BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Town Council Meeting
Held on Monday 24th November 2025 at 7:02pm in the Corn Exchange

DRAFT
Subject to confirmation

PRESENT

Cllr H Miéville – Chairman of Council
Cllr S Hitchings
Cllr R Holmes
Cllr N Lacey-Clarke
Cllr T Clarkson
Cllr B Quayle
Cllr S Morgan
Cllr J Robinson
Cllr C Stevens – Vice Chairman of Council
Cllr A Cross
Cllr M Spruce
Cllr Y Miéville
Cllr M Putt
Cllr S Chapman
Cllr Gail Del-Pinto

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk
Committee Clerk
Operations Manager

Prior to the start of the meeting, Michelle Spruce signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Cllr Spruce received an absolute majority at the co-option meeting held prior to this full council meeting and is now a Town Councillor representing the Langton St Leonards ward in Blandford Forum.

94. PUBLIC SESSION

Cllr Stevens raised concern over the closure of the launderette and the lack of washing machines in the town. Cllr Lacey-Clarke said there is a business at the top of town where people can take their washing. However, Cllr Quayle added that it is an expensive facility.

95. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS

Cllr Quayle asked that Councillors encourage local groups to apply for the funding streams via the Dorset Council.

After 18 months of no appointment, the area now has a Community Highways Officer starting on 1st December 2025. He asked that Councillors inform him of any issues that he and Cllr Lacey-Clarke can raise with the new post holder.

The Dorset Council is currently working on the budget for the 2026/27 financial year and is publicising an opportunity for residents to try to balance the budget.

Cllr Quayle referred to a report by the Dorset Council about passing services on to town and parish councils. As part of this process, area boards are being introduced.

The Dorset Council Highways Team has started to grit roads in the recent cold weather.

96. APOLOGIES

Cllr L Hitchings

97. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllrs Stevens and S Hitchings declared an interest in the Blandford Opportunity Group grant application and stated they would leave the room during debate, discussion and voting.

98. MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 27TH OCTOBER 2025

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Cross, SECONDED by Cllr Chapman and AGREED (12 in favour, 3 abstentions/non-votes) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

99. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

Town Hall Mantelpiece Clock – The horologist was asked to suggest a suitable clock for the Town Hall mantelpiece and he proposed an antique French Brocot Slate & Marble Barrel Clock S. Marti. It is a late 19th century French mantel clock in Belgian slate and variegated marble with gilt inlays to the case front. The clock has a brass surround to the white enamel dial with Roman numerals, a visible Brocot escapement and blue steel hands. With an 8-day S.Marti movement striking a pleasant bell on the1/2 hour and hour. The Town Council purchased this clock via eBay at a cost of £125 in October 2025, and the seller was happy to provide information about its history as it was purchased when it was already fifty years old at a house sale in Dorset in 1935 by the seller's grandfather Eric Jackson who at that time was running his butcher's business in Milborne Port. The history has been recorded on the Town Council system, but will also remain with the clock in case anyone wants to learn about it.

Picture Hanging – SK Picture Framing recommended a picture hanger for the Town Council to use and he has put up the picture of HM The King in the lobby, along with the Blandford Races, all the council photos we had in the Council Chamber, along with the Freedom pictures and he will also secure the Town Hall pictures the grounds team put up last month.

Opening Event – All the funders have been invited to attend the Opening Event on Sunday 30th November 2025 and one invite has turned into the funder hosting a meeting in the building, with the Town Clerk also provided a tour of the complex. Geordie Thomson has offered to play the Blandford Forum fanfare at 12:30pm when the Mayor and Sam James will be on stage and Simon Hoare MP has kindly agreed to attend. At present the event is costing £3,000 of the approved £5,000 budget.

Police Presence – The Police came into the office last week to say that we can expect to see an increased Police presence over the coming weeks/months in the town and they will be out patrolling the town during Yuletide Festival. They spent the summer months being called out to Bournemouth and Weymouth a lot but now the tourism season is over we should expect to see them more. The Committee Clerk informed him that the B+ group mentioned in a recent meeting that an increased police presence had been noticed in the town recently.

Events / Mayor's Assistant – The Town Clerk confirmed that Zoë Bridgeman has been appointed as Events / Mayor's Assistant.

100. CIVIC REPORT

The paper was distributed to Councillors via email prior to the meeting.

101. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RECEIPT OF MINUTES

None

102. TO CONSIDER RESPONDING TO A LETTER TO SHAFTESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

Councillors discussed this in full and gave examples of recent experiences with policing in the local area.

102. TO CONSIDER RESPONDING TO A LETTER TO SHAFTESBURY TOWN COUNCIL (cont.)

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Morgan, SECONDED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke and AGREED (11 in favour, 4 against) that

The Town Council responds to Shaftesbury Town Council expressing sympathy with their perception; however, this has not been Councillors' recent experience.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

Cllr Del-Pinto proposed an amendment to include references to the difference in policing provision between coastal towns and inland towns and towns within North Dorset. However, this was not seconded.

103. TO CONSIDER THE TOWN COUNCIL'S POSITION ON DEPOSITS FOR BOOKINGS AND FREE TICKETS FOR CARERS

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Quayle but withdrawn that the Town Council delegates authority to the Town Clerk and Operations Manager to create a policy and the Operations Manager and Bookings Receptionist then have authority to consider each event on its merit for a deposit.

