

## Minutes of the Full Council Meeting

Held in The Council Chamber of Emersons Green Town Council

19:00hrs on Thursday 16th of April 2026

### INTRODUCTION

**Present:** Cllrs James Hunt (Mayor), Bobbie Sunderland (Deputy Mayor), Graham Hutter, Kelly Allen, Colin Hunt, Lynne Paraskeva, Abi Cohen and Tina Potter

**In attendance:** Jo Bryant (Town Clerk)

**Apologies:** Cllrs Rachael Hunt, Andy Cowie, Simon Budd.

**Absent:** Cllrs Daryl Hembrough, Andrej Turk and Eli Akatwijuka.

**Public:** No members of the public were in attendance.

**Notes:** The meeting began at 19:00hrs. All resolutions were passed with a majority vote, by a show of hands, unless otherwise stated.

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Mayor welcomed everyone, described the emergency procedures, and made any necessary safety announcements.

**FC\_2026.001 Declaration of Interest – Localism Act 2011.**  
No declarations were made.

**FC\_2026.002 Public Participation.**  
None present.

### COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION

**FC\_2026.003 Minutes.**

**Resolved:** To approve the *Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2026*, copies having been circulated, as a correct record, and the minutes were signed by the Mayor.

**FC\_2026.004 Outstanding items.**

Clerk reported that EGTC Expression of Interest for the UK Town of Culture 2028 competition had been submitted and acknowledged. Submissions will be reviewed later this year.

Clerk also reminded everyone of the WECA Bus Plan Consultation which was notified last month and closes 10<sup>th</sup> May 2026. Paper copies of the survey are

available in the office as well as on our website, social media and noticeboards (QR Codes). Councillors are encouraged to share widely amongst their networks to ensure a high quantity of submissions are made. This is relevant for the whole WECA region and not just Emersons Green.

Clerk confirmed that Cllr Andrej Turk is now removed as a councillor of Emersons Green Town Council following non-attendance of any qualifying meetings or events for more than 6 months. A vacancy notice will now be applied.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### FC\_2026.005 Correspondence.

Official correspondence to the Council was noted.

## OPERATIONS

### FC\_2026.006 Reports

To receive reports from:

#### 1. Committees

##### a. Finance & Partnership Committee

Cllr Graham Hutter reported that no grant applications were considered. The council insurance policy was reviewed and increases to £2m for fidelity insurance was approved. A new Website Accessibility Statement was adopted along with payments for end of March & April approved: £78,720.03 total. The usual budget monitoring was undertaken, with income, expenditure, earmarked reserves, and Reserve Funding Facility balances reviewed.

##### b. Open Spaces

Cllr Bobbie Sunderland provided a report from the Open Spaces Committee who met on 2nd April.

***Dibden Lane Allotment Plot*** - A brief discussion was had regarding how a Town Council allocated plot could benefit the local community. The Committee asked the Committee Clerk to gauge the level of interest in a community allotment plot and to estimate the amount of officer time required for the project.

***Emersons Green Lane Speeding***- agreed to install signage in the lane emphasising the shared nature of the lane. A budget of £600 + vat was agreed.

***Wildlife Recovery sign for Rodway*** – S Glos has proposed a sign for the Common, which they would fund, encouraging people not to disturb wildlife. The ‘Do not disturb’ message was felt to unclear and potentially confusing to users of the Common. An information board would be a more effective alternative. This suggestion, together with examples of information boards that EGTC has installed in other areas, will be communicated to S Glos.

##### c. Planning Committee

Cllr Colin Hunt reported that there was little to report recently although a decision has been made notified agreeing new external lighting for Downend Car Wash which we objected to as we felt it would severely impact neighbouring properties. Conditions have been prescribed for lighting to be off outside of operational hours.

**d. Personnel Committee**

Cllr Tina Potter reported Assistant Clerk Sarah Parkin has had her temporary position made permanent following successful provision of maternity cover and an identified need for 3 part time assistant clerks to focus internally on the 3 business channels of Emersons Green Town Council. Professional qualification courses were approved for the Youth Liaison team.

**e. Youth Work Committee**

Cllr Abi Cohen reported about ongoing youth work, partnerships, recent challenges, and future plans, with a strong focus on expanding community engagement and mobile youth provision (CHOW).

**1. Holiday Provision & Projects**

- Confirmed at Emersons Green Village Hall with activities including building a bench and planter garden with young people.
- Exploring Pomphrey Hill as a potential second (and possibly permanent) site.
- Continued focus on creative, youth-led community projects following the success of the Lyde Green mural.

