

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL
TUESDAY 12th MAY 2026, 6PM
HELD AT BIDDULPH TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, BIDDULPH ST8 6AR**

PRESENT:

- **The Mayor:**
Councillor A C Lawton
- **Deputy Mayor:**
Councillor C Smith
- Councillor C Brady
- Councillor Rev Y Case
- Councillor N Eardley
- Councillor J I M Garvey
- Councillor A H Hart
- Councillor D J Hawley
- Councillor J T Jones
- Councillor C Kisicki
- Councillor W Rogers
- Councillor J T Salt
- Councillor A K Harper
- Councillor J Redfern
- Councillor N R Yates
- Councillor C Wood

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Sarah M Haydon – Chief Officer (Minute Taker)
- Jodie Hancock – Events and Partnerships Officer
- Margaret Warman – Compliance and Governance Officer
- Angela Williams – Administration Officer
- Susan Booth – Customer Support Assistant
- John Robinson – Town Crier
- Reverend Will Drain – St. Lawrence Church
- 18 members of the Public

The Town Crier introduced The Mayor- Councillor Lawton, Deputy Mayor- Councillor Smith and the Chief Officer, Mrs Sarah Haydon.

Reverend Will Drain led the Town Council in prayer.

Councillor Lawton welcomed returning councillors and read a statement regarding the recording of the meeting before opening the meeting.

1. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR & MAYOR MAKING CEREMONY

a) Nomination, election and signature of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Councillor Lawton called for nominations for the role of Mayor of Biddulph Town Council. Councillor Salt proposed Councillor Smith, stating she had no doubt that she would lead by example, being a strong, courageous and a role model within town and over borders. Councillor Smith is a social worker by trade and a community champion; the nomination was seconded by Councillor Rogers. There were no other nominations. All voted in favour.

Councillor Smith signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor Smith left the Chamber to receive the Chains of Office.

b) Presentation of Chains of Office to Mayor and Mayoress/ Consort

Councillor Smith returned to the Chamber wearing the Chains of Office. She was greeted with a round of applause.

Mr Scott Smith formally accepted the Consort's Chain of Office.

c) Speech of Acceptance by Mayor

The newly elected Mayor expressed pride and humility in taking on the role of Mayor of Biddulph for 2026–2027, reflecting on her long-standing connection to the town and her commitment to serving the local community. She outlined her background in local government and community work, including involvement with The Green Tree House charity and the founding of The Troll Run, both aimed at supporting local families and improving opportunities for young people. Drawing on her professional experience as a social worker, she emphasised the importance of equality, inclusion and ensuring that financial circumstances should not prevent children and families from accessing opportunities and support.

The Mayor advised that her mayoral year would focus on raising funds for a Biddulph Activities Fund to help children access clubs, activities and equipment, alongside supporting The Green Treehouse and tackling food insecurity within the community. She also reflected on the importance of representation, fairness and respectful local democracy, praising the work of councillors, officers and volunteers within the town. The Mayor concluded by thanking her family, fellow councillors and council staff for their support and stated her intention to serve the people of Biddulph to the best of her ability throughout the coming year.

The Mayor went on to congratulate the Chief Officer on ten years of service. She had worked tirelessly for the benefit of the town; town councils up and down the country would be asking

'WWSHD- What would Sarah Haydon do?' A gift was presented to the Chief Officer on behalf of Councillors and staff at the Town Council.

d) Confirmation of Amanuenses (if required)

Not required.

e) Speech by outgoing Mayor

The Mayor reflected on a busy and enjoyable year in office, noting the wide range of civic, community and regional events attended throughout the year. He highlighted the importance of recognising the contribution of volunteers and community organisations across Biddulph, and referenced events organised both by the Town Council and by local voluntary groups, including the Biddulph Festival and Christmas celebrations. The Mayor also attended civic engagements in neighbouring towns and emphasised the significance of maintaining strong relationships with neighbouring councils during a period of local government reorganisation.

Particular highlights of the mayoral year included the opening of the Hilda Sheldon Memorial Garden, the unveiling of the Miners' Memorial and improvements to the Town Hall frontage, the enhanced Civic Awards ceremony, and the opportunity to congratulate the Chief Officer, Sarah Haydon, on receiving the National Association of Local Councils' "Clerk of the Year 2025–2026" award.