It was then PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Morgan and AGREED (10 in favour, 5 against) that

The Town Council delegates authority to the Town Clerk and Operations Manager to create a policy and bring it back to Council for consideration.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Putt and AGREED (12 in favour, 3 abstentions) that

The Town Council allocates a maximum of four tickets for each performance for carers to attend with people with a disability. This is due to capacity and sustainability for each event.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

104. TO CONSIDER A GRANT APPLICATION FROM BLANDFORD OPPORTUNITY GROUP

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Chapman and AGREED (12 in favour, 2 non-votes, 1 abstention) that

The Town Council approves the request for a grant and authorises expenditure of £2,000 from the Grants budget to Blandford Opportunity Group (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

105. TO CONSIDER EXPENDITURE APPROVAL FOR THE DAPTC MEMBERSHIP

The paper was noted (see Appendix E).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Cross, SECONDED by Cllr Chapman and AGREED (12 in favour, 3 against) that

105. TO CONSIDER EXPENDITURE APPROVAL FOR THE DAPTC MEMBERSHIP (cont.)

The Town Council authorises expenditure of £2,253.70 for its membership to the DAPTC (Expenditure Authority: Localism Act 2011 s1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

106. TO CONSIDER A RESIDENT'S REQUEST FOR A 20MPH SPEED LIMIT TO BE IMPLEMENTED ON WHITE CLIFF MILL STREET

The paper was noted (see Appendix F).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr H Miéville and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council responds to the resident, thanking them for raising this matter and advising that this has now been raised with the Dorset Council Councillors and they will feed back in due course.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

107. TO RESPOND TO A RESIDENT'S REQUEST FOR LIGHTING TO BE INSTALLED IN THE ALLEYWAY CLOSE TO BARNES CLOSE

The paper was noted (see Appendix G).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Putt, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (13 in favour, 2 abstentions) that

The Town Council responds to the resident, thanking them for raising this matter and expressing sympathy for the situation. However, it is not in position to take any action, and Dorset Council funds are believed to be limited, so we advise the resident to contact the Housing Association.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

108. PLANNING MATTERS

108.1 Appendix A – new planning application

108.1.1 P/LBC/2025/06272, P/ADV/2025/06514 and P/FUL/2025/06515 – Jerry's 10 West Street Blandford Forum DT11 7AJ

Cllr Morgan declared an interest due to her business interest in a similar business in the town centre.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr H Mieville and AGREED (13 in favour, 1 abstention, 1 non-vote) that

The Town Council has no objections to the application, which is in accordance with Blandford + NP Policies: B10 Design Code: CA2. Built Form Code: 9.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

108.1.2 P/HOU/2025/06282 – 13 Shaw Close Blandford Forum DT11 7TY

Cllr Cross declared an interest because he personally knows a resident who is objecting to it.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Clarkson but NOT AGREED (7 in favour, 7 against, 1 abstention with the Chairman of Council, Cllr H Miéville having the casting vote against) that the Town Council has no objections to the application, which is in accordance with Blandford + NP Policies: B10 Design Code: CA4. Built Form Code: 11,14, 15 & 16.

108. PLANNING MATTERS (cont.)

108.1.2 P/HOU/2025/06282 – 13 Shaw Close Blandford Forum DT11 7TY (cont.)

It was PROPOSED by Cllr H Miéville, SECONDED by Cllr Chapman and AGREED that

The Town Council objects to the application on grounds of overdevelopment.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

108.1.3 P/LBC/2025/06281 – 67A Salisbury Street Blandford Forum DT11 7PY

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Y Miéville and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council has no objections to the application, which is in accordance with Blandford + NP Policies: B10 Design Code: CA2. Built Form Code: 9,15,16 & 17.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

108.1.4 P/LBC/2025/06460 – Lloyds TSB 6 Market Place Blandford Forum DT11 7EE

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr H Miéville and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council has no objections to the application, which is in accordance with Blandford + NP Policies: B10 Design Code: CA2. Built Form Code: 9,15,16 & 17.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

108.1.5 P/BOC/2025/06505 – Larksmead House 101 Salisbury Road Blandford Forum DT11 7SW

It was PROPOSED by Cllr H Miéville, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (12 in favour, 2 against and 1 abstention) that

The Town Council has no objections to the application, which is in accordance with Blandford + NP Policies: B10 Design Code: CA4.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

108.1.6 P/FUL/2025/06241 – Grenville Place Percy Gardens Blandford Forum DT11 7QQ

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED that

The Town Council has no objections to the application, which is in accordance with Blandford + NP Policies: B10 Design Code: CA2. Built Form Code:15.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

108.1.7 P/FUL/2025/06588 – Marks & Spencer Langton Road Blandford Forum DT11 7EN

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Putt and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council has no objections to the application, which is in accordance with Blandford + NP Policies: B10 Design Code: CA2. Built Form Code: 9 however Councillors ask that any noise protection is put in place to protect local residents.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

109. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE AND CONSIDER ANY REQUESTS REGARDING THE:

109.1 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – Blandford + - The paper was noted (see Appendix H).

109.2 BFTC Commemoration Group – A festive lunch/meeting is taking place next month.

109.3 Climate, Biodiversity & Nature – Cllr Y Miéville informed Councillors about discussions with Pesticide Free Sherborne who had asked how the Town Council went through the process of going glyphosate free.

109.4 Dorset Council Grant to support the Market Area Enhancement Project – Cllr Stevens is collating information from local groups and organisations and will take it to the Town Clerk in due course. Cllr H Mieville added that Reeve the Baker is not supportive of the scheme because the business is concerned about the impact it will have on their many customers who pull up outside and pop in.

110. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

None

The meeting closed at 9:05pm.

SIGNED ……. DATED ……..……