

**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of the Town Council on Monday 10 November
2025 at 7.00pm**

Present

St Michael's Ward

Cllr S Atherton
Cllr M Baldock
Cllr C Doran
Cllr J Fotheringham
Cllr R Fowles
Cllr R Sexton
Cllr M Sheen
Cllr L Wakefield

St Paul's Ward

Cllr S Craddock
Cllr D Hayler
Cllr A Pearsall (Chair)
Cllr S Sexton
Cllr H Turner
Cllr C Kolek
Cllr J Taylor

In attendance

Stephen Hill, Town Clerk
Heloise Marlow, Deputy Town Clerk
Sargeant J Palmer
3 Members of the public via Zoom
Cllr R Coombs via Zoom

25/154 Apologies for absence

Cllr R Coombs (personal)
Cllr C Maunder (personal)
Cllr S Thorne (personal)
Cllr J Brown (EDDC)
Cllr R Jefferies (DCC)

25/155 Declarations of Interests

Cllr S Sexton – Personal Interest (Items 25/164, 25/169, 25/171 and 25/174)
Cllr R Sexton – Personal Interest (Items 25/164, 25/169, 25/171 and 25/174)
Cllr C Kolek -Pecuniary Interest (Items 25/160, 25/164, 25/167, 25/168, 25/169
25/171 and 25/174)

25/156 Dispensations

The Town Clerk confirmed he had granted Cllr C Kolek a dispensation in relation to items 25/160, 25/164, 25/167, 25/168, 25/169 25/171 and 25/174 which allowed Councillor Kolek to remain in the meeting whilst these agenda items were being discussed, contribute to the debate but would prevent her from voting.

25/157 Public Question Time for items on the agenda

There were no public questions.

Sgt Palmer confirmed that she would be attending the Police Advocates

Meeting on Thursday 13th November with Cllr R Sexton and was available to speak with members about any issues they wanted her to raise.

Sgt Palmer left at 19.10pm

25/158 Reports from District and County Councillors

The [attached report](#) had been received from Cllr R Jefferies.

25/159 Reports from Honiton Town Council Members with Special Responsibilities and/or on Outside Bodies

Cllr H Turner:

- Devon Freewheelers had been awarded the SW Care Award 2025. Their Charity shop continued to be busy.
- Members of The Den had been awarded 2nd prize at Honiton Carnival and were busy making items for the December craft festival at the Beehive.

Cllr S Sexton:

- Attended Honiton Carers meeting at Combe Garden Centre and would attend the AGM on Tuesday 11th November.

Cllr R Sexton

- Attended meeting of Honiton Business Network which now has over 100 members during which the Council's Christmas Tree lights switch on event and late-night shopping on 15th November were discussed.

Cllr J Fotheringham – [Millenium Green report attached](#).

25/160 Reports and Recommendations from Working Groups and Meetings.

Members **NOTED** the Market Working Group notes 23.10.25.

Cllr Fowles advised the following re the meeting of Beehive Low Carbon Working Group Notes 29.10.25:

This was the third meeting of the Beehive Low Carbon Working Group.

The WG had identified 4 potential consultants but had been advised that too much was currently unknown for those consultants to provide quotes.

SDS were the WG's preferred consultant and was recommending 7 phases of work. Phase 1 Diagnostics & Review which includes a site visit – cost £3235. Phase 2 – Modelling & Options Appraisal – cost £3750. As these costs exceeded the £5k budget agreed, the WG was asking for the budget to be increased to £7k to cover both phases. Thereafter the WG would use the information to work with an installer/provider.

The following points were discussed:

- As built drawings of the Beehive still be located.
- HTC resolved to be carbon neutral by 2030 five years ago
- Over £19k had been spent on repairs to the Beehive boilers since 2021.

- Additional budget would be required for 26/27 – increase from £5k to £7k required from 25/26 budget.

Members RESOLVED to increase the cost limit for the instruction of a consultant to advise the Beehive Low Carbon Working Group from £5000 to £7000.

Proposed by Cllr Craddock and seconded by Cllr Sheen

For 12; Against 0; Abstentions 3

25/161 Correspondence: 9th October 2025 – 5th November 2025

Members **NOTED** the item.

25/162 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 13 October 2025

Members RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting on the 13th October 2025

Proposed by Cllr Fotheringham and seconded by Cllr S Sexton

For 14; Against 0; Abstentions 1.

