



Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on 28 April 2026 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, East Street, Wareham at 7.30pm.

Members Present: Councillors Z Gover (Mayor), K Critchley (Deputy Mayor), D Budd, M Cotton, A Dallimore, I Davey, S Dean, M Hill, L Kirk, D Robinson and S Wheatley.

Officers Present: N Gray, Town Clerk & RFO, S Dickins, Deputy Town Clerk

TC 209/25-26 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr D Cleaton, Cllr B Dean, Cllr V Green, Cllr R Holloway and Cllr M Tighe.

TC 210/25-26 **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

TC 211/25-26 **Public participation time**

There were three members of the public present, none of whom wished to speak.

TC 212/25-26 **Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting**

TC 202/25-26: Removal of superfluous "at" in resolution.

TC 203/25-26: Amendment of 1st sentence in 2nd paragraph for enhanced legibility.

TC 206/25-26: Removal of "Town Council for" in 1st sentence of 2nd paragraph.

It was **RESOLVED** that, subject to the above amendments, the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 24 March 2026 be **APPROVED** and would be signed by the Mayor following the meeting.

TC 213/25-26 **Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting**

There were no matters arising.

TC 214/25-26 **Reports by Dorset Councillors and representatives on outside bodies**

Councillors enquired after the context and quantity of complaints regarding the resurfacing of sections of path adjoining the underpass near the Saxon Roundabout noted within Cllr Ezzard's report. A considered discussion took place regarding the quality of the resurfacing and the removal of the pedestrian and cyclist segregation marks which could potentially increase the risk of collisions for path users. The Mayor thanked Cllr Ezzard for her report and asked for Council to be kept updated.

Councillors noted work was being undertaken to resolve the offensive odour caused by the operation of the Trigon landfill site and the updated timeline of three to four weeks.

The Town Clerk noted correspondence from Lloyds following the announcement of the branch closure in Wareham and the possibility of a banking hub being established. The timely nature of this information from Lloyd's given Cllr Ezzard's efforts to establish a contact point for Lloyds bank users in town was welcomed

and the Town Clerk offered to forward the contact details to Cllr Ezzard, noting that banking hubs are overseen by a team which was external to Lloyd's bank.

The report from Cllr Ezzard was NOTED.

TC 215/25-26 Payments for outstanding creditors

Council considered the list of payments for approval.

It was **RESOLVED** that payments in the sum of £57,160.63 be approved.

TC 216/25-26 To receive such communications as the Town Mayor may wish to place before the Council

There were no communications placed before Council.

TC 217/25-26 Reports from committees and sub-groups

The minutes from the following meetings were NOTED:

- a) Amenities Committee – 10/02/2026
- b) Planning and Transport Committee – 10/03/2026 & 24/03/2026

TC 218/25-26 Bank Reconciliations – February and March 2026

Councillors reviewed the bank reconciliations for February and March 2026.

It was **RESOLVED** that the reconciliations for February and March 2026 be approved.

TC 219/25-26 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Consultant Appointment

Councillors considered the report in respect of the appointment of a consultant for the Neighbourhood Plan review received from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

It was **RESOLVED** that Jo Witherden of Dorset Planning Consultant Limited be appointed to support the review of the Wareham Neighbourhood Plan, and delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk and Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (provided they are an elected Councillor) to pay the consultant invoices as long as they fall within the Financial Regulations delegated authority.

TC 220/25-26 Council and Museum Website

Councillors considered the report and quotations for the development of the Town Council and Town Museum websites.

It was **RESOLVED** that Aubergine 262 Ltd be appointed to develop the Town Council and Museum websites with the cost for the Town Council's website development being met from "Office Costs – Website Production" in the sum of £899 (excluding VAT) and the cost for the Museum website in the sum of £3,549 (excluding VAT) being met from the general fund.

TC 221/25-26 Community Governance Review

Councillors consider the report regarding the Community Governance Review.

Councillors held a considered discussion regarding the depth of the Community Governance Review, potential impacts of the review for Wareham and the prudence of the Town Council responding. The Town Clerk noted the consultation would be advertised to the public for their response and members were encouraged to respond personally as well as in their Councillor capacity.

It was **RESOLVED** that officers would produce an initial draft response for Councillors to consider and refine asynchronously prior to submission.

TC 222/25-26 Town Council Action List

Councillors noted their disappointment that efforts to engage the Purbeck School in the governance process for a Youth Council had not borne results but welcomed further engagement with the school through less formal channels.

Councillors enquired after the progress of the Town Hall's roof repairs. The Deputy Clerk noted that a firm had been appointed and a commencement date for the repairs was still being arranged.

Councillors considered the update regarding the vehicle speed on Bere Road and noted their disappointment that Dorset Council was unwilling to implement yellow bars. Councillors considered the benefits of advisory signs for the lower section of the C7 such as elderly people crossing signs.

Councillors noted the emergence of black boxes identified as "traffic counter surveys" and enquired whether the Town Council had more information regarding their purpose. The Deputy Town Clerk noted that the office was currently unaware of the purpose of their installation but would enquire with Dorset Council colleagues and report back.

It was **RESOLVED** that officers request Dorset Council to consider the installation of elderly people crossing signs on the lower section of the C7.

The Town Council Action List was noted.

TC 223/25-26 Report of the Museum Co-ordinator

Councillors noted the breadth of positive activities being carried out by the museum with particular note to the success of the junior archaeologist event.

Cllr Cotton led Councillors in a vote of thanks to the museum co-ordinator for her efforts.

The report of the museum co-ordinator was noted.

TC 224/25-26 Town Clerk's Update

The Town Clerk noted that preparations for year-end and audit were forming a substantial part of her current work.

The Town Clerk highlighted the Town Council was still awaiting the Wareham Burial Joint Committee's accounts for inclusion in the Town Council's year end figures. Cllr Critchley noted that he would enquire to expedite the return of these accounts to the Town Council.

The Town Clerk noted that the asset transfer of the Former Middle School Field was being progressed by the Town Council's solicitors and Dorset Council's legal department.

The Town Clerk updated Council that the expression of interest for the National Lottery Heritage Fund had been submitted and was awaiting assessment by the National Lottery. An outcome was to be expected within the next 20 working days.

The Town Clerk noted that the Howards Lane toilets would be temporarily closed on Wednesday 6 May 2026 to allow works to redevelop the public conveniences to progress. Notice of the closure would be shared through the Town Council's communication channels to guide members of the public to the nearest available facilities.

TC 225/25-26 Any other items the Mayor deems urgent

The Mayor noted the success of the Easter Egg hunt organised by Cllr Cotton and herself which had been held on 4 April 2026, at which approximately 40 families had attended the free event.

TC 226/25-26 Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Town Council, which would be the Annual Town Council meeting, was scheduled to be held on Tuesday 12 May 2026 at 7:00pm.

TC 227/25-26 Confidential Session

It was **RESOLVED** that under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the nature of the business to be transacted.

TC 228/25-26 Howards Lane Public Toilets

Councillors received and considered the update regarding the Howards Lane Public Toilets.

The update in relation to the Howards Lane Public Toilets was noted.

TC 229/25-26 Museum Development Update

Councillors received and considered the update regarding the Museum Development.

The update in relation to the Museum development was noted.

Mayor..... Date.....