



BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

Meeting: Town Council

Meeting Date: Thursday, 7 May 2026

Meeting Time: 6:30pm

Venue: Greenhouse, Riverbank House, Bideford EX39 2QG

Present:

North Ward

Councillor D Bushby
Councillor K Hind
Councillor J Gordon
Councillor D McGeough
Councillor S Smith

South Ward

Councillor R Clarke
Councillor S Inch
Councillor P Lawrence (Town Mayor)

West Ward

Councillor C Hawkins
Councillor M Taylor

East Ward

Councillor J Craigie
Councillor J Gubb
Councillor J McKenzie

Also Present:

J Gardner, Town Clerk
R D Coombes, Deputy Town Clerk
1 x Member of the Public

1. Election of a Town Mayor

It was proposed by Councillor R Clarke, seconded by Councillor S Smith to elect Councillor P Lawrence as Town Mayor for the 2026-27 civic year. (Vote – For: 10, Against: 0, Abstentions: 3)

It was proposed by Councillor J Craigie, seconded by Councillor C Hawkins to elect Councillor D McGeough as Town Mayor for the 2026-27 civic year.

Resolved: that Councillor P Lawrence be appointed Town Mayor for the Civic Year 2026-27.

2. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Town Mayor's Declaration of Acceptance of Office would be made on Thursday, 21 May 2026.

3. Election of a Deputy Town Mayor

It was proposed by Councillor S Smith, seconded by Councillor J Gordon to elect Councillor K Hind as Deputy Town Mayor for the 2026-27 civic year (Vote – For: 7, Against: 0, Abstentions: 6).

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor S Inch to elect Councillor J Gubb as Deputy Town Mayor for the 2026-27 civic year (Vote – For: 6, Against: 0, Abstentions: 7).

Resolved: that Councillor K Hind be appointed Town Mayor for the Civic Year 2026-27.

4. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors J and L Hellyer (personal), and T Inch (personal).

5. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

No declarations of interest or requests for dispensations were received.

6. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

7. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded by Councillor S Inch and **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2026 as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 12, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

8. Communications

The Chairman advised that he had been approached to organise an Armed Forces Event given the District Council have restricted their commemoration to Riverbank House and no longer organised the event in Victoria Park.

He suggested that the Service Cadets could be invited, on what would be for them a usual training evening (22 June), to Parade to the Flagpole, where a brief ceremony including the flag raising, commemorative words and Piper's Lament could be conducted. He intimated early evening and modest timing.

Councillors indicated that they were not opposed to the idea.

9. Code of Conduct

The Council considered the Model Councillor Code of Conduct published by the Local Government Association (LGA) as recommended by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and **resolved** to adopt the attached Model Councillor Code of Conduct published by the Local Government Association (LGA) as recommended by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

(Vote – For: 13, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

10. Standing Orders

The Council noted that its Staffing, Finance and General Purposes Committee had recommended to the Council to adopt the national model Standing Orders at its previous meeting on 30 April 2026.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor K Hind and **resolved** to adopt the national model Standing Orders.

(Vote – For: 13, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

11. Finance

a. Financial Regulations

The Council noted that it had reviewed and adopted the national model Financial Regulations at its last meeting on 19 March 2026.

b. Schedule of Regular Payments

The Council's Financial Regulation 6.6 required the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) for each financial year to draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the Council or a duly delegated committee may authorise in advance for the year.

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

(Vote – For: 13, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

c. Bank Signatories

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and **resolved** to confirm and appoint bank signatories with “View and Submit” level of access (Janine Gardner and Richard Coombes) and “View and Authorise” level of access: Councillors Bushby, Lawrence and McKenzie.

(Vote – For: 13, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

d. List of Payments

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor D Bushby and **resolved** to approved the list of payments.

(Vote – For: 13, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

e. Verification of Bank Statements and Bank Reconciliations

The Council’s Financial Regulation 2.6. stipulated that “At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a councillor other than the Chair or a bank signatory shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The councillor shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the Council’s Staffing, Finance and General Purposes Committee.”

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor J McKenzie and **resolved** to appoint Councillor Hind as the councillor who verifies and signs the Council’s bank statements and bank reconciliations.

(Vote – For: 12, Against: 0, Abstentions: 1)

f. Deeds in the Custody of the Council

Members noted that its members had had the opportunity to inspect the deeds in the custody of the Council by prior appointment.

12. Publication Scheme

The Council considered its publication scheme.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor S Smith and **resolved** to approve the publication scheme for publishing on the Council’s website.

