

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING, BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL
TUESDAY 27 JANUARY 2026, 5.30PM
HELD AT BIDDULPH TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, BIDDULPH ST8 6AR.**

PRESENT:

- **Mayor:**
- Councillor A C Lawton
- Councillor M A Hopkins
- Councillor D Hawley
- Councillor K J Jackson
- Councillor W Rogers (Chair)
- Councillor N Eardley
- Councillor J T Jones
- Councillor C Wood
- Councillor N R Yates

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Mrs Sarah M Haydon – Chief Officer (Minute Taker)
- Ms Jodie Hancock – Events and Partnership Officer
- Mrs Margaret Warman – Compliance and Governance Officer
- Mrs Elizabeth Davies – Finance Officer
- Mrs Angela Williams – Administration Officer

Councillor Rogers recited the disclaimer regarding the recording of the meeting.

83. APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

- Councillor C Brady
- Councillor A K Harper (Absent)
- Councillor A H Hart
- Councillor C Smith
- Councillor J Salt

84. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- i. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: Nothing to declare.
- ii. Other Interests: Nothing to declare.

85. MINUTES

To **confirm** the Minutes of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting held on 25 November 2025 (approved at the Town Council meeting on 13 January 2026)

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Minutes-Finance-25-November-2025-DRAFT-No-Confidential.pdf>

The minutes were **confirmed**.

Proposed by Councillor Hawley; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.

86. AUDIT AND ACCOUNT MATTERS

- a) To **approve** the bank reconciliations for September, October and November 2025- all accounts (attached).

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/ALL-BANKS-RECONCILIATION-SEP-2025.pdf>

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/ALL-BANKS-RECONCILIATION-OCT-2025.pdf>

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/ALL-BANKS-RECONCILIATION-NOV-2025.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Hawley; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.

- b) To **receive** reports on Committed Spend and Cost Centre Year Comparisons until 21 January 2026 (attached).

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Committed-Spend-at-21-January-2026.pdf>

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Cost-Centre-Year-Comparison-Summary-at-21-January-2026.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Lawton; seconded by Councillor Yates. All **agreed**.

- c) To **receive** the internal control visit report from 8 December 2025 (attached).

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/BTC-Internal-Check-Report-081225.pdf>

Councillor Hawley noted that there was a cheque that was paid 6 months after being issued. There was a discussion whether to cancel cheques at the end of the financial year, as the rules had now changed.

Councillor Hawley stated that the next internal control visit would be in March 2026. Proposed to receive by Councillor Lawton; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.

87. POLICY REVIEW (ATTACHED)

- a) To **approve** the revised Grants Policy

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Grants-Policy-January-2026.pdf>

Councillor Yates suggested an amendment for point 3.2 in relation to the Equalities Act. The numbering would be amended in section 4.

Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Yates. All **agreed**.

b) To **approve** the revised Stress Management Policy

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Stress-Management-Policy-January-2026.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All **agreed**.

c) To **approve** the revised Violence at Work Policy

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Violence-at-Work-Policy-January-2026.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Hawley; seconded by Councillor Jackson. All **agreed**.

d) To **approve** the revised Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Anti-Fraud-Bribery-and-Corruption-Policy-January-2026.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Lawton. All **agreed**.

88. STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

a) To **consider** disposal of any assets, in line with the Asset Management Policy and Financial Regulations

The Chief Officer reported that following the six-monthly chair inspection, 20 of the upholstered chairs had failed and require disposal.

There was a discussion regarding whether to replace the chairs.

It was proposed by Councillor Yates to obtain quotes for consideration; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All **agreed**.

b) To **confirm** approved suppliers as part of the Procurement Policy

The Chief Officer reported that a new Funeral Director had satisfied the requirements to be added to the approved suppliers list.

Proposed by Councillor Hawley; seconded by Councillor Eardley. All **agreed**.

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1, the Council is to determine which items, if any, should be taken with the public excluded.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

89. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COOPERATIVE COUNCILS WORK

The Chief Officer gave an update. There would be a funding round opening soon, and she wondered whether the Town Council would like to apply for this.

Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed**.

90. TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON THE COUNCILLOR SKILLS AUDIT RESPONSES RECEIVED AND TO AGREE A TRAINING PLAN FOR 2026

The Chief Officer reported that the completion of the skills audit had been a useful exercise in identifying existing skills and assisting in the development of a training plan.

It was agreed that a Biddulph Town Councillor training session be organised.

Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All **agreed**.

91. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON THE GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE DEVELOPMENT

The Chief Officer reported that the revised habitat plan has now been submitted via the planning portal to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

The Chief Officer further advised that the tender for the groundwork element of the project will be published, with a closing date of 20 February 2026. The tender will be issued via Find a Tender.

This was **received**.

92. TO CONSIDER TRIALLING THE ASSET MANAGEMENT APPLICATION- CIVIC.LY

The Chief Officer reported that Scribe has introduced a new project management system, Civic.ly, which provides a more robust approach to asset management, including the ability to record and log site visits.

Proposed by Councillor Eardley; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All **agreed**.

93. TO APPROVE AN APPROACH TO SHORTLISTING TENDERS RECEIVED FOR THE PROVISION OF GROUNDS MAINTENANCE AT THE BURIAL GROUNDS AND SPRINGFIELD ROAD, AND THE BAR PROVISION AT THE TOWN HALL (DEADLINE FOR TENDERS IS 30 JANUARY 2026)

It was agreed to establish a small working group to review and shortlist the tenders received. This meeting would need to take place in the week commencing 2 February 2026, with the decision being taken at the Town Council meeting the following week.

All **agreed**.

94. 2026-27 BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

- a) To **confirm** Committee budgets (proposed budget attached)

The Chief Officer presented the draft budget. Discussions took place regarding the completion of the Garden of Remembrance within this financial year, as well as

Following discussion, the budget was **confirmed**. Proposed by Councillor Hawley, seconded by Councillor Yates and agreed.

- b) To **confirm** room hire rates at Biddulph Town Hall (proposed and current fees attached)

The Chief Officer had circulated the draft proposed hire costs for 2026-27.

- c) To **confirm** fees and charges for Council services (proposed and current fees attached)

The Chief Officer had circulated the draft proposed Burial Grounds and fees.

Councillor Wood proposed that the Town Council should establish an efficiency group. Seconded by Councillor Jackson, and **agreed**.

- d) To **confirm** an approach to the District Council in relation to 2026-27 funding

It was **confirmed**.

- e) To **confirm** Precept requirements, following information from the District Council on the parish tax base figure. The tax base for 2026-27 is 6373 (a reduction from 6401).

The Chief Officer presented the draft precept figures.

Councillor Eardley left the meeting at 19.07.

Proposed by Councillor Hawley; seconded by Councillor Yates that the precept requirement is £548,785. All **agreed**.

95. QUOTATIONS

- a) To **approve** the quotation for the Clubs Groups and Societies booklet and the Volunteering booklet

Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Yates. This would be funded from the Biddulph Works Together fund. All **agreed**.

- b) To **approve** CCTV remedial works at Biddulph Town Hall

Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Lawton. All **agreed**.

- c) To **confirm** the quotation for the renewed Display Energy Certificate for Biddulph Town Hall

Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Wood. All **agreed**.

- d) To **approve** a quotation for hedge cutting at Moorland Road allotments

Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All **agreed**.

Emergency item:

The Chair requested that the Committee consider a further emergency quotation.
All **agreed**.

Proposed by Councillor Jackson; seconded by Councillor Yates. All **agreed**.

The meeting ended at 7.57pm

Signed..... Date.....