

BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL



Janine Gardner
Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Riverbank House
Bideford
Devon
EX39 2HS

Telephone:
(01237) 428938

Thursday, 11 June 2026

To: Members of the full Council

You are hereby summoned to attend the following meeting:

Meeting: Town Council

Meeting Date: Thursday, 18 June 2026

Meeting Time: 6:30pm

Venue: Greenhouse, Riverbank House, Bideford EX39 2QG

for the purpose of transacting the following business.

In accordance with The Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 members of the public are welcome to attend. There is a legal right to film/record/photograph/report public meetings.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J Gardner'.

J Gardner
Clerk to the Council

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies and reasons for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

To receive declarations of interest on items on the agenda and note any requests for dispensation received by the Clerk prior to the meeting.

3. Public Participation

Public participation session of 15 minutes duration on items on the agenda.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2026 as a correct record.

5. Items Brought Forward by the Chair

6. Devon and Cornwall Police

To receive an update from Devon and Cornwall Police.

7. Annual Governance and Accountability Return

a) Report by the Internal Auditor

To consider and note the report by the Council's internal auditor covering the 2025-26 financial year.

b) Section 1 – Governance Statement

To approve the assertions in Section 1 of the AGAR.

c) Section 2 – Statement of Accounts 2025-26

To approve the Accounting Statements set out in Section 2 of the AGAR.

d) Period for the Exercise of Electors' Rights

The period for the exercise of public rights is the period during which the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. The period lasts for 30 working days set by the smaller authority and must include the first 10 working days of July.

To agree the period for the exercise of public rights from Monday, 29 June 2026 until Friday, 7 August 2026.

8. Maintenance of Defibrillators

To consider the attached report.

9. Live Streaming of Council Meetings

To consider the attached report.

10. Youth Council

To consider the attached report.

11. Committee Minutes

To adopt the minutes of the Amenities Committee on 28 May 2026.

12. Committee Memberships

To appoint councillors to serve on Committees and Working Groups resolved upon under the previous agenda item, and to appoint the chairmen of the Committees/Working Groups.

13. List of Payments

To approve the list of payments.

Part II (Closed Session)

14. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve to exclude members of the public and the press to progress a matter of a confidential nature under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings Act) 1960 and Local Government Act 1972, ss 100 and 102.

15. Pannier Market

a) Construction Contract

To enter into a Joint Contracts Tribunal (JCT) contract governing the refurbishment works at the Pannier Market which has to be signed as a deed in accordance with the Council's Standing Order 23 as follows:

Execution and Sealing of Legal Deeds

a) A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.

b) Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.

b) Refurbishment

To consider a report appraising options to potentially bridge the funding gap for the Pannier Market refurbishment works.

16. Trust Port

To receive an update by Cllr Ken Hind.

17. Mayor's Robe

To consider a report recommending the purchase of a replacement robe for the Mayor.

Date of Next Meeting: 30 July 2026

Declaration of Interests at meetings

- Where a matter relates to an interest in list A, the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter. He /she only need declare it if it is not already noted on the register of interests.
- Where the matter is in list A, but is a sensitive interest, the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote; the member shall disclose that there is an interest but not the nature of it.
- Where a matter relates to an interest on list B the member shall not vote and may only speak as a member of the public.
- A member only has to declare an interest in list B if it is not already on the register of interests.
- If the interest is in list B and is sensitive in nature and not already registered then the member shall disclose the interest but not the nature of it.
- Where a matter relates to the financial interest of a friend, relative or close associate (other than in list A) the member shall disclose the interest and not vote. He or she may speak but only as a member of the public.

List A:

1 **Employment, office, trade or vocation** – carried on for profit by member or spouse or civil partner.

2 **Sponsorship** – any payments for the previous 12 months, other than by the Council, to assist in Council duties

3 **Contracts** – any current contracts between the Council and the member or his/ her spouse or civil partner or a company the member is a director or partner of.

4. **Land** – any beneficial interest in land within the area of the Council by member, spouse or civil partner.

5 **Licenses** - any license, alone or with others, by spouse, civil partner or member to occupy land in area of Council.

6 **Corporate Tenancies** - any tenancy where the Council is the landlord and the member, spouse or civil partner has a beneficial interest in the tenant.