(Vote – For: 12, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

13. Governance Structure

Members considered a report and proposal regarding its governance structure.

Discussion included the flexibility of Working Groups in practise providing for fluid participants / specialists reporting back to the appropriate Committee, in the case of the Events Working Group the Resources Committee. Greater councillor involvement in wider Council operations / interests and preparation for future changes – potential for management of new / reclaimed assets within the Amenities area of responsibility.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor J Gordon and **resolved** to incorporate the new Governance / Committee structure with a six month review.

(Vote – For: 9, Against: 4, Abstentions: 0)

14. Committee Memberships

(Councillor McGeough left the meeting.)

Members appointed councillors to the stated committees:

Amenities Committee:

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

Planning Committee:

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

Resources Committee:

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

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

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

15. Appointment to Outside Bodies

The Council appointed the following:

Bideford & District Community Archive Council: Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and T Inch.

Bideford Bridge Trust: Town Mayor, Bushby (Dec 25), Hind (Dec 25) and T Inch (Oct 26).

Bideford Twinning Association: Town Mayor and T Inch.

Bideford Regeneration Board: Town Mayor and Town Clerk.

Bideford Regatta Committee: Town Mayor, Craigie, L Hellyer and T Inch.

Bideford Town Band Management Committee: S Inch.

Citizens Advice Bureau: Craigie.

DALC County Committee: Town Clerk.

DALC Larger Councils Sub-Committee: Town Clerk.

Pollyfield Community Association: Gubb.
Bideford Bay Family Hub: Craigie.
Taw/Torridge Estuary Forum: Deputy Mayor and Smith.
Harbour Users Group: Hind.
UNESCO Biosphere Champion: Craigie.
Fire Liaison: L Hellyer.
Police Liaison: L Hellyer.
One Atlantic: Smith.
West Croft School Governors Board: Bushby.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor J Gubb and **resolved** to appoint councillors as stated.

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

16. Terms of Reference and Review of Delegation Arrangements

It was agreed to review the terms of reference at the respective committee meetings.

17. Review of Risk Management Arrangements

Members noted that it had reviewed and approved its risk management strategy and risk register at its meeting on 19 March 2026.

Members further noted that the Council’s Staffing, Finance and General Purposes Committee had recommended the Council’s Health and Safety Policy and Fire Safety Policy for approval at its meeting on 30 April 2026.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor J McKenzie and **resolved** to adopt the Council’s:

Health and Safety Policy
Fire Safety Policy
Lone Worker Procedure

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

It was further proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and **resolved** to purchase three Lone Alert 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: 12, Against: 0, Abstentions: 0)

18. Meetings Calendar

Members considered the calendar of meetings and functions for the civic year 2026-27.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor J McKenzie and **resolved** to approve the calendar of meetings and functions for the civic year 2026-27.

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

19. Minutes

a. Planning Committee on 1 April 2026

It was proposed by Councillor S Inch, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee on 1 April 2026.

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

b. Planning Committee on 22 April 2026

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor S Inch and resolved to adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee on 22 April 2026.

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

c. Market Management Committee on 23 April 2026

It was proposed by Councillor J McKenzie, seconded by Councillor J Gubb and **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the Market Management Committee on 23 April 2026.

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

d. Tourism Committee on 28 April 2026

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor S Inch and **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the Tourism Committee on 28 April 2026.

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

e. Staffing, Finance & General Purposes Committee on 30 April 2026

The Clerk advised the Council that by adopting the minutes of the Staffing, Finance & General Purposes Committee on 30 April 2026, the Council approves the Privacy Policy for publication on the Council's website, agrees to the Council's investment strategy, the councillors' allowances as well as the customer services policy including the Freedom of Information procedure.

It was proposed by Councillor D Bushby, seconded by Councillor P Lawrence and **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the Staffing, Finance & General Purposes Committee on 30 April 2026.

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

20. Review of the Council's and Staff Subscriptions to Other Bodies

Members noted the subscriptions to:

Ancient & Honourable Guild of Town Criers
Devon and National Associations of Local Councils
Information Commissioner's Office
National Allotment Society
National Association of British Markets (NABMA)
South West Councils

and that the Clerk was a member of the Society of Local Council Clerks.

It was proposed by Councillor P Lawrence, seconded by Councillor J McKenzie and **resolved** to confirm

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

21. Torridge District Council

There was no report.

