



BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

Meeting: Town Council

Meeting Date: Thursday, 27 August 2026

Meeting Time: 6:30pm

Venue: Greenhouse, Riverbank House, Bideford EX39 2QG

Present:

North Ward

Councillor D Bushby

Councillor K Hind

Councillor D McGeough

South Ward

Councillor P Lawrence (Chairman)

West Ward

Councillor C Hawkins

East Ward

Councillor J Craigie

Councillor J Gubb

Councillor L Hellyer

Councillor J McKenzie

Also Present:

J Gardner, Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

R Coombes, Deputy Town Clerk

Councillor M Barry (Devon County Council)

Prebendary Reverend Clair Rose-Casemore (St Mary's Church)

Mr Steer, Chair Raifuture Devon and Cornwall regional branch.

62. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Clarke, J Hellyer, S Inch and T Inch.

Apologies were not received from Councillors Gordon and Smith.

63. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Councillor Gubb declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 9.35 (mother of payment recipient) and pecuniary interest in Items 9 numbers: 33, 41, and 53 (spouse of payment recipient).

64. Public Participation

Mr Steer spoke about a meeting held in Exeter to discuss the Strategic Outline Business Case to bid for funding to improve the North Devon (Tarka) Line where Railfuture gave £10,000.00 to support the work.

Not all rail projects received funding but he noted that both Bideford and Tavistock were included in the Devon Local Transport Plan.

65. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded by Councillor Bushby and **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2026 as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 9, Against: 0)

66. District and County Matters

The Chairman invited Councillor Barry (Devon County Council Bideford East) to address the Council (a copy of his report is attached and forms part of the minutes).

Councillor Barry made reference to various points from his report adding that there was a wider “fragility” within the North Devon District Hospital healthcare provision compounding the Maternity Care Department’s concerns.

He highlighted the difficulties in attracting medical personnel to the Hospital.

Discussion followed on staff shortages, contract obligations, financial packages, inducements and perceived lack of professional progression opportunities.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Barry for presenting his report.

Councillor Bushby (Chairman Torridge District Council) read a report (that is attached and forms part of the minutes).

(Councillor Hind joined the Meeting.)

The Chairman noted that the lampposts along the Quay needed cleaning; Councillor Barry made a note.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Bushby for his report.

67. Items Brought Forward by the Chair

- a. The Mayor indicated that the Landivisiau Twinning Association members had very much enjoyed the Councils’ hospitality. He thanked all those involved in the organisation of the successful Civic Event including the Maintenance Team’s commemorative flower display.

- b. The Bideford and District Community Archive are in need of storage opportunities to house the North Devon Journals editions bequeathed by the last Councillor Peter Christie.

68. Town Council's Response to Local Government Reorganisation

Councillor Hind raised key points from the report previously received by councillors.

He believed that Torbay's Unitary model was too small to provide effective services for their electorate / residents.

The Devon Coast and Countryside Unitary remit extends 105 miles from North to South, with no economic natural centre. It would be more a "regional" than "local" authority and poorer.

Councillor Hind proposed, seconded by Councillor Craigie (the Council):

- a. To reject the governments proposals for local government reform in Devon
- b. Instruct the Town Clerk to inform the government of the Council's views.
- c. The Devon Coastal and Countryside Unitary Authority be scrapped.
- d. That Devon be divided into three Unitary Authorities not four and the proposals be reconsidered.
- e. The elections in May 2027 for the Unitary authorities in Devon be postponed until the local government plans for Devon have been reconsidered.

Councillor L Hellyer proposed an amendment to include promoting the Council's views in the media.

Councillor Hind accepted and seconded the amendment to the motion.

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

Councillor Hind proposed, seconded by Councillor Craigie (the Council):

- a. To reject the governments proposals for local government reform in Devon
- b. Instruct the Town Clerk to inform the government of the Council's views.
- c. The Devon Coastal and Countryside Unitary Authority be scrapped.
- d. That Devon be divided into three Unitary Authorities not four and the proposals be reconsidered.
- e. The elections in May 2027 for the Unitary authorities in Devon be postponed until the local government plans for Devon have been reconsidered.
- f. The Council publishes their concerns to the media.

