BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

Meeting: Town Council
Meeting Date: Thursday, 22 October 2026
Meeting Time: 6:30pm
Venue: Greenhouse, Riverbank House, Bideford EX39 2QG

Present:

North Ward

Councillor D Bushby
Councillor K Hind (Chairman)
Councillor S Smith

South Ward

Councillor R Clarke
Councillor S Inch

West Ward

Councillor T Inch

East Ward

Councillor J Craigie
Councillor J Gubb
Councillor J Hellyer
Councillor J McKenzie

Also Present:

J Gardner, Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
R Coombes, Deputy Town Clerk

88. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lawrence, Hawkins and L Hellyer.

Apologies were not received from Councillors Gordon and McGeough.

89. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declaration of interest.

90. Public Participation

There were no members of the public.

91. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was proposed by Councillor S Inch, seconded by Councillor McKenzie and **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2026 as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 8, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

92. District and County Matters

No members of the County Council were in attendance. No reports were received.

Councillor Bushby advised that policy changes in England significantly impact the powers and roles of district councillors through planning reforms, standards frameworks, and local government structural adjustments.

He noted Central Government's initiative transfers a greater number of planning decisions away from elected councillors and directly to council officers. Councillors will no longer be able to "call-in" an application that provided for applications to be considered by committee (in the past).

The Chairman thanked Councillor Bushby for his contribution.

93. Items Brought Forward by the Chair

(Councillor Smith joined the Meeting.)

a. Councillor Craigie explained there had been a moratorium on the disposal of the Torridgeside Link Resource Centre. It provided an opportunity to register an interest in the building by nominating it as an Asset of Community Value. *The Community* must register interest by 23 November 2026.

   He spoke on the impact of the closure of the building by those who had benefited from the mental health and well being benefits the facility provided.

   Councillor Craigie believed that the Council should write a letter of support for those seeking funds to secure the building's future; a request for reports and surveys could be made, also to help facilitate an application.

   The Chairman indicated that he had seen the building believing it to be in good condition.

   Councillor Craigie spoke of the time limit implication in terms of registering an interest, bid submission and when the building could go on to the open market.

b. The Deputy Town Clerk invited councillors to support the reading of the names of the Bideford fallen, at 10.00 am Chudleigh Fort on Remembrance Sunday, prior to the Remembrance Service at Victoria Park and subsequent Parade.

94. External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2025-26

The Town Clerk explained the observations in the report.

The Chairman led the Councillors in noting the report.

95. Town Council Sponsorship Opportunities

Councillors had sight of a report on providing Town Council sponsorship opportunities. The Town Clerk's Assistant had initially approached Torridge District and Devon County Councillors for locality funding contributions, widening the net, with great success, to local organisations and those outside, working locally. To date she had accrued £7,500.00 with further promised monies in support of the Christmas Lights' Switch On Event.

Enquiries had highlighted the need to provide a "corporate package." Further investigation by the Town Clerk's Assistant highlighted other Council's approach.

Councillor Bushby, led members in thanking the Assistant for her initiative and the impressive results.

Discussion followed on the mutual community benefits and "offer" to sponsors.

It was proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by Councillor Craigie and **resolved** to support the introduction of sponsorship opportunities (policy) to Council Events.

(Vote – For: 10, Against: 0)

96. Survey of Wrecks in the River Torridge

The Chairman provided councillors with an explanation of a report, which is attached and forms part of these Minutes.

97. Planning Application

Given the Planning Committee Meeting scheduled for 7 October 2026 was inquorate Councillors considered the following planning applications:

a. Application No. 1/0722/2026/LBC

   Alterations to roof drainage system and including front down pipe

   Location: 25 The Strand, Bideford, Devon, EX39 2ND

   Applicant: David Morgan

   Date Received: 22 September 2026

b. Application No. 1/0741/2026/TEL

Prior approval notification for the installation of a 18m monopole with 6 no. antennas, 2 no. dishes and 4 no. associated cabinets and ancillary development under Part 16 of GPDO.

Location: Torridge District Council, Cattle Market Car Park, Chanters Road, Bideford

Applicant: EE Ltd

Date Received: 1 October 2026

It was proposed by Councillor Hellyer, seconded by Councillor Busby and **resolved** to recommend both applications.

