

## BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL



Town Hall  
Bideford  
Devon  
EX39 2HS

Telephone:  
Bideford (01237) 428817/8

Richard Coombes  
Acting Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Friday 16 January 2026

To: Members of the Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of **Bideford Town Council** to be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bideford, on **Thursday 22 January 2026 at 6.30 pm** for the purpose of transacting the following business.

In accordance with The Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 members of the public are welcome to attend. There is a legal right to film/record/photograph/report public meetings.

R Coombes  
Acting Clerk to the Council

### AGENDA

1. To receive apologies and reasons for absence.
2. To receive declarations of interest on items on the agenda and note any requests for dispensation received by the Clerk prior to the meeting. Enc
3. Public participation session of 15 minutes duration on items on the agenda.
4. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 December 2025 as a correct record. Enc
5. Accounts - To approve the payments listed. Enc
6. To receive a verbal report from the Devon County, Bideford West and Hartland, Councillor on issues within the parish.
7. To receive a report from the Police on issues within the parish.
8. To receive such communications as the Town Mayor / Clerk may wish to lay before the Council, including return of Members Register of Interest Forms.
9. To consider and resolve upon the recommendation to introduce a financial software package from 1 April 2026. Enc
10. Planning Committee - To approve and adopt the minutes of the meeting held on Enc

7 January 2026.

11. Staffing, Finance and General Purposed Committee – To approve and adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2026. Enc

**(Minute No. 89 (Precept / Budget 26/27 is a recommendation.)**

12. Rangers' Equipment replacement.
- a. To consider and resolve upon the purchase of vehicle replacement for the Rangers' Toyota Hilux. E mail
- b. To consider and resolve upon replacement or replacement parts for nine years old Ferris "walk behind" grass machine 48 inch bed. E mail

13. Torridge District Council – To receive an update on Torridge District Council activities.

14. Bideford Bridge Trust – To receive an update on Bridge Trust activities by one of the Trustees.

15. **PART II (Closed Session)**

16. **To resolve 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.**

17. Market Hall Project update.

18. Staffing Matters.

Prayers will be said by Reverend Sean O' Rourke, in the Council Chamber at 6.20 pm, prior to the start of the meeting. Councillors and Members of the Public are invited to participate if they so wish.
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**Date of next Meeting: Thursday 19 March 2026 at 6.30pm**



## **Declaration of Interests at meetings**

- Where a matter relates to an interest in list A, the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter. He /she only need declare it if it is not already noted on the register of interests.
- Where the matter is in list A, but is a sensitive interest, the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote; the member shall disclose that there is an interest but not the nature of it.
- Where a matter relates to an interest on list B the member shall not vote and may only speak as a member of the public.
- A member only has to declare an interest in list B if it is not already on the register of interests.
- If the interest is in list B and is sensitive in nature and not already registered then the member shall disclose the interest but not the nature of it.
- Where a matter relates to the financial interest of a friend, relative or close associate (other than in list A) the member shall disclose the interest and not vote. He or she may speak but only as a member of the public.

### **List A:**

1 **Employment, office, trade or vocation** – carried on for profit by member or spouse or civil partner.

2 **Sponsorship** – any payments for the previous 12 months, other than by the Council, to assist in Council duties

3 **Contracts** – any current contracts between the Council and the member or his/ her spouse or civil partner or a company the member is a director or partner of.

4. **Land** – any beneficial interest in land within the area of the Council by member, spouse or civil partner.

5 **Licenses** - any license, alone or with others, by spouse, civil partner or member to occupy land in area of Council.

6 **Corporate Tenancies** - any tenancy where the Council is the landlord and the member, spouse or civil partner has a beneficial interest in the tenant.

7. **Securities** – a beneficial interest is held in a body that has land or business in the area of the Council by the member, spouse or civil partner that either exceeds £25,000 or the total share capital is in excess of one hundredth of the of the total shares issued.

### **List B:**

Any interests which relate to or is likely to affect:

1. Any body where the member has general control or management and was appointed by the Council.
2. Any body that the member is in a position of control or management and either:
  - (a) exercises functions of a public nature;
  - (b) is for charitable purposes; or
  - (c) has the purpose of influencing public opinion or policy (including political parties and trade unions)
3. Any gifts or hospitality that the member has received by virtue of his or her office in excess of £50.



