

BROADSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Broadstone Town Council held on Monday 10th August 2026 in the NorthReach Annex, St John's Church. The meeting commenced at 6.30pm

PRESENT:

Cllr **Brooke**, Cllr **Elkins**, Cllr **Sidaway**, & Cllr **Walls**

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Michelle **Harrington** (Proper Officer)

ABSENT:

Cllr Maxey, Cllr O'Neil, Cllr P Slade, & Cllr Tebbs

PUBLIC SESSION

Nine members of public were present.

One member asked several questions in relation to the budget.

1. There is a budget for office provision, but Broadstone Town Council do not have offices, and why do we need one?

Although Broadstone Town Council does not currently have a dedicated office in Broadstone, the Proper Officer (PO) is currently working from a home office. The Council is exploring options for suitable office accommodation within Broadstone, which would provide a central point where residents can drop in, speak with the PO and access Council services in person. It would also provide a dedicated workspace for Council administration and meetings where appropriate.

2. Is there a cheaper venue to hire for public meetings?

There are other venues available in Broadstone, and the Council will review these options in the future. However, there are very few venues in Broadstone that can accommodate the dates and times required by the Council. Following the elections, a suitable venue was needed quickly, and this venue was available. It also meets the Council's requirements, including parking, accessibility and sufficient space for public meetings.

3. What equipment / furniture costs have you incurred, if you have no offices?

The Council has incurred costs for essential administration equipment for the PO, including a laptop and associated items required to carry out the Council's work.

The furniture budget has been included in anticipation of the Council securing suitable office accommodation in the future. If an office is obtained, furniture and other associated equipment will be required to provide a suitable and functional workspace.

4. There is a salary budget of over £30,000 what is that for.

The PO is an employee of Broadstone Town Council, and the salary budget provides for the cost of employing staff. This includes not only the salary itself but also the associated employment costs, such as the Council's National Insurance and pension contributions, both of which the Council is required to pay.

One member asked if the Town Council was happy with the response rate of the recent resident's survey.

Cllr Elkins who lead this project stated he was happy with the response rate, and more details would be published soon.

One member of public requested the Dunyeats Road options be published on Facebook.

It was noted the Council will consider how best to share the options with residents. As the consultation is intended to gather constructive feedback on the proposed measures, the Council could publish the information on its website first, providing residents with a clear and consistent source of information.

0826-1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No declaration was made, or dispensation requested. NB this does not preclude any later declarations.

0826-2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received before the meeting from Cllr Maxey, Cllr Slade & Cllr Tebbs for personal reasons, and Cllr O'Neil for business reasons.

0826-3. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the full council meeting held on Monday 20th July 2026 were approved and signed as a correct record the meeting. (LGA 1972, SCHEDULE 12, PARA 41(1))

Proposed Cllr Brooke

Seconded Cllr Elkins

RESOLVED: The minutes from the full council meeting held on Monday 20th July 2026 were approved and signed as a correct record the meeting.

0826-4. BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH & POOLE (BCP) COUNCILLOR REPORT.

A verbal report was given by Cllr Sidaway as Ward Councillor.

Roadworks:

There are currently two significant roadworks schemes affecting Broadstone, one on Queen Anne Drive and the other on Dunyeats Road. Both schemes are being undertaken by Southern Gas Networks to relay the main gas pipe.

The works have been scheduled for the summer months due to gas pressure and temperature requirements, as well as the need to minimise disruption to residents' access to gas for heating during the colder months.

BCP Council has limited ability to prevent utility companies from undertaking essential works. It can, however, comment on applications and sometimes impose conditions where considered appropriate. BCP Council's main influence is through ensuring that suitable diversion routes are provided. However, it was noted where traffic is diverted from an A-road, the alternative route must also be an A-road, or higher standard.

Planning Changes:

Cllr Sidaway advised that significant changes to the planning system are due to come into effect from 31 October 2026.

One of the key changes will be a reduction in the number of planning applications considered by the Planning Committee, with more applications being determined by planning officers.

The current ability for a Ward Councillor, or 20 members of the public, to request that an application is referred to the Planning Committee will be removed.

Small developments of up to nine properties will not be eligible for consideration by the Planning Committee.

It will therefore be increasingly important that objections to planning applications are clearly based on material planning considerations, with specific reference to the relevant policies within the Broadstone Neighbourhood Plan (BNP), the Local Plan or the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Some larger applications falling under Sch 2 will also be determined by planning officers rather than being automatically referred to Committee. Further details of the changes are awaited.

