



BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held in the Town Hall, Bideford on

Thursday 18 December 2025 at 6.30 pm

- PRESENT:**
- | | |
|-------------|--|
| North Ward: | Councillor D Bushby
Councillor J Gordon
Councillor K Hind
Councillor D McGeough
Councillor Mrs S Smith |
| South Ward: | Councillor S Inch
Councillor P Lawrence (Chairman) |
| West Ward: | Councillor T Inch |
| East Ward: | Councillor Mrs J Gubb
Councillor J Hellyer
Councillor Mrs L Hellyer
Councillor J A McKenzie |
- IN ATTENDANCE:**
- Mr R D Coombes (Deputy Town Clerk)
Mrs J Gardner (Town Clerk, Cranbrook Town Council)
Reverend S O'Rourke (Mayor's Chaplin)

94. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors C Hawkins, West Ward, personal and Mrs R Clarke, South Ward, personal.

Councillors M Taylor, West Ward and J Craigie were absent but did not proffer apologies nor reasons for absence.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

96. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

There was no public participation.

97. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 November 2025 were approved and adopted.

(Vote – For: 12, Against: 0)

98. **RESCHEDULING OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

The Chairman advised Members that the Meeting to be held on 5 February 2026 had to be brought forward to 22 January 2026 to allow for the Council to agree the Budget and submit the Precept application to TDC, within the time limit of 23 January 2026.

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded and

RESOLVED: That the Town Council Meeting scheduled for 5 February 2026 be brought forward to 22 January 2026.

(Vote – For: 11, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

99. **ACCOUNTS**

To approve the payments listed.

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded and

RESOLVED: That the List of Payments be approved.

(Vote – For: 12, Against: 0)

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

There were no statements.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 November 2025 were approved and adopted.

(Vote – For: 12, Against: 0)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 October 2025 were approved and adopted.

(Vote – For: 12, Against: 0)

STAFFING, FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 December 2025 were approved and adopted.

(Vote – For: 11, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

101. **MARKET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 December 2025 were approved and adopted.

(Vote – For: 12, Against: 0)

102. **TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL – UPDATE**

Councillor Bushby advised:

- a. Town Hall. Alternative designs are being prepared not to include solar panels and air source heat pumps in the light of recent planning application refusal.

Temporary (Portakabin) accommodation for the Town Council office staff is now in place within the Riverbank House curtilage.

It is anticipated that the Town Hall will return to full operational use, including the new gymnasium and wellness centre facility and “workspace,” to be managed by “Active Torridge,” in early 2027...

- b. Local Government Revue. All Devon submission were made in November.
- c. Estuary Strategy delivery. The “wrecks” are being mapped in the estuary; there are discussions with Crown Estate on how they might be cleared.
- d. SS Freshspring. TDC has agreed two years of funding for the Charity to cover the mooring costs of the vessel (approximately £1,900.00 annually). The hope is that this will help to develop it’s good work and fund raising potential.
- e. Fountains on the Quay. TDC has now funded this project, through the Real England Prosperity Fund, and the tender has been “let.” The fountains will be operational again in the New Year.
- f. Community Regeneration Partnership. Most projects are progressing satisfactorily. There has been a need to engage and seek assurances for those projects that are causing concern with regard to deliverability.
- g. Planning. Central Government has published new guidance on plan making allowing for progress to be made on the new Local Plan for North Devon and Torridge in 2026.
- h. Housing and Temporary Accommodation. Demand for temporary accommodation continues to fall partly attributable to the deliverance of “good level” affordable accommodation and the use of TDC temporary accommodation at Sully House; a pathway to a private sector rental.
- TDC are planning for the delivery of one of it’s own sites for future social housing.
- i. Operational Service Centre. The Centre will be fully operational from mid-January 2026.
- j. Festive break. TDC offices will be closed lunchtime 24 December 2025 until Monday, 5 January 2026.

