



Full Council meeting

Minutes

From the meeting at 7*pm on Tuesday 12 May 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 [1](#), [2](#), [5](#), [7](#), [11](#), [12](#), [13](#), [16](#), [17](#) & [18](#) .

Present

Councillors:

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

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: None

*Meeting was opened and adjourned by Councillors Atkinson, Savva and Vigar.
Meeting restarted at 7.40pm.



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1. Adjournment of Annual Council meeting.

Owing to an overrunning meeting attended by all councillors, Councillors Atkinson, Savva and Vigar convened at 7pm forming a quorate council.

Proposed by Councillor Atkinson

Seconded by Councillor Savva

And with all in favour **resolved**: to elect Councillor Vigar as Chair to open the Annual Council meeting.

Councillor Vigar suggested a short adjournment to allow all councillors to attend the Annual Council meeting following a delay due to a previously scheduled meeting nearby.

Proposed by Councillor Savva

Seconded by Councillor Atkinson

And with all in favour **resolved**: to briefly adjourn the Annual Council meeting.

2. Agenda item 1 – Election of the Council Chair and Town Mayor

Councillor Vittles as outgoing Chair asked for nominations. Councillor Blackwell's name was given and as there were no further nominations:

Proposed by Councillor Vittles

Seconded by Councillor Gordon

And with all in favour **resolved**: Councillor Sam Blackwell was elected as Chairman and Mayor for the ensuing municipal year. Councillor Blackwell then took the chair and presided over the rest of the meeting.

3. Agenda item 2 – Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

The Chairman signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

4. Agenda item 5 – Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

5. Agenda item 6 – Election of Vice Chair and Deputy Town Mayor

The Chair asked for nominations and Councillor Elliott's name was given.

As there were no further nominations:



Proposed by Councillor Blackwell

Seconded by Councillor Vigar

And with all in favour **resolved**: Councillor Kevin Elliott was elected at Vice-Chair and Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing municipal year. The Chair congratulated the Deputy Mayor on his appointment.

6. Agenda item 7 – Register of Members Interests
Members were reminded to advise the town clerk of any changes to their disclosable pecuniary interests.

7. Agenda item 8 – Minutes from the previous meeting of the Full Council
Proposed by Councillor Vigar

Seconded by Councillor Reed

And with all in favour **resolved**: to accept the minutes of the meeting held on the 10 March 2026 as a fair reflection of the proceedings.

8. Agenda item 9 – Matters arising
None.

9. Agenda item 10 - To note the minutes of the meetings of the committee meetings since the last Full Council meeting.
The minutes were noted.

10. Agenda item 11 – Chair's Update

Councillor Vittles provided the outgoing chair's update:

- He had attended the West Wilts Business Show where it had been made clear that Trowbridge Chamber of Commerce are keen to have very close links with businesses in Bradford on Avon either forming a Bradford on Avon branch or fold the businesses into the Trowbridge branch. Councillor Vittles confirmed he would bring the Chair up to speed on the proposals.
- Councillor Vittles also attended a French twinning reception which formed part of the latest trip of 37 Sully Sur Loire residents to Bradford on Avon. A decorative plate was presented to the town. Councillor Vittles thanked all those responsible for the organising.
- The Duck Race will now take place on 25 May, postponed due to the nesting swans.



- Councillor Vittles also confirmed that the proposed pedestrian/cyclist bridge has been approved as a live project at Wiltshire Council with funding allocated. The town council are awaiting the completion of the full business case. Councillor Vittles thanked all involved to get the project to this point both councillors, officers and residents.
- Councillor Vittles finally thanked all councillors and officers for their support over the two years he has been in office. It had been a privilege to hold the office of Mayor, there had been a lot to deal with, some of it quite challenging, but also many enjoyable events to attend. It had been a pleasure to represent the town across Wiltshire and further afield. He also thanked Councillor Bessant for all her work as Deputy Mayor and wishes Councillors Blackwell and Elliott the best of luck.

Councillor Blackwell provided the incoming chair's update:

- The Chair thanked, on behalf of the town and the town council, the outgoing Chair for all his commitment and service over the last 2 years. There had been significant challenges, but Councillor Vittles had provided major contributions to lots of key projects. The Chair particularly singled out the traffic meeting in September 2024 and the robust list of proposals which emerged. The Chair reflected that the role of Mayor is public facing, but Councillor Vittles was also able to push proposals along in meetings with great effort, particularly regarding Wiltshire Council.
- The Chair also remarked that work on St Margaret's Hall, is finally ending and it was a shame Councillor Vittles won't be the one to lead the reopening, however he led the town very well and played a significant role through the flooding of November 2024.
- The Chair also thanked Councillor Bessant in her role as Deputy Mayor particularly for her help with local businesses.

11. Agenda item 12 – Standing orders and Financial Regulations

Proposed by Councillor Savva

Seconded by Councillor Gordon



And with all in favour **resolved**: to adopt the Standing Orders 2026 and Financial Regulations 2025.

12. Agenda item 13 – Health and Safety Policy Statement 2026

Proposed by Councillor Blackwell

Seconded by Councillor Vittles

And with all in favour **resolved**: to adopt the Health and Safety Policy Statement for 2026.

The Town Clerk signed the statement.

13. Agenda item 14 – Committee Terms of Reference

It was suggested that the Aims should include a strategy on all active travel options not just pedestrian safety. It was agreed this would be considered at the first committee meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Vigar

Seconded by Councillor Spence

And with all in favour **resolved**: to adopt the Committee Terms of Reference 2026.