It was noted that the Broadstone Neighbourhood Plan remains an important planning document, although its influence has reduced as a result of changes to the planning system.

During the Covid period, BCP Council relied more heavily on agency staff and site visits were not always undertaken. It was reported that there are now fewer agency staff and BCP Council is making efforts to ensure that appropriate site visits are carried out.

BCP Council Chamber Use

A proposal has been put forward for BCP Council to allow all Town and Parish Councils within the BCP area to use BCP Council-owned meeting facilities at no cost for the purpose of holding Town or Parish Council meetings.

Concern was raised that, although the facilities would be provided at no direct cost to Town and Parish Councils, BCP Council would still incur costs associated with providing and maintaining the facilities. These costs would ultimately need to be met from BCP Council's budget and could therefore be indirectly funded by residents across the BCP area.

It was questioned whether this could result in residents in areas such as Broadstone effectively contributing towards the cost of other Town Councils, such as Bournemouth and Poole Town Councils, holding their meetings, when they have significantly larger Precept.

It was also noted that Christchurch Town Council and other Parish Councils within the BCP area have historically paid for their own meeting venues. Clarification would therefore be required as to whether Councils that have previously incurred venue hire costs would be able to seek reimbursement for meetings held in the past, should the proposal be agreed.

0826-5. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was noted.

0826-6. PROPER OFFICER REPORT.

The Proper Officer's report was submitted before the meeting, but a verbal update was given:
Website - The new look website is now live.

Groundsman / Caretaker - BTC have received several applications, of which a couple standing out as good candidates. An informal meeting with the Proper Officer and the candidates has been arranged, and it is hopeful that a self-employed Caretaker / Groundsman will be in situ come the end of August. See Appendix A.

RESOLVED / ACTION: That the allotment noticeboard be repaired and refurbished by Cllr Elkins, where this is considered practical and cost-effective, rather than replaced. Proper Officer to obtain a key for the noticeboard and, Cllr Elkins to investigate repair options.

0826-7. NEXT MEETING.

a. Items for the next meeting agenda.

b. Meeting date, time and location confirmation

Full Council – Monday 7th September 2026 at 18:30

Community Services Committee – Tuesday 25th August 2026 at 12:30

Finance and Governance Committee – Tuesday 25th August 2026 at 15:45

Planning, Highways and Licencing Committee – Tuesday 25th August 2026 at 14:30

All meetings held in the NorthReach Annex, St John's Church, Broadstone.

The meeting ended at 19.13

Appendix A: Proper Officer Report

General Update

As Members will be aware, Broadstone Town Council (BTC) continues to make excellent progress on a number of projects despite being a newly established authority. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Councillors for the considerable amount of time and effort they continue to dedicate to the Council. Your willingness to take the lead on projects and initiatives has enabled the Council to progress work that would otherwise have been difficult to achieve within my current part-time hours.

As we continue to establish BTC, I look forward to supporting Members as we develop new projects and initiatives together. The enthusiasm and willingness of Councillors to get involved has been one of the Council's greatest strengths during its first few months. By combining Members' local knowledge, ideas and vision with officer support and governance advice throughout each project, I am confident we can continue to deliver excellent outcomes for the residents of Broadstone.

Once again, thank you all for your continued support and commitment to BTC.

General Administration

Alongside the specific projects detailed within this report, routine officer duties continue to be undertaken, including responding to resident enquiries, supporting Members, administering the Council's website and social media channels, preparing agendas and reports, progressing committee decisions, liaising with partner organisations and managing the Council's day-to-day administration.

Website

Members will be aware that the TC's website was originally created by BCP Council prior to BTC inception. Whilst ownership of the website hosting has now transferred to the Council's IT provider, the website itself has continued to rely on the content management system previously used by BCP Council.

Unfortunately, this system has proved cumbersome to administer and makes even relatively simple updates unnecessarily time-consuming. It also limits our ability to develop the website into a modern site that reflects BTC own identity and meets our future communication needs.

To address this, I requested that our IT provider migrate the website to a standard WordPress hosting platform. WordPress is widely used across the sector and will provide a flexible and user-friendly system, enabling the TC to keep the website up to date more efficiently whilst developing a website that is unique to BTC.

The migration has presented a number of unforeseen technical challenges and, as a result, has taken longer than originally anticipated. However, good progress is being made, and it is hoped that the migration will be completed, allowing work to commence on developing and updating the website, by the beginning of Aug '26.

Allotment Administration

Following the transfer of the allotments to BTC, I am currently issuing each tenant with a personalised covering letter together with a copy of the new (BTC) Allotment Tenancy Agreement. A stamped addressed envelope has also been included to enable tenants to return the signed agreement as easily as possible.