103. **BRIDGE TRUST**

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

Councillor Hind added that the Trustees have refined the Business Grant, the criteria will differ, there will be a follow up on each grant paid and the larger grants will need to be seen to benefit the Community.

104. **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: 12, Against: 0)

105. **MARKET HALL PROJECT UPDATE**

Councillor Hind appraised members on meetings, engagement of officers, liaison with the Architects and TDC, funding, surveys and completion date timelines.

106. **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Chairman introduced Member to Mrs Janine Gardner who would take up the role of Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer from 11 March 2026.

He confirmed, also that Mrs Claire Heller would take up the position of Administrative Officer in January 2026.

The business of the meeting having been concluded the Mayor thanked the members for their attendance at the meeting, which concluded at 7.07 pm, and support throughout his tenure. He wished everybody a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Signature of Town Mayor:

Date:

BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Town Council Meeting - 11 November 2025

PV (All)
Date Invoice (All)

Row	Date Entered	Description	Extended Description	Net	VAT	Gross
1	17/10/2025	BJ's Value House	Plant Lines	9.97	2.00	11.97
2	23/10/2025	Amazon EU SarL	Metalized Polyester Film Tape	34.71	6.96	41.67
3	27/10/2025	BJ's Value House	Plant Lines	3.32	0.67	3.99
4			Brush	7.49	1.50	8.99
5		Garlands	Stationery	4.00	0.00	4.00
6		Motor Parts Direct	Lucas 12v bulb	2.44	0.49	2.93
7	28/10/2025	Clarity Copiers	Copier Charges	51.14	10.23	61.37
8		EDF	Bridge Lights	20.97	1.05	22.02
9			Xmas Lights - 74a	18.00	0.90	18.90
10			Xmas Lights - 14a	25.78	1.29	27.07
11		In-Stitches	PPE	54.00	10.80	64.80
12		James Lee Electrical	TR Depot install 6 x car park bollard lights	1,537.19	307.44	1,844.63
13		Peter Lawrence	Jigsaw Event Expenses	156.87	0.00	156.87
14		PWLB	Loan Repayment	5,813.23	0.00	5,813.23
15		E-On Next Energy Limited	Town Ranger Depot Elec.	59.53	2.98	62.51
16		Richard Coombes	Laptop Expenses	25.30	0.00	25.30
17		Tudor Enviornmenal	Herbicides	99.00	19.80	118.80
18		National Association of Local Councils	Advertisement	300.00	60.00	360.00
19		Wollen Michelmore LLP Clients Account	Legal Fees	1,417.50	283.50	1,701.00
20		Encompass Security Solutions	Sy system call out reset door code change	120.00	24.00	144.00
21		The Digital Times (SW) Limited	Advertisement	250.00	0.00	250.00
22	29/10/2025	Torbay Media Ltd	2 x Advertisement - Gazette	400.00	80.00	480.00
23		Torridge District Council	T Hall Offices Service Charge	6.33	1.27	7.60
24		Lloyds	Service Charges	16.09	0.00	16.09
25		Parish and Town Auditing Services	Auditing Services	325.00	0.00	325.00
26		CRH Sustainability Group Ltd	Plant Trailor second half payment	2,750.00	550.00	3,300.00
27		The Greenhouse People Ltd	Robinsons Greenhouse	577.23	115.44	692.67
28	30/10/2025	Focus Group	TR Depot / Townhall Broadband	87.72	17.55	105.27
29	31/10/2025	Torridge District Council	T Hall Offices rent	320.66	64.13	384.79
30			T Hall Offices Service Charge	227.26	45.45	272.71
31		Lineal	Laptop Docking 365 Bitlocker issue	887.00	177.40	1,064.40
32		Grand Total		15,607.73	1,784.85	17,392.58

Bank Balances at	06/11/2025	- Current Account	£ 10,353.05
Bank Balances at	06/11/2025	- Deposit Account	£ 260,000.00
Bank Balances at	06/11/2025	- 95 Day Account	£ 332,180.18