22. Bridge Trust

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

Part II (Closed Session)

23. Exclusion of the Press and Public

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

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

24. Christmas Lights Switch-On Event

The Council considered a report regarding the delivery of its Christmas Lights Switch-On event on Sunday, 29 November 2026 which included quotes by seven event management companies to deliver the event on behalf of the Town Council.

The Council noted that its Staffing, Finance and General Purposes Committee had previously resolved on 26 February 2026 to direct the Christmas light funding of £12,000 to the Tourism Committee to facilitate this event (ref. minute 107).

It was proposed by Councillor J McKenzie, seconded by Councillor D Bushby and **resolved** to appoint Miss Ivy Events to deliver the Town Council's Christmas Lights switch-on event in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations at a cost of £12,000.

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

25. Staffing Update

The Council received an update on a staffing matter.

There is a confidential minute associated with this item.

The business of the meeting having been concluded the Mayor thanked the councillors for their attendance at the meeting, which concluded at 7:58pm.

Signature of Town Mayor:

Date:

Accounts for approval at the Annual Town Council Meeting - 7 May 2026

	Invoice Date		Allocation	VAT	NET	TOTAL
1	24/04/2026	Bideford Twinning	2 x Myr ferry tks (Myr's Allce)	£0.00	£100.00	£100.00
2	26/04/2026	Farnon's Welding Services	Welding - Planters	£0.00	£80.00	£80.00
3	26/03/2026	27/7 Drain Solution	CCTV drain survey - Pannier Market refurbishment	£1,120.00	£5,600.00	£6,720.00
4	26/04/2026	White Sails Gallery	Llandivisiau Twinning Gift - replica bronze otter	£0.00	£95.00	£95.00
5	23/04/2026	Clarity	OPC Drum / Charger Kit	£25.40	£127.00	£152.40
6	29/04/2026	Society of Local Council Clerks	Clerk membership 2026-27	£0.00	£530.00	£530.00
7	01/05/2026	Lineal	Microsoft Licenses / Sentinel	£36.82	£184.10	£220.92
8	22/04/2026	Kirkham Tyres	Puncture Repair	£3.00	£15.00	£18.00
9	28/04/2026	BJ's Value House	Maintenance Items	£1.00	£4.99	£5.99
10	29/04/2026	BJ's Value House	Maintenance Items	£2.33	£11.66	£13.99
11	29/04/2026	Fireprotonl	Watering Equipment	£55.80	£278.98	£334.78
12	30/04/2026	Myles Clough Management Services Limited	Pannier Market refurbishment project management	£441.25	£2,206.25	£2,647.50
13	29/04/2026	Woollens	Legal costs	£234.50	£1,172.50	£1,407.00
14	29/04/2026	Myles Clough Management Services Limited	Pannier Market refurbishment quantity surveying fee	£323.07	£1,615.33	£1,938.40
15	28/04/2026	AMN Fire Safety Southwest	Fire risk assessments x 3	£0.00	£500.00	£500.00
16	01/05/2026	R Coombes	DCC Highways Road closure fee 11 - 14 May 26	£0.00	£800.00	£800.00
17	30/04/2026	Tamar Trading	Maintenance Items	£4.57	£89.31	£93.88
18	30/04/2026	Lineal	Support - WI FI / Printer	£10.20	£51.00	£61.20
19	30/04/2026	Clarity	Meter copy charge	£5.71	£28.54	£34.25
20	01/05/2026	Scribe	Monthly subscription fee	£34.80	£174.00	£208.80
21	05/05/2026	Devon Association of Local Councils	Employee training	£13.00	£65.00	£78.00
22	06/05/2026	E.On	Electricity - Caddsdwn Depot	£3.81	£76.13	£79.94
23	22/05/2026	Staff / HMRC / DCC	Salary / National Insurance / Pensions	£0.00	£36,101.13	£36,101.13
24	06/05/2026	Torrige Tree Services	Removal of fallen ash tree + 3 further damaged trees		£200.00	£200.00
25	07/05/2026	Clarity	Annual "helpdesk" Support	£19.80	£99.00	£118.80
26	03/05/2026	Amazon	Prime		£8.99	£8.99
27	05/05/2026	P Lawrence	Mayoral Mileage / Charity Event (Mayor's Allowance)	£0.00	£69.59	£69.59
				£2,335.06	£50,283.50	£52,618.56
			Bank Balances at 07/5/2026 - Current	£ 84,171.63		
			Bank Balances at 0705/2026 - Deposit	£ 599,627.00		
			Bank Balances at 07/05/2026 - Reserves Account	£ 180,000.00		