**ANNUAL MEETING OF BOVEY TRACEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7TH MAY 2025 AT 7.00PM**

**Present:**

The Town Mayor, Cllr S Brooke Cllr E Kelly

Cllr A Allen Cllr G Kennedy

Cllr U Arnold Cllr H Mills-Brown

Cllr C Burton Cllr S Oldrieve

Cllr C Day Cllr L Robillard Webb

Cllr M Evans Cllr S Simmons

Cllr D Fletcher Cllr C West

**In attendance:**

Mr M Wells – Town Clerk

Cllr S Morgan (County & District Councillor)

Cllr M Smith (District Councillor)

The Honorary Representative of the Lord of the Manor

A member of the Neighbourhood Watch Association

A member of the Residents’ Association
3 members of the public

 *Cllr Brooke opened the meeting.*

**AM.25/01 Election of the Town Mayor & Chairperson for 2025/26:**

Cllr Oldrieve nominated Cllr Brooke as Town Mayor for 2025/26. Cllr Brooke accepted nomination. The nomination was seconded by Cllr Kennedy.

**Resolved:**

As there were no other nominations, Cllr Brooke was duly elected to serve as Town Mayor for 2025/26.

Cllr Brooke thanked fellow Councillors for electing her and stated that she is proud to represent the community.

Cllr Brooke signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

*The remainder of the meeting was chaired by Cllr Brooke.*

**AM.25/02 Election of Deputy Town Mayor for 2025/26:**

Cllr Robillard Webb nominated Cllr Evans as Deputy Town Mayor for 2025/26. Cllr Evans accepted nomination. The nomination was seconded by Cllr Kelly.

**Resolved:**

As there were no other nominations, Cllr Evans was duly elected to serve as Deputy Town Mayor for 2025/26.

Cllr Evans thanked fellow Councillors for electing him.

Cllr Evans duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**AM.25/03 Apologies for absence**

 None.

**AM*.*25/04Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

 There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensation received.

**AM.25/05 Minutes**

i) The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 17.03.25 (\**copy previously circulated)* were confirmed as a true record and were duly signed by the Town Mayor.

ii) The Town Clerk advised of the following update from the previous minutes:

* FC 25/03 – The Local Council Award Scheme application is still yet to be submitted.

**AM.25/06 Standing Item – Climate Emergency:**

Members noted the Council Declaration to embed the Climate Emergency Declaration across all Council services, activities, plans and other relevant work, considering the environmental impact of decisions, ensuring a fully integrated approach to mitigating the impact of climate change.

Cllr Burton referred to the presentation slide, advising that the Met Office has reported the sunniest April in the UK since records began, and Sky News reported that it was the hottest March on record in Europe. The world is already at more than 1.5c above pre-industrial levels.

Cllr Simmons advised members that a small task group are reviewing the current declaration and are working on an energy saving plan.

 ***The meeting went out of session.***

**AM.25/07** **Reports from Key Bodies on Parish related matters:**

 The following reports were received (if provided) from key bodies including:

**i)** **Churches Together**

No report received. Cllr Brooke advised that the church bells will be ringing on 8th May for VE Day and there will also be a Church Service and Beacon Lighting taking place.

**ii)** **Police**

 No report received.

**iii) County, District and Town Councillors**

County Councillor:

Cllr Brooke congratulated Cllr Morgan on the recent success of being elected as Devon County Councillor for our area. Cllr Morgan advised that, although it is still very new, she was last elected as County Councillor 20 years ago. Cllr Morgan suggested facilitating a dialogue with DCC Officers around the traffic projects for the parish to obtain a more consolidated view of the various schemes.

District Councillor(s):

Cllr Morgan reported back following a site visit recently with an Officer from Teignbridge DC (Charles Ackland) to highlight issues raised such as pathways etc. Cllr Morgan has joined the Heathfield Community Centre Trust and is looking to help recruit further volunteer trustees. Cllr Robillard Webb invited Cllr Morgan to a site visit in Heathfield to review unresolved highway related issues.

Cllr Smith referred to previous discussions with Sustrans around the feasibility of joining the Stover and Wray Valley Trails together. Sustrans are recommending to DCC in June further routes for feasibility studies. Cllr Smith provided feedback following discussions with TDC Officers about Infrastructure delivery and the use of S106 funds in addition to the 75% of CiL allocations received by TDC and how the parish could apply, or at least determine, what contributions have been made for the local area and what infrastructure has been delivered. Cllr Smith advised the Town Council that the District Council will be seeking Town/Parish Councils to create Infrastructure Delivery Plans and a template document is being devised.