7. **Securities** – a beneficial interest is held in a body that has land or business in the area of the Council by the member, spouse or civil partner that either exceeds £25,000 or the total share capital is in excess of one hundredth of the of the total shares issued.

List B:

Any interests which relate to or is likely to affect:

1. Any body where the member has general control or management and was appointed by the Council.
2. Any body that the member is in a position of control or management and either:
 - (a) exercises functions of a public nature;
 - (b) is for charitable purposes; or
 - (c) has the purpose of influencing public opinion or policy (including political parties and trade unions)
3. Any gifts or hospitality that the member has received by virtue of his or her office in excess of £50.



BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

Meeting: Town Council

Meeting Date: Thursday, 21 May 2026

Meeting Time: 6:30pm

Venue: Greenhouse, Riverbank House, Bideford EX39 2QG

Present:

North Ward

Councillor D Bushby
Councillor K Hind (Chairman)
Councillor D McGeough
Councillor S Smith

South Ward

Councillor R Clarke
Councillor S Inch

West Ward

Councillor C Hawkins

East Ward

Councillor J Craigie
Councillor J Gubb
Councillor L Hellyer
Councillor J McKenzie

Also Present:

J Gardner, Town Clerk
R D Coombes, Deputy Town Clerk

26. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and approved by Councillors T Inch, J Hellyer and P Lawrence.

27. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Councillor J Gubb declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 6 (list of payments) by virtue of payments being made to her spouse.

28. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was proposed by Councillor S Inch, seconded by Councillor J McKenzie and **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting on 7 May 2026.

(Vote – For: 10, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

29. Committee Minutes

It was proposed by Councillor K Hind, seconded by Councillor J McKenzie and **resolved** to approve and adopt the minutes of the Tourism Committee meeting held on 17 March 2026.

(Vote – For: 11, Against: 0)

30. List of Payments

It was proposed by Councillor K Hind, seconded by Councillor J McKenzie and **resolved** to approve the payments listed.

(Vote – For: 10, Against: 0)

Councillor J Gubb did not participate in the vote.

Part II (Closed Session)

31. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Due to the sensitive or confidential nature of the following item it was proposed by Councillor L Hellyer, seconded by Councillor J McKenzie and **resolved** to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting on the basis of Section 1 paragraph 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 which stipulated that a council may, by resolution, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings.

(Vote – For: 11 Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

32. Pannier Market Refurbishment – Tender Evaluation and Contract Award

The Clerk introduced a report recommending the appointment of a main construction contractor for the refurbishment of the Pannier Market in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

The recommendation followed a restricted procurement procedure which had been led by Torridge District Council's procurement service and following a tender evaluation procedure

carried out by the project team consisting of the architect, quantity surveyor, project manager and the Clerk.

The original submissions had all been returned in excess of the budget and a subsequent value engineering process sought to enable the delivery of the project within the available budget.

The Council discussed additional funding, completion date implications and other projects within Torridge.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor S Smith and **resolved** to

- a. notify Arque that the Council appointed them the preferred contractor and utilise the standstill period to finalise the financial negotiations and reduce the tender figure in line with budget and increase the risk allowance accordingly.
- b. undertake a detailed credit check for financial and commercial standing prior to formal appointment.

(Vote – For: 11, Against: 0)

The business of the meeting having been concluded the Chairman thanked the councillors for their attendance at the meeting, which concluded at 6:59 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor:

Date:

BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Accounts for approval at the Town Council Meeting - 21 May 2026				Agenda Item 6				
	Invoice Date		Allocation	VAT	NET	TOTAL	Payment	Governance
1	01/05/2026	Triangle	Broadband Provision	£70.12	£350.59	£420.71	27/05/2026	Market
2	08/05/2026	Clear Sky Publishing	Public Notice - Gazette website / social media	£15.00	£75.00	£90.00	27/05/2026	TC
3	08/05/2026	Peninsula Business Services Limited	HR/H&S/EAP	£65.15	£344.97	£410.12	27/05/2026	TC
4	12/05/2026	Acorn	Seasonal Worker	£80.83	£404.14	£484.97	19/05/2026	TC
5	18/05/2026	Jewson	Maintenance Items	£4.38	£21.90	£26.28	27/05/2026	TC
6	18/05/2026	Tamar	Maintenance Items	£36.41	£182.10	£218.51	27/05/2026	TC
7	06/04/2026	Blakewell Services Ltd	Vehicle Test - Intermittent Fault	£5.50	£27.50	£33.00	27/05/2026	TC
8	14/05/2026	DVLA	Renault - WD18LXA - Vehicle Tax + Admin Fee		£362.50	£362.50	CC015	TC
9	14/05/2026	BJ's Value House	Maintenance Items	£7.17	£35.83	£43.00	CC016	TC
10	15/05/2026	Genuine Centre Ltd	Stationery	£3.58	£17.91	£21.49	CC017	TC
11	15/05/2026	Vista Print	Bideford Fair items	£24.63	£121.78	£146.41	CC018	TC
12	15/05/2026	Hobby Toys Ltd	Water	£3.50	£17.49	£20.99	CC019	TC
13	15/05/2026	Amazon EU	Refuse sacks	£0.57	£2.83	£3.40	CC020	TC
14	15/05/2026	We Can Source It Ltd	Napkins	£2.99	£14.95	£17.94	CC021	TC
15	16/05/2026	Sara DM Enterprises Ltd	Bideford Fair items	£2.18	£10.91	£13.09	CC022	TC
16	20/05/2026	South West Councils	Membership 2026-27	£110.00	£550.00	£660.00	27/05/2026	TC
17	31/03/2026	Jonathan Rhind Architects	Market Project	£2,098.08	£10,490.39	£12,588.47	27/05/2026	TC
18	18/05/2026	Niek Sampson Mechanical Engineering	Crane hire 11 and 12 May 2026	£960.00	£4,800.00	£5,760.00	27/05/2026	TC
19	19/05/2026	RGB	Maintenance Items	£6.15	£31.16	£37.31	27/05/2026	TC
20	19/05/2026	Acorn	Seasonal Worker	£135.94	£679.69	£815.63	27/05/2026	TC
				£3,632.18	£18,541.64	£22,173.82		
			Bank Balances at 21/5/2026 - Current	£ 45,655.03				
			Bank Balances at 21/05/2026 - Deposit	£ 580,000.00				
			Bank Balances at 21/05/2026 - Reserves Account	£ 180,107.85				

Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26

Bideford Town Council

<https://www.bideford-tc.gov.uk/>

During the financial year ended 31 March 2026, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2025/26 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2024/25, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2024/25 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2025/26 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2024-25 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.	✓		
P. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

15/10/2025

22/04/2026

09/06/2026

Parish & Town Auditing Services

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Date

09/06/2026

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We have assured ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A <i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>
10. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.			<i>has made suitable arrangements for its IT and data management and has complied with proper practices in doing so.</i>

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	
			<i>Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.</i>
1. Balances brought forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies			<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts			<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs			<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments			<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments			<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments			<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets			<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings			<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	
11 Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactions?			<i>For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval.

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

MAINTENANCE OF DEFIBRILLATORS

Introduction

In December 2025, the South Western Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust wrote to the Council advising that the “Cardiac Science G5” defibrillators located at the fire station and Harbour Master’s office would be formally gifted to the Town Council, and that the Ambulance Trust was no longer responsible for their maintenance. A previous memorandum of understanding had governed the defibrillators’ maintenance and servicing which expired on 1 December 2025.

The Town Council is therefore responsible for the following:

- Ownership of the equipment which is no longer in warranty by the manufacturer
- Repairs, updates or replacements
- Monitoring and replacement of consumables including pads and batteries

Maintenance Requirements

In their letter dated December 2025, the South Western Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust recommend purchasing replacements and spares via online stores.

The Council’s maintenance team carries out weekly battery checks on all defibrillators in order to enable the timely replacement of batteries which have a lifespan of 4-5 years which is, of course, dependent on usage. Pads require replacement following every use or when their use by date expires.

Replacement batteries cost in region of £275 and pads cost in region of £65.

Recommendation(s)

- a) To retain the defibrillators located at the fire station and Harbour Master’s office.
- b) To note the costs associated with the replacement of batteries and pads.

Janine Gardner
Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
June 2026

LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Introduction

On 19 September 2024, the Council supported the motion to make Council meetings transparent to the public by live streaming to the public and for recordings to be kept as a matter of record until the minutes of the meeting have been approved as an official record of the meeting (ref. minute 74).