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

Councillors stated that irrespective of the changes and the impact upon Bideford, the Council would give of their best to make the outcomes of the Local Government Review work for the residents.

69. Committee Minutes

It was proposed by Councillor Bushby, seconded by Councillor McKenzie and **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 20 August 2026 as a

correct record.

(Vote – For: 9, Against: 0)

70. List of Payments

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

(Vote – For: 7, Against: 0, Abstention: 1)

(Having declared a pecuniary interest Councillor Gubb did not partake in the vote.)

Part II (Closed Session)

71. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Due to the sensitive or confidential nature of the following item it was proposed by Councillor Gubb, seconded by Councillor Lawrence 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: 0)

72. Potential Use of Site off Honestone Street

Councillors had read a report provided by the Town Clerk.

Councillor Hind led discussion where members agreed to support the Clerk's recommendations. It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded by Councillor Bushby and **resolved**

- a. To resolve the funding position before committing to the purchase, including on whether PWLB borrowing can be secured for the acquisition and subsequent construction, and whether borrowing can be undertaken before the Town Council owns the site. The Council should also obtain a fully costed financial model showing the acquisition, finance, construction, professional fees, VAT, contingency and anticipated car park income.
- b. To proceed only on the basis of satisfactory due diligence and a conditional agreement. A full and final financial proposal will then be presented to the Council before it becomes unconditionally committed to the purchase.

(Vote – For: 9, Against: 0)

Councillor Hind led the Councillors in recognising and expressing appreciation for the amount of detailed work carried out by the Town Clerk in a short space of time on the initiative.

73. Permanent Appointment of Town Clerk

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded by Councillor Craigie and **resolved** to confirm the permanent appointment of the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer following the successful probationary period.

(Vote – For: 9, Against: 0)

74. List of Payments

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded by Councillor Hind and **resolved** to approve the (confidential) Payment.

(Vote – For: 9, Against: 0)

The business of the meeting having been concluded the Chairman thanked the councillors for their attendance at the meeting, which concluded at 7.29 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor: Date:

BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Accounts for approval at the Town Council Meeting - 27 August 2026