Although email would ordinarily be the most efficient method of distribution, a number of the email addresses transferred to the TC have proved to be invalid, with messages being returned as undeliverable. In addition, as the agreement must be signed and returned, I was conscious that not all tenants have access to a printer or the facilities to print documents at home. For these reasons, issuing paper copies to all tenants was considered the fairest and most inclusive approach.

To minimise postage costs, I have been hand-delivering the document packs to tenants whilst undertaking my routine allotment inspections. Had every pack been posted, the Council would have incurred postage costs of just under £150. During my first visit I was able to hand deliver ten packs within approximately thirty minutes, representing a significant saving to the Council.

An additional benefit of delivering the packs in person has been the opportunity to speak directly with tenants. Many commented that they had never previously met or spoken with a representative of a Council whilst on the allotment site. They welcomed the opportunity to discuss the role of the TC, the purpose of the monthly inspections and how issues can be reported in future.

These conversations have also provided valuable feedback which will help inform future improvements to the site. The two most common issues raised were:

- There are currently only three communal water troughs serving the entire allotment site. Depending on the location of a tenant's plot, this can require carrying heavy watering cans over a considerable distance, particularly during periods of hot weather.
- Over many years, some plot holders have raised or lowered the level of their plots. As a result, access routes between certain plots have become uneven, creating potential trip hazards and raising health and safety concerns for some tenants.

Both matters will be investigated further and reported back to Council.

Groundsman / Caretaker Recruitment

Following Full Council's approval to recruit a self-employed Groundsman/Caretaker, I am pleased to report that the vacancy was formally advertised on 28th July 2026.

The advertisement has been placed on Indeed, together with a post on the Council's social media channels. I have also asked Cllr Elkins to display a recruitment poster in one of the noticeboards, and I will also be placing a copy on the allotment noticeboard to maximise local awareness.

The recruitment campaign has made a positive start, with one individual already making an enquiry regarding the position. Applications will continue to be accepted until the closing date, after which I will assess all applications and, subject to there being a suitable candidate, appoint a contractor under the delegated authority previously granted by Full Council.

Councillor Training

All Members have now been registered with the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils (DAPTC) online training portal and have access to the wide range of training opportunities available.

I would encourage all Councillors to browse the training programme and let me know if there were any courses they would like to attend. Please do not book courses directly with DAPTC, as doing so will result in the invoice being issued directly to you rather than to the TC. I will happily arrange all bookings on Members' behalf.

DAPTC have also kindly offered to provide a free introductory training session covering the fundamentals of being a Town Councillor. This would be an excellent opportunity for all Members, particularly as we continue to establish the Council.

I would therefore be grateful if Members could advise me of their availability during September and October, following which I will liaise with DAPTC to arrange a suitable date.

Following a discussion with the Planning, Highways and Licensing Committee, I will also be contacting BCP Council to arrange a planning training session for Members. This session will provide an overview of the planning process together with an update on the emerging BCP Local Plan.

Allotments

I have now completed three monthly inspections of the Council's allotment site, with the most recent inspection taking place during the week commencing 20th July 2026.

These inspections continue to prove worthwhile, with several tenants carrying out significant improvements to their plots following discussions regarding maintenance standards.

Unfortunately, one tenant recently surrendered their plot due to ill health. I am pleased to report that the plot was re-let almost immediately to the next person on the waiting list. Despite taking possession during

the recent heatwave, the new tenant has already made excellent progress in clearing and cultivating the site.

During the week commencing 27th July 2026, I met with a local tree surgeon to undertake a comprehensive inspection of the trees across the allotment site. This visit allowed me to highlight existing concerns whilst also benefiting from their professional expertise in identifying any additional issues.

A few matters requiring attention were identified, including several dead trees and a number of low-hanging branches that have either caused, or have the potential to cause, damage to tenants' sheds and greenhouses.

I have requested a quotation for all recommended works, which will be presented to the F&G Committee.

As part of the same quotation, I have also requested that vegetation within the allotment car park is cut back to the fence line. This work would reclaim a number of parking spaces that have gradually been lost to overgrowth. This work would include the removal of a small trees which have grown at an angle over the parking area. This tree presents a particular issue for taller vehicles, where rear parking sensors do not detect the overhanging branches, resulting in the trunk striking the roofs of vehicles and causing damage.

[Allotment Noticeboard](#)

The allotment noticeboard is showing signs of age and would benefit from some general repairs and refurbishment.