



Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 14th July 2026 at 7.30pm, in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall.

Present: Cllrs. Wood (Chair), Bovey, Coles, Distin, Giles, Nutley and Pugh.

In attendance: The Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Cllrs Rogers (DCC & TDC) and Major (TDC), Reverend Phillip Parker, the Portreeve, the Chair and Deputy of the Neighbourhood Plan working group and one member of the public.

Cllr. Wood opened the meeting and welcomed those present. Reverend Parker presented a short period of reflection in memory of the late Rt Hon Ann Widdicombe.

096.26 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr. Harper due to ill health, Cllrs. Searight and Snowsill due to work commitments and Cllr. Turner due to a prior commitment.

Resolution

APPROVED

Proposed: Cllr. Giles

Seconded: Cllr. Pugh

Prior to moving to the next agenda item Cllr. Nutley read a prepared statement on a point of order (**Appendix 1**). Cllr. Wood noted that the Council will respond in full in due course.

097.26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None Received.

098.26 PUBLIC COMMENTS / STATEMENTS

A resident spoke of the concern of the waste outside Kenwyn being a fire hazard and wanted to know if the Council can become involved. Cllr. Nutley stated that he has been in contact with the local fire officer regarding this and Cllr. Rogers distributed a handout from Kenwyn's owner explaining the current position and further requesting he remains anonymous until final planning permission is sought.

Another local resident spoke of the continuous damage being caused to Holne Bridge by long, large lorries. It is repeatedly being knocked down, sometimes for long periods of time. He also raised concerns about parking in the area.

ACTION

Cllr. Wood suggested working in conjunction with Holne Council. Cllr. Nutley offered to make introductions on behalf of Ashburton Town Council.

ACTION



099.26 TO RECEIVE THE PREVIOUS MINUTES OF 9TH JUNE 2026.

The Clerk reported that all actions have been completed.

Resolution

RESOLVED: The minutes were duly signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Proposed: Cllr. Pugh

Seconded: Cllr. Nutley

100.26 TO RECEIVE THE MAYOR'S REPORT.

Cllr. Wood presented her prepared report (**Appendix 2**) making particular reference to the success of the recent Carnival week and thanking the team for their dedication and hard work.

101.26 TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT.

The Clerk presented her report (**Appendix 3**) updating the Council on several areas:

- Completion of the CiLCA qualification.
 - Staffing.
 - Asset transfer progress.
 - Meetings recently attended throughout the District.
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102.26 TO RECEIVE THE POLICE REPORT.

The Clerk presented the Police report (**Appendix 4**).

103.26 TO RECEIVE THE DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT.

Cllr. Rogers responded to the public comment regarding Holne Bridge. He will feedback to Highways.

104.26 TO RECEIVE THE TEIGNBRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT.

Cllr. Wood requested a more detailed reply to an email from Alex Carpenter about the likelihood of TDC transferring the car parks to Ashburton Town Council.

ACTION

105.26 TO RECEIVE THE REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE FINANCE AND TOWN HALL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE.

Cllr. Pugh highlighted the ongoing actions from the recent Finance meeting. The Clerk reported that the research into acoustic panels for the Main Hall has expanded to a potential grant application to include an audio induction loop for people that are hard of hearing.



106.26 TO RECEIVE THE REPORT FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP.

The Deputy Chair of the NHP gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the current status of the Plan and asked for recommendations of where to advertise it once complete. Suggestions such as the Post Office, Information Centre, Facebook and the website were all offered. It was reported that the timescale for this could be as little as 2-3 weeks.

The Clerk thanked the NHP group and praised them for their work and expertise.

The Chair of the NHP then read a statement and asked the Clerk for this to be shared with all Councillors electronically. **(Appendix 5)**. This statement will also go in the Around Ashburton.

ACTION

107.26 TO RECEIVE THE PROPOSAL FROM THE ASSET MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP REGARDING TRANSFER OF TDC ASSETS.

