



Full Council meeting

Minutes

From the meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 10 March 2026

At: United Church Bradford on Avon, 10 St Margaret's Street, Bradford on Avon

Decision making

The **decisions** made by the Full Council at this meeting are at minutes 65, 67, 72, 73 & 74.

Present

Councillors:

- James Atkinson
- Sam Blackwell
- Kevin Elliott
- Andy Gordon
- Alex Kay
- Ben Reed
- Ghika Savva
- George Simmonds
- Chris Spence
- Katie Vigar
- Jack Vittles (Chair & Mayor)

Town Council Officers:

- Ian Brown - Chief Executive & Town Clerk
- Chris Hogg – Green Spaces Officer
- Sarah Hawkins - Accountant

Meeting clerk:

- Sarah Howe – Committee Clerk
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Apologies

From Councillors unable to attend the meeting:

- Kate Bessant (Vice Chair & Deputy Mayor)



64. Agenda item 3 - Declarations of interest

None

65. Agenda item 4 – Minutes of 6 January 2026

Proposed by Councillor Gordon

Seconded by Councillor Vigar

and with all in favour **resolved:** to accept the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 6 January 2026.

66. Agenda item 5 - Matters Arising

None

67. Agenda item 6 – Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the following meetings were noted: Town Development 13 January and Environment and Green Spaces 27 January 2026.

68. Agenda item 7 – Bradford on Avon Fire Station proposed closure

Dorset and Wilts Fire Authority are planning to close 8 fire stations as part of a cost cutting exercise and the withdrawal of central government funding.

There is a public consultation in place until the 15 May 2026. The Chair opened the discussion by confirming he and other councillors had attended the Fire Authority meeting with the Chief Fire Officer and other representatives the previous week in Bradford on Avon (BoA) and had tried to get more clarity on the issue. The town council now needs to decide on its position.

Councillors agreed that the town would be safer with the fire station remaining open. Councillors Vigar and Blackwell were both impressed with public engagement to date and continued to encourage residents to respond to the consultation. It was felt conversations need to be started around funding public services more generally, asking questions regarding the closure in Parliament and triggering a parliamentary debate with a petition (Brain Mathew M.P. will be mentioning Bradford on Avon in Parliament on Thursday 12 March), and whether the public could help keep the station open by making further contributions via council tax as part of a revenue raising exercise. The Chair went on to say any campaign to keep the station open should look at evidence-based reasoning. BoA is in a unique position due to the river, flooding issues, pokey side streets and there was general agreement



that even if emergency fire events are reducing, other emergencies keep the total number of call outs steady.

It was agreed the Chair would write an open letter from the Council to the Fire Authority as well as respond via the consultation. This letter would be published widely using the usual channels available to the council and be shared with the Fire Authority. The Chair asked officers to continue to publicise the consultation. He also added that the fire fighters should let the council know if there is anything else the council can do to help.

A motion was agreed.

Proposed by Councillor Vittles

Seconded by Councillor Kay

And with all in favour **resolved: Bradford on Avon Town Council opposes the closure of Bradford on Avon Fire Station given its unique benefits to the town, and will work with the Fire Authority, firefighters and all stakeholders to find a solution which avoids any closure. The Council will write an open letter laying out their objections.**

69. Agenda item 8 – Chair's Update

The Chair provided a verbal update.

The Chair attended the fire station briefing from Dorset and Wilts Fire and Rescue Service last Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning too. He questioned the Chief Fire Officer on the timeline of the publication of the consultation responses and to make sure they had taken into account BOA's unique situation with regards to flooding. It was good to see so many BOA residents coming out to listen and question on this very important topic. The Chair also had two opportunities to make the case for BOA fire station on BBC Radio Wiltshire and West Wilts Radio.

The town's Flood working group will be meeting tomorrow to look at how we can pursue the EA options 3 and 4 as approved previously at a Full Council meeting. Option 3 was 'to consider community and catchment resilience measures such as temporary barriers, natural flood management, etc. to reduce impact'. Option 4 was 'Property flood resilience project'.