## 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<br>Councillor J Gordon<br>Councillor K Hind<br>Councillor D McGeough<br>Councillor Mrs S Smith |
| South Ward: | Councillor S Inch<br>Councillor P Lawrence (Chairman)  |
| West Ward:  | Councillor T Inch  |
| East Ward:  | Councillor Mrs J Gubb<br>Councillor J Hellyer<br>Councillor Mrs L Hellyer<br>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		<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>15,607.73</b>	<b>1,784.85</b>	<b>17,392.58</b>

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

BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Town Council Meeting - 22 January 2026

Row	Date Entered	Description	Extended Description	Net	VAT	Gross
1	16/01/2026	Devondale	Maintenance Items	20.00	4.00	24.00
2		Lineal	Licenses / Remote labour / cable / adapter	286.71	57.34	344.05
3		Phil Stone	Mayoral mileage	31.60		31.60
4		Howdens Joinery Limited	Maintenance Items	49.50	9.90	59.40
5		Richard Coombes	Refund IKEA Office Furniture	275.50	54.50	330.00
6		Peninsula Business Services Limited	HR/H&S/EAP	344.97	65.15	410.12
7		The Link Publications	Manor Court Advertisement	200.00	40.00	240.00
8		Gillett & Johnston	St Mary's Clock - Annual Service	225.00	45.00	270.00
9		<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>1,433.28</b>	<b>275.89</b>	<b>1,709.17</b>

Bank Balances at	16/01/2026	- Current Account	£ 39,141.62
Bank Balances at	16/01/2026	- Deposit Account	£ 128,267.05
Bank Balances at	16/01/2026	- 95 Day Account	£ 332,766.62

## Financial Software

### Introduction

The Town Council's internal auditor, the Parish and Town Auditing Services (PATAS), recommended on 13 January 2026 the introduction of an accounting package to assist the Council in its management of its finances and accounts.

To date, the Council has been operating on Excel spreadsheets. While the use of Excel spreadsheets is perfectly acceptable and workable in smaller and non-complex organisations, they:

- carry risks of mistakes from manual data entry, formula errors, copy-paste issues,
- require extensive manual input for transactions, calculations, and adjustments,
- lack automation
- lack robust security, version control, and automatic tracking of changes
- lack scalability and become slow, complex and unmanageable as the Council may grow in the future, especially in light of any transfers of assets and services, not least in connection with local government reorganisation
- struggle with advanced analytics, such as interactive dashboards, and in-depth insights,
- struggle with complex reporting compared to dedicated accounting software, which offers built-in controls, audit trails, integrations, and automated functions.

Introducing accounting software will, of course, attract additional financial costs to the Council in the form of an initial setup cost and recurring annual subscription but investing in sector-specific software will release officer capacity quite significantly – please see the section on “Benefits” below.

### Options

The Council's internal auditor suggested the following solutions:

[AdvantEDGE Finance - EDGE IT Systems](#)

[Rialtas](#)

[Scribe](#)

The above three software providers have been approached for quotes and, so far, only Scribe responded to advise “The best next step would be to arrange a meeting with you over Zoom, so we can ensure the software meets the council's needs. We will also be able to discuss pricing and prepare a quote and business case for you.”

The incoming Clerk has experience of using both Rialtas and Scribe.

## **Benefits**

The Council's internal auditor also mentioned Xero, but like competitor providers including Sage, Intuit / QuickBooks etc, those applications are written for businesses in the commercial sector. It is advisable to choose a package which is sector-specific and offers sector-specific functionality including the automated production of budget monitoring documentation, bank reconciliations, Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return / the annual accounting statements, allotment management, asset register, payment integration, invoicing and credit control and so on which commercial sector applications do not offer – therefore saving valuable officer time.

## **Budget Implications**

The Council's draft budget for the 2026-27 financial year includes sufficient funds for the onboarding process, estimated at £2,000, and the annual software subscription, estimated at £3,000.

## **Recommendations**

- a) To agree to the introduction of a financial software package from 1 April 2026.
- b) To delegate to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to arrange demonstrations of all three software packages and to jointly decide which one to introduce to Bideford Town Council.



**BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting**

**held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall on,**

**Wednesday 7 January 2026 at 6.30 pm**

**PRESENT:** South Ward: Councillor P Lawrence  
Councillor S Inch

East Ward: Councillor J Hellyer  
Councillor Mrs L Hellyer  
Councillor J McKenzie

West Ward Councillor T Inch

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr R Coombes (Acting Town Clerk)

67. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Ms R Clarke (South Ward - personal).

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

There were no declarations of interest.

69. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION OF 15 MINUTES DURATION**

There were no members of the Public present.

70. **MINUTES**

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Hellyer and seconded by Councillor Lawrence, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 December 2025 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 5, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

71. **TREE PRESERVATION ORDER – CHUDLEIGH FORT, EAST-THE-WATER**

Members noted the Tree Preservation Order.

72.

