



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
Grand Total				62,534.22	6,390.89	68,925.11

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