On the pedestrian bridge, the Chair was pleased that the outline business case has been commissioned with funding from Active Travel England. This is expected to be completed this autumn. On the traffic project, the bus feasibility study on Silver Street has been commissioned by Wiltshire Council and we can expect results in early summer.

Guidelines have been adjusted around the town cemetery so that the discount for BOA residents also applies to those who were living in BOA before moving into care. There is no requirement to have any family members in BOA in this instance.

Finally, the Chair enjoyed presenting the winners with their prizes at our annual pancake day race. It was good to see about 100 children from Westview and the Shambles nursery taking part as well as hundreds of people watching on. Should the pancake race be in half term next year it would be great to have an open children's race where people can register to compete.

As an addendum it was noted that 40 residents from Sully Sur Loire (BoA's French twinning town) will be staying at the end of April.

70. Agenda item 9 – St Margaret's Hall Update

The Deputy Town Clerk was unwell and not available to attend. The Town Clerk confirmed there has been a lag time on some materials, so a new end date needs to be established. The Chair confirmed a new update would be published to the public once a finish date is confirmed.

71. Agenda item 10 – Town Culture bid

Councillor Vigar introduced the item. The Government has created a competition 'UK Town of Culture', similar to the 'UK City of Culture' awarded annually since 2013. Several councillors have got together to build a bid for BoA with ideas focused on the town's industrial heritage, vibrant performing arts scene and modern precision engineering reputation. A sample range of businesses have been approached and survey set up on the town council website for the public to generate ideas. So far there has been lots of support.

Councillors feel rounding on an industrial heritage theme would be the best place to start and possibly make a link with Bradford in Yorkshire who has won the competition previously and became City of Culture in 2025.



Councillor Vigar also added that the short-listed towns will be given £60,000 to progress their bids and if BoA were to be shortlisted the funds would be used to develop relevant beneficial projects for the town as part of progressing the bid.

The Chair thanked Councillor Vigar for her work so far.

72.Amenity Building Loan

The Town Clerk referred to his report as supplied with the agenda to councillors.

The rebuilding of the Culver Close Pavilion has been split into 2 phases: Phase 1 is the pavilion itself; phase two is the amenity building on Victory Field. It was reiterated that all the features required of the pavilion will not fit on the current footprint of the current site, so some elements have planning permission for a sensitively dressed building on the edge of Victory Field, including public toilets, workshop/garage space for the town wardens and a Changing Places changing room. There have been various rounds of public engagement and the revised cost for the building is now £620,000 which will be used to make the loan application with the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB).

Councillor Elliot recommended that the work should go out to local tenders in the first instance and Councillor Gordon recommended that public toilets can be obsolete very quickly so fittings should have parts which can be replaced.

Finally, for clarity, the council tax will not be increased for future years 2027/28 and beyond.

Proposed by Councillor Spence

Seconded by Councillor Gordon

At the Full Council meeting of the 10th March 2026, with all in favour **resolved:** to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government to apply for a PWLB loan of £620,000 over the borrowing term of 50 years for the purpose of building an amenity building and public toilet in Victory Field, Bradford on Avon. The annual loan repayments will come to around £50,000.

It is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments.



73. Confidential Business

Proposed by Councillor Vittles

Seconded by Councillor Vigar

And with all in favour **resolved**: to go into confidential business.

74. Poulton Park Drainage

75. Next meeting

The next Full Council meeting is planned for Tuesday 12 May 2026.

End of the meeting

The meeting finished at 8.28pm.

Appendix A:

There were 16 members of the public present and 3 questions were asked and comments presented.

(Q1) A request that old street signs are collated/photographed and renovated where necessary.

The Chair confirmed that the signage around town is owned by various entities. However, if the resident would like to send in photos, officers will have a look.

(Q2) There was a question about when the Resources minutes would be available from the week before and when he would receive a response to the questions he asked.

It was confirmed once the draft minutes had been 'ok-ed' they would be published to the website and the responses to questions as soon as officers have the time to finalise the answers.

(Q3) There was a statement asking the town council to consider updating the Town Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Statement.