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

a. **Application No.**            **1/0726/2025/FUL**

Proposed replacement of existing ancillary building and store to be used in association with Higher Marsh, Bideford (amended description, red line and certificate).

**Land at Grid Reference 245319 125335, New Road, Bideford.**

Applicant:                      Mr R Kay, Higher Marsh, EX39 5HB  
Date Received.                9 December 2025

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded by Councillor T Inch and

**RESOLVED: That the application is approved subject to the DCC requirement that all aspects of the proposed surface water drainage management system have been considered in order to conform with the Policy ST03 of North Devon and Torridge Local Plan 2011 - 2031.**

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

b. **Application No.**            **1/0951/2025/FUL**

Proposed single dwelling and associated works.

**Land at Grid Reference 243890 125702 High Park Close, Bideford.**

Applicant:                      Paul Knox, Pearce Construction Barnstaple Ltd, EX31 3TD  
Date Received.                10 December 2025

It was proposed by Councillor S Inch, seconded by Councillor Mrs L Hellyer and

**RESOLVED: That the application is refused.**

(Vote – For: 4, Against: 2)

Councillor S Inch advised that he would “call the application in,” when presented at the District Council.

c. **Application No.**            **1/0962/2025/LBC**

Alterations to roofs, roof lights, valley gutters and fascias.

**Bethel Church , Torrington Street, Bideford, EX39 4DP**

Applicant:                      Mr K Holland, Central Church Bideford (same address)  
Date Received.                17 December 2025

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

**RESOLVED: That the application is approved subject to the Conservation Officer being satisfied with the application.**

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

d. **Application No.**      **1/0908/2025/LA**

Construction of a sand dressed floodlit play zone, include hard standing area, sports fencing, advertising funding banners and link path.

**Play Area, Pollyfield Community Centre, Avon Road, Bideford**

Applicant:                      Mr S Kearney, Torridge District Council, Riverbank House  
Date Received.                18 December 2025

It was proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by Councillor Lawrence and

**RESOLVED: That the application is approved.**

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

e. **Application No.**      **1/0970/2025/LA**

Change of use of library (Use Class F1) to create a multifunctional sport and fitness facility (Use Class E) and associated alterations.

**Torridge District Council, Town Hall, Bridge Street, Bideford, EX39 2HS**

Applicant:                      Mr A Redwood, Torridge District Council, Riverbank House,  
Bideford EX39 1QG  
Date Received.                19 December 2025

It was proposed by Councillor S Inch, seconded by Councillor Mrs L Hellyer to support the application.

(Vote – For: 2, Against: 3, Abstention: 1)

**RESOLVED: That the application is not approved.**

f. **Application No.**      **1/0971/2025/LBC**

Change of use of library (Use Class F1) to create a multifunctional sport and fitness facility (Use Class E) and associated alterations.

**Torridge District Council, Town Hall, Bridge Street, Bideford, EX39 2HS**

Applicant:                      Mr A Redwood, Torridge District Council, Riverbank House,  
Bideford EX39 1QG  
Date Received.                19 December 2025

It was proposed by Councillor S Inch, seconded by Councillor Mrs L Hellyer to support the application.

(Vote – For: 2, Against: 3, Abstention: 1)

**RESOLVED: That the application is not approved.**

g. **Application No.**      **1/1011/2025/FUL**

Erection of 7no. Industrial Units (Class B8).

**Land At Grid Reference 243346 125259, Farm Road, Caddstown Industrial Park, Bideford**

Applicant:                      Mr Nick Luckett Caddstown Industrial Park, Bideford EX39  
3BE

Date Received.                      23 December 2025

It was proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by Councillor Lawrence and

**RESOLVED: That the application is approved.**

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 0)

h. **Application No.**      **1/1017/2025/FUL**

Replacement of existing single glazed timber framed windows and doors with heritage style white UPVC window frames

**Flat 1, Westcroft Court, Union Close, Bideford**

Applicant:                      Mr Ed Dunkley, Live West, 1 Wellington Way, Holly Cottage,  
Exeter EX5 2FZ

Date Received.                      24 December 2025

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

**RESOLVED: That the application is approved.**

(Vote – For: 5, Against: 1)

73. **PLANNING AUTHORITY UPDATE**

The Chairman gave an update on planning application decisions received from TDC.

The business of the meeting having been completed, the Chairman thanked the members for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 6.46 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor: ..... Date: .....

Signature of Chairman: ..... Date: .....



## 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&amp;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
<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>48,106.53</b>	<b>904.96</b>	<b>49,011.49</b>

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
<b>Administration</b>							
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
<b>Ceremonies</b>							
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