Cllr. Pugh read a statement from Cllr. Turner as she was unable to attend the meeting **(Appendix 6)**. In the absence of Cllr. Snowsill, the Clerk presented the proposal from the Asset working group. Cllr. Wood reminded members that this is a proposal to enter into discussion about certain assets in a bid to identify costs – both of transfer and in the future. This proposal is not intended to enter into any legally binding contracts. Cllr. Rogers (TDC) advised Council that he had asked many questions on behalf of parishes such as Widecombe and Buckfastleigh but has received no response as yet.

The wording of the proposal was discussed and agreement made for some small alterations. The Clerk's office will make these changes and circulate the proposal to Councillors before sending it on to TDC.

ACTION

Resolution

RESOLVED: to alter the wording of the proposal to ensure clarity that it is a proposal to enter into negotiations only, to discuss the possible transfer of assets and to ascertain costs and future implications to Ashburton Town Council.

Proposed: Cllr. Pugh

Seconded: Cllr. Coles

108.26 TO RECEIVE THE REPORT FROM THE PORTREEVE, 1205 SHANE FLEMING.

The Portreeve reported a busy couple of months particularly the many coffee mornings and AGMs that had been attended.

109.26 TO RECEIVE THE COUNCILLORS' REPORTS OF ATTENDANCE AT SUB COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS.

Cllr. Coles reported that he and Cllr. Nutley had attended the Glendinnings local liaison group. There is concern from residents about the safety of the new road by the quarry.

27,000 trees and shrubs have been planted in the area and the innovative use of solar panels has saved many tonnes of CO2.



Cllr. Coles also reported that the NEB film had a further successful showing and that about 5% of Ashburton's population have now seen it. There is to be a meeting on 27th July to discuss the next measures to be taken.

Cllr. Wood noted that the swimming pool is open and very busy with no leaks. All is going well and the committee are grateful to the community for their support.

110.26 TO SUGGEST CONTENT FOR THE ASHBURTON TOWN COUNCIL MEDIA POST.

The Neighbourhood Plan, the Clerk's CiLCA qualification and the ACE/NEB film were all suggested.

111.26 MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS FOR INFORMATION ONLY OR ON A FUTURE AGENDA.

Cllr, Giles commented on the speed limit by the new Co-op. Council have previously been advised that a crossing cannot be installed on that road because of the necessary reduction in driving speed. Cllr. Giles pointed out the drastic reduction required at the top of Whistley Hill where it goes from 70 into a 20mph zone. The Clerk's office was asked to investigate further.

ACTION

Cllr. Wood closed the meeting at 21.03

SIGNED _____ DATE _____



Action Points Arising from the Full Council Meeting

Held on Tuesday 14th July 2026 at 7.30pm in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall

Agenda Item	Actions	Responsible
098.26	Clerk's office to contact Highways raising awareness of the continual damage being caused to Holne bridge.	Clerk's Office
098.26	Cllr. Nutley to make introductions to Holne Council on the Clerk's behalf.	Cllr. Nutley
104.26	The Clerk's Office to share the original reply with Cllr. Major by email.	Clerk's Office
106.26	The Clerk's Office to circulate the statement from the Chair of NHP with all Councillors.	Clerk's Office
107.26	The Clerk's Office to reword the proposal as instructed, forward to Councillors for approval and send to Teignbridge District Council.	Clerk's Office
111.26	The Clerk's Office to further investigate the installation of a crossing to the new Co-op.	Clerk's Office



APPENDIX 1

On a point of order chair.

I am bringing up a point of order on Council Traditions.

Having been on the Town Council for a number of years I feel that our long standing traditions are now not being adhered to. You only have to look at the photos to see that the male Councillors were always suited and booted for the full council meetings, and the Female Councillors were also smartly dressed. Although our female Councillors are mostly smartly dressed, I am afraid that some male Councillors are not.

As with saying prayers before going into the full council meeting, Councillors and members of the public are invited to stand for the prayers, but for those not wishing to do so were invited to remain seated.

We used to have our church vicar come to give prayers. The new vicar did come to a meeting, but at first was not invited to say prayers, and when he was he was not addressed in the manner I would have expected and I found it quite embarrassing. He has not been invited again, and I would like to know the reasons for this.

At a recent Courts event, I was asked what has happened to the traditions of the council.

