



Castle Cary Town Council

The Market House

Market Place

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MINUTES OF CASTLE CARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

held on Monday 19th January 2026 at 7.00pm

Present: Trevor Oats (Chair), Frances Alden, Linda Ball, Margaret Bebbington, Philippa Biddlecombe, David Bright, David Gill, Judi Morison and Pek Peppin

In attendance: Lisa Davis (Clerk)
Terena Isaacs (Deputy Clerk)
Cllr. Kevin Messenger
Cllr. Henry Hobhouse
Zoe Young – The Newt / Cary in Bloom
Penny Steiner – Cary in Bloom
Di Pinnions – Ansford Parish Council
3 members of the public

Before the meeting started, Trevor Oats reminded all Councillors of the Civility and Respect pledge that has been approved by CCTC.

Open session

A member of the public requested that FOI responses were published on the Town Council website and asked that CCTC ignore the advice from SALC regarding adding a list of FAQ's rather than publishing the full response.

A resident raised concerns about transparency following no response to further questions about the Donald Pither Pavilion

The meeting started at 19:05

2025

TC109 Apologies for absence

Gavin Crisp and Angela Piggott had sent their apologies.

TC110 Declarations of personal or pecuniary interests

David Bright advised he may need to declare an interest in item TC115b). Trevor Oats confirmed that the draft letter relating to this item was not yet available.

TC111 To approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 15th December 2025 to be signed by the Chair

RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 15th December

TC112 Community Safety and Security update No report had been received. It was noted that PCSO Beata had moved to another team for at least two months.

TC113 Cary in Bloom 2026

- a) **Update on Cary in Bloom 2026** Penny Steiner gave an update on Cary in Bloom 2026 and encouraged people to attend the open public meeting on 20th February. A key project this year will be clearing the Millenium Wood. Penny expressed her hope that CCTC would be able to support the project in many ways including the grant request and it was hoped that Castle Cary Commerce Association would embrace the theme of painting the town yellow. Zoe Young gave an update on the Sow, Grow and Bloom Festival that will take place at the Donald Pither Field on 11th July. Trevor Oats thanked Penny and Zoe and all the volunteers involved and noted that Cary in Bloom was wonderfully received last year so saw no reason why that would not be the same this year.

TC114 To receive reports, updates and correspondence:

- a) **Henry Hobhouse and Kevin Messenger (Somerset Councillors)** Henry Hobhouse reported that he has applied to move the footpath at the Primary School. Once the existing footpath is closed it will give access to the Cadet building and mean that the school children do not need to be escorted into the playground. Notification of the appeal decision for Foxes Run has been received and the reasons for a legal challenge would be forwarded to the Town Clerk. Henry Hobhouse advised that he would be happy to submit a request for a judicial review as an individual as the costs would be much higher if submitted by an organisation. Henry advised was unable to brief on the Somerset Council budget as the Scrutiny Committee meeting had been cancelled following an announcement regarding the Government grant which does not even cover inflation. The B3153 would be closed for three weekends for resurfacing works to be completed. Kevin Messenger reported that he had raised concerns again about the sinkhole and landslide at the Somerset Council Full Council meeting. Unfortunately the landslide works are on hold as a priority job in Minehead needs to be completed first but there are plans ahead to resolve the sinkhole. It was reported that Somerset was placed 16th out of 250 in a recent assessment of the state of roads.
- b) **To receive a report from the Town Council representative for Caryford Hall (DG)** David Bright reported that there were issues with the lights in the car park but repair works were being scheduled. Caryford Hall have recently signed a contract with Biffa for waste disposal.
- c) **To receive a report from the Town Council representative for Castle Cary Museum (PP)** Pek Peppin reported that the Cary Museum in Winter monthly talks are going really well, with over £400 raised at the last talk.
- d) **To receive an update on Local Community Network (LCN) (JM)** The next LCN meeting would be held on 21st January.
- e) **To receive an update on youth provision** there was no update, although it was noted that a contract review meeting is taking place the following week.
- f) **To review action points from previous meetings** None.

TC115 Chairs' Report

- a) **General update, observations and to discuss meeting protocol** Trevor Oats raised concerns about retrospectively going over things and noted the importance of Committee meetings for CCTC to work well. If Councillors are unable to attend

meetings then questions should be asked before the meeting via the Chair.
Trevor Oats agreed to write a proposal to be agreed regarding meeting protocol.

Action 261901/1: Trevor Oats

- b) **To discuss request from Ansford Parish Council to send a joint letter to Caryford Hall Trustees regarding the sale of land** A draft letter was not yet available. It was agreed to ask APC for the letter so that it could be discussed at a future meeting.

Action 261901/2: Town Clerk

- c) **Community Conversation – to note that the next Community Conversation will be held on 4th February** Noted

- d) **Correspondence**

- i. **Email regarding vandalism at Station Road and Fairfield – to note**
Noted
- ii. **Letter from the Leader of Somerset Council: Reflections and Updates – to note** Noted
- iii. **Letter regarding Ramblers 2026 project: Potential Rights of Way for Castle Cary – to discuss and agree how to respond** It was agreed to accept the offer from the Ramblers and that Philippa Biddlecombe would contact a potential volunteer regarding Rights of Way.

