

**Minutes of the Meeting of Bury St Edmunds Town Council,
held at the Guildhall, Bury St Edmunds,
on Wednesday 17th December 2025 at 7pm**

Present: Cllrs Higgins (Town Mayor), Armitage, Chung, Hind, Iannelli-Popham, Lindberg, Mackenzie, McGoochan, Mager, O'Driscoll, Sayer, Stamp and Stennett.

Also present: Jodie Budd (Town Clerk), Jacqueline Howells (Responsible Financial Officer/Assistant Town Clerk, retiring), Nicola Whittle (Responsible Financial Officer/Assistant Town Clerk), PCSO Mark Ellis, and the Press.

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Augustine, Halpin and Waterman.

2. To receive declarations of interest, additions to register and any gifts or hospitality received.

All District Councillors declared: '*That I may vote differently at District or County Council level from that recorded at this meeting*'. Cllrs Armitage, Chung, Higgins, Hind, Lindberg, Mager, O'Driscoll, Sayer, Stamp, and Stennett declared a local non-pecuniary interest as District Councillors.

3. To consider written applications by a member for dispensation, from the restrictions in section 31(4) of the Localism Act 2011 and specify the period for which any dispensation has effect

None.

4. To confirm, adopt and sign the minutes from the Full Council held on 26th November 2025

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/441/17/Dec/25**

RESOLVED that the Full Council minutes from the meeting held on 26th November 2025 be agreed and signed, as an accurate record.

5. Public Forum

No members of the public attended.

6. Mayor's announcements

The Mayor, Cllr Higgins advised Members that the Mayoral team had attended the following events representing the Town Council:

Apex Charity Collections
BSE Girl Guides Carol Service
Stagecoach Winter Performance
Brave Futures Snow Dash Run
Emergency Services Carol Service
Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk Carol Concert
Mayor of Felixstowe Carol Service
Riverwalk School Certificate Presentation
Stowmarket Town Council Carol Service

7. Town Clerk's report

The Town Clerk advised Members as follows:

Attended Clerk's unplugged meetings

Attended an online 'super forum'. Involved 70+ councils from Suffolk to listen about what devolution means to town councils. Unfortunately, the following day, government postponed devolution.

Visited the printers to watch the Mayor's Christmas card be printed.

On Tuesday, Julie, Cllr Hind and I will attend West Suffolk College to assist in the preparation and delivery of the Christmas dinners for vulnerable people who are alone on Christmas Day.

Mr T Murray wishes all at the Town Council a very Happy Christmas.

Finally, it is a very sad goodbye to our RFO, Jacqui Howells who is retiring. Thank you so much for all your support.

8. To note the PCSO's report

Councillors noted the crime figures submitted by the PCSO's.

PCSO Ellis, advised that there had been a few incidents of blackmail and these are being investigated. Problems with shoplifting are continuing to be prioritised, with a new shop safe initiative, recently introduced. PCSO Ellis reminded councillors to report any concerns to the Town Clerk.

9. To approve funding for outreach work and Teen Chill in Moreton Hall commencing March 2026 for 13 months.

Councillors discussed the successful outreach work currently being undertaken in the Northwest side of town. It was agreed that this should be extended to the Moreton Hall area.

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/442/17/Dec/25**

RESOLVED That the Budget for outreach work be increased to £50,000 for a second Teen Chill.

10. To consider the 2026/2027 budget proposals

Councillors approved the revised draft budget for 2026/2027 following discussions at the November 2025 Full Council meeting.

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/443/17/Dec/25**

RESOLVED That the 2026/2027 budget, be **APPROVED**. The precept to West Suffolk will be £646,090 and the outstanding expenditure of £94,650 be taken from General reserves.

11. To discuss and confirm the Council's preferred option for a Unitary Council

Councillors requested that although the Town Council is not a statutory consultee, their views should be made known to Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government department.

The Town Clerk was requested to advise the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government department that Bury St Edmunds Town Council would support the Three Council option.

12. To consider and adopt current Town Council policies

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/444/17/Dec/25**

RESOLVED that the following policies be APPROVED and ADOPTED:

- 12.1 Annual Investment Strategy
- 12.2 Disciplinary procedure
- 12.3 Equality and Diversity
- 12.4 Freedom of Information
- 12.5 General Office Safety
- 12.6 Health and Safety
- 12.7 Lone Worker (amended)
- 12.8 Public Forum

13. To approve payment of £6,398.82 for the holiday activities provided by Abbeycroft during October half term.

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/445/17/Dec/25**

RESOLVED that expenditure of £6,398.82 be **APPROVED** for holiday activities provided by Abbeycroft.

14. To receive the report and adopt the recommendations of the Planning, Licensing and Finance committee meeting of 26th November 2025

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/446/17/Dec/25:**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning, Licensing and Finance committee meetings held on 26th November 2025 be **ADOPTED**

15. Responsible Financial Officer's report

The RFO presented the monthly financial report outlining key information extracted from the monthly budget report. No areas of concern were identified

16. To note the CCLA payment report

The CCLA payment report was noted. The RFO advised that £100,000 had transferred from CCLA to Barclays current account on 12th November 2025.

17. To approve and sign Barclays bank balances as of 30th November 2025

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/447/17/Dec/25:**

RESOLVED that Barclays bank balances as of 30th November 2025 be **APPROVED** and **SIGNED**

18. To approve and sign payments list for November 2025

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/448/17/Dec/25:**

RESOLVED that the payments list for November 2025 be **APPROVED** and **SIGNED**

19. Date of next meeting Wednesday 21st January 2026

The meeting ended at 8.30pm

Signed: D. F. Hughes Dated 21st Jan 26