The Council's decision was never implemented.

Implications of the Decision

There was no provision included in the 2026-27 budget for the capital investment required in order to enable live streaming.

The Council did also not appraise options properly including:

- Public access to the streams and recordings (on the Council's website, a Council YouTube channel, Facebook Live, etc)
- Reviewing platform terms of service, data usage, moderation tools etc
- Ensuring accessibility requirements are met (e.g. captions, clear audio) under the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 which applies to live and recorded videos published online
- Additional staff time and training required for setup, moderation during and following meetings, editing recordings and maintenance
- Planning how to respond if inappropriate, offensive, or unlawful statements are made live
- Compliance with records management obligations under data protection legislation

The Council needs to balance openness and transparency with privacy, legal compliance and practical delivery requirements, including its human resources.

It was suggested that one compromise could be rather than live streaming, uploading video recordings of meetings after they are held. This would make editing out Part II sections easier and makes it easier to deal with any inappropriate, offensive, or unlawful statements that could be made. However, additional officer time will be required to train officers, edit recordings and upload them to a platform.

Identifying the Problem

Perhaps another approach would be to identify the problem first which live-streaming seeks to solve:

a) Making Council meetings transparent to the public

Devon County Council's YouTube channel attracts 986 subscribers. The population of the administrative area of Devon County Council, excluding Torbay and Plymouth, is approximately 842,300.

Torrige District Council's YouTube channel attracts 349 subscribers. The population of the Torrige district is approximately 70,770.

Teignmouth Town Council's YouTube channel attracts 57 subscribers. The population of Teignmouth is approximately 14,900.

Viewing figures are usually modest, usually in the double digits.

There is little evidence to suggest that live-streaming Council meetings or publishing recordings of meetings following events result in making Council meetings more transparent to the public.

Live streaming and webcasting can increase access, but they do not necessarily increase transparency if few people watch, if proceedings are difficult to understand, or if meaningful scrutiny remains limited. Instead, the Council could seek to improve transparency in ways which focus on comprehensibility, accountability, participation, and traceability, rather than simply broadcasting meetings.

One suggestion could be to publish plain-language decision summaries on social media. Most council papers and minutes are difficult for non-specialists to follow, and the Council could try and can publish short summaries of agendas when they are published on the website, followed by decision summaries which contain the practical impact on residents, reasons for decisions and financial implications.

This makes decisions understandable without requiring residents to watch hours of footage.

Another suggestion might be to involve residents in decision-making who are more likely to perceive transparency where they can influence outcomes directly through e.g. participatory budgeting,

b) Create official records of meetings until minutes are approved

It is understood that at the time of the original motion there were several disputes relating to accuracy of minutes which may have prompted the motion. If the desire remains to create recordings to be kept as a matter of record until the minutes of the meeting have been approved as an official record of the meeting, as the original motion had articulated, then perhaps audio recordings of meetings could be recorded on existing Council devices.

Recommendation

a) To not live-stream Council and committee meetings to the public.

b) To record audio recordings of Council and committee meetings on existing Council devices as a matter of record until the minutes of the meeting have been approved at the following meeting.

Janine Gardner
Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
June 2026

Project Initiator and Lead:	Jack Gordan	Date:	30 th August 2023
Project Description	To make council meetings transparent to the public I propose that they should be live streamed to the public and kept as a matter of record until the minutes of the meeting have been approved as an official record of the meeting.		
Benefits	<p>This will both improve public access with residents who can not attend meetings for whatever reason being able to watch, as well as provide better transparency with the council in line with the Nolan Principles.</p> <p>It has the added benefit of officers being able to review the minutes when compiling the minutes to improve quality.</p> <p>Helps transition the council into much needed modernisation to help meet public expectataions</p>		
Financial Implications	<p>Meeting Owl £1500</p> <p>Meeting Owl 3 - 360 Degree, 1080p HD Video Conference Camera (owllabs.co.uk)</p>		
Officer resource required:	Yes-minimal		
Risks and issues	Negative publicity from poor behaviour.		
Action List	Yes / No	Name of person to complete action	Observations:
Planning Permission	No		
Owners Consent	No		
Consultation Required	No		

Please continue on separate sheet if necessary

YOUTH COUNCIL

Introduction

The Town Council recently received a request to consider reinstating a Youth Council for Bideford.