Town Councillors:

Cllr Allen provided feedback following the recent annual Community Awards. This year produced some great nominations and following the awards we have received some really positive feedback. It has been difficult to generate nominations in recent years and thanks go to Cllrs Robillard Webb, Burton and Oldrieve for their helping attracting nominations. A report will be submitted in September to Full Council for early consideration of next years’ award process.

Cllr Burton referred to circulation of the Youth Café report, highlighting the concerns raised by the staff and volunteers and that a joint plan is required urgently with the relevant authorities to help with coordinating an approach to the issues. Cllr Robillard Webb suggested that the Council considers developing a ‘children and young peoples’ policy’, so decisions aren’t ad-hoc, which will aid a more co-ordinated approach, or the Council, as a minimum, could consider preparing a Statement of Intent.

Cllr Oldrieve referred to the Great Big Green Week scheduled for 7th – 15th June 2025 and highlighted that there is already an extensive programme of activities planned, which creates lots of volunteering opportunities. If anyone is interested in volunteering, please contact Cllr Oldrieve.

**iv) Town Mayors Interests**

A copy of the Town Mayor’s activities was circulated and noted.

**v) Other outside bodies**

No reports provided.

**AM.25/08** **Questions and Statements by the Public**

 The Chairman of the Neighbourhood Watch Association, reported that the public toilets at the Recreation Ground were closed and enquired about when they might open? A report was also made about overgrown hedges that were impeding a footpath in Mary Street (at the junction of Crockers Meadow).

 The Chairman of the Residents Association highlighted that he had been attending Council meetings for over 25 years and thanked members for listening and responding to concerns and questions that are raised.

 The Honorary Representative of the Lord of the Manor commented on the importance of flying flags at the correct orientation.

 Cllr Brooke welcomed the Honorary Representative of the Lord of the Manor and thanked them for attending. Cllr Brooke highlighted the achievements of the Honorary Representative and gave thanks on behalf of the council for all the voluntary work undertaken over previous years for the benefit of the parish and presented the chain of honor.

 *7.40pm – Two members of the public and the Honorary Representative of the Lord of the Manor left the meeting.*

***The meeting went back into session.***

**AM.25/09 Business Raised by the Public:**

The Town Clerk advised that a recent report had been received from the Cleaning Contract Supervisor about the blocked drain at the Recreation Ground Public Toilets. The Town Council’s Grounds Maintenance Operatives are investigating and have identified the cause and hope that the Public Toilets will again reopen prior to the end of the week.

 The Town Clerk further advised that a report had been made to Devon County Council in relation to the overgrown hedges and that a request has been made for these to be removed/cut back again.

**AM.25/10 Election of Committees:**

Consideration was given to the appointment of Members for the Town Council’s Committees for 2025/26:

 **Resolved:**

 To make the following appointments:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Standing Committees** | **Number of Members** | **2025/26 Members**  |
| Recreation, Parks & Property Committee | 7 Councillors (incl. Ex Officio) | Cllr Brooke (Ex O)Cllr ArnoldCllr EvansCllr KellyCllr Mills BrownCllr Robillard WebbCllr West |
| Finance, Resources & General Purposes Committee | 7 Councillors (incl. Ex Officio) | Cllr Brooke (Ex O)Cllr AllenCllr BurtonCllr FletcherCllr KennedyCllr OldrieveVacancy |
| Planning & Environment Committee | 7 Councillors (incl. Ex Officio) | Cllr Brooke (Ex O)Cllr ArnoldCllr DayCllr EvansCllr KellyCllr KennedyCllr Simmons |
| Personnel Committee | 3 Councillors (plus Ex Officio) | Cllr Evans (Ex O)Cllr BurtonCllr FletcherCllr Robillard Webb |
| Appeals Committee | 3 Committee Chairs plus Town Mayor | Deferred for consideration at the next Council Meeting. |

**AM.25/11 Representatives on Outside Bodies:**

Consideration was given to the appointment of members as Town Council representatives on outside bodies for 2025/2026:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Outside Body**  | **Number of Members**  |
| Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC)  | Cllr Kennedy |
| Bovey Tracey Heritage Trust  | Cllr BrookeCllr Kennedy |
| Bovey Tracey Information Centre CiC | Cllr Day |
| Police & Crime Commissioner Council Advocate Scheme  | Cllr Brooke |
| Bovey Tracey Youth Action  | Cllr Burton |
| Business for Bovey  | Cllr Burton |
| Bovey Tracey/Le Molay-Littry Twinning Association  | Cllr Robillard Webb |
| Friends of Mill Marsh Park  | Cllr Brooke |
| Heathfield Action Team | Cllr Mills BrownCllr Robillard Webb |
| Bovey Tracey Fairtrade (+ S*erving Mayor as President*)  | Cllr BrookeCllr Oldrieve |
| Heathfield Rail Link Project  | Cllr Day |
| Bovey Paradiso Arts | Cllr West |
| East Dartmoor National Nature Reserve Advisory Group | Cllr Day |

