



## Full Council meeting

### Minutes

From the meeting at 7.30pm on Tuesday 11 March 2025

At: Youth and Community Centre, Frome Road, Bradford on Avon

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### Decision making

The **decisions** made by the Full Council at this meeting are at minute [56](#).

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### Present

Councillors:

- Kate Bessant
- Sam Blackwell
- Emma Franklin
- Alex Kay
- Tim Trimble
- Katie Vigar
- Jack Vittles (Chair)

Town Council Officers:

- Ian Brown - Chief Executive & Town Clerk
- Chris Stringer – Deputy Town Clerk

Meeting clerk:

- Sarah Howe – Committee Clerk
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### Apologies

From Councillors unable to attend the meeting:

- Dave Garwood
  - Sarah Gibson
  - Jennie Parker
  - Alison Potter
  - Simon McNeil-Ritchie
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55. Agenda item 5 - Declarations of interest  
No declarations of interest were made.

56. Agenda item 4 - Minutes from the previous meeting of the Full Council  
Councillor Kay asked for some changes to minute no.48 regarding the traffic from the Full Council minutes of the 7 January 2025. Following a discussion, it was agreed to change the beginning of the paragraph to: 'Various councillors expressed their **extreme** frustration at WC's **changing** stance regarding....'.  
A final sentence was also added: **This has combined to make progress slow and difficult.**

Proposed by Councillor Katie Vigar

Seconded by Councillor Jack Vittles

and with all in favour it was **resolved** to accept the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 7 January 2025 with the stated amendments.

57. Agenda item 5 - Matters arising  
None.

58. Agenda item 6 – Chair's Update

The Chair gave a verbal update as follows:

- Several Neighbourhood Plan (NP) meetings have taken place over the last few weeks with the consultant Place Studio.  
Stakeholder groups are being approached to take part in the process.  
The next consideration will be the call for sites submissions.
- On 13 February the Chair and other councillors met with the Environment Agency (EA), Wiltshire Council (WC) and Bradford on Avon's M.P. Brian Mathew to hear from the EA. More under Agenda item 8.
- November flooding: the Chair met with residents and businesses caught up in the flooding to discuss their experiences and ongoing requirements. The Chair in his capacity as Mayor also spoke to the BBC in a follow up piece.
- The A36 has reopened which should hopefully ease traffic travelling through the town.



- Councillor Vittles attended a West Wilts Mayors meeting alongside Mayors from Trowbridge, Melksham, Chippenham and Westbury. Discussions centred round problems, opportunities, advice and community events.
- A service took place on 3 March to commemorate the 3-year anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. The Chair reaffirmed the town council's ongoing support to the Ukrainian community.
- The Chair recently attended and enjoyed the St Laurence School Awards. The guest speaker was Nelson Mandela's former bodyguard!
- Culver Close pavilion – the original decision on planning was supposed to be published on 31 May 2024. However, WC have recently completed the public consultation so the decision should finally come though soon.
- Westbury Garden tree and wall – the tree has been inspected and is stable. The trunk has expanded to such an extent that the wall alongside the river adjacent to the tree has been compromised. A section of wall will therefore be removed and new fencing added around the tree which itself will be pruned. These works should buy another 5-10 years before addressing the issue again.
- Finally, the Chair thanked councillors and officers for all their hard work and commitment. He continued that it had been a pleasure to work collaboratively with everyone and a privilege to represent residents, friends and family. Councillor Kay also thanked the Chair/Mayor and Deputy Mayor for all their hard work over the year.

#### 59. Agenda item 7 – St Maragret's Hall

The Deputy Town Clerk provided a verbal update.

The floor in St Margaret's Hall has been dried out very slowly over the last couple of months under the directions of the insurance company.

Unfortunately, various complications have come to light regarding the integrity of the floor and supporting structures and so it is almost certain that the floor will need to be replaced instead of salvaged. Reinstatement work will therefore take longer and the retractable seating will need to be removed and stored off site.

The removal of the flooring will provide the best opportunity to establish the ingress of water either over the barriers from the river or up from under the floor.



The council is therefore waiting for the loss adjuster to confirm these next steps.

There was a discussion on the suitability of the Youth Centre as venue for council meetings as the acoustics are so poor. The Chair confirmed that the football club could be used instead and has been offered. It was agreed that alternative venues will be investigated. A resident confirmed that Holy Trinity church are considering offering the church as a community space for certain events that cannot take place at St Margaret's Hall.

#### 60. Agenda item 8 – Flooding Update

The Chair referred to his update as supplied with the agenda and added that the hope is to use Holy Trinity church as an alternative venue to St Margaret's Hall for the EA engagement event sometime this spring. The Chair is also hoping town and Wiltshire councillors might attend the event to speak to residents.

Councillor Kay believes the originally proposed EA flooding scheme would not be workable and would not have prevented the flooding in November. She is also hoping the EA will attend the Wild River festival to meet with local residents and take part in a forum. Councillor Trimble believes a study of the whole river system up and downstream from Bradford on Avon could help with future flooding events. Perhaps any money which might be available could be used to plant trees on agricultural land at certain strategic points. Councillor Blackwell wondered whether and how residents feedback should be captured.

The Town Clerk confirmed that Bradford on Avon's flood plan and response to flooding events is seen as effective and consequently the town council has been invited to take part in a pilot study organised by the National Flood Forum where the town's flood plan will become multi-agency.

#### 61. Agenda item 9 – New pedestrian river crossing

The Chair referred to his update as supplied with the agenda and added that funding for any new river crossing has yet to be sought but would come from central government and other outside sources.

The next steps would be the production of a Business Case Plan (BCP) however the costs associated and who would pay for that have yet to be determined. It



was considered that if the town council pays for the BCP the town can decide who is engaged which might be an advantage.

It was also confirmed that WC's support comes in the form of taking the Strategic Outline Case and helping the town council turn that into a built bridge with engineering and bid support.

Councillor Bessant wondered if the EA could be approached to help with the BCP, the Chair confirmed he could ask and also chase up Wiltshire Council to maintain some momentum with the project.

#### 62. Agenda item 10 – Traffic update

The Chair referred to his update as supplied with the agenda and confirmed that he shares the frustrations of many councillors that there has been no progress with Wiltshire Council on the next steps for the project. Councillor Trimble confirmed he would chase up Wiltshire Council officers again. It is thought that the arrival of purdah may free up some officer time. Councillor Vigar suggested that new/incoming town councillors should be reminded that traffic has been a key project since 2021 for the council. Councillor Trimble also suggested that the new council should put pressure on new Wiltshire Councillors as they come into office.

#### 63. Next meeting

The next Full Council meeting is provisionally planned for Tuesday 13 May 2025.

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#### End of the meeting

The meeting finished at 8.28pm.



Appendix A:

The were 3 members of the public present and 1 statement.

A resident thanked all the councillors for all their hard work over the last 4 years.