Youth councils represent the views of young people and help influence decisions made by local authorities. The benefits can be significant for both the young people involved and the wider community summarised as follows:

Benefits for Young People

1. A stronger voice in local decision-making: Youth councils give young people a structured way to influence policies and services which affect them. However, the Town Council provides a very limited range of services such as town maintenance and the organisation of events. Service areas such as transport, education, leisure facilities, mental health support, community safety and so on do not form part of the Town Council's jurisdiction.

2. Development of leadership skills; Young Councillors would gain experience in:

Public speaking
Chairing meetings
Negotiation
Teamwork
Project management
Problem-solving

These skills can be valuable for future education and employment.

3. Increased confidence: Representing peers, speaking with councillors, and participating in consultations can help young people become more confident in expressing their views and engaging with adults in positions of authority.

4. Better understanding of democracy and government: Youth councils provide practical experience of how local government works, how decisions are made, and how citizens can influence those decisions.

5. Improved employability: Participation demonstrates initiative, leadership, communication skills, and community involvement, which can strengthen university, apprenticeship, and job applications.

Benefits for Communities and Local Authorities

1. Better-informed decisions: Young people often have insights into issues which adults may overlook. Their input can help councils design and deliver services which better meet the needs of younger residents.

2. Greater civic engagement: Young people who participate in youth councils are more likely to become active citizens, volunteers, and voters later in life.
3. Increased trust between young people and authorities: Regular dialogue helps build relationships and can reduce feelings that decisions are being made without considering young people's perspectives.
4. More effective youth services: Consulting young people directly can improve the design and delivery of services related to education, recreation, health, and community development, and the Town Council can facilitate those conversations.

Examples of Activities

A Youth Council might:

- Conduct surveys of local young people
- Meet with elected councillors
- Campaign for safer streets or better public transport
- Organise community events
- Contribute to consultations on local policies
- Represent local youth at regional or national events

History in Bideford

On 8 April 2021, the Town Council supported a motion to form a Bideford Youth Council to determine the distribution of funds from the Town Council's play equipment funds for the parks within Bideford Parish (ref. minute 352 – see appendix). At the time, concerns regarding the implications on resources and workloads were articulated, as well as the benefits of youth councils.

Potential Challenges

To be effective, a Youth Council needs:

- Genuine influence rather than token consultation
- Diverse representation of local young people
- Adequate funding and support
- Clear links to decision-makers who can act on recommendations

Existing Youth Councils in Devon

Barnstaple Town Council recently established a Youth Council with 12 young people and the Council is in the process of establishing how to integrate the Youth Council with the Town Council, e.g. by creating standing items on agendas. The young people generates ideas, e.g. in relation to street cleanliness and graffiti. Even when the areas of interest lie outside the Town Council's jurisdiction, the Town Council can connect them into the right organisation. The Youth Council meets once a month.

However, both the Clerk and Deputy Clerk stress that the right person needs to support a Youth Council who can connect with youth-related organisations, and they do not consider that a Youth Council will work as a bolt-on. Barnstaple Town Council employ a dedicated Community Developer for Youth within their Community Team.

[Okehampton Town Council also operates a Youth Council](#) and have commented as follows:

The Youth Council is fab, but we don't have enough resources, time or financial, in order to make it the success it could be.

They meet every couple of months or so, we don't have a set schedule because of other commitments, and unfortunately, I can see it fizzling out because we can't put enough time to it.

It's such a shame but we need a dedicated community engagement officer or similar.

Resource Implications

Establishing and sustaining an ongoing Youth Council usually involves a mix of staff time, funding, governance support, safeguarding, and participant support. The main resource implications to plan for are:

Staffing and coordination, including governance (safeguarding, training, consent forms), organising and attending meetings, recruitment and outreach, communication with members, agenda setting and follow-up, production of minutes, supporting young people to participate meaningfully, communications

Recruitment and retention, including targeted outreach campaigns, relationship-building with community organisations, school/community engagement, application and selection processes, induction and onboarding, diversity and inclusion efforts

Training and capacity building, including leadership skills, public speaking, governance and decision-making, safeguarding awareness, campaigning and consultation skills, media and communications training, youth engagement methods