14. Agenda item 15 – Meeting Schedule for 2026-27

The meeting schedule was noted. It was pointed out 31 March 2027 is a Wednesday so the Sustainable Development and Travel meeting will be on Tuesday **30** March 2027. The schedule will be updated to reflect this.

15. Agenda item 16 - Committee membership

The committee membership structure was considered. Various changes were made. The finalised schedule will be circulated.

16. Agenda item 17 – Election of Chairs and Vice Chairs of the committees

The following nominations were made:

Committee	Chair	Vice-Chair
Environment and Green Spaces	Cllr Alex Kay	Cllr Kate Bessant
Community and Wellbeing	Cllr Katie Vigar	Cllr Kate Bessant
Sustainable Development and Travel	Cllr Chris Spence	Cllr Andy Gordon



Resources	Cllr George Simmonds	Cllr Kevin Elliott
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Proposed by Councillor Vittles

Seconded by Councillor Gordon

And with all in favour **resolved**: Councillors were elected as Chair and Vice Chair as set out in the given table.

17. Agenda item 18 - Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025-26.

Prepared by the Accountant:

(i) Section 1 of the Annual Governance statement 2025-26.

Proposed by Councillor Vigar

Seconded by Councillor Elliott

And with all in favour **resolved**: to approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement 2025-26.

This was signed by the Chair and the Committee Clerk.

(ii) Section 2 Accounting Statements 2025-26 were noted and signed by the Chair.

The Chair thanked the accountant for all her hard work.

18. Agenda item 19 – Public Participation Policy

Following public questions in appendix A regarding this item Councillor Kay confirmed that the Chairs of the meetings still held absolute discretion as to who can speak and for how long. The public can always contact the town council offices if they have any questions or queries. There is a requirement to get through all the agenda items of meetings in a sensible and businesslike fashion.

The Chair also commented that a lot of councils receive very few visitors at meetings whereas Bradford on Avon Town Council have very engaged residents and the policy provides some points of order and ensures everyone is treated fairly.

Proposed by Councillor Blackwell

Seconded by Councillor Spence



And with all in favour **resolved**: to adopt the Public Participation Policy at council and committee meetings.

19. Next meeting

The next Full Council meeting is planned for Tuesday 7 July 2026.

End of the meeting

The meeting finished at 8.37pm.



Appendix A:

There were 14 members of the public present and 8 questions were asked and comments presented.

(Q1) A resident congratulated the council on a quick transition between current Mayor/Chair and new.

Regarding agenda item 19, the Public Participation Policy, other councils in Wiltshire have say 3 minutes or 5 minutes to speak instead of the 2 proposed. And in Frome the public are heavily involved in the decision making.

The Chair confirmed that on the other hand Wiltshire Council are very strict on speaking times and the town council are not proposing to cut anyone off or use an alarm or buzzer. The policy is there to ensure public engagement is fair for all and reflects that fact there is a lot of engagement at town council meetings. The council does operate an open shop. He also reminded everyone council meetings are not public meetings but council meetings the public may attend.

(Q2) A resident wanted clarification whether the public participation policy was indeed a policy or a recommendation.

The Chair confirmed it was a policy, but who can speak for how long remains at the Chair's discretion. It will be useful when there are lots of people who wish to speak.

The resident also reminded those present that there will be a showing of People's Emergency Briefing film and invited all councillors to attend. Tickets available through ticket tailor. This is on 21 May 2026 in United Church Hall.

The Chair thanked the resident for the reminder. He confirmed it is a chilling but important watch. He also confirmed it could be promoted through the usual channels.

(Q3) A resident asked if the town could be divided up into 12 and all councillors look after a section. She believes this used to happen in the past.

The Chair considered that the councillor distribution (in terms of residences) might not cover the whole town evenly, but he would have a think about it.

(Q4) A resident thanked the outgoing Mayor and Deputy Mayor for their contributions and commented the town is lucky to have such a dedicated set of councillors.



(Q5) A resident and local business owner highlighted the BoA Highstreet project. He has developed this with other local businesses. The main aim to implement growth and develop a vision for the infrastructure of the town centre over 50-75 years instead of the shorter term as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan. He invited all councillors to a meeting on 3 June at 7.30pm at Studio Bacchus.

The Chair confirmed it was great to hear new ideas and longer-term visions are key. He also invited the resident to present to Sustainable Development and Travel committee in the future.

(Q6) A resident as trustee of the local Girl Guides is looking for funding to improve their premises in the centre of town.

The Chair confirmed grants could be sought from the town council, Colonel William Llewellyn Palmer Trust and Area Board, in terms of local options.

(Q7) Regarding the development proposals for the Beehive Field, have the town council been engaged with groups such as Climate Friendly BoA, Preservation Trust and Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. When will the town council respond to the proposals and will the council take the views of some of these other groups?

The Chair confirmed that the proposals have come forward quickly because of the rejection of the Local Plan for Wiltshire. There is no consultation period yet for the Beehive Field. When this is open the town council will speak to all the groups mentioned and any others which might be helpful. The town council can take time to come to a decision. The planning application for the Beehive is likely to go in, in the next few weeks.

It will be debated in Sustainable Development and Travel committee meetings.

(Q8) A request for the town council to highlight planning applications to residents.

The Chair confirmed that due to the volume of applications, listing all the applications on the town council website is unlikely. The information is on the Wiltshire Council website. However, the council will highlight and debate the controversial ones so residents will be informed.