



Minutes of Bridgwater Town Council held in the Arts Centre Theatre on Thursday 22 January 2026 at 19:00

Present:

Councillors, Pearce (Chair), Edmunds, Heywood, Hubble, Leavy, Lerry, Lilley, Mander, Redman (left at 19:56), Rodrigues, Slocombe, Solomon, and Smedley

David Mears, CEO and Town Clerk, Sally Jones, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, Jaycee Ellis, Projects Manager, Melissa Webb, Communications and Marketing Officer, and Amy Storey, Democratic Services Officer

There were no members of the press or public present.

Cllr Pearce announced the death of former Bridgwater Town Councillor, Mike Cresswell. A one-minute silence was held.

TC2026/1 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors, Aujla, Loveridge, and Marsh.

TC2026/2 Declarations of interests

Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s31(2) subject to s32(3) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

No declarations of interests were received.

TC2026/3 To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Thursday 18 December 2025

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Thursday 18 December 2025 be signed as a correct record.

TC2026/4 To receive apologies and to approve maternity leave and a period of absence of 6 months for Councillor Suria Aujla

RESOLVED: To approve Councillor Suria Aujla's period of absence for 6 months for maternity leave.



TC2026/5 Mayor's announcements

The Mayor attended the following events throughout December and January:

- Remembrance Ceremony at St Mary's Church
- Town Carol service at St Mary's Church
- Opening of New Work-Wise Job Club
- Presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Lidl and Aldi Managers for the food they have donated to the community

RESOLVED: To note.

TC2026/6 Finance: Budget and Precept for 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027 To receive the report from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and for Members to approve the budget and precept demand for the financial year 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027

RESOLVED: That the budget of £5,356,740 and precept of £4,726,790 for 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027 is approved.

TC2026/7 Governance:

1. To abolish the Arts Centre Steering Group
2. To create a new committee known as 'Arts Centre and Town Hall Committee' and to:
 - Agree the attached Terms of Reference for the Committee
 - To agree to appoint the following members to the committee: Councillors Hubble, Mander, Leavy, Lilley and Smedley and two members of the Arts Centre Friends Group and to appoint a chair and vice-chair of the committee.
3. To adopt the attached Terms of Reference for the Friends of the Arts Centre
4. That the date and times of committee meetings up until the Annual Council Meeting in May be determined by the Proper Officer in conjunction with the Committee Chair.

RESOLVED: That the Arts Centre Steering Group is abolished and a new Committee 'Arts Centre and Town Hall Committee' is created and that the Terms of Reference for the Committee was agreed. The following members are appointed to the Committee: Councillors, Hubble, Mander, Leavy, Lilley, and Smedley, and two members of the Arts Centre Friends Group. Dates and times of the Committee meetings will be determined by the Proper Officer in conjunction with the Committee members.



TC2026/8 Projects: To receive and note the report from the Projects Manager regarding Asbestos removal at the Town Hall and to approve the following recommendation: To appoint Wring Group (Contractor D) as the Specialist Contractor to assist in the removal and clearance of identified asbestos within the Town Hall Theatre to aid the mobilisation of the Bridgwater Town Hall Refurbishment project.

RESOLVED: That Wring Group is appointed as the Specialist Contractor to assist in the removal and clearance of identified asbestos within the Town Hall Theatre.

TC2026/9 To agree the Grants Sub-Committee meeting dates for the municipal year 2026/27 Wednesday 17 June 2026 and Wednesday 9 December 2026

RESOLVED: That the Grants Sub-Committee meeting dates for the municipal year 2026/27 was agreed.

TC2026/10 To review and agree the Internal Controls policy as recommended by the Finance and Corporate Services Committee

RESOLVED: That the Internal Controls Policy was agreed.

Councillor Redman left the meeting at 19:56

TC2026/11 Oral Update from the Town Development Forum held on 19 January 2026

The Town Development Forum held a positive meeting where views were shared with regard to reviews on the parking by the River Parrett, it is hoped the comments from this Forum will be taken on board.

RESOLVED: To note.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **20:00**

Signed.....

Dated.....