

## BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL



Riverbank House  
Bideford  
Devon  
EX39 2QG

Telephone:  
Bideford (01237) 428817/8

Janine Gardner  
Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Thursday 12 March 2026

To: Members of the Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of **Bideford Town Council** to be held in Greenhouse, Torridge District Council, Riverbank House, Bideford EX39 2QG on **Thursday 19 March 2026 at 6:30pm** 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.

J Gardner  
Clerk to the Council

### AGENDA

1. To receive apologies and reasons for absence.
2. To receive declarations of interest on items on the agenda and note any requests for dispensation received by the Clerk prior to the meeting. Enc
3. Public participation session of 15 minutes duration on items on the agenda.
4. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 January 2026 as a correct record. Enc
5. Accounts - To approve the payments listed. Enc
6. To receive a report from the Devon County Councillor for Bideford West and Hartland, Cllr Robin Julian, on issues within the parish.
7. To receive such communications which the Town Mayor / Clerk may wish to lay before the Council.
8. Planning Committee –
  - a. To approve and adopt the minutes of the meetings held on 28 January 2026. Enc
  - b. To approve and adopt the minutes of the meetings held on 18 February 2026. Enc
  - c. To approve and adopt the minutes of the meetings held on 11 March 2026. To follow

9. Staffing, Finance and General Purposed Committee –
  - a. To approve and adopt the minutes of the meetings held on 19 February 2026. Enc  
**N.B. By adopting these minutes, the Council approves the grants awarded to external organisations.**
  - b. To approve and adopt the minutes of the meetings held on 26 February 2026. Enc  
**N.B. By adopting these minutes, the Council adopts its Risk Management Policy and Risk Register in accordance with the Council’s Financial Regulation 2.2.**
10. Market Management Committee –
  - a. To approve and adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2026. Enc
  - b. To approve and adopt the minutes of the meetings held on 12 March 2026. Enc
11. Tourism Committee –
  - a. To approve and adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2026. Enc
  - b. To approve and adopt the minutes of the meeting held on and 17 March 2026. To Follow
12. Decarbonisation and Environment Committee Enc  
 To approve and adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2026.
13. Notice of Motion – Councillor K Hind: Enc  
 “To elect three Town Councillors to form a Working Group to consider the acquisition of Torridge District Council assets and their viability after Local Government Reform and report back to Full Council.”
14. Appointment of Bank Signatories – To review and determine the bank mandate for all Council bank accounts in accordance with the Council’s Financial Regulations 1.7 and 7.1.
15. Payments made by BACS or CHAPS – To approve payments being made by BACS or CHAPS provided that each payment is approved online by two authorised bank signatories, and evidence of this is retained in accordance with the Council’s Financial Regulation 7.9.
16. IT Policy – To approve and adopt a national model IT policy provided by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) which is required in order to meet governance requirements set out in paragraph 1.54 of the proper practices. Compliance with this requirement is tested under Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return). Enc
17. Devon, Plymouth and Torbay: Local government reorganisation consultation – To approve and submit a response to the [government’s consultation on local government reorganisation in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay](#) Enc
18. Torridge District Council – To receive an update on Torridge District Council activities.

19. Bideford Bridge Trust – To receive an update on Bridge Trust activities by one of the Trustees.
20. To note and consider an invitation from the Chairman of Marland School to appoint one or two Bideford Town Councillors to join the Bideford Marland Schools Board of Governors.

Enc

21. **PART II (Closed Session)**

22. **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.**

23. Letter to Historic England – To approve signing a letter to Historic England regarding the regeneration of the Town.

Email

Reflective silence will be held by Jacqui Poole of the Quakers at 6:20pm prior to the Town Council meeting. Councillors are invited to participate if they wish.
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**Date of next Meeting: Thursday 7 May 2026 at 6:30pm**



## **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 of the Town Council Meeting held in the Town Hall, Bideford on**

**Thursday 22 January 2026 at 6.30 pm**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	North Ward:	Councillor D Bushby Councillor K Hind Councillor Mrs S Smith
	South Ward:	Councillor Ms R Clarke Councillor S Inch Councillor P Lawrence (Chairman)
	West Ward:	Councillor T Inch
	East Ward:	Councillor J Craigie Councillor Mrs J Gubb Councillor J Hellyer Councillor J A McKenzie

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr R D Coombes (Deputy Town Clerk)  
Councillor R Julian (Devon County Councillor)  
Inspector E Seear (Torridge Sector Inspector)  
Reverend S O'Rourke (Mayor's Chaplin)

### 107. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors C Hawkins, West Ward, personal, D McGeough, North Ward, personal, J Gordon, personal and Mrs L Hellyer, personal..

Councillors M Taylor, West Ward was absent but did not proffer apologies nor reasons for absence.

### 108. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 109. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

A member of the public requested the Council, at the next Town Council Meeting, to encourage the District Council to purchase an area of land for additional car parking provision, indicating that the Freeholder would be willing to sell.

Councillor Hind indicated that the Town Council were investigating the opportunity, establishing the feasibility with the potential to finance a public works loan through parking revenue.

(Councillor J Craigie joined the Meeting.)

The Chairman indicated that the item would be considered at the next Town Council Meeting.

A second member described transport connectivity issues and a particular long (time) and arduous journey when combining bus and rail travel. They wished the Council to contact the District Council with a view to improving the coordination of train and busses.

The Chairman noted the request.

Two further members spoke on reinstating the Bideford to Barnstaple Railway Line, again thanking Members for providing monies, in concert with the County Councillor's Locality Fund to progress the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance's two Strategic Outline Business Cases.

Points were raised also in the wider backing that the Project had received amid wider interest across other areas of Devon and Cornwall.

#### 110. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 December 2025 were approved and adopted.

(Vote – For: 9, Against: 0, Abstention: 2)

#### 111. **ACCOUNTS**

To approve the payments listed.

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded and

**RESOLVED: That the List of Payments be approved.**

(Vote – For: 11, Against: 0)

#### 112. **BIDEFORD WEST AND HARTLAND DEVON COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

- a. The Mayor welcomed Councillor Robin Julian and invited him to address the Meeting.
- b. Councillor Julian thanked the Mayor and proceeded to give his report. Points included:
  - The importance of the train / bus routes / connectivity generally and specifically to younger people
  - Devolution, rushed without sufficient information.
  - Renewal of Highways Contract / Contractor.
  - Pot holes on the A39.
- c. The Mayor invited Members to raise questions that included:

- Old Town Pot Holes.
  - Impact of road closures / extreme road diversions.
- d. The Mayor thanked Councillor Julian for his contribution.

113. **POLICE PRESENTATION**

- a. The Mayor welcomed Inspector Ewan Seear and invited him to address the Meeting.
- b. Inspector Seear thanked the Mayor and proceeded to give his report. Points included:
- Internal restructuring following inspection.
  - Summary of 2025 and reflection of improved recorded crime figures, including violence against women and girls down by 4%.
  - Working with partners / community, those blighted by criminal individuals the use of criminal orders, the Court and the Prison Service leading to Custodial Service Orders.
  - New Year’s Eve Celebrations have now gravitated to Westward Ho!
  - The devastating Fire Incident has seen no one charged; there has been a lot to learn.
    - Criminal matter are Police related.
    - Multiple properties impacted; TDC will look to improve the (long term) scaffolding appearance.
- c. The Mayor invited Members to raise questions that included:
- Mill Street still witnesses vehicles during the prohibited times of 10.00 am to 4.00 pm.
    - Police Time is measured against reward. Errant parking in comparison with drug and anti social behaviour issues.
  - Positive impact of high visibility Town Marshals.
    - “Hot Spot” funding in place until April. Funding streams are limited but continue to work with TDC.
- d. The Mayor thanked Inspector Seear for his contribution.

114. **COMMUNICATION BROUGHT FORWARD ON THE DIRECTION OF THE MAYOR**

The Grant Applications will be available to view for all councillors during normal office hours.

115. **FINANCIAL SOFTWARE PACKAGE**

The Chairman explained the Budget / Precept process, working with the future Town Clerk and noting the limitations of the Excel spreadsheet.

Members had sight of a report, from the soon to be appointed, Town Clerk who had noted the Interim Internal Auditor’s recommendation to introduce an accounting package to assist the Council in its management of the finances and accounts.

She noted that the introduction of accounting, sector specific, software would attract set up costs and an annual subscription but indicated that it would free up officer resource, significantly.

Councillor J Hellyer led discussion on other accounting software packages believing that payroll, too should be considered.

Proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded by Councillor Bushby and

**RESOLVED: To:**

- a. **The introduction of a financial software package from 1 April 2026.**
- b. **The Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk to arrange demonstrations of noted software packages and jointly decide which one to introduce to the Council.**
- c. **Cost to be referred to SF&GP Committee.**

(Vote – For: 11, Against: 0)

116. **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 January 2026 were approved and adopted.

(Vote – For: 9, Against: 2)

117. **STAFFING, FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

The Deputy Chairman of the Committee highlighted **Minute No. 89 (Precept / Budget 2026/27 (£825,327.00) recommendation** and made reference to future equipment replacement provision.

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 January 2026, including the Precept Request were approved and adopted.

(Vote – For: 9, Against: 2)

The Chairman and Clerk signed the “Notice of Precept upon Torridge District Council.”

118. **RANGERS’ EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT**

- a. Members had received replacement quotations for the Toyota Hilux.

The Chairman, having spoken with the Rangers’ Supervisor, proposed replacing the vehicle and was seconded by Councillor Ms Clarke.

Councillor Bushby indicated that the vehicle was robust and despite requiring work to pass the last MOT believed that there was no need for a replacement, noting the low recorded mileage.

(Vote – For: 4, Against: 6, Abstention: 1)

- b. Members had sight of detail of initial cost to repair a gearbox, potential for the need to replace a second and further quotation to renew the nine years’ old machine.

Proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded by Councillor Bushby and

**RESOLVED: To purchase a new Ferris Walk Behind Mower.**

(Vote – For: 10, Against: 1)

119. **TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL – UPDATE**

Councillor Bushby advised that the “cutting of the ribbon,” for the Operation Service Centre facility at Cleave Wood, East the Water would be held on 11 February 2026.

Councillor T Inch wondered if there would be an “Open Day,” invitation.

Councillor Bushby confirmed that the Primary Schools were to be invited but would explore the opportunity, through TDC, to provide opportunities to the wider public.

120. **BRIDGE TRUST**

Councillor Mrs J Gubb briefed Members on the income, expenditure, charitable donations and grants figures.

121. **PART II (CLOSED SESSION)**

Proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded and

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

(Vote – For: 11, Against: 0)

122. **MARKET HALL PROJECT UPDATE**

The Chairman referred to meetings with the newly appointed officers, the architects and TDC personnel with discussion on tendering, procurement legislation and approval of contractors.

123. **STAFFING MATTERS**

Councillor Hind updated members, and referred to correspondence, concerning a former employee.

The business of the meeting having been concluded the Mayor thanked the members for their attendance at the meeting, which concluded at 7.47 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor: .....

Date: .....

**BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Town Council Meeting - 22 January 2026**

Row	Date Entered	Description	Extended Description	Net	VAT	Gross
1	16/01/2026	Devondale	Maintenance Items	20.00	4.00	24.00
2		Lineal	Licenses / Remote labour / cable / adapter	286.71	57.34	344.05
3		Phil Stone	Mayoral mileage	31.60		31.60
4		Howdens Joinery Limited	Maintenance Items	49.50	9.90	59.40
5		Richard Coombes	Refund IKEA Office Furniture	275.50	54.50	330.00
6		Peninsula Business Services Limited	HR/H&S/EAP	344.97	65.15	410.12
7		The Link Publications	Manor Court Advertisement	200.00	40.00	240.00
8		Gillett & Johnston	St Mary's Clock - Annual Service	225.00	45.00	270.00
9		<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>1,433.28</b>	<b>275.89</b>	<b>1,709.17</b>

Bank Balances at	16/01/2026	- Current Account	£ 39,141.62
Bank Balances at	16/01/2026	- Deposit Account	£ 128,267.05
Bank Balances at	16/01/2026	- 95 Day Account	£ 332,766.62





**BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting**

**held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall on,**

**Wednesday 28 January 2026 at 6.30 pm**

**PRESENT:** South Ward: Councillor P Lawrence  
Councillor S Inch

East Ward: Councillor Mrs L Hellyer  
Councillor J McKenzie

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr R Coombes (Acting Town Clerk)  
Ms C Heller (Administrative Officer)

74. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors Ms R Clarke (South Ward - personal), T Inch (West Ward – personal) and J Hellyer (East Ward – personal).

75. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Councillor P Lawrence declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 6.c. (Resident of Oaklands).

76. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION OF 15 MINUTES DURATION**

There were no members of the Public present.

77. **MINUTES**

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Hellyer and seconded by Councillor S Inch, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 January 2026 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 4, Against: 0)

78. **TOWN AND PARISH SETTLEMENT SURVEY FOR BIDEFORD**

Members had received, and together completed a survey provided by the North Devon and Torridge District Councils to help inform the update to the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan setting out the vision, strategies and policies to guide the future development of

Northern Devon.

The joint Councils intimated that it is hoped that, “the study will provide an updated understanding of the role and function of urban and rural settlements across northern Devon by assessing a range of factors, including the level of provision and accessibility of services, facilities and employment opportunities.”

As well as assessing the relative sustainability of different settlements, the work will help the joint Councils identify where improved provision of services, facilities and infrastructure may be required to help meet the current needs of local communities and secure the long-term sustainability and viability of our rural areas.

79. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a. **Application No.**            **1/0998/2025/REMM**

Reserved matters application for Internal Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for 10 dwellings pursuant to application 1/1015/2014/OUTM.

**Land at Grid Reference 243152 126528, New Road, Bideford.**

Applicant:                      Bloor Homes (South West) Limited, 3 Stanton Court, South Marston Park, Swindon SN3 4YH.

Date Received.                7 December 2026

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Hellyer, seconded by Councillor S Inch and

**RESOLVED: That the application is approved.**

(Vote – For: 4, Against: 0)

b. **Application No.**            **1/0043/2026/FUL**

Extension to the front elevation of the existing unit, approx. 6m x 12.5m. Widening and relocation of existing entrance gates..

**Unit 3C, Clovelly Road Industrial Estate, Bideford, Devon.**

Applicant:                      Mr Eddie Pollit, Eddie Pollit Grab Hire (Address As Above.)

Date Received.                22 January 2026

It was proposed by Councillor S Inch, seconded by Councillor Lawrence and

**RESOLVED: That the application is approved.**

(Vote – For: 4, Against: 0)

c. **Application No.**            **1/0052/2026/FUL**

Erection of a single-storey rear extension, first floor side extension and conversion of garage.

**52 Oaklands, Bideford, Devon, EX39 3HW**

Applicant: Mr Alec and Sue McLaren (Address As Above.)  
Date Received. 22 January 2026

It was proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by Councillor Lawrence and

**RESOLVED: That the application is approved.**

(Vote – For: 4, Against: 0)

80. **PLANNING AUTHORITY UPDATE**

There was no update on planning application decisions received from TDC.

The business of the meeting having been completed, the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.05 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor: ..... Date: .....

Signature of Chairman: ..... Date: .....



**BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting**

**held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall on,**

**Wednesday 18 February 2026 at 6.30 pm**

<b>PRESENT</b>	South Ward:	Councillor P Lawrence Councillor Ms R Clarke
	East Ward:	Councillor J Hellyer Councillor J McKenzie Councillor J Gubb (substitute for Councillor S Inch)
	North Ward:	Councillor Mrs S Smith (Chairman) (substitute for Councillor Mrs J Hellyer)
	West Ward:	Councillor T Inch
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>		Mrs J Gardner (Town Clerk) Miss C Heller (Administrative Officer)

Prior to the start of the Meeting Councillor Mrs S Smith agreed to assume the Chair in the absence of both Chairman and Vice Chairman.

81. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors Ms L Hellyer (East Ward – work) and S Inch (South Ward – work).

82. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Councillor J McKenzie declared an interest in Agenda Item 5.a. (planning application by the Rovers Football Club for a proposed club house and community food pantry with associated works at the Pollyfield Playing Field) by virtue of being an honorary trustee of the Pollyfield Community Centre.

83. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION OF 15 MINUTES DURATION**

There were no members of the public present.

84. **MINUTES**

Proposed by Councillor J McKenzie and seconded by Councillor Ms R Clarke, the minutes of

the meeting held on 28 January 2026 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 7, Against: 0)

85. a. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**From Torridge District Council for Period 28 January 2026 to 18 February 2026**

i. **Application No.**      [1/0063/2026/FUL](#)

Proposed Clubhouse and Community Food Pantry with associated works.

**Pollyfield Playing Field, Avon Road, Bideford EX39 4BL**

Applicant:                      Mr Sam Stephens Shamwickshire Rovers Football Club

Date Received.                27 January 2026

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor T Inch and

**RESOLVED: That the application [1/0063/2026/FUL](#) is recommended for approval by the local planning authority Torridge District Council.**

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

ii. **Application No.**      [1/0057/2026/FUL](#)

Proposed change of use of ground floor to residential use (no additional dwelling created)

**22 High Street, Bideford EX39 2AN**

Applicant:                      Mr Matthew Branch

Date Received.                9 February 2026

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S Smith, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and

**RESOLVED: That the application [1/0057/2026/FUL](#) is recommended for approval by the local planning authority Torridge District Council on the condition that the Conservation Officer would be in agreement.**

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 1)

b. **Application No.**      [1/0951/2025/FUL](#)

Members noted the appeal.

86. **PLANNING AUTHORITY UPDATE**

Members had sight of the Planning update prior to the Meeting.

The business of the meeting having been completed, the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 6.37 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor: ..... Date: .....

Signature of Chairman: ..... Date: .....



## BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Staffing, Finance & General Purposes Committee

held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall on,

Thursday 19 February 2026 at 6.30 pm

<b>PRESENT:</b>	North Ward:	Councillor D Bushby (Chairman) Councillor K Hind
	East Ward:	Councillor Mrs J Gubb Councillor J McKenzie Councillor J Hellyer
	South Ward	Councillor S Inch Councillor P Lawrence (Mayor)
	West Ward	Councillor C Hawkins (sub - Councillor Mrs L Hellyer)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs J Gardner (Town Clerk)  
Mr R Coombes (Deputy Town Clerk)

1 x Member of the Public

#### 94. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members noted the Apologies received and reasons for absence from Councillor Mrs L Hellyer (East Ward – personal).

Councillor McGeough (North Ward) was absent, no apologies were received by the Clerk.

#### 95. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Councillor Mrs J Gubb disclosed pecuniary interest in Agenda Items: 7.4. (Bike Show – engaged by organisers) and 7.37. (No 1 Bideford OAPs – engaged by organisation).

Councillor Mrs J Gubb disclosed non-pecuniary interests in Agenda Items: 7.10. (Massed Pipes and Drums – Committee Member), 7.16. (Bideford Youth Pipe Band – Committee Member), 7.40. (Regatta – Committee Member) and 7.41. (Bideford Carnival – Chairman).

Councillor Hind disclosed a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Items: 7.14. (Bideford Rotary – Committee Member).

Councillor S Inch disclosed non-pecuniary interests in Agenda Items: 7.10. (Massed Pipes and Drums – Committee Member), 7.40. (Regatta – Committee Member) and 7.41. (Bideford Carnival – Committee Member).

96. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION OF 15 MINUTES DURATION**

A Member of the Public spoke about the Massed Pipe Bands, its evolution, impact of COVID-19 in terms of financial support streams, cost challenges, increased popularity and importance within the Bideford Town Events calendar.

97. **MINUTES**

Proposed by Councillor S Inch and seconded by Councillor Lawrence, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 January 2026 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 7 Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

98. **ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There were none.

99. **ACCOUNTS**

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence and seconded by Councillor Hellyer, and

**RESOLVED: That the lists of payments for 19 February 2026 be approved.**

(Vote – For: 8, Against: 0)

100. **GRANTS TO LOCAL ORGANISATIONS 2026/27**

Members considered each application received and made recommendations to Full Council for the award of grants from 1 April 2026, as detailed in the table below.

The Chairman led Members to vote “en bloc,” with those having declared interests abstaining.

Grant Award Summary 2026/2027		
	<u>Receipient</u>	<u>Amount Awarded</u>
1	1st Woolseery Scout Group	£ 200.00
2	Abbotsham and Alwington Preschool	£ 500.00
3	Bid & Dist Cty Archive	£ 200.00
4	Bideford Bike Show	£ 1,500.00
5	BABC	£ 1,000.00
6	Bideford Gardeners Club	£ 250.00
7	Bideford Keyboard and Organ Cub	£ 250.00
8	Bideford Library	£ 1,000.00
9	Bideford Littleham and Westward Ho Cricket Club	£ 895.00
10	Bideford Massed Pipes and Drums	£ 3,000.00
11	Bideford Phoenix Morris	£ 100.00
12	Bideford Pride	£ 100.00
13	Bideford Railway Heritage Centre	£ 1,000.00
14	Bideford Rotary	£ 1,000.00
15	Bideford Rugby Club	£ 2,000.00
16	Bideford Youth Pipe Band	£ 2,000.00
17	Burton at Bideford	£ 1,000.00
18	CAB	£ 1,000.00
19	Christians against Poverty	£ 500.00
20	Bideford Town Band	£ 3,000.00
21	Rainbo Music Trust (Bid Christmas Lights Switch On)	£ 12,000.00
22	SWEMS CiC	£ 1,500.00
23	Surviving Abuse Northern Devon CiC (SAND)	£ 200.00
24	Soap Box Derby	£ 1,500.00
25	St Mary's Hall	£ 250.00
26	SW Heritage Trust (North Devon Record Office)	£ 4,000.00
27	Tarka Child Contact Centre	£ 500.00
28	Torrige Growing Together CiC	£ 250.00
29	TTVS	£ 500.00
30	Yoga Community Project	£ 250.00
31	Torrige Male Voice Choir - did not specify amount wanted - any...	£ 200.00
32	North Devon Display Gymnastic Club	£ 750.00
33	BARC	£ 2,000.00
34	Bideford Film Society	£ -
35	Bideford Music Club	£ 350.00
36	Bideford Twinning Assoc	£ 2,000.00
37	Bideford OAP No 1 Branch	£ 500.00
38	Bideford AFC Women	£ 290.00
39	Next Steps Tutors CiC	£ 500.00
40	Bideford Regatta	£ 1,000.00
41	Bideford Carnival	£ 3,000.00
42	Up Close Theatre	£ 1,500.00
43	Fresh Spring	£ 590.00
Contingency		£ 875.00
Total Requested / Allocated		£ 54,125.00

Proposed by Councillor Bushby, seconded by Councillor Lawrence and

**RECOMMENDED:** That the grant allocation of £54,125.00 as detailed in the above table with a contingency totalling £875.00 making an overall total of £55,000.00 is

agreed by Full Council.

