



BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Staffing, Finance & General Purposes Committee

held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall on,

Thursday 15 January 2026 at 6.30 pm

PRESENT: North Ward: Councillor D McGeough

East Ward: Councillor Mrs J Gubb
Councillor J McKenzie
Councillor J Hellyer
Councillor Mrs L Hellyer (Chairman)

South Ward: Councillor S Inch
Councillor P Lawrence (Mayor)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr R Coombes (Deputy Town Clerk)

83. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Members noted the Apologies received and reasons for absence from:

Councillor	D	Bushby
Councillor	K	Hind

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

There were none.

85. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION OF 15 MINUTES DURATION

There were no members of the public present.

There was no public participation.

86. MINUTES

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Hellyer and seconded by Councillor McKenzie, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 December 2025 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

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

- a. The Clerk advised that the Council will be in receipt of the commissioned “Man Basket,” to allow for work on the Christmas Lights. Application would need to be made to DCC; it is anticipated that the work would take four nights and involve the five Rangers operating the road closure (pedestrians would still have access). (Two electricians will work from the Man basket).

A crane will be hired, that will sit centrally on the Bridge, not disturbing the pavements

Quotations will be obtained, albeit the Road Closure has a three month lead in.

- b. A request to drive sheep across the Long Bridge, to coincide with the Fair, has been received; the logistics will be considered at the next Tourism Committee Meeting. Members indicated that the Town’s Freewoman should be in attendance.

88. **ACCOUNTS**

It was proposed by Councillor McKenzie and seconded by Councillor Mrs L Hellyer, and

RESOLVED: That the lists of payments for 15 January 2026 be approved.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

89. **BUDGET 2026/2027**

(Councillor McGeough joined the Meeting.)

Councillor Lawrence provided full detail on the draft budget, which had the endorsement of the incoming Town Clerk.

Proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded by Councillor and

RECOMMENDED: That the Council approves the budget of £825,326.50 which is an increase of 8.59% (or 22p per week) on a band D, in respect of the Financial Year commencing 1 April 2026. The Council’s reserves will remain at £332,000.00

(Vote For: 7, Against: 0)

90. **TOWN RANGERS - TASKS UPDATE**

Councillor McKenzie led Members in expressing there thanks to the Rangers for their extensive and impressive work.

91. **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: 7, Against: 0)

92. **MARKET PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

Councillor Lawrence confirmed the appointments of the Quantity Surveyor and Project Manager adding that a structural engineer will also need to be engaged.

He spoke of positive meetings with stakeholders and the belief, once the contractor has been engaged through the tender process, work should commence by the second quarter of the year.

93. **STAFFING MATTERS**

Councillor Lawrence reminded Members that the newly appointed Administrative Officer will start work on Monday, 19 January 2026 and that the incoming Town Clerk may well have the opportunity to start in February 2026.

The business of the meeting having been completed, the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7.31 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor: Date:

Signature of Chairman: Date:

BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - SF&GP Committee Meeting - 15 January 2026