The Mayor expressed his thanks to the Mayoress, Town Council staff, the Mayor's Secretary, the Chief Officer and the Town Crier for their support throughout the year, and extended best wishes to the incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor. He concluded by reflecting positively on the continued success and extensive use of the Town Hall and expressed confidence that the Council and staff would continue to uphold the strong reputation of Biddulph Town Council during future changes.

f) Vote of thanks

Councillor Rogers gave the vote of thanks to Councillor Lawton for the past year.

Councillor Yates commented that Councillor Lawton had been an excellent 'apprentice Mayor', noting that, as someone born and bred in the town, he had taken to the role naturally and carried out his duties with enthusiasm. Councillor Yates also expressed his thanks for Councillor Lawton's service over the past year.

g) Presentations to outgoing Mayor

Councillor Smith presented Councillor A. Lawton with the Past Mayor's Medal.

2. APOLOGIES

- Councillor K Jackson
- Councillor A C W Parkes
- Councillor D A Proudlove
- Councillor S Fletcher
- Councillor M Hopkins
- Councillor N Eardley

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations:

Councillors Salt declared an interest in item 9.

b) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests

Nothing to declare.

4. ANNUAL MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL ~ 13 MAY 2025

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting of 13 May 2025 (signed at the Ordinary Town Council meeting on 10 June 2025).

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Annual-Meeting-of-the-Town-Council-Minutes-May-2025.pdf>

Received.

5. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

a) Nomination, election and signature of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Mayor called for nominations for the role of Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Rogers nominated Councillor Jones as Deputy Mayor; seconded by Councillor Wood. Councillor Jones was a long-serving community champion, and would be a great asset.

There were no other nominations. All voted in favour. Councillor Jones signed the Declaration of Office.

b) Presentation of Chains of Office to Deputy Mayor and Mayoress/ Consort

The Deputy Mayor received the chains of office and called upon his wife, Deputy Mayoress Anne Jones to receive the chains of office.

6. CONSTITUTION DOCUMENTS AND CONFIRMATION OF KEY DECISIONS

a) STANDING ORDERS

To **approve** Standing Orders (enclosed).

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/BTC-Standing-Orders-May-2026.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Garvey; seconded by Councillor Salt. All **agreed**.

b) MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- I. To **approve** the Terms of Reference for Committees and Scheme of Delegation document (enclosed)

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Terms-of-Reference-for-Committees-Scheme-of-Delegation-May-2026.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Redfern; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

- II. To **approve** Committee membership for 2025/26:

- **Finance Strategy and Management** – Mayor, Deputy Mayor plus twelve members.
- **Town and Community** – Mayor, Deputy Mayor plus twelve members.
- **Recreation and Amenities** – Mayor, Deputy Mayor plus twelve members.
- **Planning** – Mayor, Deputy Mayor plus twelve members

- III. To **approve** Councillor Committee membership (enclosed)

- IV. To **approve** the Committee dates for 2026-27 (enclosed)

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Meeting-dates-2026-27.pdf>

Items II, III and IV moved on-block.

Proposed by Councillor Rogers; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

c) TO APPROVE THAT EXISTING WORKING GROUPS WILL CONTINUE TO MEET THROUGHOUT 2025-26, AS APPROPRIATE:

- Neighbourhood Plan Implementation (Planning Committee)
- Biddulph Works Together (Town and Community Committee)
- Transport (Recreation and Amenities Committee)
- Events (Town and Community Committee)
- Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution (Town Council)

All Councillors are welcome to attend Working Groups, as voting members.

Proposed by Councillor Garvey; seconded by Councillor Salt. All **agreed**.

d) APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

To **confirm** the Town Council representatives on outside bodies. Please note, there will be a monthly update from representatives at Town Council meetings.

Councillor Garvey stepped down from Biddulph in Bloom; Councillor Salt joined. Councillor Garvey asked to be the Twinning Association representative, alongside the Mayor.

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

e) FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

To **approve** the Town Council's Financial Regulations (enclosed).

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Financial-Regulations-2026.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Garvey; seconded by Councillor Salt. All **agreed**.

f) EMERGENCY PLAN AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

To **approve** the Emergency Plan and Business Continuity Plan (documents attached). To **confirm** that these documents will be reviewed by the Finance Strategy and Management Committee during 2026-27, in line with emerging Martyn's Law requirements.