(Vote – For: 4, Against: 1, Abstention: 3)

101. **PART II (CLOSED SESSION)**

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Gubb, seconded and

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

(Vote – For: 8, Against: 0)

102. **MARKET PROJECT**

a. **Update.**

Councillor Hind spoke generally about the Project, stakeholders and formal Tender appointment of the Project Manager, Quantity Surveyor and Structural Engineer.

b. **Engagement of Project Officers**

It was proposed by Councillor Hind and seconded by Councillor McKenzie, and

**RESOLVED: To accept the tenders from the Architects and formally appoint:**

- a. **Project Manager**
- b. **Quantity Surveyor**
- c. **Structural Engineer.**

(Vote – For: 8, Against: 0)

Councillor Lawrence indicated that the Town Clerk would now be the main point of contact for the Project.

The Chairman lead a vote of thanks for Councillors Lawrence and Hind for stepping in and facilitating the Project development enabling it to move forward.

c. **Funds Transfer to Market Account for Project Attributable Costs.**

Members discussed the payment to date of the architect and surveyors fees on the general Market accounting.

It was proposed by Councillor Bushby and seconded by Councillor McKenzie, and

**RESOLVED: To transfer Council funds for professional fees to the Market Account, attributable to the Project and those to be subsequently claimed against the Central Government allotted Project Fund.**

(Vote – For: 8, Against: 0)

Councillor Hind advised that the Chief Executive of Torridge District Council had intimated that “forward funding” was available to meet Project costs preferable to claiming subsequent to expenditure.

103. **STAFFING MATTERS**

Councillor Hind indicated that dates had been set for a (staff) hearing.

The business of the meeting having been completed, the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.30 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor: ..... Date: .....

Signature of Chairman: ..... Date: .....

## BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Staffing, Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting - 19 February 2026

Row	Date Entered	Description	Extended Description	Net	VAT	Gross
1	27/01/2026	Clarity Copiers	Copier Charges	17.04	3.41	20.45
2		EDF	Bridge Lights	31.75	1.59	33.34
3			Xmas Lights - 74a	122.95	6.15	129.10
4			Xmas Lights - 14a	28.23	1.41	29.64
5		Garlands	Christmas Lights - Electricity usage	54.45		54.45
6		Guild of Mace-Bearers	R Dymond Macebearer Ann sub	10.00		10.00
7		E-On Next Energy Limited	Town Ranger Depot Elec.	217.10	10.86	227.96
8		Living Wage Foundation	Annual subscription	71.00	14.20	85.20
9		Tudor Enviornmenal	Water control flex timer / PVC pipe	114.99	23.00	137.99
10	30/01/2026	Lloyds	Service Charges	8.88	0.00	8.88
11		Focus Group	TR Depot / Townhall Broadband	102.72	20.54	123.26
12	31/01/2026	Allstar	Fuel March	156.27	31.26	187.53
13		RGB	Maintenance Items March	277.99	55.60	333.59
14		Tamar Trading	Maintenance Items March	883.10	176.62	1,059.72
15		Bowdens Cleaning Services Limited	Cleaning March	69.33	13.87	83.20
16	04/02/2026	Andrew Symons Ltd	New Ferris Walk Behind Mower	9,500.00	1,900.00	11,400.00
17			Old Ferris Walk Behind Mower	(1,500.00)	0.00	(1,500.00)
18		Torridge District Council	T Hall Offices rent	315.31	63.06	378.37
19			T Hall Offices Service Charge	223.48	44.69	268.17
20			Town Ranger Depot Rates	1,338.33	267.67	1,606.00
21		Lineal	Licenses	163.22	32.64	195.86
22		Richard Coombes	Myr / Clk Connectivity Forum Hlswrthy mileage	41.00	0.00	41.00
<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>12,247.14</b>	<b>2,666.57</b>	<b>14,913.71</b>
Bank Balances at		12/02/2026	- Current Account	£ 16,356.95		
Bank Balances at		12/02/2026	- Deposit Account	£ 110,000.00		
Bank Balances at		12/02/2026	- 95 Day Account	£ 332,766.62		



**BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Staffing, Finance & General Purposes Committee**

**held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall on,**

**Thursday 26 February 2026 at 6.30 pm**

- PRESENT:**
- North Ward: Councillor D Bushby (Chairman)  
Councillor K Hind  
Councillor D McGeough
  - East Ward: Councillor Mrs J Gubb  
Councillor J McKenzie
  - South Ward: Councillor S Inch  
Councillor P Lawrence (Mayor)
  - West Ward: Councillor C Hawkins (sub for Cllr Mrs L Hellyer)
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr R Coombes (Deputy Town Clerk)

104. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members noted the Apologies received and reasons for absence from:

Councillor J Hellyer  
Councillor Mrs L Hellyer

105. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were none.

106. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION OF 15 MINUTES DURATION**

There was no members of public.

107. **MINUTES**

Proposed by Councillor Inch and seconded by Councillor Hind, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 February 2026 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 5, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

(Councillors McGeough and Hind joined the Meeting.)

Councillor Mrs Gubb intimated that the grant recommendation in relation to the Christmas Lights had led the applicant, because of the one third shortfall, to consider stepping back from running the Event.

Councillor Mrs Gubb explained the cost barriers adding that the subsequent organisation of the Event would need a sense of urgency noting also the issues surrounding road closures and further rerouting constraints.

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence and seconded by Councillor Mrs J Gubb, and

**RECOMMENDED: That the recommended Christmas Light Funding of £12,000 be directed to the Tourism Committee to facilitate the Event.**

(Vote – For: 8, Against: 0)

Members considered the Up Close Theatre Grant application which had not been made available at the previous Meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor Bushby and seconded by Councillor Inch, and

**RECOMMENDED: That Up Close Theatre grant allocation of £1,500.00 is agreed by Full Council.**

(Vote – For: 7, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 February 2026 will be amended to reflect the recommendation.

Members considered the Steamship Freshspring Trust Grant application which had not been made available at the previous Meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor Bushby and seconded by Councillor Inch, and

**RECOMMENDED: That Steamship Freshspring Trust grant allocation of £590.00 is agreed by Full Council.**

(Vote – For: 7, Against: 1)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 February 2026 will be amended to reflect the recommendation.

### **CHANGE OF ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Agenda Item 5, Items brought forward by the Chairman was moved to follow Agenda Item 9.

## 108. **FINANCE**

a. It was proposed by Councillor McKenzie and seconded by Councillor Mrs Gubb, and

**RESOLVED: That the lists of payments for 26 February 2026 be approved.**

(Vote – For: 8, Against: 0)

b. Interim Internal Auditor’s Report.

Members received and approved the Council’s interim Internal Auditor’s Report for the period 1 July 2025 – 30 September 2025.

Proposed by Councillor Hind, seconded by Councillor Bushby and

**RESOLVED: That the Council’s Interim Internal Auditor’s Report for the period 1 July – 30 September 2025 is noted.**

(Vote For: 8, Against: 0)

c. Interim Internal Auditor’s Report.

Members received and approved the Council’s interim Internal Auditor’s Report for the period 1 October 2025 – 31 December 2025.

Proposed by Councillor Hind, seconded by Councillor Bushby and

**RESOLVED: That the Council’s Interim Internal Auditor’s Report for the period 1 October – 31 December 2025 is noted.**

(Vote For: 8, Against: 0)

The Chairman indicated the Suite of Documents: Council’s Statement of Internal Control, Council’s Risk Management Policy and Register and Financial Regulations once considered, the Recommendation would be made “en bloc.”

Members reviewed and approved the Council’s Statement of Internal Control for the Financial year 2025 – 2026, the Council’s Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register and the Council’s Financial Regulations.

Proposed by Councillor Bushby, seconded by Councillor Lawrence and

**RECOMMENDED: That the Council’s Statement of Internal Control for the Financial year 2025 – 2026, the Council’s Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register and Council’s Financial Regulations are approved.**

(Vote – For: 8, Against: 0)

109. **BIDEFORD REGENERATION STRATEGY**

Members had received the Strategy document produced by the Bideford Regeneration Board.

Councillor Hind believed that the document had ideas for the District Council to deliver but it did not take into consideration the impact of the Local Government Review (LGR), on the District Council body nor the transfer of assets.

It ignored the Northern Devon Rail Link, the Trust Port (local running of the Port) and had not considered central car parking nor a community centre provision.

There was no costing, nor method of funding timetable for implementation.

It simply provided for good ideas and aspirations.

Discussion followed noting that following the LGR and the loss of the District Council there was no indication of “who would do what.”

Councillor Lawrence advised that there would be a launch which would engage with stakeholders, including local organisations to make comment (on the strategy); the Draft document was a precursor for a bigger plan.

110. **CITIZENS AND YOUNG CITIZENS AWARD**

Members agreed that the Council should continue with the Awards.

Councillor Lawrence, noting the Administrative Officer’s full embracing of and engagement with the Council’s social media directed that the Awards be advertised (on the Council’s media).

111. **MAINTENANCE OPERATIVES TASK**

Councillor Mrs Gubb highlighted a task which on request had been completed the same day following an approach to her from a resident. She expressed thanks to the Team.

Members were in agreement on the value which the Rangers represented to the Community and their importance to the Council and Town generally.

112. **ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman expressed disquiet when considering the Grant applications in the open forum. He believed that the discussion should be restricted to Part II future (grant) meetings.

He noted that the Toyota Hilux had been subject to a nationwide recall (by Toyota) for works to be addressed on the chassis. He believed that it reflected well on the manufacturer that a vehicle just short of ten years’ old should still be attended to.

113. **PART II (CLOSED SESSION)**

Proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded and

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

(Vote – For: 8, Against: 0)

114. **BIDEFORD LONG BRIDGE LIGHTS**

The Clerk provided a report to members outlining a general plan, details of road closure submission, quotations received and areas which required work including risk

assessments and method statements.

Proposed by Councillor Bushby, seconded and

**RESOLVED: That D S Electrical are invited complete the Electrical Lighting works in line with their Estimate.**

(Vote For: 8, Against: 0)

Proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded and

**RESOLVED: That the Clerk and Chairman consider additional crane quotations and engage the Contractor with a limit not to exceed £4,400.00.**

(Vote For: 8, Against: 0)

#### 115. **MARKET PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

The Clerk reported on meetings with the Project stakeholders, noting that the Planning and Listed Building Consent applications were expected to be submitted on Friday, 27 February 2026.

The Clerk gave an indication of timelines noting confidence expressed in meeting the completion date of 31 March 2027.

#### 116. **STAFFING MATTERS**

- a. The Clerk had provided a report regarding the Deputy Town Clerks accrued time of in lieu (TOIL) and the Council's financial underspend for the period during which he had deputised for the vacant Town Clerk position. The recommendations included:
  - i. To approve a one-off additional salary payment in recognition of the overtime hours accrued by the Deputy Clerk during the period from October 2025 until February 2026 to a maximum value of £4,549.50.
  - ii. To delegate authority to the Clerk to agree a flexible schedule of treating the overtime hours worked whereby the Deputy Clerk could use some of the accrued overtime hours as time of in lieu (TOIL) and accept a one-off additional salary payment in recognition of the remaining hours accrued.

Members expressed appreciation for the work and commitment of the Deputy Town Clerk.

Proposed by Councillor McGeourgh, seconded by Councillor McKenzie and

**RESOLVED: To accept the recommendations and delegate authority to the Clerk to authorise a one-off additional salary payment in recognition of the remaining hours accrued / use of accrued overtime hours.**

(Vote For: 8, Against: 0)

- b. Councillor Hind reiterated the position in relation to a former employee's hearing. He

suggested that he and the Town Clerk could provide an intermediary role between the Solicitors and the Council.

The Clerk explained that an opportunity of assistance could be provided through the Council's HR providers; she would make enquiries and liaise with Members.

The business of the meeting having been completed, the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.30 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor: ..... Date: .....

Signature of Chairman: ..... Date: .....

## BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Staffing, Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting - 26 February 2026

Row	Date Entered	Description	Extended Description	Net	VAT	Gross
1	13/02/2026	BJ's Value House	Lobelia Cambridge Blue Petunia Celebrity Mix	13.48	2.69	16.17
2		Coop	Stamps	13.92	0.00	13.92
3		EDF	Electricity Quay Lights	271.42	13.57	284.99
4		Garlands	Stationery	24.95	0.00	24.95
5		Merry Harriers	Irrigation Fittings	165.83	33.17	199.00
6		Peninsula Business Services Limited	HR/H&S/EAP	344.97	65.15	410.12
7		Source For Business	Town Ranger Depot Water	44.95	0.00	44.95
8		Hydrosure Global Ltd	Black Pipe	28.17	6.70	34.87
9		Pdotwolf Ltd	Hanging Basket Brackets	150.00	30.00	180.00
10	25/02/2026	EDF	Bridge Lights	23.34	1.17	24.51
11			Xmas Lights - 74a	88.54	4.43	92.97
12		D S Electrical	Christmas Light Installation 25	30,562.86	6,112.57	36,675.43
13		Lineal	IT Support	195.00	39.00	234.00
14		North Devon District Council	Chair Civic Event (Myrl Allice)	30.00	0.00	30.00
15		E-On Next Energy Limited	Town Ranger Depot Elec.	282.20	56.44	338.64
16		The National Allotment Society	Local Auth Membership	70.00	14.00	84.00
17		Encompass Security Solutions	Call-Out / IP address reset	60.00	12.00	72.00
18		Mr S Long	Tricks Allotment Site Equipment	12.99	0.00	12.99
19		Staff salaries inc Pension HMRC	Salary	30,151.60	0.00	30,151.60
<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>62,534.22</b>	<b>6,390.89</b>	<b>68,925.11</b>
Bank Balances at 25/02/2026				- Current Account	£ 14,551.33	
Bank Balances at 25/02/2026				- Deposit Account	£ 43,242.82	
Bank Balances at 25/02/2026				- 95 Day Account	£ 332,945.31	



## BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Market Management Committee

held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall on,

Thursday 29 January 2026 at 6.30 pm

<b>PRESENT:</b>	North Ward:	Councillor K Hind Councillor J Gordon Councillor Mrs Smith (Chairman)
	East Ward:	Councillor Mrs J Gubb Councillor Mrs L Hellyer Councillor J McKenzie
	South Ward	Councillor P Lawrence
	Market Complex	Mrs K Austin
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>		Mr R Coombes (Deputy Town Clerk)

In the absence of Councillor McKenzie, Councillor Mrs Smith, Vice, assumed the Chair.

69. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members were advised that the Chairman would be delayed; otherwise there were no absentees.

70. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations of interest.

71. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION OF 15 MINUTES DURATION**

There were no members of the public.

72. **MINUTES**

Proposed by Councillor Lawrence and seconded by Councillor Hind, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 December 2025 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

73. **ACCOUNTS**

Proposed by Councillor Hind, seconded by Councillor Mrs Gubb, and

**RESOLVED: That the lists of payments for 29 January 2026 be approved.**

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

74. **MARKET HALL PROJECT – WORKS IMPACT ON STAKEHOLDERS**

Councillor Lawrence led discussion that could not, at this stage, provide any detail on whether, when and how the Market Hall works would impact the Butcher’s Row tenants and visitors to the Complex.

Whilst integral officers had been engaged the main contractor had not been established and was not in place.

Access could be restricted, noise too could be a negative factor.

There is no schedule of works earmarked for Butcher’s Row under the Project.

Should the Market Hall be available and there was disruption within Butcher’s Row tenants could have the opportunity to relocate for a period.

It was clear that there was a need for the Tenants to be informed not least for those operating a holistic service. (The Café tenant had been advised when it was thought there would be disruption, last summer.)

75. **TENANT / TRADER REPRESENTATIVE**

(Councillor McKenzie joined the Meeting.)

The Chairman invited Mrs Austin to address the Committee.

- Tenants are concerned that the waste contractor engaged by Jack in Box simply abandons the large empty blue bin in the entrance to Butcher’s Row where it can remain all morning until such times as the Tenant deigns to move it.

The Clerk advised that a formal agreement had yet to be entered into but the Tenants had been directed to read **Minute. No.62**, that included, “that Bin and its operation must not cause nuisance / disquiet to market stakeholders.”

Members noted that the now vacant Unit 1A had been made available for the arranged storage of secured waste at a nominal cost.

The Clerk advised that correspondence had been sent with a request that the Bin contractor uses the area, formerly used by the Council, by the railings outside the entrance to the Main Hall, and within close proximity of Unit 1A.

- Further discussion ensued leading to a noticeable reduction in core hours / commitment to Butcher’s Row attendance. All tenants had been advised of **Minute. No.61**, regarding the intention to provide for flexible opening hours albeit that when

introduced, effective 1 April 2026, it still would require tenants committing to the twenty five on site hours attendance. Poor attendance did provide for a negative impact.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Austin for her contribution (throughout the Meeting).

76. **PART II (CLOSED SESSION)**

Proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded and

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

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

77. **MARKET HALL**

Councillor Lawrence referred to meetings with the newly appointed officers, the architects and TDC personnel including discussion on tendering, procurement legislation and approval of contractors.

A further Meeting had been arranged, including the soon to be appointed Town Clerk, to engage with those other TDC officers who will help facilitate the works, including Planning. (TDC want the Council to succeed.)

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Smith, seconded by Councillor Mrs L Hellyer, and

**RESOLVED: That Devolved Authority is given to provide for Councillors Lawrence, Hind, McKenzie and the, soon to be appointed, Town Clerk, following professional advice, to make recommendation to Council the preferred Contractor from the Tender process.**

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

78. **MARKET AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

Councillor Hind led discussion considering the opportunity for the Architects to develop and draw up plans for “Phase II,” of the Market Hall, to allow further funding to be sourced.

It was requested that the adopted Market Strategy be circulated providing Members with the opportunity to ensure “Phase II,” was in keeping with that which was agreed.

79. **TENANT / TRADER**

There is a confidential note associated with this item.

Members noted that two tenants had vacated their respective premises and a third had given Notice to quit Butcher’s Row. There had been interest expressed, and applications received, following social media / website / word of mouth promotion.

The business of the meeting having been completed, the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 8.07 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor: ..... Date: .....

Signature of Chairman: ..... Date: .....

**BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Accounts for approval at the Market Management Committee Meeting - 29 January 2026**

Number (All)

Row	Date Entered	PV	Description	Extended Description	Net	VAT	Gross
1	17/12/2025	BSPM33	Vodafone Limited	Mobile	28.18	5.63	33.81
2			South West Water	Water	257.50	0.00	257.50
3			Ignyte Ltd	Visit ND website	275.00	55.00	330.00
4			EDF	Electricity	1,013.80	202.76	1,216.56
5				Gas	35.17	1.76	36.93
6			D S Electrical	EICR (five year)	2,000.00	400.00	2,400.00
7			Lineal	Equipmnt to spt Bband upgrade	2,029.60	405.91	2,435.51
8	19/12/2025	BSPM33	Bideford Appliance Store	Fridge - remove old fridge Café	186.66	37.34	224.00
9	23/12/2025	BSPM34	Lloyds	Service Charges	9.35	0.00	9.35
10	05/01/2026	BSPM35	Mkt recharge	TC Costs	3,721.97	0.00	3,721.97
11	12/01/2026	(blank)	Vodafone Limited	Mobile	28.18	5.63	33.81
12	<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>9,585.41</b>	<b>1,114.03</b>	<b>10,699.44</b>

Bank Balances at	23/01/2026	- Current Account	£	8,708.27
Bank Balances at	23/01/2026	- Deposit Account	£	30,015.87



## BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Market Management Committee

held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall on,

Thursday 12 March 2026 at 6.30 pm

<b>PRESENT:</b>	North Ward:	Councillor D Bushby (sub for Councillor J Gubb) Councillor J Gordon Councillor Mrs Smith
	East Ward:	Councillor Mrs L Hellyer Councillor J Hellyer (sub for Councillor K Hind) Councillor J McKenzie (Chairman)
	South Ward	Councillor P Lawrence
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>		Mrs J Gardner (Town Clerk) Mr R Coombes (Deputy Town Clerk)

#### 80. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Mrs J Gubb (East Ward – personal) and K Hind (North Ward – personal). Mrs K Austin (Market Representative).

#### 81. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 82. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION OF 15 MINUTES DURATION

There were no members of the public.

#### 83. MINUTES

Proposed by Councillor McKenzie and seconded by Councillor Mrs L Hellyer, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 January 2026 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 5, Against: 0, Abstention: 2)

84. **ACCOUNTS**

Proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by Councillor Mrs L Hellyer, and

**RESOLVED: That the lists of payments for 12 March 2026 be approved.**

(Vote – For: 7, Against: 0)

85. **MARKET HALL PROJECT**

The Town Clerk advised that the Tender documentation has been progressed, will be issued at the end of the month and is “on track.”

The return Tender date has been set at 28 April 2026 consideration period and award of contract scheduled for 22 May 2026 and commencement of works to 5 / 6 July allowing for completion date of 26 March 2027.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the refurbishment would be “like for like” in line with the Listed Building Consent; the structural fabric will not change. There would be improvements, though to the roof access of Butcher’s Row allowing for a “man safe” access system including a line to attach a harness.

The Project Manager has submitted the cash flow forecast to TDC which will allow for the processing of claims.

Members discussed the budget, drawdown of funds and payment stream for the Project Manager. Further discussion explored the potential for a rain water capture system.

86. **TENANT / TRADER REPRESENTATIVE**

Councillor Lawrence alerted members to the Scarecrow Competition to be held in Butcher’s Row.

He advised that a tenant occupying the southern most Butcher’s Row Unit i.e. furthest from the Office, was suffering connectivity issues to the Free public Wi Fi provision.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the IT support company had been notified, they had made an onsite visit, as well as having remote connectivity, and had been hastened.

87. **PART II (CLOSED SESSION)**

Proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded and

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

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

88. **CAFÉ KITCHEN RANGE**

Members considered quotations and alternative suppliers / options to the replacement of the Café Kitchen range.

Proposed by Councillor Bushby, seconded by Councillor Mrs Hellyer, and

**RESOLVED: That the Bideford Appliance Store be invited to supply and fit the Rangemaster 90cm Professional+ Induction Range Cooker [L SEP] 73ltr Left Hand Fan Oven with Handy rack and Catalytic side Liners and remove / dispose of the old appliance.**

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 1)

89. **TENANT / TRADER**

Councillor Lawrence advised Members on the selection and results of the application process for 22 and 25 Market Place, 3 4 Butcher’s Row Shop Unit.

The Clerk advised members of the efforts made by the Rangers to make the Units suitable for letting.

The business of the meeting having been completed, the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.01 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor: ..... Date: .....

Signature of Chairman: ..... Date: .....