Row	Date Entered	Description	Extended Description	Net	VAT	Gross
1	17/12/2025	EDF	Bridge Lights	22.78	1.14	23.92
2		ICO	Data Protection Fee	47.00	0.00	47.00
3		E-On Next Energy Limited	Town Ranger Depot Elec.	189.93	9.50	199.43
4	18/12/2025	Amazon EU SarL	Mayoral Reception (Myr's Allce)	71.81	14.37	86.18
5		Madar Corporation Ltd	Mayoral Reception (Myr's Allce)	50.75	10.15	60.90
6		Canva	Design software	83.32	16.67	99.99
7	19/12/2025	Andrew Symons Ltd	Investigate oil leak to handbrake shaft	155.00	31.00	186.00
8		Mimick Signs	3 x signs 3 x panels	139.40	27.88	167.28
9		Richard Coombes	Mayoral Reception (Myr's Allce)	317.25		317.25
10	23/12/2025	EDF	Xmas Lights - 14a	27.40	1.37	28.77
11	31/12/2025	Allstar	Fuel	145.82	29.16	174.98
12		Jewson	Maintenance Items	22.05	4.41	26.46
13		RGB	Maintenance Items	425.55	85.11	510.66
14		Tamar Trading	Maintenance Items	290.70	58.14	348.84
15		Bowdens Cleaning Services Limited	Cleaning	69.33	13.87	83.20
16	05/01/2026	Clarity Copiers	Copier Charges	34.98	7.00	41.98
17		Torridge District Council	Town Ranger Depot Rates	1,338.33	267.67	1,606.00
18		Lloyds	Service Charges	8.50	0.00	8.50
19		Focus Group	TR Depot / Townhall Broadband	102.72	20.54	123.26
20		PWLB	Loan Repayment	12,863.49	0.00	12,863.49
21	06/01/2026	Amazon	Amazon Prime	8.99	0.00	8.99
22	07/01/2026	EDF	Electricity Quay Lights (Sep - Dec)	885.86	44.30	930.16
23		Torridge District Council	T Hall Offices rent	315.31	63.06	378.37
24			T Hall Offices Service Charge	223.48	44.69	268.17
25		West of England Fire Protection Service Limited	Service Charges / Equipment Caddsdwn	768.00	153.60	921.60
26		Guild of Mace-Bearers	P Stone - Ann sub	10.00	0.00	10.00
27		Devon County Council	Allotment Rent	500.00	0.00	500.00
28		Northam Town Council	Northam Mayor's Charity x 2 (BTC Myr's Allce)	80.00	0.00	80.00
29		C K Occupational Health Ltd	Fit for employment certificates	40.00	0.00	40.00
30	08/01/2026	BJ's Value House	Maintenance Items	6.67	1.33	8.00
31		Staff Salaries inc Pension Cllrs Allce inc HMRC	Salary / Allces	28,862.11		28,862.11
Grand Total				48,106.53	904.96	49,011.49

Bank Balances at	09/01/2026	- Current Account	£ 7,134.03
Bank Balances at	09/01/2026	- Deposit Account	£ 150,000.00
Bank Balances at	09/01/2026	- 95 Day Account	£ 332,568.90

Bideford Town Council
Draft Budget
For The Financial Year 2026/2027

Function	Budget 2025/26	Budget 2025/26 ProRata	Expend as at 31/12/2025	Year End Projection	Variance	Variance ProRata	Budget 2026/27
Administration							
Bank Charges	700.00	525.00	77.45	103.27	596.73	447.55	200.00
Employees Salaries, NI, Pension	373639.75	280229.81	257014.54	342686.05	30953.70	23215.27	386740.00
Contracted Services (Payroll)	1500.00	1125.00	5310.97	7081.29	-5581.29	-4185.97	5000.00
Honorariur All	3400.00	2550.00	2813.00	3750.67	-350.67	-263.00	3000.00
Allowances Mayor's/Councillors	14490.00	10867.50	737.91	983.88	13506.12	10129.59	15214.50
Advertising Grants / Parish Mtgs	700.00	525.00	2789.00	3718.67	-3018.67	-2264.00	1000.00
Audit Fees	2650.00	1987.50	2425.00	3233.33	-583.33	-437.50	3000.00
By Elections	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Newsletter	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Insurance	6630.00	4972.50	7441.79	9922.39	-3292.39	-2469.29	8000.00
Insignia	1020.00	765.00	3323.14	4430.85	-3410.85	-2558.14	1000.00
Hospitality	500.00	375.00	909.09	1212.12	-712.12	-534.09	1500.00
Postages, Stationery, Sundries	1000.00	750.00	2075.51	2767.35	-1767.35	-1325.51	3000.00
Subsistenci Officers / Members	408.00	306.00	304.25	405.67	2.33	1.75	600.00
Training Courses / Days	2040.00	1530.00	624.35	832.47	1207.53	905.65	2000.00
Subscriptions	2244.00	1683.00	9134.42	12179.23	-9935.23	-7451.42	5000.00
IT / website	2595.00	1946.25	3845.22	5126.96	-2531.96	-1898.97	10000.00
Office rental	7836.00	5877.00	10378.30	13837.73	-6001.73	-4501.30	2000.00
	421352.75	316014.56	309203.94	412271.92	9080.83	6810.62	447254.50
Ceremonies							
Civic Functions	5475.50	4106.63	3062.38	4083.17	1392.33	1044.25	6000.00
Celebratory Events	533.00	399.75	9957.81	13277.08	-12744.08	-9558.06	2500.00
Remembrance Sunday		0.00	906.00	1208.00	-1208.00	-906.00	1000.00