(Vote – For: 10, Against: 0)

Councillor Bushby asked the Town Clerk to meet with the Planning Director to make clear the Councils consultation relationship with the Planning Authority ensuring Council recommendations are received.

98. Committee Minutes

a. Resources Committee Meeting held on 8 October 2026.

It was proposed by Councillor J Hellyer, seconded by Councillor McKenzie and **resolved** to approve the minutes as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 6, Against: 4)

(Concern was raised at the setting of a budget ceiling for grant provision. Whilst the Committee had resolved upon the grant policy the formal financing of Council expenditure would be discussed and resolved at the (overall) Budget meeting.

b. Amenities Committee Meeting held on 15 October 2026.

It was proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by Councillor S Inch and **resolved** to approve the minutes as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 10, Against: 0)

99. Bideford College Governor Vacancy

Councillors had sight of details on applying to become a Bideford College Governor.

The Chairman invited any councillor interested in becoming a Bideford College Governor to apply individually.

100. List of Payments

It was proposed by Councillor Craigie, seconded by Councillor Clarke and **resolved** to approve the List of Payments.

(Vote – For: 10, Against: 0)

Part II (Closed Session)

101. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Due to the sensitive or confidential nature of the following item it was proposed by Councillor J Hellyer, 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: 9, Against: 1)

102. Potential Use of Site off Honestone Street

The Chairman explained the benefits to the Pannier Market facility, visitors and local householders of purchasing a site to be developed into a car park suitable for 129 cars.

The Clerk introduced a report that had been circulated to the Councillors including financial implications.

Councillors S and T Inch expressed concern at the (additional) cost to the Council Tax payer (an increase of £38.00 to the total annual Council Tax bill of a Band D householder).

Further discussion followed on the servicing of the loan nad future valuable income stream that would benefit the Community through supporting Council projects. It was conceded that Honestone Street car park had all but reached its level of capacity.

Councillor T Inch requested a recorded vote.

It was proposed by Councillor J Hellyer, seconded by Councillor Clarke and **resolved** to proceed with the acquisition of the site off Honestone Street for the purpose of conversion into a car park and to provide direction to the Responsible Financial Officer for the purpose of drafting the Council's budget for the 2027-28 financial year.

For	Against	Abstention
J Hellyer	S Inch	J Gubb
R Clarke	T Inch	
K Hind		
J McKenzie		
D Bushby		
J Craigie		
S Smith		

(Vote – For: 7, Against: 2, Abstention: 1)

103. Land at Ford Rock

The Town Clerk explained a report that had been circulated to the Councillors that indicated a parcel of land adjacent to the Council's reclaimed, leased, public space is unregistered.

It was proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by Councillor J Hellyer and **resolved** to register Bideford Town Council's land ownership of the parcel of land with HM Land Registry to safeguard it for future for public use.

(Vote – For: 10, Against: 0)

104. Staff Accommodation at the Town Hall

The Council had been in receipt of the terms, from the Estates Office of the District Council, for the use of the upstairs office suite of rooms hitherto occupied prior to the Town Hall's renovations.

It was proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by Councillor J Hellyer and **resolved** to accept the terms in securing the status quo for the Council's eventual return to the Town Hall.

(Vote – For: 8, Against: 1, Abstention: 1)

The business of the meeting having been concluded the Chairman thanked the councillors for their attendance at the meeting, which concluded at 8.40 pm.

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

BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Accounts for approval at the Town Council Meeting - 22 October 2026						Agenda Item 13	
	Invoice Date	**Supplier**	**Allocation**	**VAT**	**NET**	**TOTAL**	**Payment**
1	09/09/2026	South West Water	Water Services		£81.56	£81.56	
2	24/09/2026	Merry Harriers Garden Centre	Maintenance Items	£3.00	£14.99	£17.99	CC079
3	28/09/2026	TTS Training Services Ltd	PAT training	£39.00	£195.00	£234.00	Paid
4	28/09/2026	Jewson	Maintenance Items	£4.06	£20.32	£24.38	
5	29/09/2026	James Hallam Council Guard	Motor fleet insurance	£0.00	£2,076.00	£2,076.00	
6	29/09/2026	Tudor Environmental	Battery Backpack Blower + Lithium Batteries	£349.95	£1,749.76	£2,099.71	
7	30/09/2026	Myles Clough Management Services	Pannier Market QS	£323.07	£1,615.33	£1,938.40	
8	30/09/2026	Myles Clough Management Services	Pannier Market project management	£631.25	£3,156.25	£3,787.50	
9	30/09/2026	Allstar	Fuel	£144.92	£359.59	£504.51	DD
10	30/09/2026	Clarity	Copy Meter Charge	£4.46	£22.29	£26.75	DD
11	30/09/2026	Mr A Mitchell	Jewson - Yale Combination Padlock - Pollyfield	£6.07	£36.42	£42.49	15/10/2026
12	30/09/2026	Vodafone	Mobile	£4.42	£22.10	£26.52	DD
13	01/10/2026	Andrew Symons	Maintenance Items	£21.95	£109.76	£131.71	CC080
14	01/10/2026	Lineal	Microsoft Licenses	£34.47	£172.34	£206.81	
15	01/10/2026	Triangle	Broadband Provision	£74.69	£373.45	£448.14	
16	02/10/2026	Devon Association of Local Councils	Training - Heritage issues and the planning system	£7.00	£35.00	£42.00	
17	02/10/2026	EDF	Decorative Lighting, Bideford Quay	£10.97	£219.51	£230.48	16/10/2026
18	02/10/2026	E.ON Next	Caddsdown Facility - Electricity	£4.22	£84.31	£88.53	
19	03/10/2026	Amazon	Prime	£1.50	£7.49	£8.99	CC081
20	06/10/2026	Nicholsons	Hygiene Items	£50.16	£250.80	£300.96	
21	08/10/2026	Wimba	Christmas Lights Switch On - Marquees	£121.67	£608.32	£729.99	Paid
22	08/10/2026	Peninsula	HR	£65.15	£344.97	£410.12	08/10/2026
23	08/10/2026	Torridge District Council	Pannier Market - Premises Licence		£70.00	£70.00	
24	09/10/2026	Ashton Electrical Ltd	Replace emergency bulkhead light	£15.57	£77.83	£93.40	

	Invoice Date	Supplier	Allocation	VAT	NET	TOTAL	Payment
25	09/10/2026	Mole Valley Farmers South Molton	Maintenance Items	£4.00	£19.98	£23.98	CC082
26	12/10/2026	Nick Sampson Mechanical Engineering Services Ltd	Transport of planters	£120.00	£600.00	£720.00	23/10/2026
27	12/10/2026	Tamar Trading	Maintenance Items	£1.84	£75.73	£77.57	23/10/2026
28	13/10/2026	Arque	Construction works at the Pannier Market	£5,671.74	£28,358.70	£34,030.44	23/10/2026
29	14/10/2026	South West Communications	Caddsdown facility - broadband	£10.69	£53.43	£64.12	23/10/2026
30	14/10/2026	D S Electrical	Repairs to Festoon Lights / provide install new trasformers	£790.79	£3,953.96	£4,744.75	23/10/2026
31	14/10/2026	Screwfix	Maintenance Items	£7.17	£35.83	£42.99	CC083
32	16/10/2026	Screwfix	Maintenance Items	-£7.17	-£35.83	-£42.99	CC083
33	15/10/2026	P Lawrence	Mayoral mileage / Jigsaw Event misc costs (Myr's Allce)		£312.69	£312.69	
34	19/10/2026	Adobe	Annual subscription	£39.79	£198.96	£238.75	DD 18/11/2026
35	19/10/2026	BJ's Value House	Maintenance Items	£7.11	£35.57	£42.68	CC084
36	19/10/2026	Parkerbrand.com Lout H Eng	Maintenance Items	£13.78	£68.89	£82.67	CC085
37	20/10/2026	Robeda Joinery	Iroko timber - Chub Road bench	£6.10	£30.51	£36.61	23/10/2026
38	20/10/2026	Berrys	Six month payroll / additional back dated calcs / correspondence	£240.00	£1,200.00	£1,440.00	23/10/2026
39	21/10/2026	Bideford Cobblers	Key Cutting		£9.00	£9.00	CC086
40	21/10/2026	BJ's Value House	Push Pins	£0.21	£1.04	£1.25	CC087
41	21/10/2026	Atlantic Locksmiths	Open digital key box safe	£15.00	£75.00	£90.00	CC088
42	23/10/2026	Staff, Councillors, HMRC, DCC Pension	Salary / Allowance / Tax / Pension contributions	£0.00	£35,423.10	£35,423.10	23/10/2026
				£8,838.60	**£82,119.95**	**£90,958.55**	
			Bank Balances at 22/10/2026 - Current	£ 60,516.50			
			Bank Balances at 22/10/2026 - Deposit	£ 30,048.87			
			Bank Balances at 22/10/2026 - Reserves Account	£ 668,000.00			
			Bank Balances at 22/10/2026 - Current (Mkt)	£ 33,727.90			
			Bank Balances at 22/10/2026 - Deposit (Mkt)	£ 36,247.91			