25/163 Minutes of Previous Meetings

Members **NOTED** the item.

25/164 Committee and Working Group Terms of Reference

Members RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference for the Beehive Low Carbon Working Group October 2025.

Proposed by Cllr Craddock and seconded by Cllr Sheen

For 12; Against 0; Abstentions 3

Cllr Fotheringham requested that the draft Terms of Reference for the HCC/HTC Review Meeting include the provision of a verbal report from the Council representatives at the meeting at the next meeting of Full Council (paragraph 9) as this had been done to date.

Cllr S Sexton spoke against the Council representatives at the HTC/HCC Review meeting providing FC with a verbal update at the next meeting following a Review meeting.

Members RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference for the HTC/HCC Review Meeting 29.10.25 to include the provision of a verbal report from the Council representatives at the next meeting of Full Council.

Proposed by Cllr Fotheringham and seconded by Cllr Fowles.

For 5; Against 4; Abstentions 6

25/165 Membership of Committees and Working Groups

Cllr Kolek resigned from the Footpath Working Group

Cllr Atherton requested to join the Footpath Working Group.

Cllr Wakefield resigned from the Honiton Sports Working Group and as a Cllr with a special responsibility for Sports.

LGR was added to the list of Special Responsibilities with a transitional board consisting of Cllrs Pearsall, Wakefield, S Sexton and Doran.

Members RESOLVED unanimously to approve the above changes.

Proposed by Cllr Kolek and seconded by Cllr Turner

25/166 Devon Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

Council **NOTED** the following:

- SET Committee had agreed a long list of assets/services to be transferred from EDDC.
- EDDC have provided a verbal commitment to transfer freeholds by December 2026.
- EDDC have been asked to provide confirmation of freehold transfers, timescales, relevant financial information to inform 26/27 budget; whether the transfers would be legally binding on the new Unitary Authority and the implications of not transferring assets and services to HTC.
- No formal response yet received from EDDC.
- EDDC have advised that they will produce a transfer framework by Christmas 2025.
- Discussions are taking place with other Town Councils and Parish Councils.
- Currently difficult to set a budget for LGR 26/27
- Responses from EDDC to be shared with Cllrs if requested.

25/167 Budget Consultation

The 26/27 Budget Consultation had been drafted. The consultation would be made available to the electorate by way of hard copies, website, Facebook and online. The following was discussed:

- Christmas Tree Lights Switch On event to be added.
- Impact LGR could have on the Precept.
- Cost of living pressures on the electorate

Members RESOLVED to delegate to the Town Clerk the revision of the draft consultation in consultation with Cllrs Fotheringham, Wakefield and R Sexton

Proposed by Cllr Craddock and seconded by Cllr Wakefield

For: 14 Against 0; Abstentions 1

25/168 Budget 26/27 Progress Report

The Town Clerk advised that the Finance & Policy Committee would review the proposed Committee budgets at their meeting 17.11.25

Members **NOTED** the report

25/169 Budget 26/27

a) Low Carbon Working Group

Members discussed the following:

- The Working Group had suggested that £90k would be required to fund the works with £60k to come from grant funding.
- Aim is to decrease running costs at the Beehive and increase air quality.
- Work would be phased over 12-18 months.

- Focus was required on the boilers at the Beehive and the Joanna Leach Auditorium.
- Consultant's report required before decisions could be taken.
- Short term actions and long term actions available.
- Building specification was varied when build due to cost.
- Request from WG was for a significant amount and would lead to an increase in the precept.
- HTC had committed to being carbon neutral by 2030.
- Impact of future legislation regarding energy performance of buildings.
- Need for the Working Group to discuss further and revert back with a more detailed and costed budget.

No decision was taken re the Low Carbon Working Group budget.

b) HCC Grant

- The new lease and SLA provide for a £60k grant for the first year from August 2025 – August 2026. This falls partly within the 25/26 Budget and partly within the 26/27 Budget. The 26/27 Budget should include the sum of £51,250.00 for the HCC Grant.

Members RESOLVED to include £51,250.00 for HCC Grant in the 2026/27 Budget

Proposed by Cllr Craddock and seconded by Cllr S Sexton

For 13, Against 1 (Cllr J Taylor), Abstentions 1

25/170 Mayor's Charity Ball – January 2026

The following points were discussed:

- Timing of the Ball
- Venue would be the Deer Park, Weston.
- The Mayor's Charity is Hospiscare
- No budget was being requested from Honiton Town Council as the ticket sales would cover the costs.
- Whether there was a demand for a Mayor's ball.
- Demand on Council staff time.