This council has always prided itself on traditions and carried out its business in a professional manner.

I can understand that with the hot weather you may not want to wear a suit but I would request that these traditions are reinstated in September as to the manner we have conducted council business in the past.



APPENDIX 2

100.26 – Mayor's Report

This month's highlight has to be Ashburton Carnival Week. The whole town had such a wonderful celebratory atmosphere, and it was fantastic to see so many people getting involved.

Carnival Week really does offer something for everyone. Local businesses put so much creativity into decorating their shop windows, the fun run encouraged people of all abilities to get active, while the quiz, bingo, procession and Party in the Park brought the community together for plenty of fun.

As always, these events are only possible because of a small but incredibly dedicated group of volunteers. My heartfelt thanks go to everyone who gave their time and energy to make the week such a success.

Looking ahead, I'm excited for the Bread and Ale Festival this Saturday, and my Mayor's Inauguration event on 25 July from 11am–2pm at Cleder Place. We're planning a relaxed community afternoon with a face painter, giant bubbles, a storyteller, music, light refreshments, and opportunities to share ideas about our river. I'm very grateful to everyone who has supported and advised me in bringing it all together.

Alongside all the celebrations, there has also been a great deal of work taking place on the potential transfer of assets from Teignbridge District Council to Ashburton Town Council. It has been encouraging to see members of the public attending the asset meetings and contributing their views. These are important decisions that will help shape the future of our town, and I believe we are now reaching an important stage in that process. As we discuss the next steps this evening, it is vital that all perspectives are considered carefully.



Appendix 3

Clerk's Report – Full Council, Tuesday 14th July

Staffing:

Ashburton Town Council now has a CiLCA qualified Clerk. For anyone who is not aware, this is a nationally recognised qualification that demonstrates competence in the legal, administrative, financial, and governance aspects of running a local council and I am incredibly grateful to the council for providing me with this training.

The next thing will be to adopt the General Power of Competence. This gives the Council much broader legal freedom to do any project that benefits the community, unless another law specifically prevents it. This could include running new services, supporting community projects or trading through a company. We do, however, need to meet additional criteria for this: two thirds of the council must be elected members – at the moment we do not meet this, and therefore this has to wait until after the local elections next year.

Our Town Warden, Jack, has started work. He has been working on Bovey Memorial and Church Path at the moment, with the intention of then focussing on the Town Centre – North, East and West Streets and St Lawrence Lane.

Town Hall Maintenance:

We have noticed a damp issue in the clock tower corner of the Main Hall. Chris Frediani has kindly accessed the tower from within and from street level but suggested we need to investigate further. To avoid scaffolding costs at this stage, he suggests using a drone camera to get some images to potentially diagnose the issue. We have had an offer from someone with a drone and will organise a date over the next few weeks.

We also have a continued odour issue in the office, in this continued hot weather this has reduced, but I am looking into quotes to have the drains accessed and will report to the finance committee in due course.

External Meetings:

Cllr. Turner and I attended a meeting on 22nd June at County Hall regarding Local Government Reorganisation. Most towns in the county were represented, the leaders of the district councils were also in attendance. Our frustrations regarding the asset transfer process and lack of funding are echoed throughout the county. Whilst not a particularly useful meeting unfortunately, it provided an opportunity to network and begin talks on 'clustering'. This would mean a group of local, neighbouring towns actively supporting each other with services or advice and the ability to challenge the district/unitary council with a much larger voice.

Following this, I attended an initial meeting at Bovey Tracey Town Council, attended by members of Buckfastleigh, Chudleigh, Mortenhamstead and discussion ensued regarding how we could support each other. We will meet again in September, by which time we should have an idea of what the unitary council might look like.

Additionally, I will be attending another 'clustering' opportunity meeting next week including towns such as Teignmouth, Dawlish Kingsteignton and Newton Abbot as well.

HR meeting:

Finally, just to remind members of the HR subcommittee of tomorrow's meeting. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, this meeting will need to be bought forward to 6pm and be held in the Information Centre.

Thank you.