Minute Number. 96 - Report

Abandoned Boat Wreck Survey Report

Introduction

1. This report updates the Council on its campaign to clean up the River Torridge as part of the proposal to introduce regulation into the Torridge and Taw rivers.

Background

2. Following the campaign in social media, tv and newspapers to introduce a trust port and clean up the rivers Torridge and Taw, Crown Estates who own most of the riverbeds of the Torridge and Taw along with an official of Torridge District Council met with the Chairman of the Torridge and Taw Estuary Forum, Tony Pratt to discuss removal of abandoned boats from the rivers. It was agreed by Crown Estate representative, Peter Lawrence that the Forum should survey the wrecks and following presentation of the data Crown Estates they would begin by removing 10 abandoned boats from the river.

Survey

3. The survey was carried out by volunteers, John Puddy -Fresh Spring Trust, Mike Teare- Bideford Heritage Harbour, Ken Hind-Bideford Town Council, Tony Pratt and Eric Evans North Devon Yacht Club and others. The surveyors examining the condition of each boat, construction, location, whether floating or sunk and photographed it. Historic wrecks were ignored as they are the subject of a different survey being carried out on behalf of the Bideford Heritage Harbour. Fishing trawlers and other boats which are occupied as house boats were not included unless clearly abandoned. The larger boats were made of steel, the majority of the smaller leisure craft were fibreglass which unfortunately does not rot and has to be cut up and otherwise disposed of safely.

4. The team considered that boats were abandoned wrecks as follows;- River Caen – 29 River Taw -3 River Torridge: From Navantia Ship Yard including Regulated Bideford Harbour-22 River Torridge Bideford from Riverside House to New Bridge 15 River Torridge :: Appledore -3 River Torridge : Instow and North Devon side -7 Total 79

Actions by Crown Estates

5. The Crown Estates will have to see if anyone claims an abandoned boat before it is removed to be scrapped. A 30 day legal notice process will have to be followed to give owners the opportunity to claim the boat and remove it themselves.

Other Responsible Bodies.

6. The Chairman of The Forum has given an undertaking to provide Torridge District Council and Crown Estates with the whole survey of the 79 wrecks before Christmas. It is proposed that the surveyors will continue to monitor boats in the

river for abandoned vessels and check for new abandoned boats. It is felt that it is also necessary for North Devon District Council, the Environment Agency, Christie Estate, Town and Parish Councils around the estuary to receive those parts of the survey where it relates to their area and or responsibility.

7. A lease was signed between Torridge District Council and Crown Estates in 2013 for 25 years, current annual rent £3002, leases the River Torridge foreshore to the low watermark from all the regulatory Harbour of Bideford to Hartland. (Copies are available to members) This mean that wrecks identified by the surveyors in the Bideford Harbour, Appledore Port, and along the foreshore including under the Bideford new bridge are the responsibility of Torridge District Council, a total of up to 40 wrecks.

8. The lease by clauses 8.2 and 9.2 can be interpreted to show that TDC in relation to its obligations covering fly tipping and dumping of boats is in breach of the lease:

   8.2 **The Tenant will keep the property at all times clean and tidy free from debris** (including dead fish and animals), pollution and contamination and in a condition that poses no threat to human health or the environment.

   9.2 The tenant will not use the Property in a way that is or may be a nuisance disturbance or damage to the Landlord or any other person. **If a nuisance occurs the Tenant will take all action to stop it.**

Conclusion

Crown Estates cannot be expected to clear boats from areas where they are not responsible or have leased the property to others so this will fall upon these other authorities and leaseholders to deal with the problem.