



BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

Name of Committee: Staffing, Finance and General Purposes Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 30 April 2026

Meeting Time: 6:30pm

Venue: Greenhouse, Riverbank House, Bideford EX39 2QG

Present:

North Ward

Councillor D Bushby (in the Chair)

Councillor K Hind

South Ward

Councillor S Inch

Councillor P Lawrence

East Ward

Councillor J Gubb

Councillor L Hellyer

Councillor J McKenzie

Also Present:

J Gardner, Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

117. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillor Cllr James Hellyer (personal).

118. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

No declarations of interest or requests for dispensations were received.

119. Public Participation

No members of the public attended the meeting.

120. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was proposed by Councillor S Inch, seconded by Councillor K Hind and **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2026 as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 7, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

121. Items Brought Forward by the Chair

None.

122. Standing Orders

The Committee considered the national model Standing Orders published by the National Association of Local Councils.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and **resolved** to recommend to the full Council to adopt up-to-date Standing Orders as published by the National Association of Local Councils.

(Vote – For: 7, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

123. Privacy Policy

The Committee considered a revised Privacy Policy for publication on the Council's website.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor S Inch and **resolved** to recommend to the full Council to adopt the revised Privacy Policy.

(Vote – For: 7, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

124. Finance

a) List of Payments

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor D Bushby and **resolved** to approve the payments listed.

(Vote – For: 7, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

b) Practitioners' Guide 2026-27

The Committee noted the Practitioners' Guide 2026-27 statutory guidance on governance and accountability for smaller authorities in England.

c) Investment Strategy

The Committee considered the Council's new investment strategy.

The Committee recognised that the Council's general reserve was currently towards the lower end of the spectrum recommended in the Practitioners' Guide.

(Councillor K Hind left the meeting at 6:44pm.)

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby seconded by Councillor J McKenzie and **resolved** to recommend to the full Council to not invest any of the Council's funds and to keep the general reserve at instant access.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

d) Banking Arrangements

The Committee considered a report regarding the Council's banking arrangements.

The Committee noted that in order to become compliant with the Council's Financial Regulations, the Council's bank required the capability of separating the duties of submission of payments and their authorisation, and also required the retention of evidence showing which councillors approved the payment online, and that Council officers were currently liaising with the Council's bank to seek confirmation whether the bank could facilitate those requirements.

It was proposed by Cllr P Lawrence, seconded by Cllr D Bushby and **resolved** to obtain hard copy signatures by the Council's bank signatories authorising payments until access to the Council's online banking for the bank signatories and the above requirements were implemented.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

125. Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013

The Committee considered a report regarding the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor J Gubb and **resolved** to accept the percentage increase applied to National Joint Council (NJC) allowances.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

126. Health and Safety

a) Health and Safety Policy

The Committee considered the Council's health and safety policy.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor D Bushby and **resolved** to recommend to the full Council to adopt the health and safety policy.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

b) Fire Safety Policy

The Committee considered the Council's fire safety policy.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor L Hellyer and **resolved** to recommend to the full Council to adopt the fire safety policy.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

c) Health and Safety for Employees

The Committee considered a report regarding the health and safety of the Council's employees, including a lone working procedure.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor D Bushby and **resolved** to recommend to the full Council to adopt the lone worker procedure and to procure two LoneAlert SOS Fobs at a purchase cost of £100.00 plus VAT per device plus a three-year monitoring contract at £136.44 plus VAT per user per annum.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

127. Customer Services Policy including Freedom of Information Procedure

The Committee considered the Council's customer services policy which included a Freedom of Information procedure.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor S Inch and **resolved** to recommend to the full Council to adopt the customer services policy including the Freedom of Information procedure.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstention: 0)

128. Christmas Lights Tender Document

The Committee considered the invitation to tender document for the Christmas Lights for publication on the Government's Find a Tender platform.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and **resolved** to approve the invitation to tender document for the Christmas Lights for publication on the Government's Find a Tender platform in accordance with the tender timetables contained in the invitation to tender document.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

129. Town Centre Free Parking Days

The Committee considered a report recommending free parking days in the town centre.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence seconded by Councillor J Gubb and **resolved** to agree to the allocation of free parking days in the town centre on 29 November 2026 and 12 December 2026.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstention: 0)

130. Appraisal Arrangements for the Town Clerk

The Committee considered a report recommending appraisal arrangements for the Town Clerk.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and **resolved** that the annual appraisal of the Clerk be carried out by the Mayor, the previous year's Mayor as well as the Chair of the Staffing, Finance & General Purposes Committee.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

131. Purchase of a Gift for the 50th Anniversary of the Twinning Association

The Committee considered the purchase of a gift for the 50th Anniversary of the Twinning Association and suggested that the Mayor would liaise with Council staff.

132. Manor Court Presentments

The Committee considered the presentments made to the Manor Court on 14 March 2026, and suggested the following actions:

Presentment 1: Liaise with Torridge District Council's waste and recycling and environmental health service and request more frequent waste collections.

Presentment 2: Implement in-house.

Presentment 3: Cllr J Gubb confirmed at the meeting that the Bridge Trust was the landowner of Four Acres and that she would facilitate contact with the landowner. The Committee agreed that a site visit be held between the landowner and the Council and that the latter produce a proposal for implementation or otherwise.

Presentment 4: The Committee suggested the removal of the remainders of the former bench at Park Lane and to install a powder-coated steel bench to the same specification as the benches installed at Chudleigh Fort, adjacent to the Burton and outside the Riverbank House public entrance.

Presentment 5: Implement in-house.

133. Maintenance Operatives

The Committee received an update on the tasks undertaken by the Maintenance Operatives and expressed its gratitude for the excellent work undertaken.

Cllr J Gubb declared that a disclosable pecuniary interest by virtue of being the spouse of the Seasonal Worker under consideration under the following agenda item.

Cllr J Gubb left the meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor L Hellyer and **resolved** to approve the employment of the Seasonal Worker between 1 May 2026 and 30 September 2026 to assist with the additional summer workload.

(Vote – For: 4, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

Cllr J Gubb re-joined the meeting.

Part II (Closed Session)

134. Exclusion of the Press and Public

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor S Inch and **resolved** 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.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstention: 0)

135. Citizens Award

The Committee considered two nominations received for the Citizens Award.

Councillor P Lawrence nominated a third candidate for the Citizens Award at the meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor J Gubb and **resolved** to award a citizens award to Lucy Lowe for her contribution to public life in Bideford.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

Councillor D Bushby declared a personal interest by virtue of being related to the following nominee.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor S Inch and **resolved** to award a citizens award to Alan Glover.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

It was further proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor L Hellyer and **resolved** to not award the third nomination on the basis of insufficient information.

The Chairman invited councillors to consider any potential candidates for a young person's award.

136. Mayor and Mayoress Day Chain

The Committee considered a report regarding the Mayor and Mayoress day chain.

The Council's insurer had confirmed that securing chains within private homes and returning them to a secure Council facility at the earliest opportunity following a civic function would be acceptable to the insurer under the Council's current insurance policy. The insurer had also confirmed that there was no specific requirement within the policy to engage a Beadle; however they would expect that the Council would be risk assessing and making informed decisions to ensure the assets are as safe as possible.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and **resolved** to:

a) agree that chains could be secured within private homes and returned to a secure Council facility at the earliest opportunity following a civic function in accordance with the advice received from the Council’s insurer.

b) investigate further options for the purchase of chains for the Mayor’s consort.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

137. Employment Matters

a) Employment Handbook

The Committee noted the Council’s employment handbook and commended it for distribution among all Council employees.

b) Long Bridge Lights Works

The Committee considered a report regarding night shift remuneration during the Long Bridge lights works.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor L Hellyer and **resolved** to

a) note the legal requirements in relation to the employment of night workers, most notably the working hours restrictions and the requirement to offer a free health assessment.

b) agree to pay the maintenance team double time during the four night shifts from 11 until 15 May 2026 at a combined increase in salary costs of £3,157.56 plus employer oncosts.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

c) Staffing Matter

The Committee received an update on a staffing matter.

The business of the meeting having been concluded the Chair thanked the councillors for their attendance at the meeting, which concluded at 8:05pm.

Signature of Chair:

Date:

Signature of Town Mayor:

Date:

BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Accounts for approval at the SF&GP Meeting - 30 April 2026

	Invoice Date		Allocation	VAT	NET	TOTAL	Payment	Governance
1	02/03/2026	EDF	Xmas Lights - 74a	£0.84	16.80	17.64	17/03/2026	TC
2	02/03/2026	EDF	Bridge Lights	£1.01	20.28	21.29	17/03/2026	TC
3	04/03/2026	E-On Next Energy Limited	Town Ranger Depot Elec.	£10.71	214.20	224.91	19/03/2026	TC
4	09/03/2026	EDF	Xmas Lights - 14a	£1.83	36.52	38.35	24/03/2026	TC
5	24/03/2026	Staff salaries inc Pension HMRC	Salary	£0.00	37872.04	37872.04	24/03/2026	TC
6	01/03/2026	Jonathon Rhind Architects Ltd.	Architect's Fees	£5,562.28	27811.40	33373.68	24/01/2026	Project
7	23/03/2026	Bideford Baptist Church	Hall / Room Hire - Manor Court	£0.00	100.00	100.00	24/03/2026	TC
8	20/03/2024	Lineal	4 x Online Licenses	£2.61	13.04	15.65	24/03/2026	TC
9	14/03/2026	Royal Hotel	Manor Court Buffet	£465.08	2325.42	2790.50	24/03/2026	TC
10	13/03/2026	Flowers by Bella	Manor Court Flowers	£0.00	120.00	120.00	24/03/2026	TC
11	19/03/2026	Royal Mail Group LTD	Redirection of Mail	£0.00	649.00	649.00	24/03/2026	TC
12	25/03/2026	Marine Scene Ltd	3 white boat fender	£14.49	72.36	86.85	25/03/2026	TC
13	26/03/2026	Black Country Rope and Lifting Ltd	Mooring Rope x 2	£7.16	35.84	43.00	26/03/2026	TC
14	26/03/2026	Timpson Ltd	Maintenance Item	£10.00	50.00	60.00	26/03/2026	TC
15	26/03/2026	Value House Stores	Maintenance Item	£2.60	13.00	15.60	26/03/2026	TC
16	28/02/2026	Clarity Copiers	Copier Charges	£3.40	17.02	20.42	26/03/2026	TC
17	12/02/2026	Lloyds	Service Charges	£0.00	8.50	8.50	27/03/2026	TC
18	17/03/2026	Focus Group	TR Depot / Townhall Broadband	£22.04	110.22	132.26	31/03/2026	TC
19	27/03/2026	Focus Group	Town Hall Broadband	-£12.17	-60.83	-73.00	31/03/2026	TC
20	12/02/2026	P R Vachon	Myrl Function x 3 tkts (2 x Myrl Alice)	£0.00	114.00	114.00	31/03/2026	TC
21	31/03/2026	Lineal	Licenses / Remote labour	£50.42	252.10	302.52	31/03/2026	TC
22	25/03/2026	Devon Association of Local Councils	Clerk's Essentials Webinar	£6.00	30.00	36.00	31/03/2026	TC
23	20/03/2026	Bowdens Cleaning Services Limited	Town Hall	£3.20	16.00	19.20	31/03/2026	TC
24	24/03/2026	Kersten (UK) Ltd	New model weed brush	£579.00	2895.00	3474.00	31/03/2026	TC
				£6,730.50	£72,731.91	£79,462.41		
Bank Balances at 31/3/2026 - Current				£	6,921.99			
Bank Balances at 31/3/2026 - Deposit				£	16,303.72			
Bank Balances at 31/3/2026 - Reserves Account				£	260,000.00			

BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Accounts for approval at the SF&GP Meeting - 30 April 2026

Financial Year 2026/2027									
Invoice Date	Allocation	VAT	NET	TOTAL	Payment	Governance			
1 31/12/25	J Rhind Architects	Market Project	£1,249.37	£6,246.85	£7,496.22	23/04/2026	Project		
2 31/03/26	Allstar	Fuel	£68.27	£341.36	£409.63	23/04/2026	TC		
3 2/03/2026	Clarity Copiers	Copier Charges	£6.94	£34.72	£41.66	DD	TC		
4 31/03/26	MCMS	Market Project	£597.07	£2,985.33	£3,582.40	23/04/2026	Project		
5 31/03/26	Wollens	Employment works	£245.00	£1,225.00	£1,470.00	23/04/2026	TC		
6 18/03/26	Exmoor Zoo	Roadshow - 6 Jun 26	£0.00	£265.00	£265.00	23/04/2026	TC		
7 1/04/26	DALC	NALC / DALC - Affiliation Fee / Service Charge	£190.74	£2,174.00	£2,364.74	23/04/2026	TC		
8 2/04/26	E.On Next	Depot - Electricity	£8.69	£173.81	£182.50	DD	TC		
9 08/04/26	Peninsula Business Services Limited	HR/H&S/EAP	£65.15	£344.97	£410.12	23/04/2026	TC		
10 08/04/26	DS Electrical	Remove supplies for tree works	£58.00	£290.00	£348.00	23/04/2026	TC		
11 10/04/26	DCC Highways	Highways Licence Long Bridge	£0.00	£383.00	£383.00	10/04/2026	TC		
12 13/04/26	Berrys	Payroll / P60	£108.00	£540.00	£648.00	23/04/2026	TC		
13 13/04/26	Skips & Stones	Skip Hire	£83.00	£415.00	£498.00	23/04/2026	TC		
14 15/04/26	Navantia UK	Design & Build working persons basket	£2,371.00	£11,855.00	£14,226.00	27/04/2026	TC		
15 16/04/26	Tudor Environmental	Maintenance Items	£15.95	£79.76	£95.71	23/04/2026	TC		
16 20/04/26	Focus Group SW Comms Group Ltd	Depot - Broadband	£9.88	£49.39	£59.27	23/04/2026	TC		
17 26/04/20	Mimick Signs	Road closure signs x 4	£74.56	£372.80	£447.36	23/04/2026	TC		
18 01/04/26	Scribe	Set up fees	£302.00	£1,510.00	£1,812.00	23/04/2026	TC		
19 01/04/26	Scribe	Subscription	£34.80	£174.00	£208.80	23/04/2026	TC		
20 23/04/26	Jewson	Maintenance Items	£7.13	£35.64	£42.77	23/04/2026	TC		
21 23/04/26	RGB	Maintenance Items	£23.04	£115.19	£138.23	23/04/2026	TC		
22 23/04/26	Tamar	Maintenance Items	£18.63	£93.21	£111.84	23/04/2026	TC		
23 2/04/26	EDF	Decorative Lighting Bideford Quay	£11.07	£221.33	£232.40	23/04/2026	TC		
24 25/3/26	Bridge Trust	Handy Cross	£0.00	£250.00	£250.00	23/04/2026	TC		
25 13/04/26	Bideford Appliance Store	Fridge	£26.50	£132.50	£159.00	13/04/2026	TC		
26 19/3/26	G J Heaman	Vehicle / Ground Maintenance Items	£94.96	£474.80	£569.76	23/04/2026	TC		
27 1/04/26	EDF	Christmas Lights - 74A	£0.93	£18.60	£19.53	DD	TC		
28 1/04/26	EDF	Bridge Floodlighting	£1.10	£21.91	£23.01	DD	TC		
29 17/04/26	Motor Parts Direct	Carlube / grease	£2.42	£12.10	£14.52	17/04/2026			
30 20/04/26	Motor Parts Direct	Bulb	£0.30	£1.49	£1.79	20/04/2026			
31 14/04/26	Taylor's Tool and Fittings	Maintenance Items	£3.10	£15.51	£18.61	14/04/2026	TC		
32 20/04/26	DCC Highways	Hanging Baskets / Planters Licence	£0.00	£228.00	£228.00	20/04/2026	TC		
33 23/04/26	Bideford Baptist Church	Hire of Hall - Annual Parish Meeting		£40.00	£40.00	23/04/2026	TC		
34 23/04/26	Mayoral Mileage	2 x Civic Functions - Myr's allee	£0.00	£54.00	£54.00	23/04/2026	TC		
35 24/04/26	Staff/ HMRC / DCC	Salary / National Insurance / Pensions		£31,158.00	£31,158.00	24/04/2026	TC		
36 5/5/26	Bulk Pay	Grant Payments	£0.00	£42,125.00	£42,125.00		TC		
37 5/5/26	CTA Centre	2 x Chapter 8 "Supervisor Level"	£166.45	£832.25	£998.70		TC		
			£5,844.05	£105,289.52	£111,133.57				
Bank Balances at 23/4/2026 - Current			£ 52,849.60						
Bank Balances at 23/4/2026 - Deposit			£ 29,477.98						
Bank Balances at 23/4/2026 - Reserves Account			£ 190,000.00						