	Twining Reception	320.00	240.00	369.14	492.19	-172.19	-129.14	1500.00
		6328.50	4746.38	14295.33	19060.44	-12731.94	-9548.96	11000.00
Environmental								
	Allotments	9159.25	6869.44	1978.40	2637.87	6521.38	4891.04	10000.00
	Environmental projects	15280.00	11460.00	0.00	0.00	15280.00	11460.00	16500.00
	Dog/Litter Bins	1046.00	784.50	0.00	0.00	1046.00	784.50	500.00
		25485.25	19113.94	1978.40	2637.87	22847.38	17135.54	27000.00
Grants								
	Local Organisations	55000.00	41250.00	45200.00	60266.67	-5266.67	-3950.00	50000.00
	North Devon Record Library	4000.00	3000.00	4000.00	5333.33	-1333.33	-1000.00	5000.00
		59000.00	44250.00	49200.00	65600.00	-6600.00	-4950.00	55000.00
Projects								
	Maintenance Depot	0.00	0.00	58375.80	77834.40	-77834.40	-58375.80	-
	Grass cutting	-3500.00	-2625.00	0.00	0.00	-3500.00	-2625.00	-3500.00
	Town Projects	155608.00	116706.00	25889.33	34519.11	121088.89	90816.67	75000.00
		152108.00	114081.00	25889.33	34519.11	117588.89	88191.67	71500.00
Tourism & Public Realm								
	Bridge & Xmas electricity	5000.00	3750.00	1405.74	1874.32	3125.68	2344.26	5000.00
	Christmas Lights installation	61000.00	45750.00	25631.44	34175.25	26824.75	20118.56	64000.00
	Decorative Lighting - Quay Elec & repair	3947.00	2960.25	5245.58	6994.11	-3047.11	-2285.33	3000.00
	Planters / Floral Displays	15848.50	11886.38	14576.80	19435.73	-3587.23	-2690.43	16640.00
	General (Xmas parking & Tic)	13375.00	10031.25	125.00	166.67	13208.33	9906.25	0.00
	Pull Testing	2462.00	1846.50	0.00	0.00	2462.00	1846.50	2580.00
	Public Clocks maintenance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
		101632.50	76224.38	46984.56	62646.08	38986.42	29239.82	91220.00
Woodland								
	Maintenance	1500.00	1125.00	2900.00	3866.67	-2366.67	-1775.00	5000.00

		1500.00	1125.00	2900.00	3866.67	-2366.67	-1775.00	5000.00
Loans								
	Maintenance Team Depot Repayments	38591.73	28943.80	24489.95	32653.27	5938.46	4453.85	37352.00
	Maintenance Depot	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00	
		38591.73	28943.80	24489.95	32653.27	5938.46	4453.85	37352.00
General								
	Transfer In/(Out) of Reserves	-1131.20	-848.40	0.00	0.00	-1131.20	-848.40	0.00
	Market Recharge	-42621.64	-31966.23	0.00	0.00	-42621.64	-31966.23	-
	Market Project	5187.36	3890.52	8694.28	11592.37	-6405.01	-4803.76	75000.00
	General Contingency	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5000.00
		-38565.48	-28924.11	8694.28	11592.37	-50157.85	-37618.39	80000.00
		767433.25	575574.94	512823.69	683764.92	83668.33	62751.25	825326.50

EARMARKED RESERVES

End 24/25

End 25/26

Bus Shelters (Manteo Way)	10,000.00	10,000.00
Regeneration Projects	12,000.00	12,000.00
Play equipment	10,000.00	10,000.00
Town Council Reserves	300,000.00	300,000.00
	332,000.00	332,000.00

TOTAL	(Expend 31 Dec 25)	512,823.69
Variance		83,668.33
Current band D		£135.71
New Band D:		£147.37
Increase on band D		8.59 %
Tax base	(for 2026/2027)	5,600.34
		£0.22 per week
		£11.66 per year
Amount required by precept 26/27		825,326.50
Amount required by precept 25/26		767,433.25