

BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL



Town Hall
Bideford
Devon
EX39 2HS

Telephone:
Bideford (01237) 428817/8

Janine Gardner
Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

2 March 2026

To: Members of the Decarbonisation and Environment Committee

You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of the **Decarbonisation and Environment Committee** of the above-named Council to be held in the **Greenhouse, Riverbank House**, on **Monday 9 March 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.

J Gardner
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 28 October 2025 (approved and adopted at the Meeting of the Town Council held on 13 November 2025). Enc
5. To consider whether to make an application to install a rainwater collection system at Bideford Pannier Market and, where necessary, make recommendation.
6. To consider and recommend submitting an application for a group TPO for Ford Woods.

7. To engage the Friends of Ford woods group in creating an updated woodlands management plan for Ford Words.

Enc - PIF

DECARBONISATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Councillors:	J Craigie	Mrs R Clarke	J Gordon
	P Lawrence	Mrs S Smith	M Taylor
Bideford Sustainability Group:		Ms H Sheard	

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 Decarbonisation and Environment Committee Meeting held in the Council Chamber, on Tuesday 28 October 2025 at 6.30 pm

PRESENT: East Ward: Councillor J Craigie
North Ward: Councillor J Gordon
South & West Ward: Councillor P Lawrence

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr R Coombes (Deputy Town Clerk)
Ms H Sheard

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Gordon was proposed by Councillor Lawrence and seconded by Councillor Craigie.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Gordon is appointed as Chairman of the Committee for the coming year.

(Vote: For: 3, Against: 0)

(Councillor Gordon assumed the Chair and thanked the Members for their vote.)

2. **ELECTION OF A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Craigie was proposed by Councillor Lawrence and seconded by Councillor Gordon.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Craigie is appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Committee for the coming year.

(Vote: For: 3 , Against: 0)

3. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members noted the Apologies received and reasons for absence from:

Councillor Mrs S Smith

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

There were no Declarations of Interest.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD**

There were no members of the public present.

6. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 May 2025 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 3, Against: 0)

7. **TOWN WILD SEEDING PROJECT**

The Chairman spoke about the unsuccessful wild seeding of Manteo Way in March this year. He believed that greater preparation, cultivation of the ground and clearing of grass, would pave the way for future success; appropriate equipment and perhaps training should also be in place.

Discussion ensued including not advocating “No Mow May,” and potential future wild seeding sites noting that Ford Woods would be too shaded. Members reflected on “outsourcing,” to a local charity and training provision.

8. **PRESENTATION – FRIENDS OF FORD WOODS**

Ms Sheard advised that there had been a previous incarnation of the Friends of Ford Woods, noting leading players and activities including organised working parties clearing invasive sycamore with tools and equipment made available.

She noted that there had been a hiatus and but spoke of subsequent interest of an individual with ecology expertise who had made a “walk through” assessment; the noting of twenty seven indicator species established the “County Wildlife Site,” designation.

Ms Sheard reflected on a recent organised walk noting the dangers of walking in specific areas of the woodland identifying areas of concern.

She advised on fellow “(new) friends” who together had engaged with the outgoing Town Clerk. Ms Sheard together with the Rangers’ Supervisor, did visit the Site with the Clerk noting areas where neighbouring residents had encroached into the Nature Reserve. She made reference to apparent “lost” TPOs believing that there were none, now for Ford Woods.

The Chairman observed that the Council did need to be vigilant and ascertain what is transpiring in the Woods taking appropriate action and, where necessary, to pursue errant householders.

The Chairman agreed to fill the role of Council Representative to the Friends of Ford Woods and that he and, where necessary, Councillor Craigie would attend their (on site) meetings.

Ms Sheard indicated that the Friends could access grant funding; the Chairman alluded to Green Grant application opportunities, also.

It was proposed by Councillor Gordon, seconded and

RECOMMEND: That Councillor Gordon is appointed Council representative to the Friend of Ford Woods.

(Vote: For: 3 , Against: 0)

9. **ELECT COMMITTEE COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE**

Following discussion where Ms Sheard indicated agreement, it was proposed by Councillor Gordon, seconded and

RECOMMEND: That Ms Sheard be elected as a non-voting community representative to the Decarbonisation and Environment Committee.

(Vote: For: 3 , Against: 0)

The Chairman thanked the Members for their attendance and support. He concluded the Meeting at 7.10 pm.

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

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

Notice of Motion / Project Initiation Form – Bideford Town Council

Project Initiator and Lead:	Jack Gordon	Date:	21/2/2026
Project Description	<p>To discuss and make recommendations on engaging the community group Friends of Ford Woods to support the development of a Woodland Management Plan for Ford Woods.</p> <p>This proposal recommends that Bideford Town Council formally engages <i>Friends of Ford Woods</i> to work in partnership with the Council in the preparation of a UK Forestry Standard-compliant Woodland Management Plan (WMP) for Ford Woods, an area of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) owned by the Town Council.</p> <p>The Woodland Management Plan will provide a long-term (10-year) framework for managing the woodland in a way that protects biodiversity, improves climate resilience, supports permissive public access, and enables the Council to apply for external environmental grant funding. The plan would be prepared by a suitably qualified professional, with community input facilitated through the Friends group.</p>		
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of Ancient Woodland This would help support long-term management of an ASNW site, ensuring compliance with national guidance and best practice. • Supports Decarbonisation Objectives A Woodland Management Plan will help maximise carbon offsetting, woodland resilience, and climate adaptation, directly supporting the Council’s decarbonisation strategy. • Unlocks External Grant Funding An approved Woodland Management Plan is a prerequisite for multiple government grants, potentially enabling significant external investment into Ford Woods. • Community Engagement and Stewardship Formal engagement with Friends of Ford Woods strengthens local involvement, and allows a dedicated group to help with the management of Ford Woods. 		
Financial Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outsourcing a woodland management plan would cost in the region of £1,500-£2,000. While grant funding can help cover £1,500 of this, working with the Friends of Ford Woods group could help reduce the initial cost of the plan whilst still being eligible for the grant. - Once a management plan is in place this could allow further 		

	applications for grants, greatly increasing any budget to managed the woodlands.		
Officer resource required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant Applications: Officer time will be required to submit and manage external funding applications. • Liaison: Coordination between the Council, Friends of Ford Woods, and relevant statutory bodies. 		
Risks and issues	<p>Community Expectations: There is a risk that community expectations exceed the Council’s legal or financial capacity. This will be mitigated through clear terms of engagement and Council-led decision-making.</p> <p>• Reputational Risk: Misunderstanding around woodland management activities (e.g. thinning or coppicing) could lead to public concern. This will be mitigated through transparent communication and professional oversight.</p> <p>• Grant Dependency: External funding is not guaranteed. The Council retains discretion to proceed or pause depending on funding outcomes.</p>		
Action List	Yes / No	Name of person to complete action	Observations:
Planning Permission	No		Not required for plan preparation
Owners Consent	Yes	Town Clerk	Town Council own the land
Consultation Required	Yes	Decarbonisation Committee	Engagement with Friends of Ford Woods and relevant officers

Please continue on separate sheet if necessary