Financial costs, including staff costs, paying young people for their time, DBS disclosures, travel reimbursement, digital access support, printing and communications, insurance, activity/project budgets for e.g. campaigns, events, commission research, community projects

Safeguarding and risk management, including DBS disclosures, safeguarding policies, supervision ratios, consent procedures, risk assessments, incident management, neurodiversity support, additional staff training requirements

Communications and engagement, including social media management, newsletters, consultation materials, youth-friendly content creation, maintaining digital platforms or groups

Local Organisations

The following organisations locally have been contacted with the query whether they would support the reintroduction of a Youth Council e.g. by assisting in the recruitment of Young Councillors,

Bideford College
Kingsley School
Space

St Mary's Church
Wings

Space would “absolutely love to support you with discussions surrounding a youth council. I think it's amazing you're considering having a youth voice input into the council, what a valuable resource! Young people are amazing and have often thought of things that adult brains haven't even considered yet! I'd love to know a little more about how we can help”.

Funding

If the Town Council decides to reinstate a Youth Council, there may well be grant [funding opportunities](#) such as the Growing Communities Fund and the Places To Go, Things To Do Fund, helping local organisations strengthen communities and improve opportunities for children and young people aged 11-25.

Recommendation

To support the reintroduction of a Youth Council for Bideford in principle, subject to:

- a) identifying funding to enable set up the Youth Council, ideally by employing a dedicated support worker.
- b) ensuring that the above arrangement becomes financially sustainable, e.g. by including ongoing support for a dedicated support worker in the Town Council's precept.

Janine Gardner
Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
June 2026

NOTICE OF MOTION 8 APRIL 2021

Submission by Councillor J Craigie.

To form a Bideford Youth Council to determine the distribution of funds from the Town Council's play equipment funds for the parks within Bideford Parish.

The Youth Council can be formed along guidelines from the British Youth Council Association to mirror as closely as possible the town or parish council it is providing suggestions to. Therefore, the proposal is to have a 16 member council formed by anyone aged between 11 and 18 living, receiving education in or work in Bideford Parish. That individuals be able to self nominate and elections held if more than 16 nominations are received. Terms of two years are the standard for youth councils.

Councillor J Craigie believed that it was important to introduce young people into politics given the post COVID-19 and Climate Change epoch. In reiterating the sixteen member mirroring of the Council he explained that a councillor would need to be in attendance at meetings to report back to Council.

The Chairman reflected that Bideford had had one before, that it's success was down to a dedicated school representative and a very keen student. He expressed concern given the extreme times and need for pupils / schools to catch up. He asked which schools Councillor J Craigie were going to approach.

Councillor Mrs Corfe seconded the Motion.

Councillor Ratcliff recalled the previous incarnation. He felt it was a very good idea however, the former Town Clerk was run ragged by the extra workload. There would be a need for Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) checks (at a cost). He did not believe that it would be a good idea for a councillor to be committed to attending each meeting suggesting that a youth representative could attend the Town Council meeting.

Councillor Ratcliff noted that Bideford College set up its own Youth Council with the demise of the Bideford Town Youth Council.

Councillor Mrs Corfe believed that it was a wonderful idea but questioned why a representative couldn't attend a Town Council meeting. Councillor J Craigie simply replied that it was what he had been advised by the British Youth Council.

Councillor Bushby indicated that Council meetings are open to the public yet are poorly attended unless there are really contentious issues. He added that he could not remember when a young person was last in attendance.

Councillor Bushby did not have a problem with Councillor Craigie's proposal and setting up all of the work but he believed that there would be a lot of work. A sledgehammer was being employed to crack a nut in forming a Youth Council, made up of eleven to eighteen year olds, to determine the allocation of play equipment funding. He did not believe that sixteen to eighteen year old children would be interested in play and park equipment that targeted very young children. There

would be little uptake from young families. It was a step too far. TDC own the play strategy, they are the main drivers; Bridge Trust and Council funding is being administered by TDC.

Councillor Lawrence wondered if the Bideford Youth Council was still in existence.

Councillor Mrs Corfe offered to work two hours a week on the project.

Councillor Mrs Hellyer agreed that teenagers were not interested in play parks and that it would be better to encourage young people to attend council meetings.

Councillor Bushby reminded Members when council meetings had been held at the Bideford College theatre only three students had attended but their motivation was guided by lifts home following the event.