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Emergency-Plan-May-2026.pdf>

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Business-Continuity-Plan-May-2026.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Rogers. All **agreed**.

g) CODE OF CONDUCT

To **approve** the Code of Conduct (enclosed).

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Code-of-Conduct-for-Members-2026.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Garvey; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

h) INTERNAL HEALTH AND SAFETY MONITORING COUNCILLOR

To **confirm** that the Health and Safety Monitoring Councillor is Councillor Ken Harper (with Councillor Jill Salt as Deputy), reporting to the Town Council.

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Brady. All **agreed**.

i) INTERNAL AUDITOR & MONITORING COUNCILLORS

Appointment of independent Internal Auditor (currently JDH Business Services) plus two Councillors (Eardley and Hawley), to fulfil audit requirements.

Proposed by Councillor Hart; seconded by Councillor Rogers. All **agreed**.

7. FINANCIAL MANDATE- BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

The Town Council banks with **NatWest** and **Unity Trust Bank**.

- a) **Signatories:** Current signatories for the current account being: The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair and Vice Chair of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee plus the Chief Officer and Finance Officer. **(Two members plus one officer to sign/ approve throughout the year, except in the transition between signatories at the start of the year where the previous years signatories may still be required to sign.)**
- b) **Mayor's Charity Account:** To give authority to the Chief Officer, Finance Officer and Events and Partnerships Officer to be the signatories for the Mayor's Charity Account **(two to sign)**. The Finance Strategy and Management Committee will receive an annual review of this account.
- c) **Bank Mandate:**

To **resolve** that a banking relationship will be maintained with National Westminster Bank Plc (the Bank) and Unity Trust Bank, in accordance with the Mandate and that:

- ✓ The individuals identified as Authorised Signatories may, in accordance with the Signing Rules, sign cheques and give instructions for Standing Orders, Direct Debits, electronic payments, banker's drafts and other payments on the Accounts even if it causes an Account to be overdrawn or exceed any limit;
- ✓ Any authorised Signatory may give other instructions or requests for information to the Bank in relation to the Accounts; opening accounts with the same Signing Rules and Authorised Signatories; closing accounts; or other banking services or products;
- ✓ The Bank may accept instructions that do not have an original written signature provided the Bank is satisfied that the instruction is genuine and subject to any other agreement the Bank may require for those instructions;
- ✓ The Customer will provide to the Bank a copy of its constitution and any amendment to the constitution, certified as correct by the Chief Officer.

This Mandate will continue until the Organisation gives the Bank a replacement mandate or the Organisation passes a resolution changing the Signing Rules and/or adding or removing an Authorised Signatory by completing and returning the Change of Signing Authority form in which case this Mandate will continue as amended.

- d) **Public Sector Deposit Fund- CCLA:** To give authority to the Chief Officer and Finance Officer to authorise withdrawals following approval at Town Council.

Item 7 proposed on block by Councillor Rogers; seconded by Councillor Hart. All **agreed**.

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

8. MINUTES

- a) To **approve and sign** the Minutes of the Town Council meeting on Tuesday 14 April 2026

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Minutes-Town-Council-14-APRIL-2026-DRAFT-inc-confid.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Redfern; seconded by Councillor Garvey. All **agreed**.

- b) To **receive** the Minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee meeting held on Tuesday 14 April 2026

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Minutes-Recreation-and-Amenities-14-April-2026-Draft-Inc-confid.pdf>

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

- c) To **receive** the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 21 April 2026

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Minutes-Planning-21-April-2026-DRAFT.pdf>

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

- d) To **receive** the Minutes of the Town and Community Committee meeting held on Tuesday 21 April 2026

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Minutes-Town-and-Community-21-April-2026-Draft-inc-confid.pdf>

Proposed by Councillor Salt; seconded by Councillor Garvey. All **agreed**.

- e) To **approve and sign** the Minutes of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting held on Tuesday 28 April 2026

<https://biddulph.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Minutes-Finance-28-April-2026-Draft-Inc-Confidential.pdf>

Councillor Salt noted that she left the room during discussion of the Greenfingers and Knypersley Cricket Club applications; the minutes would be amended to reflect this.

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

9. ACCOUNTS & FINANCE

a. To approve accounts received for payment in May 2026

Expenditure over £500			
SMDC	Business Rates – TH	May	2368.00
Prism	Software Licensing – May	Inv 239274	1552.31
Octopus Energy	Electricity – Town Hall	April	1056.48
Moorland Contract Cleaning	Cleaning – Bus hub	April	1781.47
Moorland Contract Cleaning	Cleaning – Visitor Centre	April	1221.83
Sandyford Properties Investments Ltd	Brown lees Storage Unit – Rent	May	624.00
Clearway	Annual Maintenance fee CCTV, Fire & Alarm System	Town Hall	2209.27
Clearway	Annual Maintenance fee Alarm System	Visitor Centre	743.76
Stage Management Services	Annual Test & Inspection Lighting Bar – Stage	Town Hall	925.00
Garden Plus	Burial Ground Maintenance	April 2026	2085.50
EDF Energy	GAS – Town Hall	March	2255.15
Royale Boiler Services Ltd	Annual Boiler Service & Gas Tightness Checks	Town Hall	528.00
1 st Biddulph Moor Scout Group	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		1800.00
Biddulph Festival Committee	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		2000.00
Biddulph In Bloom	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		19000.00
Biddulph Greenfingers	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		500.00
Biddulph Youth & Community Zone	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		1750.00
Citizens Advice Staffordshire North and Stoke on Trent	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		19000.00
Douglas Macmillan	Town Council Grant Award		800.00

Hospice	Scheme 2026-27		
Knypersley Cricket Club	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		2000.00
Moorlands Voluntary and Community Transport	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		1800.00
Staged CIO	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		1225.00
The Green Tree House	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		5175.00
EDF Energy	GAS – Town Hall	April	1297.33
Charltons Solicitors	Legal Advice		1800.00
Gary Smith	Lanterns Repair and installation of timers, Repair fault door Visitor Centre, Electrical repairs at Town Hall, Replacement of Bus Hub Emergency Lights	Lanterns, Visitor Centre, Town Hall & Bus Hub	1170.00
<i>The Green Tree House</i>	<i>Correction: Ref TC 08.07.25 – read 8000.00 s/b 7900.00</i>	<i>Town Council Grant 2025-26</i>	<i>7900.00</i>

Expenditure less than £500			
Tidysite Skip Services	Bin Emptying – w/c 27/04/26	Inv 167422	113.76
Stone Town Council	Mayors Tickets x2 Civic Dinner		84.00
SMDC	Business Rates – Storage Unit	May	212.00
Beartown Soul Promotions	Biddulph's Got Soul 25.04.26: Artwork, Tickets, DJs and Equipment	Mayors Charities Event	325.00
Clearway	Alarm Callout reset 23.03.26	Town Hall	101.40
Clearway	Alarm Callout reset 31.03.26	Town Hall	101.40
Octopus Energy	Visitor Centre – Electricity	April	458.83
CEF Electrical	Screw Lid	Inv STO/340071	6.42
CEF Electrical	LED Bulkhead	Inv STO/340287	102.91
Toni's Treats	BLPG – Refreshments	INV 5	75.00
Sandyford Property Investments Ltd	Brown Lees Storage Unit – Service Charges	May	24.00
Tidysite Skip Services	Bin Emptying – w/c 20/04/26	Inv 167131	178.75
Fifteen Group Ltd	Wifi & Office Phones -April	INV 131011	94.80
Philip Hardaker	Restoration of Biddulph Artwork, cleaning and painting		125.00