Agenda Item 9

	Invoice Date	Supplier	Allocation	VAT	NET	TOTAL	Payment	Governance
1	17/06/2026	D Bushby	Refund - Vehicle Item	£0.00	£230.00	£230.00		TC
2	01/07/2026	EDF	Decorative Lighting Bideford Quay	£8.59	£171.86	£180.45	07/08/2026	TC
3	23/07/2026	Chef Duet	Glasses / Tea Cups / Delivery / Colletion - Twinning Event	£0.00	£88.20	£88.20	07/08/2026	TC
4	23/07/2026	Baker Ross	Chudleigh Fort Picnic - activitiy items	£10.40	£66.65	£77.05	24/07/2026	TC
5	29/07/2026	Jewson	Maintenance Items	£9.09	£45.46	£54.55		TC
6	30/07/2026	Tamar	Maintenance Items	£40.12	£200.54	£240.66		TC
7	31/07/2026	Myles Clough Management Services	Pannier Market project management	£561.25	£2,806.25	£3,367.50		TC
8	31/07/2026	Myles Clough Management Services	Pannier Market quantity surveying services	£323.07	£1,615.33	£1,938.40		TC
9	31/07/2026	Clairty	Meter Copy Charge	£5.83	£29.13	£34.96	DD	TC
10	31/07/2026	Encompass Security Solutions Ltd	Installation of Pyronix Euro intruder alarm system - Mkt	£248.00	£1,240.00	£1,488.00		PM
11	31/07/2026	Jonathan Rhind Architects	Pannier Market - principal designer duties	516.51	2,582.55	3,099.06		TC
12	31/07/2026	Jonathan Rhind Architects	Pannier Market - Input between March to 31 July 2026	£4,240.24	£21,201.19	£25,441.43		TC
13	01/08/2026	Starboard Systems	Monthly subscription to Scribe financial software	£34.80	£174.00	£208.80	03/08/2026	TC
14	01/08/2026	Triangle	Ethernet / Landline	£72.02	£360.11	£432.13	DD	PM
15	03/08/2026	Amazon Prime	Amazon Prime	£0.00	£8.99	£8.99	CC056	TC
16	03/08/2026	Amazon - Sim Distributors Ltd	Stationery - copier paper	£2.83	£14.16	£16.99	CC057	TC
17	03/08/2026	Amazon - MAU Brands Europe OU	Stationery - guest book	£1.67	£8.32	£9.99	CC057	TC
18	04/08/2026	Amazon - Shenzhen Huaxia Elctronic Commerce Co Ltd	Misc Item - Chudleigh Fort	£5.24	£26.20	£31.44	CC057	TC
19	04/08/2026	RGB	Maintenance Items	£62.00	£310.06	£372.06		TC
20	04/08/2026	E.On Next	Depot - Electricity Jul 26	£3.11	£62.17	£65.28	DD	TC
21	04/08/2026	JK Auto-Tek	Supply cut and programme new key - Maintenance Vehicle	£37.50	£187.50	£225.00	CC058	TC
22	04/08/2026	Nicholsons	Hygiene items	£16.73	£83.65	£100.38		PM
23	04/08/2026	Robes of Distinction	Supply mayoral gown inc faux facings and trim (part payment)	£0.00	£2,800.00	£2,800.00		TC
24	04/08/2026	EDF	Decorative Lighting Bideford Quay	£9.40	£189.07	£198.47	18/08/2026	TC
25	05/08/2026	Source for Business (SWW)	Water services - Depot	£0.00	£44.91	£44.91	19/08/2026	TC
26	06/08/2026	Mimick Signs	Supply and fit graphics for Hilux inc Chevron kit to new tailgate	£38.80	£194.00	£232.80		TC
27	06/08/2026	Morrisons	Maintenance Items	£0.00	£6.00	£6.00	CC059	TC
28	06/08/2026	Zurich	Insurance 2026-27	£70.00	£5,749.75	£5,819.75		TC
29	07/08/2026	Torrige District Council	Licence for Event on TDC land - Chudleigh Fort	£10.33	£51.67	£62.00		TC
30	07/08/2026	K Edwards + Musicians	Live Music - Bideford Fair	£0.00	£150.00	£150.00		TC
31	08/08/2026	Peninsula	HR	£65.15	£344.97	£410.12	10/08/2026	TC
32	10/08/2026	Mr J A Prestwood	2 x Fly Board displays - Fair	£0.00	£1,690.00	£1,690.00		TC
33	11/08/2026	Acorn	Seasonal Worker	£82.67	£413.33	£496.00	18/08/2026	TC
34	14/08/2026	South West Communication Group Ltd	Depot - Broadband	10.69	53.43	64.12		TC