APPENDIX 4

ASHBURTON TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

14TH JULY 2026

This report covers the parish of Ashburton including its road network. The Parish has the Police beat code of JA2C. The Parish is served by the Neighbourhood Police team working out of Ashburton Police Station and Chudleigh Police Office. The Parish forms part of the Teignbridge Coastal & Rural Policing sector. The team is led by Sergeant Ryan Cook Neighbourhood Team Leader and PC Claire Hurrell is the Neighbourhood Constable (Neighbourhood Beat Manager) and is supported by PCSO Tina Jordan.

Although every effort has been made to produce an accurate representation of the figures included in the report there may be a slight discrepancy in the totals shown.

For the period 1/06/2026 to 30/06/2026 in the Ashburton beat area there has been a total of 42 Incident Reports of a varying nature logged resulting 26 Occurrence Reports being raised that required further investigation under the following categories:

Public Safety and Concern for Welfare: 3

Violence less serious: 5

ASB Nuisance: 2

Theft: 4

Suspicious Circumstances Vehicle: 2

Police Generated & Administration: 5

Harassment: 1

ASB Hate/Prejudice: 1

Fraud & Forgery: 1

Animal/Wildlife Crime: 1

Criminal Damage: 1



Appendix 5

Your Turn Again Ashburton

The Town Council now believes its Neighbourhood Plan is ready for you to take a look at in depth. Having shared in its preparation by reflecting and commenting through various workshops and consultations, now there will be another opportunity to make your views, positive or negative, known to us in the Town Hall. By law, it must be out there for a full six weeks to ensure that the maximum number of residents have the chance and the time to respond, should they so wish. The Council will then take note of your comments and, where appropriate, alter or amend parts of the plan accordingly. When we are then sure that we have produced the best document we can, it will go for further analysis to Teignbridge District Council and to Dartmoor National Park; both are planning authorities for Ashburton. We have been careful to ensure that it contains nothing to conflict with their own Local Plans and are hopeful that they will feel able to approve it.

Yet more scrutiny awaits--- we must then forward it to a government appointed Independent Examiner. They will scrutinize every part closely and either accept or reject it. If we pass the exam it will come back to Ashburton to put to all residents as a Referendum. You will then be asked to vote to accept it so that it can become law. There must be a clear majority for this to happen---even one or two votes too few and all is lost.

You may well ask “Why bother? This has been going on for years”. Because it will give our residents and businesses direct legal power to shape the town’s future. It influences where new homes and shops are built and guarantees that we will receive a higher share (25% instead of 15% in the pound) of local development tax to spend on community projects. Local planning authorities must take note of our wishes. We can specify design standards, encourage the right mix of housing, particularly affordable homes, and protect vital green spaces.

(The plan is available on line and copies can be accessed in the Information Centre, The Library etc etc, or wherever you might decide, before this goes to print.)



APPENDIX 6

Comments on Asset Transfer following the meeting of 7 July 2026

I apologise for my absence from the meeting.

The Town Council is now fully aware of the financial implications of taking on the proposed assets, including public toilets, play parks and green spaces, and the impact this will have on the precept paid by residents. For many households, the increase will be significant. Unless substantial external funding becomes available through grants or the new Unitary Authority, the precept will remain the Council's primary source of income. We must therefore explore every opportunity to strengthen our financial position, including maximising income from the letting and rental of Town Hall offices and other Council-owned spaces.

Despite the additional costs and responsibilities, I firmly believe the Town Council has little real choice but to accept the transfer of these assets. If we do not, the most likely outcome is continued deterioration, leading to the closure of public toilets, the loss of play parks and the decline of valued green spaces. There is also a real possibility that green spaces could be repurposed by the new Unitary Authority to generate income, rather than being protected for community use.

Taking on these assets is an investment in the future of our town. We must also be honest with residents about what can be achieved. We will not be in a position to upgrade every play park immediately. However, by planning responsibly, building reserves through the precept and actively pursuing external funding opportunities, we can improve these facilities over time and ensure they remain available for future generations.

The decision before us is not simply about cost; it is about protecting essential community assets and ensuring they remain in local hands rather than allowing them to decline or disappear altogether.

Cllr. Karen Turner