The Chairman indicated that one councillor would have to take on the project adding that a teacher must be in place first, noting that the Council can not go in search of children. He reiterated to Members that this must be understood when considering their vote.

It was proposed by Councillor J Craigie, seconded by Councillor Mrs Corfe and

RESOLVED: That the Motion is supported.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 5, Abstention: 1)



BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

Name of Committee: Amenities Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 28 May 2026

Meeting Time: 6:30pm

Venue: Greenhouse, Riverbank House, Bideford EX39 2QG

Present:

North Ward

Councillor D Bushby

Councillor K Hind

Councillor J Gordon

Councillor S Smith

South Ward

Councillor R Clarke

Councillor P Lawrence

West Ward

Councillor C Hawkins

East Ward

Councillor J Craigie

Councillor J Gubb

Councillor J McKenzie

Also Present

J Gardner, Town Clerk

R D Coombes, Deputy Town Clerk

Mrs G Lamey, Acting Chairman Marland Association

Mr S Long, Representative, Tricks Allotment Site

Mr A Mitchell, Representative, Pollyfield Allotment Site

1. Election of Chair

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor K Hind and **resolved** to elect Councillor J McKenzie as the Committee's Chair for the 2026-27 civic year.

(Vote – For: 7, Against: 0, Abstention: 2)

2. Election of Deputy Chair

It was proposed by Councillor J McKenzie, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and **resolved** to elect Councillor S Inch as the Committee's Deputy Chair for the 2026-27 civic year.

(Vote – For: 9, Against: 0, Abstention: 0)

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Gordon.

4. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

No declarations of interest or requests for dispensations were received.

5. Public Participation

No members of the public attended the meeting.

6. Minutes of the Previous Meetings

- a. It was proposed by Councillor S Inch, seconded by Councillor J McKenzie and **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Committee held on 29 September 2025 as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 9, Abstention: 0)

- b. It was further proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor R Clarke and **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Decarbonisation and Environment Committee held on 9 March 2026 as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 9, Against: 0)

- c. It was further proposed by Councillor J McKenzie, seconded by Councillor K Hind and **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Market Management Committee held on 23 April 2026 as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 9, Against: 0)

7. Terms of Reference

The Committee considered its draft terms of reference.

Councillor P Lawrence led discussion on effective Committee membership numbers.

Councillor K Hind suggested an amendment to paragraph 6. To state “6. Its membership will be *a minimum of* nine councillors appointed annually by the full Council.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor K Hind and **recommend** approval of the terms of reference as amended to the full Council for adoption.

(Vote – For: 8, Against: 1)

(Councillor S Smith joined the Meeting.)

Pannier Market

8. Pannier Market Strategic Development

The Committee considered a report regarding the strategic development of the Pannier Market in the future once the construction works to refurbish the complex would be completed.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor S Smith and **resolved** to

- a. To endorse the above strategy statement and to recommend it to the full Council for adoption.
- b. apply for a development grant from the Architectural Heritage Fund to enable the development of a business plan on the basis of the Council’s strategy for the Pannier Market.

(Vote – For: 10, Against: 0)

9. Tenant Representation

Councillor Lawrence reflected on positive feedback following a recent visit.

The Chairman reflected on the signs to encourage visitors to the market by “cleaning” the pavement area incorporating a template that Mrs Austin had agreed to design.

Allotments

10. Quarterly Site Inspections

It was proposed by Councillor D Busby, seconded by Councillor J Craigie and **resolved** that Councillors S Inch and J Gubb will conduct four quarterly site inspections and liaise with the Deputy Town Clerk to coordinate dates with site representatives.

It was established there was no appetite to re-introduce the Inter Site Challenge. It was noted that the Associations had enjoyed their own (Site) initiative.

11. Request to Keep Chickens in Light of Avian Flu Restrictions having been Lifted

The Committee considered a request from a Tricks tenant to house 2-3 chickens. It was agreed that Councillors S Inch and J Gubb would visit the Tricks Site / Plot in the first instance.

12. Site Updates

- a. Marland. Mrs Lamey spoke of the former Chairman's positive impact upon the Site. She advised that the Association Committee had stepped forward in terms of volunteering for the betterment of the Site, working hard in completing necessary tasks.

The Plots are fully occupied but growing has been challenging with wet mud earlier in the year now turning to dust.

Concerns were raised over the Council's contracted tree surgeon who had left a felled tree on Site (in effect for the Marland Association Committee to take charge by default). In mitigation access to the Site is difficult. They should like to investigate access through Union Close.

Members agreed that Councillors S Inch and Gubb visit the Marland Site; whilst there would be benefits there could be "right of way" legal implications; Mrs Lamey alluded to a Ransom Strip.

- b. Handy Cross. The Deputy Town Clerk explained that efforts were ongoing in re-establishing the Site boundary which had been compromised by National Grid on an adjacent site. The Site Landlord, Bridge Trust, were party to the correspondence and on site meetings. A quotation for the works, by a local contractor, had been submitted to the National Grid for consideration.

Unfortunately, the Site experienced a break-in, that resulted in items being removed from the "secure(d)" container. CCTV evidence, clearly showing the faces of the villains, had been provided to the Police; action would only be taken on discovery of the stolen items where serial numbers were corroborated...

- c. Pollyfield. Mr Mitchell expressed disappointment at the still untouched damaged District Council owned railings adjacent to the Site car park. A vehicle had driven through the "metal scaffold pipe fencing," at the start of the year and despite inspection by Council officers there had been no corrective action. The issue had been further compounded by the lack of car parking provision for a BMX Bike event, that saw fencing removed allowing for a number of cars to drive down the grassed area and through the Allotment car park. Again, District Council attendance noting the impact, but no work.

He noted also that the grassed area had not been attended to.

Councillor Mrs Gubb was given to understand that the District Council were engaged with insurers precluding any corrective works.

Councillor Bushby (Chairman of the District Council) will investigate.

Mr Mitchell bemoaned the lack of site visits, highlighted the need for letters of encouragement to be sent to those tenants not tending plots and unnecessary delay in filling a vacant plot.

- d. Tricks. Mr Long believed the Site was operating well, new tenants had settled in, and has been liaising with the office in terms of encouraging absent tenants.

He explained that he does much of the on site maintenance, hedge / grass cutting himself and facilitating in plot provision.

(Mr Mitchell indicated that he too clears and prepares plots and assists (new) tenants.)

The Chairman thanked the Representatives for their contributions and attending the Meeting.

Decarbonisation and Environment

13. Pannier Market Rainwater Collection System

The Committee considered a report regarding the installation of a rainwater collection system at the Pannier Market.

It was proposed by Councillor J McKenzie, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and **resolved** to not install a rainwater collection system at the Pannier Market.

(Vote – For: 8, Against: 0, Abstention: 2)

14. Ford Woods – Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and Woodland Management Plan

The Committee considered a report confirming the existence of a tree preservation order (TPO) dated 15 October 1971 which remained valid, as well as an update regarding the development of a woodland management plan in partnership with the Friends of Ford Woods.

It was proposed by Councillor J McKenzie, seconded by Councillor S Smith and **resolved** to note the existence of the Ford Woods TPO and that there is no requirement for the Council to apply, as well as the update regarding the development of a woodland management plan.

(Vote – For: 10, Against: 0)

Part II (Closed Session)

15. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Due to the sensitive or confidential nature of the following item it was proposed by Councillor J McKenzie, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and **resolved** to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting on the basis of Section 1 paragraph 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 which stipulated that a council may, by resolution, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings.

(Vote – For: 10, Against: 0)

16. Landlord / Tenant Matters

There is a confidential note associated with this item.

The business of the meeting having been concluded the Chair thanked the councillors for their attendance at the meeting, which concluded at 7.40 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor:

Date:

Signature of Chairman:

Date:

Extract from the minutes of the annual Council meeting on 7 May 2026:

14. Committee Memberships

Members appointed councillors to the stated committees:

Amenities Committee:

Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors Clarke, Craigie, Gordon, Hawkins, Smith and Taylor.

Planning Committee:

Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors Clarke, J Hellyer, L Hellyer, S Inch, T Inch and McKenzie

Resources Committee:

Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors Bushby, Clarke, Gubb, Hawkins, S Inch and McKenzie.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor J McKenzie and **resolved** to appoint councillor as stated but to provide for the four absentee councillors to augment their preferred committee.

(Vote – For: 12, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