**2. Partnerships & Opportunities**

- Potential collaboration with Dogs for Thought (therapy dogs for mental health support).
- Increased engagement with Mangotsfield School (visits, feedback gathering, end-of term event).
- Vehicle donation needed to restart the school car project.
- Exploring joint funding with Staple Hill Youth Centre to expand provision.
- Early discussions to introduce youth work at Pomphrey Hill Pavilion.

**3. Challenges & Operational Changes**

- Closure of Emersons Green Skate Park has disrupted youth engagement.
- Temporary relocation to Village Hall secured for CHOW sessions (from 21 April).
- Increase in detached youth work expected as young people move to new spaces.

**4. Participation & Impact**

- 116 registered young people; attendance continues to grow.
- Gender split: 65% male, 32% female, 3% other.
- Positive feedback from cooking sessions highlights strong partnerships (e.g. Cook Stars).
- First group trip (16 young people) was highly successful and well-managed.

**5. Community Engagement Events**

- Attending three festivals: Summer Sizzler, Heath Fest, and Ham Farm Youth Festival.
- Focus on safe spaces, activities, and music/arts engagement.
- Additional outreach event planned at Mangotsfield School (16 July).
- Support provided to disadvantaged families via essential supplies.

**6. Future Plans**

- Shift toward expanding mobile and community-based provision.

- Seeking funding (e.g. Welcome Spaces grant) to broaden services, including support
- for older people and young parents.
- Proposal to reduce meeting frequency (next meetings: June and September) to prioritise delivery and development work.

***In Summary***

The service is growing and well-received, despite challenges like the skate park closure. The focus moving forward is on expanding reach, strengthening partnerships, and developing flexible, community-led youth provision.

2. Working Groups

**a. Climate & Nature**

Cllr Bobbie Sunderland reported that CAN has not met since the last Full Council. Projects that are currently ongoing, or under consideration include:

***iNaturalist***

Emersons Green Voice has a great article about the Spring Gathering and encouraging people to use iNaturalist to record wildlife in our area.

***Water Mark Town***

We have submitted our draft list of projects to Wessex Water which include:

- Water butts – an event with activities around water and information on benefits of collecting water. Note that EGTC has already installed water butts around the Council building.
- Water Collection in the Allotments and Park. FEGP already building a collection system.
- Folly Brook Clean up – currently a lot of litter along the banks particularly in the section close to the road.
- Drinking Fountains, possibly one in Lyde, one near the Library and one at Rodway.
- Management of water in Emersons Green Park. Explore with Wessex and S Glos how the flood water is managed and the impacts on local residents and wildlife.

**b. Strategic Plan**

Clerk reported that that working group met on 27<sup>th</sup> March to discuss how ear marked reserves could be utilised to benefit the community, creating capacity, capability and supporting delivery in a sustainable way. This will be considered later on this agenda.

3. External Bodies

**a. Police Authority**

Unprecedented incidents have occurred in South Gloucestershire in recent weeks, including a shooting in Speedwell and fatal stabbing in Filton. There has also been a marked increase in anti-social behaviour from youths around Emersons Green Retail Park and Lyde Green putting immense pressure on the Neighbourhood Policing Team. Residents should continue to report all incidents to assist with creating a picture of crime in the area.

**PLANNING & STRATEGY**

**FC\_2026.007 Strategic Plan**

**Resolved:** To align earmarked reserves to defined funding channels to support the delivery of community projects, with a detailed proposal for reserve allocation to be

developed and brought back to Council for approval. When considering the full EMR of £800k, £450k was available for sustainable project use to build capability, including £216k from 2025/26 precept. Alignment of £100,000 to Open Spaces Committee, £100,000 to Youth Work Committee, £100,000 to Finance & Partnership Committee and £150,000 to Full Council. This alignment still leaves committed amounts and essential reserves in place for operational safety.

**FC\_2026.008 Forward Plan.**

The Clerk reported on upcoming agenda items and projects.

**DATES & TIMINGS**

**FC\_2026.009 Next Meeting.**

To note the next meeting of the Full Council, which will be the Annual Meeting of Full Council along with regular business, currently scheduled for:

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2026 at 19:30hrs in the Emersons Green Town Council Chambers.

The meeting concluded at 19:23hrs

After the meeting, councillors remained to consider and discuss all nominations received for the Emersons Green Town Council Community Champion Awards. The finalists, and their nominators, will all be invited to the Annual Town Meeting on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at the Council Offices at 1830hrs where the winners will be announced.