<b>BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Pannier Market Accounts as at 12 March 2026</b>						
<b>Ser No</b>	<b>Date Entered</b>		<b>ALLOCATION</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>NET</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1	31/01/2026	Tamar Trading	Maintenance Items	51.26	256.32	307.58
2	28/01/2026	Lloyds	Service Charges	0.00	9.35	9.35
3	28/01/2026	EDF	Gas	2.24	44.70	46.94
4	28/01/2026	EDF	Electricity	212.88	1064.41	1277.29
5	28/01/2026	Triangle	Broadband	66.69	333.45	400.14
6	28/01/2026	Torridge District Council	Business Rates	0.00	222.05	222.05
7	28/01/2026	Jonathon Rhind Architects Ltd.	Architect's Fees	1506.16	7530.80	9036.96
8	28/01/2026	Lakeway Ecological Consultancy Ltd	EclA Report	80.00	400.00	480.00
9	04/02/2026	Mkt recharge	TC Costs	0.00	3721.97	3721.97
10	04/02/2026	Torridge District Council	Building Insurance	0.00	3685.70	3685.70
11	28/02/2026	RGB	Maintenance Items	3.32	16.60	19.92
12	28/02/2026	Tamar Trading	Maintenance Items	65.43	327.12	392.55
13	13/02/2026	Vodafone Limited	Mobile	5.63	28.18	33.81
14	13/02/2026	Ashton Electrical Ltd	Electrical repair 22 M Plice	11.04	55.21	66.25
15	13/02/2026	Nicholsons Hygienic Specialist	Cleaning Materials	30.60	153.00	183.60
16	13/02/2026	South West Water	Unit charge	0.00	33.70	33.70
17	13/02/2026	Encompass Security Solutions	Alarm System Ann insp test	48.33	241.67	290.00
18	13/02/2026	Howdens Joinery Limited	Door panel / latch pack	6.80	34.00	40.80
19	13/02/2026	Skip & Stones Skip Hire	2 x skips	148.00	740.00	888.00
21	25/02/2026	EDF	Gas	2.77	55.33	58.10
22	25/02/2026	EDF	Electricity	202.04	1010.19	1212.23
23	25/02/2026	Lloyds	Service Charges	0.00	10.20	10.20
24	25/02/2026	Triangle	Broadband	66.70	333.48	400.18
25	02/03/2026	Mkt recharge	TC Costs	0.00	3721.97	3721.97
26	02/03/2026	Myles Clough	Quantity Surveying Services	323.07	1615.33	1938.40
27	03/03/2026	Myles Clough	Project Management Services	471.25	2356.25	2827.50
				<b>3304.21</b>	<b>28000.98</b>	<b>31305.19</b>
			<b>Bank Balances at 6 Mar 26 - Current Account</b>	<b>7,358.98</b>		
			<b>Bank Balances at 6 Mar 26 - Deposit Account</b>	<b>35,000.00</b>		



**BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Tourism Committee**

**held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall on,**

**Tuesday 3 February 2026 at 6.30 pm**

**PRESENT:** North Ward: Councillor D Bushby  
East Ward: Councillor J Craigie  
Councillor J Hellyer  
South Ward: Councillor P Lawrence (Chairman)  
West Ward: Councillor C Hawkins

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Miss Claire Heller (Administration Officer)  
Mr R Coombes (Deputy Town Clerk)  
Ms Lucy Lowe (SWENS)  
Mrs Zoe Ferreira (Henley Larder)

27. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor K Hind - Personal  
Councillor Mrs S Smith - Personal

28. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations of interest.

29. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION OF 15 MINUTES DURATION**

N/A

30. **MINUTES**

Proposed by Councillor Peter Lawrence and seconded by Councillor C Hawkins, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 November 2025 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 5, Against: 0)

31. **REQUEST TO USE THE CHRISTMAS TREE HOLDERS.**

The Cultural Development Officer from Torridge District Council has approached The Council with a view to placing “Way finding aids” in their Christmas tree holders throughout the town. The officer withdrew from attending awaiting further information to present to members.

Chairman proposed, seconded by Councillor Craigie and

**RECOMMENDED: The item be deferred awaiting presentation by the Cultural Development Officer.**

(Vote – For: 5, Against: 0)

32. **EVENTS 2026/27**

a. Bideford Fair.

Members confirmed that the Bideford Fair, incorporating Mayor’s Introduction Parade, would be held on Saturday, 6 June 2026.

Ms Lowe indicated an approach from the Incorporation of Weavers, Fullers and Shearmen to drive sheep across the Long Bridge; she will liaise with them.

An acrobatic jet ski performer has been pencilled in.

Councillor Bushby advised he would request North Devon Classic Cars to attend.

Members confirmed the budget spend, stage PA arrangements as before.

The Chairman directed that the event will be co-managed by Ms Lowe and The Clerk.

b. Landivisiau Twinning.

For the 50th Anniversary it is expected that the Bideford Twinning Association will be hosting several members of the Landivisiau Council and possibly their mayor in addition to French members of the Landivisiau Association.

The Chairman agreed to contact The Twinning Association to confirm the dates of the visit and plan Bideford Town Council’s supporting event.

It was noted that he would Chair the AGM of this Twinning Association on Saturday 28 February 2026 in the Library, 10.30 am.

c. Chudleigh Picnic.

The Tourism Committee agreed to continue to support the event. The Chairman will establish a date that does not clash with the Carnival and other events.

d. Jigsaw Event.

The Event is scheduled to be held over the weekend 10 - 11 October 2026 with a singles

competition on Saturday 10 October and doubles on Sunday 11th October.

The Chairman will investigate alternative venues should the Panier Market be unavailable.

There will be a need for more people to support this event.

e. Afternoon Tea and Cream Tea Festival.

It was agreed that the Cream Tea Festival should become part of the Bideford Fair on 6 June 2026. The Chairman will investigate the provision of a marquee. The format will be discussed including judging and distinct categories of scone.

The Chairman, Mrs\_Ferreira and the Clerk to lead.

f. Other Events.

Spanish Boat Visit 2028. Project in Albaola, Spain involving the construction of a replica 16th century Basque whaling ship, originally built in Pasaia. The Ship, the San Juan, will sail to Canada in 2027 but would be available to visit Bideford in 2028. The committee agreed to support this visit. The Chairman will contact the project administrator to confirm the Committee's support.

UK Town of Culture 2028 Competition. It was agreed that Bideford should submit an Expression of Interest by 31 March 2026. The draft proposal will be studied and finalised by a steering group.

The business of the meeting having been completed, the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 19:15.

Signature of Town Mayor: ..... Date: .....

Signature of Chairman: ..... Date: .....



**BIDDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Tourism Committee Meeting**

**held in the Green House, Riverbank House, Biddeford on,**

**Tuesday 17 March 2026 at 6.30 pm**

**PRESENT:**

South Ward:	Councillor P Lawrence
East Ward:	Councillor Mrs J Gubb Councillor J Craigie
North Ward:	Councillor D Bushby Councillor Mrs S Smith Councillor K Hind
West Ward:	Councillor C Hawkins

**IN ATTENDANCE:** J Gardner (Town Clerk)  
C Heller (Administrative Officer)  
Councillor Mrs T Tinsley

**33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor J Hellyer - Personal.

**34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Councillor Mrs J Gubb declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 38 a by virtue of a family member's paid involvement with the Bideford Fair.

**85. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION OF 15 MINUTES DURATION**

There were no members of the public present.

**86. MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Smith, that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2026 be approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 5, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

**87. MARITIME COLLABORATION**

Councillor T Tinsley provided a presentation on maritime collaboration with Alboala/Spain, thanked the committee for inviting her to give the presentation and agreed to form a steering group that would co-ordinate future plans.

**38. REQUEST TO REPURPOSE THE CHRISTMAS TREE HOLDERS**

Torrige District Council's Cultural Development Officer had approached the Tourism Committee with a view to placing "Way Finding Aids" in their Christmas tree holders throughout the town. The Cultural Development Officer had withdrawn from the previous Tourism Committee meeting, 3 February 2026, as she had been awaiting further information to present to councillors.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor Ken Hind and

**RECOMMENDED: that the Clerk ascertain whether Torrige District Council wished to proceed but it was agreed in principle pending a risk assessment.**

(Vote – For: 5, Against: 0)

*(Councillor K Hind left the meeting)*

**39. EVENTS PLANNED FOR 2026-2027**

- a. Bideford Fair** (incorporating Mayor's Parade and The Cream Tea Festival. Saturday, 6 June 2026). It was agreed at the meeting that Councillor P Lawrence meet with Lucy Lowe (South West Entertainments) and Claire Heller and discuss the status of the Cream Tea Festival.

**b. Landivisiau Twinning 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

It was requested that Councillor P Lawrence would review the budget and reception details for the 50<sup>th</sup> Twining Event in Bideford on Saturday 22 August 2026 at the next Tourism Committee meeting on 28 April 2026.

**c. Frost Fair and Christmas Lights Switch On**

It was noted that Torridge District Council would be organising the Frost Fair this year.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor K Hind and

**RECOMMEND: that the organisation of the Christmas Lights event be brought in-house, that the event would take place on Sunday 29 November and that lights would not be switched off until after Wednesday 6 January 2027.**

(Vote – For: 5, Against: 0)

**e. Chudleigh Picnic**

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor D Bushby and

**RECOMMENDED: that Chudleigh Picnic would take place on Sunday 23 August 2026.**

(Vote – For: 4, Against; 0, Abstain;1)

**f. Jigsaw Event**

It was suggested that the decision on where this event would be held, on the weekend 10 to 11 October 2026, be delayed until the schedule of repairs to the Pannier Market Hall be confirmed.

**PART 11 (Closed Session)**

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

**40. UK TOWN OF CULTURE 2028 EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

At the Tourism Committee meeting on 3 February 2026, it was resolved that consideration would be given to Bideford submitting an Expression of Interest for Town of Culture 2028.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor Mrs S. Smith and

**RECOMMENDED: That the Town Council approve the submission of the UK Town of Culture 2028 Expression of Interest for Bideford to the Department for Culture, Media & Sport by 31 March 2026.**

(Vote – For: 5, Against: 0)

The business of the meeting having been completed, the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.54 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor: ..... Date: .....

Signature of Chairman: ..... Date: .....



**BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Decarbonisation and Environment Committee Meeting  
held in the Council Chamber,  
on Monday 9 March 2026 at 6.30 pm**

**PRESENT:** East Ward: Councillor Mrs S Smith  
  
North Ward: Councillor J Gordon  
  
South & West Ward: Councillor Ms R Clarke  
Councillor P Lawrence  
  
Bideford Sustainability Group: Ms H Sheard

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr R Coombes (Deputy Town Clerk)

10. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were not received from Councillors J Craigie (East Ward) nor M Taylor (West Ward).

11. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

12. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD**

There were no members of the public present.

13. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 October 2025 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 4, Against: 0)

14. **BIDEFORD PANNIER MARKET – RAINWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM**

The Chairman indicated that scaffolding on the Pannier Market Hall would provide the opportunity to look into the possibility of a rain water collection system. The immediate benefit could see water provision for the Town's planters.

Members discussed aesthetics, potential for leaks, siting, sabotage and security.

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded and

**RECOMMEND: That the Town Clerk approach the Architect / Contractor to establish the potential for the introduction of a Rainwater Collection System on the Grade II Listed building and optimum location.**

(Vote: For: 4, Against: 0)

15. **TREE PRESERVATION ORDER (TPO) APPLICATION FOR FORD WOODS**

The Chairman led discussion on the benefits of a blanket TPO in preserving and maintaining the Ancient, Historic, Natural Woodland. He indicated that anyone had the right to apply to the local council to place a TPO on a tree intimating preference for the Council to make application.

The Clerk questioned the need, reasoning that the Council had the responsibility for the Woodland, its maintenance and safety to all stakeholders. He suggested that only the Council would authorise any tree works based on tree surveys, professional advice and the engagement of qualified contractors. He wondered if a TPO would simply stymie the Council's ability to make safe judgement and take action where appropriate.

The Chairman indicated that where a tree protected by a TPO poses an immediate danger the threat can be dealt with without prior approval.

It was proposed by Councillor Gordon, seconded and

**RECOMMEND: That the Council applies for a Tree Preservation Order to cover the whole of Ford Woods.**

(Vote: For: 3, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

16. **FRIENDS OF FORD WOODS – MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Chairman had submitted a Project Initiation Form (PIF), which is attached and forms part of these Minutes.

Within the PIF the Chairman indicated that there would be costs involved to the Council in the region of £1,500 - £1,800 he suggested that grant funding could help reduce the figure. Further that an approved Woodland Management Plan is a "prerequisite for multiple government grants, potentially enabling significant external investment into Ford Woods."

He had liaised with a Ms Lee, Biosphere Community Animator, Bideford, who spoke of the potential to open up grant funding through the relationship with Friends of Ford Woods / Bideford Sustainability Group (BSG) (Ms Heard concurred).

Ms Heard intimated that the BSG were long established, had looked at grant funding for Ford Woods and had been in receipt of a modest sum. Funds could be drawn that would aid the removal of the invasive, non-native, laurel; similarly (rare species of) bats could attract funding streams.

Discussion followed on the drawing of “the Friend’s” expertise, presentation to the Council for adoption, working with the Landlords / Council, the Plan providing safeguards modes of operation / clarity, opportunities to think and plan for the future; the Council, though remaining the Landlord holding responsibility for Ford Woods.

**RECOMMEND: That Bideford Town Council formally engages Friends of Ford Woods to work in partnership with the Council in the preparation of a UK Forestry Standard-compliant Woodland Management Plan (WMP) for Ford Woods, an area of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) owned by the Town Council.**

(Vote: For: 4 , Against: 0)

The Chairman thanked the Members for their attendance and support. He concluded the Meeting at 7.17 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor:..... Date:.....

Signature of Chairman:..... Date:.....

**MINUTE NUMBER 16. FRIENDS OF FORD WOODS – MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Notice of Motion / Project Initiation Form – Bideford Town Council

Project Initiator and Lead:	Jack Gordon	Date:	21/2/2026
Project Description	<p><b>To discuss and make recommendations on engaging the community group Friends of Ford Woods to support the development of a Woodland Management Plan for Ford Woods.</b></p> <p>This proposal recommends that Bideford Town Council formally engages <i>Friends of Ford Woods</i> to work in partnership with the Council in the preparation of a <b>UK Forestry Standard-compliant Woodland Management Plan (WMP)</b> for Ford Woods, an area of <b>Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)</b> owned by the Town Council.</p> <p>The Woodland Management Plan will provide a long-term (10-year) framework for managing the woodland in a way that protects biodiversity, improves climate resilience, supports permissive public access, and enables the Council to apply for external environmental grant funding. The plan would be prepared by a suitably qualified professional, with community input facilitated through the Friends group.</p>		
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Protection of Ancient Woodland</b> This would help support long-term management of an ASNW site, ensuring compliance with national guidance and best practice.</li> <li>• <b>Supports Decarbonisation Objectives</b> A Woodland Management Plan will help maximise carbon offsetting, woodland resilience, and climate adaptation, directly supporting the Council’s decarbonisation strategy.</li> <li>• <b>Unlocks External Grant Funding</b> An approved Woodland Management Plan is a prerequisite for multiple government grants, potentially enabling significant external investment into Ford Woods.</li> <li>• <b>Community Engagement and Stewardship</b> Formal engagement with Friends of Ford Woods strengthens local involvement, and allows a dedicated group to help with the management of Ford Woods.</li> </ul>		
Financial Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outsourcing a woodland management plan would cost in the region of £1,500-£2,000. While grant funding can help cover £1,500 of this, working with the Friends of Ford Woods group could help reduce the initial cost of the plan whilst still being eligible for the grant.</li> <li>- Once a management plan is in place this could allow further applications for grants, greatly increasing any budget to</li> </ul>		

	managed the woodlands.		
Officer resource required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Grant Applications:</b> Officer time will be required to submit and manage external funding applications.</li> <li>• <b>Liaison:</b> Coordination between the Council, Friends of Ford Woods, and relevant statutory bodies.</li> </ul>		
Risks and issues	<p><b>Community Expectations:</b> There is a risk that community expectations exceed the Council's legal or financial capacity. This will be mitigated through clear terms of engagement and Council-led decision-making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reputational Risk:</b> Misunderstanding around woodland management activities (e.g. thinning or coppicing) could lead to public concern. This will be mitigated through transparent communication and professional oversight.</li> <li>• <b>Grant Dependency:</b> External funding is not guaranteed. The Council retains discretion to proceed or pause depending on funding outcomes.</li> </ul>		
Action List	Yes / No	Name of person to complete action	Observations:
Planning Permission	No		Not required for plan preparation
Owners Consent	Yes	Town Clerk	Town Council own the landd
Consultation Required	Yes	Decarbonisation Committee	Engagement with Friends of Ford Woods and relevant officers

Please continue on separate sheet if necessary

Notice of Motion / Project Initiation Form – Bideford Town Council

Project Initiator and Lead:	Ken Hind	Date:11/3/2026	
Project Description	Resolved To elect 3 Town Councillors to form a Working Group to consider the acquisition of Torridge District Council assets and their viability after Local Government Reform and report back to Full Council		
Benefits	The future direction of the Council		
Financial Implications	None		
Risks and issues	None		
Action List	Yes / No	Name of person to complete action	Observations:
Planning Permission	No		
Owners Consent	Yes		
Consultation Required	Yes		

Standing Order 7. Previous Resolutions.

\*\*A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least ( 9 ) councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.

**BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL**  
**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

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## Purpose of the IT Policy

The purpose of an IT policy is to establish clear parameters for how councillors, staff, and other authorised users use council-provided technology or equipment in the course of their duties. A well-defined policy helps to:

- Set expectations for appropriate use of equipment and systems;
- Raise awareness of risks associated with IT use;
- Safeguard the council's data and digital assets;
- Clarify what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable use;
- Outline the consequences of policy breaches.

Councils will also need to determine and clearly state whether limited personal use of IT equipment is permitted (for example, checking personal email or online shopping during lunch breaks).

## Monitoring of IT Use

As an IT provider, the Council has the right to monitor the use of its IT equipment and systems, provided there is a legitimate reason for doing so and councillors, employees and other authorised users are informed that such monitoring may take place. Any monitoring must be proportionate and comply with relevant data protection and privacy laws. Other persons may be included if they access or use Council systems e.g. if they have a Council e-mail address.

## Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all councillors, staff, and other authorised users, regardless of their working location or pattern, including those who are home-based, office-based, or work on a flexible or part-time basis. It sets out the expectations for the appropriate use of IT equipment and systems provided by the Council.

## Computer use

### 1.1 Hardware

**1.1.1** [Either] council computer equipment is provided for council purposes only. [or] Council computer equipment is provided for council purposes, however reasonable personal use is permitted (reasonable interpreted as in the opinion of [specify whom, e.g. "the council, the clerk"]). Any personal use of our computers and systems should not interrupt our daily council work in any way. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are asked to restrict any personal use to official lunch breaks or before or after working hours.

**1.1.2** Locking computers when leaving desk, all councillors, staff, and other authorised users must lock their computers when leaving their desks to prevent unauthorised access. This applies to all council and personal devices used for work. Failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action.

**1.1.3** All computer and other electronic equipment supplied should be treated with good care at all times. Computer equipment is expensive, and any damage sustained to any equipment will have a financial impact on the council.

**1.1.4** Computer and electronic hardware should be kept clean, and every precaution taken to prevent food and drink being dropped or spilled onto it.

**1.1.5** All computer and mobile equipment will carry a number which is logged against the current owner of that equipment. A database of equipment issued will be kept.

**1.1.6** Equipment should not be dismantled or reassembled without seeking advice.

**1.1.7** Councillors, staff, and other authorised are not to purchase any computer or mobile equipment (including software) unless previously authorised.

**1.1.8** Personal disks, USB stick, CDs, DVDs, data storage devices etc cannot be used on Council computers without the prior approval of [specify whom, e.g. the council].

~~**1.1.9** [Delete if not appropriate] The council has a number of wireless networks. Using a portable device to make personal Wi-Fi hot spots which bypass existing Wi-Fi is not allowed.~~

~~**1.1.10** [Optional] Any faults or necessary repairs must be reported to [specify whom, e.g. "the clerk/ IT provider"]-~~

## **Equipment**

### **2.1 Portable equipment**

**2.1.1** Portable equipment includes laptop computers, netbooks, tablets, mobile and smart phones with email capability and access to the internet etc.

**2.1.2** It is particularly emphasised that Council back-up procedures specific to portable equipment should be followed at all times.

**2.1.3** All portable computers must be stored safely and securely when not in use in the office, i.e. when travelling or when working from home. Portable equipment (unless locked in a secure cabinet or office) should be kept with or near the user at all times; should not be left unattended when away from Council premises and should never be left in parked vehicles or at any Council or non-Council premises.

**2.1.4** It is important to ensure all portable devices are protected with encryption in case they are lost or stolen. All smartphones or tablets which hold Council data, including emails and files, must be protected with a pin code. Where possible, these devices should also be programmed to erase all content after several unsuccessful attempts to break in. Any security set on these devices must not be disabled or removed.

**2.1.5** Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) is a security process which requires users to verify their identity using two or more independent methods—for example, entering a password (something you know) and confirming a code sent to your mobile device (something you

have). This significantly reduces the risk of unauthorised access to systems and sensitive data. NALC recommends implementing MFA as a best practice to enhance information security and support compliance with data protection obligations under the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

**2.1.6** If an item of portable equipment is lost or damaged this should be reported to the Clerk (or, in the Clerk's case, the Mayor). If the loss or damage is due to an act of negligence, the individual responsible may be liable to meet the first [specify amount] of the loss/damage.

**2.1.7** To protect confidential information, unless it is a requirement of the job and this has been authorised, it is forbidden for photographs or videos to be taken on Council premises, without the prior written permission of the Clerk (or, in the Clerk's case, the Mayor). This includes mobile telephones with camera function, camcorder, tape or other recording device for sound or pictures – moving or still.

**2.1.8** Under no circumstances should any non-public meeting or conversation be recorded without the permission of those present. This does not affect statutory rights (under The Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014).

**2.1.9** In addition, the Council does not permit webcams (which may be pre-installed on many laptops) to be used in the workplace, other than for conference calls for Council purposes. If there is any doubt as to whether a device falls under this clause, advice should be sought from the Clerk (or, in the Clerk's case, the Mayor).

## **2.2 Use of own devices**

[Choose either "no use permitted" below and delete the whole of the rest of this section, or "some use permitted" and tailor to suit.]

~~**2.2.1** Personal laptops and other computers or other devices should not be brought into work and used to access Council IT systems during working hours, unless this has been authorised by the employee's line manager. This is to ensure that no viruses enter the system, to prevent time being wasted during working hours on personal use and to assist in maintaining security, confidentiality, and data protection.~~

[or – if some use is permitted – delete the above, and tailor the remainder of this section, including the options regarding data storage below.]

**2.2.2** The Council recognises that some councillors, staff, and other authorised users may wish to use their own smartphones, tablets, laptops etc to access our servers, private clouds or networks for normal Council purposes, including, but not limited to, reading their emails, accessing documents stored or to store data on the Council's OneDrive or access data in other services. Any such use of personal devices will be at the discretion of the Council, but consent for standard systems (MS Windows, Mac OS X, Linux – in commercial configurations) will normally be permitted. Such devices should be kept up to date so that any vulnerabilities in the operating system or other software on the device are appropriately patched or updated.

**2.2.3** However, the same security precautions apply to personal devices as to the Council's desktop equipment. For continuity purposes, calls made to external parties must be made on Council landlines or mobile phone numbers to ensure that only these numbers are used and/or stored by the recipient, rather than personal numbers. This is the national model policy but aware that staff do use their personal mobiles. Suggest change to allow the use of personal mobile phones. Any emails sent from own devices should be sent from a Council email account and should not identify the individual's personal email address.

**2.2.4** Councillors, staff, and other authorised persons who use Council systems are expected to use all devices in an ethical and respectful manner and in accordance with this policy. Accessing inappropriate websites or services on any device via the IT infrastructure which is paid for or provided by the Council carries a high degree of risk, and, for employees, may result in disciplinary action, including summary dismissal (without notice). For Workers or Contractors, we may terminate the worker agreement. This is irrespective of the ownership of the device used. An example would be downloading copyright music illegally or accessing pornographic material.

**2.2.5** In cases of legal proceedings against the Council or [specify, e.g. "external stakeholders"], the Council may need to temporarily take possession of a device, whether council-owned or personal to retrieve the relevant data.

**2.2.6** Wherever possible the user should maintain a clear separation between the personal data processed on the Council's behalf and that processed for their own personal use, for example, by using different apps for Council and personal use. If the device supports both work and personal profiles, the work profile must always be used for work-related purposes.

**2.2.7** Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who intend to use their own devices via the Council's infrastructure must ensure that they:

- use a strong password to protect their device(s) from being accessed. For smartphones and tablets this should lock the device after a number of failed login attempts;
- configure their device(s) to automatically prompt for a password after a period of inactivity;
- always password protect any documents containing confidential information which are sent as attachments to an email, and notify the password separately (preferably by a means other than email);
- for smartphones and tablets, activate the automatic device wipe function (where available). Note that use of the remote wipe function may also involve the removal of the individual's personal data. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are therefore advised to keep personal data separate from council data where possible;
- ensure secure Wi-Fi networks are used;
- ensure that work-related data cannot be viewed or retrieved by family or friends who may use the device;
- inform the line manager if their device(s) is/are lost, stolen, or inappropriately accessed where there is risk of access to council data or resources. To prevent

phones being used, they will need to retain the details of their IMEI number and the SIM number of the device as their provider will require this to deactivate it.

**2.2.8** Personal data relating to councillors, staff, and other authorised users, associates, residents, tenants, external stakeholders etc should not be saved to any personal accounts with third-party storage cloud service providers as this may breach data protection legislation or create a security risk if the device is lost or stolen. This applies especially if the passwords used to store/access data are saved onto the device, or if the service permits councillors, staff, and other authorised users to remain logged in between sessions.

**2.2.9** Personal information and sensitive data should never be saved on councillors, staff, or other authorised users own devices as this may breach confidentiality agreements, especially if the device is used by other people from time to time.

**2.2.10** If removable media are used to transfer data (e.g. USB drives or CDs), the user must also securely delete the data on the media once the transfer is complete.

**2.2.11** Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who open any attachments should ensure that any cached copies are deleted immediately after use. The Council will provide assistance or training in doing this if needed. Additional risks include data belonging to the council being accessed by unauthorised persons if the device(s) is lost, stolen, or used without the owner's permission.

**2.2.12** Any work done on user's own equipment should be stored securely and password protected and should always be backed up in accordance with the Council's standard backup procedures.

**2.2.13** ~~[Optional]. If transferring data, either by email or by other means, this should be done through an encrypted channel, such as a virtual private network (VPN) or a secure web protocol (https://). Unsecured wireless networks should not be used.~~

**2.2.14** Prior to the disposal of any device which has work data stored on it, and in the event of a user leaving the Council, councillors, staff, and other authorised users are required to allow the Council's provider of IT support access to the device to ensure that all passwords, user access shortcuts and any identifiable data are removed from the device.

**2.2.15** Councillors, staff, and other authorised users must take responsibility for understanding how their device(s) work in respect to the above rules if they are accessing council servers/services via their own IT equipment. Risks to the user's personal device(s) include data loss as a result of a crash of the operating system, bugs and viruses, software or hardware failures and programming errors rendering a device inoperable. The council will use reasonable endeavours to assist, but councillors, staff, and other authorised users are personally liable for their own device(s) and for any costs incurred as a result of the above.

## **Health and safety**

**3.1.1** Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who work in Council offices will be provided with an appropriate workstation.

**3.1.2** The Council has a duty to ensure that regular appropriate eye tests, carried out by a competent person, are offered to employees using display screen equipment.

**3.1.3** Any VDU user who feels that their workstation requires changes to make it compliant must speak to their line manager.

If any hazards are detected at a workstation, including 'noises' from the IT equipment, this should be reported immediately to the line manager.

## **Password and Authentication Policy**

**4.1.1** All user accounts must be protected by strong, secure passwords. The Council supports the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) recommendations for creating passwords using three random words (e.g. PurpleCandleRiver). This method helps create passwords which are both strong and easy to remember, while offering effective protection against common cyber threats such as brute-force attacks. This approach is endorsed in NALC guidance.

In addition to strong passwords, Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) should be enabled wherever possible. MFA requires users to provide two or more independent forms of verification—for example, a password (something you know) and a code sent to your phone (something you have). This significantly reduces the risk of unauthorised access to systems and personal data.

To further strengthen account security:

- Initial user account passwords must be generated by the IT provider.
- Default passwords provided by vendors or the IT provider must be changed immediately upon installation or setup.
- Service or System (e.g. Website) account passwords are generated and managed by the IT provider.
- The council recommends these practices as part of its commitment to robust information security and to support compliance with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

For more guidance, see the NCSC's advice on password security: [NCSC Password Guidance](#)

### **4.1.2 Access to Passwords**

- Passwords are personal and must not be shared under any circumstances.
- Only the assigned user of an account may access or use the associated password.
- In exceptional cases (e.g., incident response or employee offboarding), access to system credentials may be granted to authorised personnel from the IT provider with appropriate approvals and logging.
- Administrative credentials must be stored securely and only accessible to authorised personnel with a copy provided to the Mayor, in a sealed envelope, only to be accessed in an emergency.

#### **4.1.3 Password Storage and Management**

- Passwords must not be stored in plain text or written down in insecure locations.
- Passwords must be stored using a Council-approved, encrypted password manager (e.g., LastPass, Bitwarden, or KeePass).

#### **4.1.4 Password Change Requirements**

- Immediately change password if compromise is suspected.

#### **4.1.5 Password Access Control and Logging**

- All access to administrative or shared credentials must be logged and auditable.
- Attempts to access unauthorized passwords will be treated as a security incident.

#### **4.1.6 Responsibility**

- Users are responsible for creating and maintaining secure passwords for their accounts.

The IT security provider is responsible for:

- Managing system/service credentials.
- Enforcing password policies. Auditing and monitoring password-related security practices.

### **Monitoring**

**5.1.1** The Council reserves the right to monitor and maintain logs of computer usage and inspect any files stored on its network, servers, computers, or associated technology to ensure compliance with this policy as well as relevant legislation. Internet, email and computer usage is continually monitored as part of the Council's protection against computer viruses, ongoing maintenance of the system, and when investigating faults.

**5.1.5** The Council will monitor the use of electronic communications and use of the internet in line with the Investigatory Powers (Interception by Councils etc for Monitoring and Record-keeping Purposes) Regulations 2018.

**5.1.6** Monitoring of an employee's email and/or internet use will be conducted in accordance with an impact assessment which the Council has carried out to ensure that monitoring is necessary and proportionate. Monitoring is in the Council's legitimate interests and is to ensure that this policy is being complied with.

**5.1.7** The information obtained through monitoring may be shared internally, including with relevant councillors and IT staff if access to the data is necessary for performance of their roles. The information may also be shared with external HR or legal advisers for the purposes of seeking professional advice. Any external advisers will have appropriate data protection policies and protocols in place.

**5.1.8** The information gathered through monitoring will be retained only long enough for any breach of this policy to come to light and for any investigation to be conducted.

**5.1.9** Councillors, staff, and other authorised users have a number of rights in relation to their data, including the right to make a subject access request and the right to have data rectified or erased in some circumstances. You can find further details of these rights and how to exercise them in the council's data protection policy.

**5.1.10** Such monitoring and the retrieval of the content of any messages may be for the purposes of checking whether the use of the system is legitimate, to find lost messages or to retrieve messages lost due to computer failure, to assist in the investigation of wrongful acts, or to comply with any legal obligation.

**5.1.11** ~~The Council has software and systems in place which can [optional: "prevent inappropriate internet use and"] monitor and record all internet usage. A daily log is kept of all activity, which details the names of all websites accessed, along with the date and time of access, by individual councillors, staff, and other authorised users. Records of internet use and sites visited will normally be retained for a period of [specify duration, e.g. "six months"]~~

**5.1.12** The Council reserves the right to inspect all files stored on its computer systems in order to assure compliance with this policy. The Council also reserves the right to monitor the types of sites being accessed and the extent and frequency of use of the internet at any time, both inside and outside of working hours to ensure that the system is not being abused and to protect the council from potential damage or disrepute.

**5.1.13** Any use that the Council considers to be 'improper', either in terms of the content or the amount of time spent on this, may result in disciplinary proceedings.

**5.1.14** All computers will be periodically checked and scanned for unauthorised programmes and viruses.

## **Remote working**

**6.1.1** Increased IT security measures apply to those who work away from their normal place of work (e.g. whilst travelling, working from home, at third party premises or any other different venue), as follows:

- if logging into the Council's systems or services remotely, using computers which either do not belong to the Council or are not owned by the user, any passwords must not be saved, and the user must log out at the end of the session deleting all logs and history records within the browser used. If the configuration of the device does not clearly support these actions (for example at an internet café), Council services should not be accessed from that device;
- the location and direction of the screen should be checked to ensure confidential information is out of view. Steps should be taken to avoid messages being read by other people, including other travellers on public transport etc;
- any data printed should be collected and stored securely;
- all electronic files should be password protected and the data saved to the Council's system/services when accessible;

- ~~papers, files or computer equipment must not be left unattended at a [specify, e.g. "non council"] premises unless arrangements have been made with a responsible person at a [specify, e.g. "non council"] premises for them to be kept in a locked room or cabinet if they are to be left unattended at any time;~~
- any data should be kept safely and should only be disposed of securely;
- papers, files, data sticks/storage, flash drive or backup hard drives should not be left unattended in cars, except where it is entirely unavoidable for short periods, in which case they must be locked in the boot of the car. If staying away overnight, Council data should be taken into the accommodation, care being taken that it will not be interfered with by others or inadvertently destroyed;
- where possible the ability to remotely wipe any mobile devices that process sensitive information should be retained in the case of loss or theft;
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who work away from the office with sensitive data should be equipped with a screen privacy filter for mobile devices and should use this at all times when accessing such data away from the office.

~~**6.1.2** Those issued with a 'dongle' to enable internet access from a laptop via 3G or 4G networks whilst away from their normal workplace should note that the cost of internet access can be very high. Dongles should therefore be used for essential council purposes only, especially if abroad.~~

**6.1.3** Similarly, use of paid for Wi-Fi access, for example at airports should be carefully monitored and restricted to essential Council use.

## **Email**

**7.1.1** Council email facilities are intended to promote effective and speedy communication on work-related matters. Although we encourage the use of email, it can be risky. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users need to be careful not to introduce viruses onto Council systems and should take proper account of the security advice below.

**7.1.2** On occasion, it will be quicker to action an issue by telephone or face to face, rather than via protracted email chains. Emails should not be used as a substitute for face to face or telephone conversations. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are expected to decide which is the optimum channel of communication to complete their tasks quickly and effectively.

**7.1.3** These rules are designed to minimise the legal risks run when using email at work and to guide councillors, staff, and other authorised users as to what may and may not be done. If there is something which is not covered in the policy, councillors, staff, and other authorised users should ask their line manager rather than assuming they know the right answer.

**7.1.4** All councillors, staff, and other authorised users who need to use email as part of their role will normally be given their own Council email address and account. The Council may, at any time, withdraw email access, should it feel that this is no longer necessary for the role or that the system is being abused.

**7.1.5** [Either] Email messages sent on the Council's account are for Council use only. Personal use is not permitted.

~~[or] Email messages sent on the council's account should be for council use only. Personal communications are permitted provided they do not encroach upon working time or interrupt council business in any way. Employees and other authorised users are asked to restrict their personal use to official lunch breaks or before or after working hours, and to use their personal email accounts, rather than council addresses.~~

## **Use of the Internet**

### **8.1 Copyright**

**8.1.1** Much of what appears on the Internet is protected by copyright. Any copying without permission, including electronic copying, is illegal and therefore prohibited. The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 set out the rules. The copyright laws not only apply to documents but also to software. The infringement of the copyright of another person or organisation could lead to legal action being taken against the Council and damages being awarded, as well as disciplinary action, including dismissal, being taken against the perpetrator.

**8.1.2** It is easy to copy electronically, but this does not make it any less an offence. The Council's policy is to comply with copyright laws, and not to bend the rules in any way.

**8.1.3** Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should not assume that because a document or file is on the Internet, it can be freely copied. There is a difference between information in the 'public domain' (which is no longer confidential or secret information but is still copyright protected) and information which is not protected by copyright (such as where the author has been dead for more than 70 years).

**8.1.4** Usually, a website will contain copyright conditions; these warnings should be read before downloading or copying.

**8.1.5** Copyright and database right law can be complicated. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should check with the Clerk if unsure about anything.

### **8.2 Trademarks, links and data protection**

**8.2.1** The Council does not permit the registration of any new domain names or trademarks relating to the Council's names or products anywhere in the world, unless authorised to do so. Nor should they add links from any of the Council's web pages to any other external sites without checking first with the Clerk.

**8.2.2** Special rules apply to the processing of personal and sensitive personal data. For further guidance on this, see the Council's data protection policy, a copy of which is included in the Employee Handbook.

### 8.3 Accuracy of information

**8.3.1** One of the main benefits of the internet is the access it gives to large amounts of information, which is often more up to date than traditional sources such as libraries. Be aware that, as the internet is uncontrolled, much of the information may be less accurate than it appears.

#### Use of social media

**9.1.1** Social media includes blogs; Wikipedia and other similar sites where text can be posted; multimedia or user generated media sites (YouTube); social networking sites (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, etc.); virtual worlds (Second Life); text messaging and mobile device communications and more traditional forms of media such as TV and newspapers. Care should be taken when using social media at any time, either using council systems or at home.

**9.1.2** Personal use of social networking/media and chat sites ~~[choose either]~~ are not permitted during working hours ~~[or]~~ should be restricted to breaks during working hours, ~~or after hours with permission.~~

**9.1.3** The Council recognises the importance of councillors, staff, and other authorised users joining in and helping to shape sector conversation and enhancing its image through blogging and interaction in social media. Therefore, where it is relevant to use social networking sites as part of the individual's position, this is acceptable.

However, inappropriate comments and postings can adversely affect the reputation of the Council, even if it is not directly referenced. If comments or photographs could reasonably be interpreted as being associated with the Council, or if remarks could be regarded as abusive, humiliating, sexual harassment, discriminatory or derogatory, or could constitute bullying or harassment, the council will treat this as a serious disciplinary offence. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should be aware that parishioners or other local organisations may read councillors, staff, and other authorised users' personal weblogs, to acquire information, for example, about their work, internal Council business, and employee morale. Therefore, even if the council is not named, care should be taken with any views expressed.

**9.1.4** To protect both the Council and its interests, everyone is required to comply with the following rules about social media, whether in relation to their council role or personal social networking sites, and irrespective of whether this is during or after working hours:

- Contacts from any of the Council's databases should not be downloaded and connected with on LinkedIn or other social networking sites with electronic address book facilities, unless this has been authorised.
- Any blog which mentions the Council, its current work, councillors, employees, other users associated with the Council, partner organisations, local groups, suppliers, parishioners, should identify the author as one of its councillors or employees and state that the views expressed on the blog or website are theirs alone and do not represent the views of the Council. Even if the Council is not mentioned, care should be taken with any views expressed on social media sites and any views should clearly be stated to be the writer's own (e.g. via a disclaimer statement such as: "The

comments and other content on this site are my own and do not represent the positions or opinions of my employer/ the Council.”) Writers must not claim or give the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the Council.

- Any employee who is developing a site or writing a blog which will mention the Council must inform the Council that they are writing this and gain agreement before going ‘live’.
- The Council expects councillors, staff, and other authorised users to be respectful about the Council and its current or potential staff, including employees, councillors, clerks, and authorised users and not to engage in any name calling or any behaviour that will reflect negatively on its reputation. Any unauthorised use of copyright materials, any unfounded or derogatory statements, or any misrepresentation is not viewed favourably and could constitute gross misconduct.
- Photos or videos which include employees or other workers wearing uniforms or clothing displaying the Council’s name or logo should not be posted on social media if they could reflect negatively on the individual, their role, their colleagues, or the Council. Additionally, photos, videos, or audio recordings must not be taken on Council premises without explicit permission
- Comments posted by councillors, staff, and other authorised users on any sites should be knowledgeable, accurate and professional and should not compromise the Council in any way.
- Inappropriate conversations should not take place on any social networking sites, including forums.
- Any writing about or displaying photos or videos of internal activities which involves current councillors, staff, and other authorised persons, might be considered a breach of data protection and a breach of privacy and confidentiality. Therefore, their permission should be gained prior to uploading any such material. Details of any kind relating to any events, conversations, materials or documents that are meant to be private, confidential or internal to the council should not be posted. This may include manuals; procedures; training documents; non-public financial or operational information; personal information regarding other councillors, staff, and other authorised users anything to do with a disciplinary case, grievance, allegation of bullying/harassment or discrimination, or legal issue; any other secret, confidential, or proprietary information or information that is subject to confidentiality agreements. This does not affect statutory requirements to publish information including under the Freedom of Information Act.
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users must be aware that they are personally liable for anything that they write or present online (including on an online forum or blog, post, feed or website). Councillors should always be mindful of the Members Code of Conduct and Nolan Principles. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action for comments, content, or images that are defamatory, embarrassing, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous, or that can create a hostile work environment. They may also be sued by other organisations, and any individual or council that views their comments, content, or images as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous or creating a hostile work environment. In addition, other councillors, staff, and other authorised users can raise grievances for alleged bullying and/or harassment.
- Postings to websites or anywhere on the internet and social media of any kind, or in any press or media of any kind, should not breach copyright or other law or disclose

confidential information, defame or make derogatory comments about the Council or its councillors, staff, and other authorised users, or disclose personal data or information about any individual that could breach data protection legislation.

- Contacts by the media relating to the Council, should be referred to the Clerk.
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who use sites such as LinkedIn and Facebook must ensure that the information on their profile is accurate and up to date and must update their profile on leaving the council.
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who use X.com, LinkedIn, or other social media/networking sites for Council development purposes must ensure they provide the Council with login details, including password(s), so that these sites can be accessed and updated in their absence.
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who have left the Council must not post any inappropriate comments about the council or its councillors, staff, and other authorised users on LinkedIn, Facebook, X.com or any other social media/networking sites.
- During your employment/ involvement with the Council, you may create or obtain access to a variety of professional contacts and confidential information. This includes, but is not limited to, contacts made through professional networking platforms such as LinkedIn, where those contacts have been established or maintained in your capacity as a councillor, member of staff, or other authorised user. All such contacts will be considered council property and may be subject to disclosure upon request.

**9.1.5** Note that the council may, from time to time, monitor external postings on social media sites. Any employee who has a profile (for example on LinkedIn or Facebook) must not misrepresent themselves or their role with the council. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are also advised that social media sites are not an appropriate place to air council concerns or complaints: these should be raised with the council or formally through the grievance procedure.

**9.1.6** It is important to note that any contact details and information remain the property of the Council. In addition, councillors, staff, and other authorised users leaving the Council will be required to delete all Council-related data including any contact details from any personal device/equipment.

### **Misuse**

Misuse of IT systems and equipment is not in line with the Council's standards of conduct and will be taken seriously. Any inappropriate or unauthorised use may lead to formal action, including disciplinary proceedings or, in serious cases, dismissal.



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Telephone:  
Bideford (01237) 428938

Janine Gardner  
Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

19 March 2026

To Whom It May Concern

**Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Proposals for Devon – Consultation Response by Bideford Town Council**

At its meeting on 19 March 2026, Bideford Town Council considered and approved the following consultation response for submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government:

Bideford Town Council's response does not endorse a specific proposal. Instead, it focuses on the key issues for parish and town councils and the extent to which the proposals support their future role in local governance.

Devon's local councils precept approximately £25 million annually. All towns and parishes, including Bideford Town Council:

- care passionately about their communities
- are proud of their communities and their identities
- prioritise the needs of their communities
- know their communities inside and out
- deliver services tailored to local need
- maintain local spaces
- grant-fund local organisations
- lead on community events and cohesion
- and so on

Bideford Town Council aspires to take on more assets and services locally. Local councils, including Bideford Town Council, want to be:

- taken seriously
- seen and treated as capable and valued partners
- included in future governance arrangements

Local councils, including Bideford Town Council, aspire for their communities to:

- take on and managing more assets locally for efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability
- engaging even more closely with their communities in ways which large unitary authorities cannot
- deliver neglected services which their communities need
- initiate and collaborate with measures to support health and well-being, safer communities and sustainability
- develop partnerships to retain and reinforce town centres

Parish and town councils are expected to play a larger role in community empowerment, yet they do not form part of the formal consideration by central government or upper tier authorities. Therefore, the town and parish sector must be included in the discussions on arrangements for future engagement, cooperation and collaboration with central government and any proposed unitary. Local government reorganisation is an opportunity to deliver effective localism, with Devon's communities determining the services they need and a locally accountable and accessible body to deliver them.

Bideford Town Council urges the government to:

- create fair arrangements for asset and service transfers
- ensure parish and town councils have a voice in the development of neighbourhood governance structures
- reflect concerns about boundary changes and local identity in any future legislation
- recognise the importance of strong partnership working with future unitary authorities

Bideford Town Council prefer to see proposals which set out clearly the way in which towns and parishes will not only be included in discussions but also be seen as a crucial conduit for conveying community messages to unitary and public sector delivery structures on services provision and design and to be actively used to convey messages back to the community. This implies a need for appropriate mechanisms to be built into any network or partnership proposals. For example, there could be clear consulta on and involvement methods resourced with simple accessible structures, in which the local council sector is seen as the natural partner in innovation, initiation and monitoring of services to communities and be engaged with the unitary as a key partner in achieving them.

Yours faithfully,



Janine Gardner  
Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

*(This response will be submitted electronically to [LGRconsultationresponse@communities.gov.uk](mailto:LGRconsultationresponse@communities.gov.uk)).*

From: [Name] <email address>  
Sent: Monday, March 9, 2026 10:32 AM  
To: Information <info@bideford-tc.gov.uk>  
Subject: Marland School Governors

Good Morning,

I am Chair of Governors at Marland School, at the moment our Board of Governors is somewhat depleted with two vacancies (out of nine). One is for a County Council nominated governor, this tends to be just a formality. Usual practice is that we find someone and they agree.

We now have two Schools in Bideford so it makes sense to ask if there are any Bideford Town Councillors who would be willing to fill this role. We already have governors who are local to our residential site at Peters Marland and secondary school at Roundswell. [...]

Marland School is a maintained Special School designated for pupils with social, emotional, mental health issues.

Thank you for your attention.

[Name]

[name]@marland.devon.sch.uk [mobile telephone number]