A WhatsApp group may also be a useful tool, as this is a road network that affects the whole area.

Cllr Lodge offered to arrange for the People's Emergency Briefing film to be available if the Council would like to make the arrangements for it to be shown.

**b) District Councillor.** A written report was circulated by email prior to the meeting.

Councillors are pleased with the new MDDC smartphone app. It is good for reporting and waste collection reminders can be set up.

The housing development at School Close is nearly complete and an Open Day will be arranged.

The tenants of a property in School Close who have just moved out have left a number of items outside and the owners have been trying to contact MDDC to make sure they are not fined for fly tipping. They have also contacted Bampton Town Council and the District Councillors.

The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) is a part of the Local Plan and is a detailed assessment of land in Mid Devon that has been brought to the attention of the Council by landowners, developers and others through two 'Call for Sites' held in 2021 and 2025, which may have potential for development for housing and economic uses, renewable energy and habitat creation. MDDC is under pressure to find sites for housing, especially with the increase to their targets because of the Government's plan to create more housing. In Clare & Shutterton Ward, potential sites for development at Bampton and Shillingford are identified and evaluated in detail. The Local Plan is still active and there is still a settlement boundary.

It was reported that some elderly and vulnerable people who are tenants of Mid Devon Housing's bungalows in Bampton are concerned because of rumours about a possibility they might be moved out.

**38/07/26. Minutes.** The minutes of the meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and they were duly signed by the Chair.

**39/07/26. Road Warden Scheme.** The Clerk has signed the agreement with DCC on behalf of Bampton Town Council. Volunteers have completed the online Highways Safety training and are booked to attend an in person Signing, Lighting and Guarding course on 15<sup>th</sup> July. Once this is completed the material to repair potholes can be

ordered.

**40/07/26. To agree to purchase 2 Vehicle Activated Speed Signs (as agreed with DCC by the Community Speedwatch Group) using funding from the Sheila Howell Legacy.** Members of the Community Speedwatch Group have obtained permission from DCC Highways for Vehicle Activated Speed Signs to be used in Bampton parish and ten sites for their use will be assessed. Quotes have been obtained for the make and models they will allow. At this point it has not been confirmed who will be paying for the posts to mount them on and their installation. The cost could be between £150 to £200 for each post and Bampton Town Council might have to meet this. The Sheila Howell Legacy Trust has agreed to contribute £5,000 towards the cost. Power was given to the Chair, Clerk/RFO and Cllr Manning to agree which quote to accept.

**41/07/26. Report from the Charter Fair Committee meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2026.** Cllr Fouracre reported on the meeting in the absence of Cllr White who was on holiday. The main issue is finding the funding to put on entertainment that will have a real pull to draw in the crowds for the fair and the committee are working on this. There are a lot of 'on costs' to put on the fair and the contribution from the Council and the stall fees are needed to cover them.

**42/07/26. Open Spaces Report.**

**a) Report from the Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2026.**

Cllr Boyles gave a report from the meeting. The Hollett Garden volunteers have purchased and planted some new plants and the garden is looking good. The old rose bush in the centre of the garden that was given a hard pruning earlier in the year is coming back well.

Four Seasons Tree Services Ltd cleared the vegetation from the leat on 19<sup>th</sup> June as arranged. This will be paid for from the Council's Open Spaces budget. A volunteer organised an event to clear weeds etc before the Hidden Gardens Weekend and a number of people took part.

The bin at Shillingford needs to be fixed in place before MDDC will empty it. Three quotes will be obtained for work that is required on trees between the Millenium Green and the school.

There was no update on plans for a project for the Motte and Bailey.

Frasers are cutting one of the three pieces of grass at Scotts and are willing to continue.

**b) To minute the completion of the installation of the new play equipment.**

The installation of the new play equipment and surfacing has been completed and has been well received. Cllr Boyles and Cllr Brooker were both thanked for painting some of the equipment that was retained. Cllr Boyles was thanked for organising the refurbishment and painting of the shelter and for putting up bunting for the opening event. Mr Boyles was thanked for doing some strimming. Repairs to the gates will be looked at once all the equipment for the installation is removed. The padlock on the gate will be replaced with one with a code.

A well-attended opening event was held on 12<sup>th</sup> June and Mrs Newman, Headteacher of Bampton C of E Primary School cut the ribbon. Children received a free ice cream.

**c) To receive an update on the marking of two disabled parking bays in the Station Road Car Park.** The space by the play area has been marked but the second, at the other end of the car park is still to be marked.

#### 43/07/26. Planning

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

**26/00851/House** Erection of a balcony and door from dwelling. Location: 14 Bouchier Close, Bampton. Comment: no objections.

**b) To note the comment made on the following application, received on the day of the last meeting.**

**26/00723/HOUSE** Erection of two storey linked extension and alterations. Mount Lodge, Bampton. It was noted that the comment made was no objections.

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

**26/00647/TPO** Application to reduce the western branch of 1 Horse Chestnut tree (T004) by approximately 1.5-2m, protected by Tree Preservation Order 94/00003/TPO. Location: Bampton C of E Primary School, School Close, Bampton. Decision: consent granted.

**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. Decision: refusal of change of use, class ma001, prior approval for the above development.

**d) Mid Devon Local Plan.** No response will be made for the Scoping Consultation.

**e) Any other planning matters.** It was noted that there are three Mid Devon Housing properties in Bampton that have been empty for at least a year. It is believed this is because they do not have enough staff to keep up with maintenance and carry out the work required to bring empty homes up to the Decent Homes Standard. It is concerning that homes are empty while there are families in need of emergency housing. In some cases it takes a while for MDDC to decide whether they can afford to bring some empty properties up to the required standard or whether they need to sell them.

#### 44/07/26. 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               | Monthly grass cutting contract   | £803.99 |
| Paul Russell (Parish and Town Audit Service) | Internal Audit                   | £295.00 |

**b) To note the receipts and payments for May and June 2026.** Appendix A – noted.

Cllr Grabke has checked and signed the bank reconciliations for May and June 2026. These were available for all councillors to see.

**c) To receive the Internal Auditor Report.** Paul Russell, Internal Auditor, confirmed that the Council had met all ten governance objectives, His recommendations were:

- Open a deposit account with Unity Trust Bank to increase bank interest receipts.
- List Earmarked Reserves in the accounts and review annually.
- Add additional information about councillors on the website
- Add reference to WCAG2.2AA in the Accessibility Statement on the website.

- Adopt a Data Retention Policy.
- Adopt an Investment Policy

**d) Report from the Finance Committee meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June.** He Committee reviewed Budget v Actual for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2026 and there were no areas of concern at this early stage of the financial year. Bank balances were noted: Unity Trust Bank - £46,526.67, CCLA - £115,388.54. The General Reserves Policy was reviewed and agreed. The Business Risk Register was reviewed and recommended for agreement by Council.

**e) To agree an Investment Policy.** Agreed.

**f) To agree the Business Risk Register as recommended by the Finance Committee.** Agreed.

**45/07/26. Council Office.** Cllr Grabke declared a personal interest but made the decision not to be involved in this item as both properties belong to her father. It was agreed to relinquish the tenancy of the Council Office at 2 Newton Square to allow the space to be used for retail and to take on the tenancy of 5 Square, a vacant premise, at the same rent. There was a risk that this property could have been turned into residential if it wasn't let. Should anyone wish to take it on for retail purposes in the future the Council is happy to move again.

**46/07/26. Clerks Report.** Nothing further to report.

**47/07/26. Date of the next Council meeting.** 7h September 2026 at 7.00pm in the LARC building.

The meeting closed at 7.58pm.

Signed:  
Chair

Date: