

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting

Held in The Council Chamber of Emersons Green Town Council

19:00hrs on Thursday 16th of July 2026

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Present: Cllrs James Hunt (Mayor), Lynne Paraskeva, Tina Potter, Andy Cowie, Daryl Hembrough, Abi Cohen, Catherine Lombardo, Tracy Cannard, and Rachael Hunt

In attendance: Jo Bryant (Town Clerk)

Apologies: Cllrs Colin Hunt, Bobbie Sunderland (Deputy Mayor), Graham Hutter, Kelly Allen, Eli Akatwijuka, Ashlea Etches, Simon Budd

Public: One member of the public was 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.

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

FC_2026.043 Declaration of Interest – Localism Act 2011.
No declarations received

FC_2026.044 Public Participation.
One Member of the public was present and shared disappointment that the Taylor Wimpey Cossham Street development proposal had recently been approved by South Gloucestershire Council.

COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION

FC_2026.045 Minutes.
Resolved: That the *Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Full Council held on the 18th of June 2026*, copies having been circulated, be approved as a correct record, and were signed by the Mayor.

FC_2026.046 Outstanding items.
The Clerk reported that our bid to be Town of Culture 2028 was unsuccessful but the team are not disheartened as much was achieved through the process and many have reached out including Claire Hazelgrove MP who will back our bid for 2029.

FC_2026.047 Correspondence.
Official correspondence to the Council, copies having been circulated, was noted. Whilst Emersons Green was unsuccessful in its bid to be considered UK Town of

Culture 2028 much support has been received from other sources that would support a further bid in 2029.

OPERATIONS

FC_2026.048 Reports

To receive reports from:

a. Committees

Open Spaces Committee - met on 2 July 2026.

Tree Survey Works were approved for a number of trees identified as being in poor condition.

- **Watermark Town Allotments** Allotment tenants have responded positively to the proposed water collection and wash station. Paul will now approach Downend Men in Sheds for a quotation and design proposal.
- One tenant also suggested that the Town Council could support the bulk purchase of IBC containers for plot holders, either through discounted purchasing or assistance with transport, as individual delivery costs can be expensive. The Committee agreed to investigate this proposal further.
- **Guest Avenue Ramp** The latest update is that National Grid has installed temporary steps into the bank to provide access. Although these are basic and not intended as a permanent solution, they significantly reduce the severity of the slope. The Committee therefore chose not to install signage and will recommend that the remaining security fencing is removed at the responsible persons discretion.
- **Rodway Common Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)** A new Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been commissioned, replacing the existing survey, which is now 15 years old. The updated survey will provide current information on habitats and species and will support the development of a future management plan.
- **Rodway Common Parking** The Committee investigated the use of boulders to prevent parking on the grass verges; however, the cost was considered prohibitive. Quotations are now being obtained for the installation of bollards or posts as an alternative solution.
- **Lyde Green Service Charges** A resident contacted Cllr Sunderland directly to express concern about increases in GreenSquare service charges, which have risen by approximately 70% over the past five years. The Committee shares these concerns, particularly as the proposed changes to Special Expenses could further highlight disparities in service provision between the Lyde Green and Emersons Green managed areas. Cllr Allen will submit a Freedom of Information request (as a member of the public) to South Gloucestershire Council to obtain further information regarding the GreenSquare contract.

Planning Committee

Cllr Tracy Cannard reported that the committee had reviewed a few applications recently but that the one receiving the most attention was the Taylor Wimpey application for Cossham Street. She had attended the site visit and SGC Planning Committee to make representations and it is disappointing to see that the application has been approved.

Finance & Partnership Committee

Cllr Andy Cowie reported that many grant applications had been approved, specifically Green Community Travel for £240 to purchase mobile solar lights for improved yard lighting, Lyde Green CA for £1,727.16 utilising their Strategic Partnership Funding Facility to support a Community Wellbeing Group and £1,500 to support Cookstars Bristol North summer holiday cooking workshops, including a session for children requiring support from a parent or carer. Review of the Co-Option Policy and Working Hours Policy was deferred to the next meeting with the Social Media, IT & Cyber Security Policy being approved.

Following a presentation from the Chair of the Climate & Nature Working Group on its structure and recruitment model, it was agreed that the Community Cohesion Working Group would arrange its first meeting. Cllr James Hunt and Cllr Catherine Lombardo will lead the group, with the meeting date to be confirmed.

The July 2026 payment list and invoices were approved and signed by the Chair, with total payments amounting to £45,792.38.

Personnel Committee

Cllr Tina Potter reported that, whilst no meeting of Personnel Committee had taken place recently, she had received regular updates from the Clerk on team activity, performance and projects. After the departure of an assistant clerk we will be looking at replacement shortly, as well as longer term staffing needs.

Youth & Community Services Committee

Cllr Abi Cohen provided key updates:

- **Summer Programme**
Regular youth sessions continue throughout the summer, with additional music, cooking and gardening activities. The expanded programme aims to keep young people engaged, reduce anti-social behaviour, and encourage them to play an active role in their community.
- **Mangotsfield School Car Project**
Launching in September, the project will provide hands-on learning opportunities, alternative provision, and strengthen partnership working with the school.
- **Community Safety & Youth Engagement**
The skate park remains closed until its planned reopening on 17 July 2026. Attendance from skate users has fallen and some anti-social behaviour has increased as young people have been displaced. Work continues with partners and police to support young people and improve community safety.
- **Together Loud Consultation**
Residents can share their views through surveys, QR codes, social media and face-to-face engagement, helping shape future services and strengthen community ownership.
- **Positive Feedback**
Work experience placements have been completed successfully, with strong feedback from schools, parents and young people. Increased

confidence, higher attendance and growing community recognition continue to demonstrate demand for the service.

▪ **Contract Renewal**

The CYN contract is due for renewal from September 2026. A 4.1% cost increase is proposed, with renewal recommended due to strong partnership working, safeguarding links and complementary arts provision.

▪ **Service Expansion**

Work is underway with neighbouring parish councils to extend provision and assess local need. The CHOW project continues to grow, with established delivery at Pomphrey Hill and strong engagement from Mangotsfield School pupils.

▪ **Growing Impact**

- 142 registered members
- 55 weekly attendees
- 46 hard-to-reach contacts
- Female participation increasing
- 600+ festival engagements

▪ **Community Engagement & Recognition**

The team engaged with more than 600 people at HeathFest and continues to attend local events to raise awareness and connect with young people. Emersons Green Youth was also shortlisted for the 2026 SNG Supplier Social Value Award.

▪ **Looking Ahead**

Planned projects include a Go Ape confidence-building trip, a theatre visit, support for Mangotsfield Festival's return, and development of a youth exchange programme linked to Minety Festival 2027.

▪ **Summary**

The service continues to grow beyond youth sessions alone, focusing on community development, partnership working, consultation, preventative support and sustainable projects that benefit the wider community.

b. Working Groups

Climate & Nature

Twilight Birds, Bats and Chats – 24 June 2026 The event was well attended despite the hot weather. In fact, the park proved noticeably cooler than many homes. Attendees enjoyed refreshments and an informative talk from Stew Roden before heading into the park to observe and listen to bats using bat detectors. Several species were identified, including serotine, noctule and pipistrelle bats.

Repair Café A further planning meeting was held on 30 June 2026. At this meeting, a management committee was established, comprising volunteers including Councillor Sunderland and Paul Kearsley.

The management committee will meet again on 29 July 2026 at 7.00 pm. A WhatsApp group will be created to support communication between Repair Café volunteers.

The first Repair Café session is scheduled to take place on **Saturday, 12 September**, from **10.00 am to 12.00 pm**, at the Town Council Office.

The event will be promoted through printed posters, social media, and an article in the August edition of *The Voice*.

- c. External Bodies – Town Clerk reported that SGC Draft Local Plan was in the final phase of inspector examination with output expected in the next few days.

PLANNING & STRATEGY

FC_2026.049 Festive Light Competition.

Resolved: That due to unforeseen circumstances a light cannot be produced but instead this year's competition winner will be selected by a small panel and will be converted into the EGTC Christmas Card for 2026 with the winner receiving £100. No light will be produced this year and alternative approaches for delivering festive competitions in the community in future years will be brought forward to a future meeting.

FC_2026.050 Forward Plan.

To note upcoming agenda items and projects.

FC_2026.051 Special Expenses

Town Clerk reported on current position of SGC Special Expenses Policy, amended following consultation responses and engagement with Town and Parish Councils and advisory services, and its approval by SGC Cabinet earlier this week. The policy is to be implemented in April 2027 with a 3 year phase available. Consultation with each Town and Parish Council will take place individually providing further information about the implementation and transition arrangements, including details of how councils can express an interest in joining Wave 1. This will be followed by a programme of briefing, engagement and support sessions throughout late summer and autumn to help councils understand the opportunities available, consider local options and prepare for any decisions that may be required. The current timetable anticipates Expressions of Interest being sought during autumn 2026, with local decisions to follow before January 2027.

DATES & TIMINGS

FC_2026.052 Next Meeting.

To note the next meeting of the Full Council, currently scheduled for:

Thursday 17th of September 2026 at 1900hrs in the Emersons Green Town Council Chambers.

The meeting was closed at 1930hrs.