	Invoice Date	Supplier	Allocation	VAT	NET	TOTAL	Payment	Governance
35	15/08/2026	CMC Productions	PA - Bideford Fair	£0.00	£350.00	£350.00		TC
36	17/08/2026	Torrige District Council	Increase in insurance premium (work) Pannier Market	£0.00	£2,606.53	£2,606.53		TC
37	17/08/2026	Amazon - Spot on-line Ltd	Twinning items	£5.99	£17.97	£23.96	CC060	TC
38	17/08/2026	Amazon - EU S.a.r.L.	Twinning items	£1.50	£7.49	£8.99	CC060	TC
39	18/08/2026	Amazon - EU S.a.r.L.	Twinning items	£1.67	£8.32	£9.99	CC060	TC
40	18/08/2026	Amazon - Ugly Koala Ltd	Chudleigh Fort Picnic - activitiy items	£0.00	£16.00	£16.00	CC060	TC
41	18/08/2026	Acorn	Seasonal Worker	£82.67	£413.33	£496.00	25/08/2026	TC
42	19/08/2026	Vistaprint	Market Banner	£8.30	£41.49	£49.79	CC061	TC
43	19/08/2026	Arque	Pannier Market Refurbishment Construction Works	£16,327.48	£81,637.40	£97,964.88		TC
45	20/08/2026	J Butler	Twinning items	£0.00	£500.00	£500.00	24/08/2026	TC
46	20/08/2026	Bideford Twinning Association	Fiftieth Anniversary Dinner x 2 (Myr's Allce)	£0.00	£80.00	£80.00	20/08/2026	TC
47	20/08/2026	Morrisons Bideford	Twinning items	£19.00	£96.20	£115.20	CC062	TC
48	20/08/2026	BJ's Value House	Maintenance Items	£0.79	£3.96	£4.75	CC063	TC
44	21/08/2026	COOP	Twinning items	£0.00	£13.00	£13.00	CC064	TC
45	21/08/2026	RBL Poppy Appeal	Wreaths	£25.42	£127.08	£152.50	CC065	TC
46	23/08/2026	Swissmiss Catering	Chudleigh Fort Picnic - refreshments	£0.00	£186.00	£186.00		TC
47	24/08/2026	Staff / HMRC / DCC	Salary / Tax National Insurance / Pensions	£0.00	£30,809.88	£30,809.88	24/08/2026	TC
48	24/08/2026	BJ's Value House	Maintenance Items	£2.17	£9.81	£11.98	CC066	TC
49	24/08/2026	Mow It	Maintenance Items	£2.08	£10.42	£12.50	CC067	TC
50	24/08/2026	Hockings	Chudleigh Fort Picnic - Ice Creams	£72.02	£360.08	£432.10		TC
51	24/08/2026	Chef Duet Event Hire	Twinning reception - hire of glasses	£0.00	£75.00	£75.00		TC
52	25/08/2026	Bideford Conservative Club	Remembrance Sunday Buffet	£0.00	£600.00	£600.00		TC
53	25/08/2026	Acorn	Seasonal Worker	£82.67	£413.33	£496.00	01/09/2026	TC
54	25/08/2026	Elite Catering	Chudleigh Fort BBQ	£0.00	£1,450.00	£1,450.00		TC
55	26/08/2026	Post Office	Stamps	£0.00	£20.76	£20.76	CC068	TC
				£23,117.80	£167,053.50	£190,171.30		
			Bank Balances at 27/08/2026 - Current	£ 12,581.59				
			Bank Balances at 27/08/2026 - Deposit	£ 30,024.19				
			Bank Balances at 27/08/2026 - Reserves Account	£ 530,338.24				
			Bank Balances at 27/08/2026 - Current (Mkt)	£ 28,133.05				
			Bank Balances at 27/08/2026 - Deposit (Mkt)	£ 36,218.14				

Minute Number 66. Devon County and Torridge District Councils Matters

Devon County Council

Report Councillor P Barry

Maternity Unit Closure at North Devon District Hospital

An extraordinary meeting of the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee was held on Monday 17 August to discuss the closure of the maternity unit at the North Devon District Hospital. In attendance were Peter Collins, Chief Officer for Population Health and Executive Board Member; Aisling Crombie, Director of Nursing; and Hannah Pugliese, Director of Women, Children & Young People Services. And from Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust who were the Trust responsible for the provision of the services were Sam Higginson: Chief Executive Officer; and Vanessa Purday, Chief Medical Officer.

In short, the committee wanted to know why this happened and how to prevent it occurring again. It became clear this is a much bigger problem and many other services are considered fragile within the hospital. The committee were told plans are in place to prevent a reoccurrence of a closure and it is hoped normal service will resume by the end of September.

Minutes of the meeting can be found by following this link:-

[Minutes Template](#)

The Committee agreed that it was important to hold a further meeting to consider the responses to the recommendations made to the ICB and Trust.

A further special meeting of the Committee will be held on **Thursday 24 September 2026 at 10.30am.**

Recognising the significant local interest in this issue and its importance to residents across North Devon, the meeting will take place at **Caddsdow Business Support Centre, Bideford, EX39 3BE**. This meeting will also include the closure of Alex Ward to increase SDEC capacity, without any consultation with GP surgeries.

Another change put forward for discussion is the change of ambulance coordination so that South Molton ambulance callouts will now transfer to Wonford (64 minutes) instead of NDDH (34 minutes). While NDDH A&E is proportionally busier than Wonford this means that South Molton residents in a critical condition are likely now be driven by car to NDDH, losing vital stabilisation time.

Let's Talk National Health

Let's Talk Neighbourhood Health, a new engagement programme that will help shape the future of health and care services across Devon has been launched.

Building on what the NHS has heard through the Devon 10 Year Plan engagement, the programme starts with listening to staff, patients and local communities to

understand their experiences and views on how health and care services can work better together. The ambition is to create more joined-up care, support people to stay well for longer, and deliver more care closer to home where appropriate.

DCC staff have a vital role to play in this conversation. Every day, colleagues see where services work well, where challenges exist, and where closer working between health, care and community partners could improve the experience and outcomes for patients.

Whether people work directly with patients or in a role that supports their care, peoples experience, expertise and understanding of local communities can help shape the future of neighbourhood health in Devon.

Health and Care staff can complete the Neighbourhood Health Survey.

The survey takes around 15 minutes and asks about people's experiences of health and care, what matters most to them, what helps them stay well, how they prefer to access care and how services could work better together.

The survey is open until Friday 2 October 2026.

If someone is unable to complete the survey online, Healthwatch can support them to complete it by telephone on 0800 520 0640.

Neighbourhood health events will be held in Exeter, Barnstaple, Paignton, Plymouth or Tavistock. More information can be found on the [One Devon website](#) or register a place [through the booking form](#).

Find out more ways of how you can get involved by visiting the One Devon website.

Email: mark.barry@devon.gov.uk / Phone: 07392 433699

Torridge District Council

Report Councillor D Bushby

The Council reallocated £600,000 of funding from the Torridge Community Regeneration Partnership to provide additional funding for projects at Bideford Pannier Market, Bideford Medical Centre, Westward Housing and Appledore Maritime Innovation Centre.

In Bideford, 2 new houses were purchased and 4 more are to be purchased in the near future to provide temporary accommodation for those in housing need. Officers are also formulating a project to deliver further modular units to assist with the national drive to reduce, or put an end to, homelessness. This will be reported to committee in September.

Planning permission has been granted for the access arrangements at Cleave Wood and we have move into the early concept design phase for a social housing development of up to 40 houses. Access works will be completed early in 2027.

A public consultation has been launched on proposals for the future of Fisherman's wharf on the Quay. If Town Cllrs or the public have views we encourage that they are submitted.

LGR - Following the announcement in July about how the future of Local Government will be shaped across the county a lot of work has been commenced. The Senior Reporting Officer, deputies and Programme Director have been appointed to lead the process of change. Warding arrangements have been published and in the Torridge area of the new Devon Council there will be 16 Councillors. There will be no continuing authorities so elections for the Shadow Councils of the 4 new Unitaries will take place in May 27. Over the next few months senior Officers will finalise the data capture processes and move towards looking at how future services might run from vesting day in 2028. Until vesting day the district and County Council will deliver the full range of current services although it is unlikely that new projects, not already within programme, will be considered as the LGR process will consume considerable staff and financial resources.

There has been a lot of interest in the data centre proposal at or near Huntshaw. We have responded to many FOI requests and various other queries and there have been demonstration at a few of the council meetings. The District Council has not yet formed an opinion on the proposal as we await a planning application that will provide details of the impacts of that proposal. We expect to receive an application in early/mid 2027.

The Grounds maintenance team have worked tirelessly through the hot and dry summer to maintain our parks and open spaces. An apprentice has been recruited to the team and we hope that another will be recruited soon. Officers are working on a project to improve the compound in the park to provide better and more secure equipment storage. This will become necessary for us to be able to cope with the growing jobs list and increasing amount of equipment that we have to house.

Fountains on the Quay - These are now fully mechanically operational. Following the resignation of the Deputy Harbour Master control arrangements are being redirected to another member of staff that is currently undertaking some Harbour duties that ensure compliance.