 *7.54pm – Cllr Kelly left the meeting.*

**AM.25/12 Recreation, Parks & Property Committee (RP&P) Committee**:

 The minutes of the meeting held on 31.05.25 *(\*draft copy previously circulated)* were received and were adopted. Cllr Oldrieve highlighted key items that were considered.

**AM.25/13 Finance, Resources & General Purposes (FR&GP) Committee:**

i) The minutes of the meeting held on 14.04.25 *(\*draft copy previously circulated)* were received and were adopted. Cllr Fletcher highlighted key items that were considered.

 ii) Members considered recommendations to re-adopt the following policies (*\*copies previously circulated*):

 - Information & Data Protection Policy

 - Data Breach Policy

 - Subject Access Request

**Resolved:**
To re-adopt policies as recommended, with amendments as highlighted within the revised circulated documents.

**AM.25/14 Planning & Environment Committee**:

The minutes of the meetings held on 31.03.25 & 14.04.25 *(\*copies previously circulated)* were received and were adopted. Cllr Simmons highlighted key applications that were considered.

**AM.25/15 Personnel Committee:**

The minutes of the meetings held on 18.03.25 (\*copy previously circulated) and 10.04.25 (*\*draft copy circulated*) were received and adopted.

**AM.25/16 Annual Governance & Accountability Return - 2025/26:**

Members considered the following:

i) receiving and noting the Internal Audit Report *(\*copy previously circulated)*

ii) approving the Annual Governance Statement (section 1 of the annual return) *(\*copy previously circulated)* and consider agreeing that the Chairperson and Town Clerk sign the document.

iii) approving the accounting statements (section 2 of the annual return) *(\*copy previously circulated)* together with an explanation of variance of 15% and above *(\*copy previously circulated)* and a statement of income & expenditure relating to box 7 & 8 of the return *(\*copy previously circulated)* and consider that the Chairperson should sign the document.

iv) approving the annual financial statement for year ended 31st March 2025 as an accurate reflection of the financial position of the Council and its income and expenditure *(\*copy previously circulated)* and consider that the Chairperson should sign the document.

v) approvingthe year end bank reconciliation for 2024/25 *(\*copy previously circulated).*

vi) approving the dates 3rd June – 14th July 2025 for the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights with the announcement (Date of Announcement of notice to be published on the Councils website advising public rights and publication of unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return) being posted on 9th May.

vii) reviewing and approving the current Asset Register *(\*copy previously circulated).*

 **Resolved:**

 To note item i) and to approve items ii) to vii) as set out above, subject to items iii) and iv) being amended as resolved (Box 4 revised figure = £148,332 and Box 6 revised figure = £332,690, as per the internal auditor’s report).

 The Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk were thanked for their due diligence.

**AM.25/17 Standing Orders:**

Members reviewed and consideredre-adopting the amended Standing Orders *(\*copy previously circulated).*

**Resolved:**

To re-adopt the Standing Orders as circulated, without further amendment.

**AM.25/18 Committee Terms of Reference:**

Members reviewed and considered re-adopting the Committee Terms of Reference*(\*copy previously circulated).*

**Resolved:**

To re-adopt the Committee Terms of Reference as circulated, making a change to rectify an error with the review date.

**AM.25/19 Financial Regulations:**

Members reviewed and considered re-adopting the Financial Regulations.

 **Resolved:**

 To re-adopt the Financial Regulations as circulated, without further amendment.

**AM.25/20 Meeting Schedule 2025/26:**

Members considered adopting the draft Meeting Schedule *(\*copy previously circulated)* for all Standing Committee meetings for the period from 8th May 2025.

 **Resolved:**

 To adopt the Meeting Schedule for all Standing Committee meetings for the period from 8th May 2025.

**AM.25/21 Councillor Training:**

Members received and noted current training opportunities *(\*copy previously circulated)* and were asked to consider any training that would enhance capability to fulfil roles and to advise the Town Clerk accordingly.

*Meeting closed at 8.24 PM.*