Hanley Print Services	Booklets – Clubs/Societies	Inv 15045	485.00
Richard Parker	Piano Tuning	Town Hall	75.00
NatWest	Bank Charges	28 Feb to 02 Apr	0.35
C J Skelhorne Jewellers	Past Mayor Jewel Engraved		374.40
Tonis Treats	BLPG Refreshments 28.04.26	INV 6	96.00
Tonis Treats	BLPG Refreshments 05.05.26	INV 7	30.00
Prism	Phone Charges – March	INV	298.79
Reliance High Tech	Lone Working Devices – April 2026	INV 27010749	37.80
Waterplus	Water Supply – Burial Ground	12 March to 12 April	109.29
CEF Electrical	Electrical Parts		424.10
Biddulph Library (SCC)	Warm Spaces 1 st Apr to 26 th June	BWT	410.00
Leek Town Council	Mayors Ticket – Civic Celebration		40.00
Eon Next	Electricity – Christmas Lights Supply	April	17.64
Eon Next	Electricity – Storage Unit	April	14.79
Euro Digital Systems	Printing – 26 March to 25 Apr	Inv 166192	243.85
Starboard Systems (Scribe)	Civic.ly Subscription	May	151.20
Octopus Energy	Bus Hub - Electricity	31 st March to 3 May	118.93
1 st Biddulph Moor Rainbows & Brownies	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		400.00
Biddulph District Guides	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		400.00
Biddulph Ladies Afternoon Club	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		300.00
Biddulph Moor Evergreens	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		250.00
Friends of B.R.I.C	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		400.00
Kingsfield Singers	Town Council Grant Award Scheme 2026-27		200.00
Waterplus	Water Supply – Storage Unit	01 Apr to 01 May	22.06
Waterplus	Water Supply – Town Hall	27 March to 27	265.37

		April	
Prism Business Developments	Chief Officer – Laptop Upgrade		303.89
Tidysite Skip Services	Bin Emptying – w/c 04/05/26	Inv 167729	162.48
Jodie Hancock	Reimbursement – Biddulph Scratch Supplies/Refreshments	May	22.49

Credit Card			
GiffGaff	Mobile Phone	May	8.00
GiffGaff	Mobile Phone	May	8.00
GiffGaff	Mobile Phone	May	8.00
Amazon	Blu-Ray	Biddulph Scratch	14.99
Amazon	Litter Picking Bag Holder		19.99
Amazon	St George Flags	St Georges Day	6.98
Amazon	Litter Picking Bag Holder		19.99
Amazon	Civic Award – Prize (The Family Hub)	Gift Card	25.00
Amazon	Blu- Ray	Biddulph Scratch	14.99
Screwfix	Tarpaulin & White Toilet Seat	Moorland Rd Allotments/ Visitor Centre	70.31
Sainsburys	Meeting Refreshments / Board in Biddulph Refreshments		92.96
Sainsburys	Door guard Batteries	Office	12.50
DIY Matador	Pea Gravel		19.51
Land Registry	Searches	1000009748631	7.00
Land Registry	Searches	1000009721191	14.00
Land Registry	Searches	1000009721228	14.00
Sainsburys	Meeting Refreshments/ Cleaning Supplies		14.75
Facebook	Social Media Advertising		14.62
Made by Cooper	Classic Vehicle Show – Badges	2026	388.80
Premier Print	Signs	Butterfly Garden/No Parking Aldi	30.58
Sainsburys	BLPG Refreshments 06.05.26		20.40
Wickes	Paint		60.00

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

b) To approve supplementary accounts received since the agenda was published.

Expenditure over £500			
SALARIES		May	18058.88
Staffordshire Pension Fund	Staff Pensions	May	5814.35
HMRC	Staff PAYE	May	5892.34
Expenditure less than £500			
CASH	Volunteer Expenses (£200.00), Petty Cash (£55.84)	May	255.84
Standard Life	Additional Voluntary Contribution	May	300.00
Sarah Haydon	Travel Expenses + Reimbursements (VE Day Floral Tribute, signs/acetate sheets, plants)	Apr/May	108.64
Waterplus	Visitor Centre – Water Supply	1 Apr to 1 May	55.06
K Wood	Window Cleaning	May	114.00
Rode Hall Silver Band	Biddulph Remembrance Parade Nov 2026	Deposit – INV SI214/1	50.00
Angela Williams	Reimbursement – Pegs and Bin Caddy	Moorland Rd Allotments/Visitor Centre	16.99
CEF Electrical Ltd	Electrical Parts	Inv STO/347174	331.36
CEF Electrical Ltd	Electrical Parts	Inv STO/345786	50.87
Clearway	Alarm Reset Callout	23.02.26	95.40

Credit Card			
Totally Branded	60 th Anniversary Pens		138.00
Sainsburys	Mayoral Making 12.05.26	Refreshments	11.00
Roche AV Pro	Meeting OWL + Mic Bundle		1914.00

Proposed by Councillor Garvey; seconded by Councillor Hart. 1 abstention (Councillor Salt).
Agreed.

The Meeting ended at 7pm.

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