Members RESOLVED to hold a Mayor's Charity Ball in January 2026 and to Delegate the Deputy Town Clerk to implement and manage the Mayor's Charity Ball (in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman).

Proposed by Cllr Wakefield and seconded by Cllr Pearsall.

For 11; Against 1; Abstentions 3

25/171 Accounts

Members RESOLVED unanimously to approve the October schedule of payments excluding HTC 21338, 21344, 21347, 21349, 21353 and 21359

Proposed by Cllr Fotheringham and seconded by Cllr R Sexton

Cllr J Taylor requested a recorded vote

Members RESOLVED to approve payments HTC 21338, 21344, 21347, 21349, 21353 and 21359

Proposed by Cllr Craddock and seconded by Cllr Sheen

For: Baldock, Doran, Atherton, S Sexton, Hayler, Sheen, Craddock, R Sexton, Fowles, Turner, Wakefield, Pearsall (12)

Against Taylor (1)

Abstentions Fotheringham, Kolek (2)

25/172 Exempt Business

Members RESOLVED to take the following items into exempt business.

Proposed by Cllr S Sexton and seconded by Cllr Baldock

For 13; Against 0; Abstentions 2

Cllr Kolek left the meeting at 20.50

25/173 Extension of meeting

Members RESOLVED unanimously to extend the meeting to 9.30pm

Proposed by Cllr R Sexton and seconded by Cllr Wakefield

25/174 Underwriting of Honiton Community Complex (HCC) Costs

The following update was provided further to HTC/HCC Review meeting:

- *August loss was due to fewer room hires, competition with local festivals and other events.*
- *HCC has been asked to provide further feedback at the next meeting and a plan to address the losses*
- *HCC now have a Finance Committee*
- *HCC requested that the Business Plan be renamed a Strategic Plan. This had been agreed.*
- *The dilapidations schedule had been discussed with Mark Regan and incorporated into the Council's work program.*
- *HTC has agreed to be responsible for the outside retaining wall*
- *HCC had paid out over £6k to repair the boilers over the last year with £19.5k paid out over the last 3 years.*
- *Changing Places will be relocated in January 2026. Once completed Councillors will be invited to view it.*
- *HCC were advised that the Low Carbon Working Group were working on an 18 month plan with focus on the JLA*
- *HCC were still waiting to hear from British Gas Lite to resolve the complaint. Last bill received was for £23k.*
- *HCC is having an open day on 6th December 2025 combined with a food festival.*
- *SMART targets (short, medium and long) were agreed with HCC.*

Cllr Fotheringham queried whether a schedule of outstanding dilapidations work had been agreed and whether the agreed SMART targets would be available to Members.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the surveyor's report set out the dilapidations schedule. The SMART targets had been delegated to the Review Meeting so FC would not be able to review these. It was agreed that HM would attach a copy to the minutes.

- *Risks identified by Mark Mulberry re HCC's financial situation.*
- *Response received from HCC. The Town Clerk confirmed that the new lease did not require HCC to hold £51k as restricted reserves to cover the costs of closing down HCC and therefore HCC can use these reserves to cover shortfall.*
- *HCC has repeatedly been asked to provide an updated reserves calculation.*

Cllr Baldock left the meeting at 9.05pm

- *HCC had made a significant loss in August 2025 with higher than usual event costs. To be raised at next HCC/HTC review meeting.*
- *HCC grant applications- progress to be raised at next HCC/HTC review meeting.*

Cllr Taylor requested a recorded vote:

Members RESOLVED to underwrite total contribution to HCC of £5000 for August 2025

Proposed by Cllr Craddock and seconded by Cllr S Sexton

For Cllrs Pearsall, Wakefield, Turner, Atherton, Fowles, Doran, Hayler, R Sexton, S Sexton, Sheen and Craddock (11)

Against: Cllrs Fotheringham, Taylor (2)

The Town Clerk advised that this was the last payment under the underwriting agreement, and the new lease does not require the same level of reporting. As such there will be no further reviews of HCC's accounts by Mark Mulberry or a report from the Clerk. The lease does allow HTC to ask for information to be provided by HCC at any time. The grant payments will be for noting.

25/175 To close the meeting

The meeting closed at 21.15pm.