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

PRESENT:

- Councillor A Lawton
- Councillor C Brady
- Councillor A K Harper
- Councillor D Hawley
- Councillor J T Jones
- Councillor J Salt (from 5.42pm)
- Councillor C Wood
- Councillor N Yates
- Councillor W Rogers (Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

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

42. APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

- Councillor N Eardley (Absent)
- Councillor A Hart
- Councillor M A Hopkins
- Councillor K J Jackson
- Councillor C M Smith

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

i. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. None

ii. Other Interests. None.

44. MINUTES

To **confirm** the Minutes of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee meeting held on 22 September 2026 (approved at the Meeting of the Town Council on 13 October 2026).

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

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45. AUDIT AND ACCOUNT MATTERS

a) To **approve** the bank reconciliation for August 2026 (attached)

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

b) To **receive** the receipt and payments cost centre comparison up to 21 October 2026 (attached)

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

c) To **receive** the final audit report from Mazars (attached)

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

46. TO AGREE THE PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A YOUTH STRATEGY (ATTACHED)

The Chief Officer advised that feedback from the World Café event held in June and the Know Your Place project had informed the proposal to develop a formal strategy. The work had gathered the views of young people and identified key themes raised through the consultation.

Councillors discussed how young people from across Biddulph could participate.

Councillors Wood and Brady both declared an interest in relation to Biddulph Youth and Community Zone.

Councillor Salt supported the proposed approach, describing the work undertaken as robust and evidence-based; she emphasised the importance of establishing a group that could meet regularly in a structured and supported environment, ensuring young people's voices were heard.

It was agreed to support the proposed Youth Strategy and establish a Youth Council, with the need to balance a practical starting point with inclusive engagement across Biddulph.

Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Harper. Councillor Hawley abstained from the vote. The proposal was carried.

47. TO AGREE STRATEGIC PLAN DELIVERY PRIORTIES (ATTACHED)

The committee considered and agreed the proposed delivery priorities.

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

48. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON A BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE COURSE DELIVERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HEALTH PARTNERS

The Chief Officer advised she had received an approach from the Patient Participation Group (PPG) regarding interest in running a British Sign Language

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course, as a partnership project. The proposed course could accommodate 15 participants at an estimated cost of £900, which could be funded via the Biddulph Works Together project and the staff training budget. Participants would be asked to contribute a small amount for the six sessions.
Councillor Harper supported the principle of offering the course but queried whether an alternative, cheaper course could be identified.
Councillor Jones welcomed the proposal but questioned the extent to which the course would be used and whether it would deliver a tangible benefit.
Councillor Salt supported the initiative, highlighting the potential for participants to build rapport and strengthen relationships with people who are deaf or use sign language.
It was agreed to go ahead with the training.
Proposed by Councillor Salt; seconded by Councillor Brady. Councillor Harper abstained from the vote. The proposal was carried.

49. POLICY REVIEW (ATTACHED)

a) To **approve** the reviewed Health and Safety and Wellbeing at Work Policy.

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

b) To **approve** the reviewed Severe Winter Weather Management Policy.

Councillor Hawley queried whether there was a more up-to-date map available with regard to Biddulph Moor gritting.
Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Brady. All **agreed.**

c) To **approve** the reviewed Accessibility Statement.

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

50. STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

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

There were no items to dispose of.

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

There were no new approved suppliers.

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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

51. TO APPROVE THE LEASE RENEWAL FOR THE STORAGE UNIT AT THE BROWN LEES INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

The lease renewal was discussed. It was agreed to renew the lease.
Proposed by Councillor Harper; seconded by Councillor Brady. All **agreed.**

52. TO CONFIRM THE STATEMENT FOR THE MINERS WALK (ATTACHED)

The proposed statement was considered. It was agreed the statement would be published on the council's website, with appropriate signposting to direct people to it. The completion of the work would be a matter for a future council.
Proposed by Councillor Salt; seconded by Councillor Jones. All **agreed.**

53. TO APPROVE THE CRISIS AND RESILIENCE FUND GRANT AND MOBILISATION STEPS (ATTACHED)

The Chief Officer provided an update and explained the Town Council had been successful in securing £32,000 through the Community and Resilience Fund to develop the Biddulph Works Together project into a stronger local network for identifying financial vulnerability early and connecting residents to appropriate support. The proposed programme would fund a dedicated officer to work one day per week.
Councillor Wood suggested the Town Council could work collaboratively with the District Council.
The plan was agreed.
Proposed by Councillor Salt; seconded by Councillor Harper. All **agreed.**

54. TO CONFIRM THE AMOUNT RAISED DURING COUNCILLOR LAWTON'S MAYORAL YEAR AND USE OF OUTSTANDING CIVIC ALLOWANCE FUNDS

It was proposed that outstanding civic allowance funds be transferred to the Mayor's Charity Account, this would give a total of £4,133.54 to be distributed.
Councillor Lawton commented that he looked forward to distributing the funds to the recipients.
Proposed by Councillor Harper; seconded by Councillor Hawley. All **agreed.**

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55. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE NEW AND NOW FUND – COUNCILLOR YATES' MAYORAL FUND

The Chief Officer provided an update on the New and Now Fund, mentioning a number of groups that had received funding to date. It was reported that a balance of £1,076.57 remained in the fund. It was anticipated that the remaining funds would be spent as the Christmas period approached.
Councillor Jones congratulated Councillor Yates on the initiative, describing it as a novel idea.
Councillor Rogers congratulated both previous Mayors on their efforts and achievements.
Proposed by Councillor Wood; seconded by Councillor Harper. All **agreed.**

56. FOLLOWING A VISIT TO NEW ROAD CHAPEL, TO CONSIDER THE NEXT STEPS REGARDING THE POTENTIAL TENANCY

The Chief Officer provided an update. A reduced rental figure was needed, together with a clear understanding of the running costs and the condition of the building.
Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Yates. All **agreed.**

57. TO CONFIRM THAT THE CLEANING CONTRACT FOR WHARF ROAD AND VISITOR CENTRE TOILETS WILL BE TENDERED (CURRENT COSTS ATTACHED) AND TO CONSIDER WHETHER ANY VARIATIONS ARE REQUIRED

The current cleaning contract was considered.
Councillor Jones proposed that the cleaning contract be put out to tender, but that other options should also be explored.
Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Yates. All **agreed.**

58. TO CONFIRM THAT PLANNING PERMISSION IS REQUIRED FOR THE INSTALLATION OF CCTV AT STATION ROAD, WHICH WILL REQUIRE TECHNICAL DRAWINGS

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

59. QUOTATIONS

a) To **approve** the quotation for six new blinds in the Social Services and Town Council offices.

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The quotation of £1,360 from Amanda for Blinds was approved.
Proposed by Councillor Jones; seconded by Councillor Harper. All **agreed.**

b) To **approve** the quotation for additional Christmas Lights in the Town Hall square.

It was agreed to proceed with extra tree lights from Protech at a cost of £380.
Proposed by Councillor Salt; seconded by Councillor Jones. Councillor Harper abstained. The vote was carried.

The meeting ended at 7:18pm.

Signed……. Date……

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