Action 261901/3: Philippa Biddlecombe

- iv. **Email from Somerset Council regarding Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Programme – to note** Noted

Committee Reports, Recommendations & Progress on Major Projects

TC116 Planning Committee & Neighbourhood Plan

- a) **Planning Committee update report** There was no update
- b) **Planning appeal ref: APP/E3335/W/25/3365088 Land Adjacent Foxes Run, Bridgwater Buildings, Castle Cary, Somerset BA7 7JU – to note planning appeal decision** It was agreed that this would be discussed at a meeting on 2nd February. Trevor Oats raised concerns about associated costs for a judicial review.
- c) **To consider the application received detailed below**

Application No	Proposal	Applicant details	Observation Expiry Date for Town Council
25/02778/FUL	Change of use of an existing building from commercial use for use as a single residential annexe, demolition and replacement of existing garage and workshop	Somerville Ansford Road Castle Cary Somerset BA7 7HG	20 th January 2026
No objections were raised RESOLVED: it was proposed and agreed (8 – for, 1 – abstained, 0 – against) to support this planning application			

TC117 Properties and Infrastructure Committee

- a) **Properties and Infrastructure Committee update report** a report had been circulated in advance of the meeting.
- b) **Update on Market House project (PP)** Judi Morison reported that the Market House Project Group had met for the second time. The fundraiser was very positive that we would get a larger grant if we applied for a smaller grant first. Pek Peppin confirmed that the costs of the fundraiser can be re-couped through grants and Trevor Oats confirmed that no money from the precept would be used for the Market House project.
- c) **Update on Pavilion project (PB)** Philippa Biddlecombe reported that discussions are ongoing regarding the build and funding and confirmed that no money from the precept would be used as all monies would come from grants and fundraising.
- d) **To discuss proposed communication with the funfair organisers following meeting with complainant** Philippa Biddlecombe had circulated the request from the complainant in advance of the meeting. It was felt that although CCTC had empathy for the resident some of the requests were unreasonable and the impact on the whole community had to be considered.
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed that Philippa Biddlecombe and the Town Clerk would draft a letter to the fair organisers and circulate to Town Councillors and advise APC that a letter would be sent

Action 261901/4: Philippa Biddlecombe / Town Clerk

TC118 Marketing and Communications

- a) **Marketing and Communications Committee update report** there was no report

TC119 Finance and Management

- a) **Budget year to date summary** Noted
- b) **To note cemetery fees from January 2026** Terena Isaacs reported that the fees had been compared with Wincanton and Bruton and it was noted that Castle Cary fees were higher than both
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to keep the Cemetery fees the same as 2025
- c) **To consider quote for additional works to resolve the issues with the roof in The Shambles**
RESOLVED: it was proposed and agreed (7 – for, 2 – abstained, 0 – against) to accept the quote for additional works to the roof and that the works would be funded using the Market House dowry
- d) **To consider grant application for Cary in Bloom 2026**
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to award a grant of £150 towards Cary in Bloom 2026
- e) **To agree recommendation from Finance and Management Committee to accept quotes for works to install a new toilet at the Market House**
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to accept the quotes for works to install an additional toilet at the Market House
- f) **To agree recommendation from Finance and Management Committee to accept quote for electrical works to install a defibrillator in the phone box**
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to accept the quote for electrical works to install a defibrillator in the phone box

- g) To agree recommendation from Finance and Management Committee to accept the quote for flooring in the Billiard Room
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to accept the quote for the flooring in the Billiard Room
- h) 2026/27 budget – to agree budget for 2026/27
RESOLVED: the budget for 2026/27 was proposed and unanimously agreed
- i) Precept – to agree the 2026/27 precept
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed that the precept is set at £262,850 for 2026/27.
- j) Payments - to approve the January 2026 payment schedule for the Town Council and the Donald Pither Trust and to nominate Councillors to verify and authorise payments
It was noted that a charge had been made by PKF Littlejohn for additional work following the receipt of challenge correspondence in relation to the 2024/25 AGAR. The external auditor had confirmed that they had reviewed all the information brought to their attention and it was their decision that none of it impacted the 2024/25 AGAR or their report on it.
RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the January 2026 payment schedule for the Town Council be approved.
RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the January 2026 payment schedule for the Donald Pither Trust be approved.
It was agreed that Margaret Bebbington would check the invoices against the payments and that Philippa Biddlecombe would execute the payments.

TC120 To agree membership of Town Council Committees Following advice from SALC Town Councillors confirmed their membership on Town Council Committees

The meeting concluded at 20:36 hours.

The next meeting of the Town Council will be held on Monday 16th February 2026 at 7:00pm. Any items for inclusion on the agenda should be forwarded to the Town Clerk by Thursday 5th February 2026.