



## BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Town Council Meeting held in the Town Hall, Bideford on Thursday 24 August 2023 at 6.30 pm.

**PRESENT:** North Ward: Councillor P S Christie  
Councillor D Bushby  
Councillor D McGeough  
Councillor K Bines  
Councillor K Hind

South Ward: Councillor S Inch  
Councillor Ms R Clarke  
Councillor P Lawrence

West Ward: Councillor C Hawkins  
Councillor M Taylor

East Ward: Councillor J Craigie  
Councillor Mrs J Gubb  
Councillor J Hellyer  
Councillor J A McKenzie

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr R Coombes (Deputy Town Clerk)  
5 x Members of the Public

#### 60. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors A T Inch (West Ward – personal) and Mrs L Hellyer (East Ward – personal).

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

It was proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by Councillor Craigie,

**RESOLVED: That the Order of Business be changed with Item 4 brought forward to be considered before Item 3.**

(Vote – For: 14, Against: 0, Abstention: 0)

61. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Councillor Mrs Gubb declared a pecuniary interest in Item 6. (husband is engaged as the Council's Seasonal worker).

62. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

A member of the Public provided further detail to that which Sir Geoffrey Cox KC had enthused during his presentation to the Council about levelling up funds and projects.

The transcript of their briefing is attached and forms part of these Minutes.

63. **RECEIVE RESIGNATION FROM THE DEPUTY MAYOR AND ELECT A SUCCESSOR**

The Chairman advised members that Councillor Hawkins had given up the position of Deputy Mayor to the Council.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Hawkins for his contribution whilst holding the position albeit for a short period of time.

Councillor McGeough welcomed his honesty for withdrawing early from the role.

The Clerk indicated the manner in which the voting should take place reminding members of procedure followed traditionally and most recently at the Annual Council Meeting when electing the Mayor / Deputy Mayor.

Members, led by Councillor Hind, disagreed and simply called for a show of hands indicating the number in support of the candidate, not those against. The Councillor with the most votes to be elected Deputy Town Mayor.

Proposed by Councillor Christie, seconded by Councillor McGeough that Councillor Lawrence be elected to fill the role of Deputy Town Mayor. (Vote: - For:5)

Proposed by Councillor Bushby, seconded by Councillor Mrs Gubb that Councillor S Inch be elected to fill the role of Deputy Town Mayor. (Vote: - For: 3)

Proposed by Councillor Craigie, seconded by Councillor Hawkins that Councillor Ms Clarke be elected to fill the role of Deputy Town Mayor. (Vote: - For: 6)

**RESOLVED: That Councillor Clarke is appointed Deputy Town Mayor for the remainder of the Civic Year 2023/2024.**

The Chairman congratulated Councillor Ms Clarke and presented her with the Badge of Office. Councillor Ms Clarke thanked the Members and indicated that she would "do a good job."

64. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 August 2023 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Vote – For: 14, Against: 0)

65. **ACCOUNTS**

To approve the payments listed.

It was proposed by Councillor McKenzie, seconded and

**RESOLVED: That the List of Payments be approved.**

(Vote – For: 14, Against: 0)

66. **LEVELLING UP WORKING GROUP**

The Chairman ventured that a Working Group made up of Committee Chairmen, but providing for contribution from all councillors, could be the basis for addressing the Levelling Up opportunity presented to Torridge.

Councillor Christie expressed agreement. He had spoken to the Economic Development Policy Officer for TDC who provided further detail on the (application) process.

Councillor Hind led discussion on the constitution of a Working Group, taking into consideration the wide experience provided by those non-Committee chairman and ability for those non-TDC councillors to concentrate on Bideford.

Councillor Bushby agreed allowing for the Group (participation) to be open to all councillors.

Members expressed agreement that the Council members, as a whole, should form the Working Group, that would include a series of meetings to refine the list of potential projects / initiatives.

The Chairman referred Members to the earlier Heritage statement and alluded to Councillor Craigie working on a combined heritage assignment.

Councillor Hind believed the Council should consider:

1. What is the aim / objective?
  - a. Recommend to Council / MP / Government.
2. Consult the people of Bideford.
  - a. Press and social media, not consultation (process).
3. Issue a positive statement from the Council.
  - a. Sensible projects; to maximise funding opportunity.
4. Timetable (for presentation).
  - a. Ready for Christmas.
  - b. Ready for Civil Servants.

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence, seconded and

**RESOLVED: That a Working Group made up of all councillors, to address the Levelling Up opportunity be convened at the earliest opportunity, notice of which is to be made public.**

(Vote – For: 14, Against: 0)

The business of the meeting having been concluded the Mayor thanked the members for their attendance at the meeting which concluded at 7.05 pm.

Signature of Town Mayor: .....

Date: .....

**BIDEFORD TOWN COUNCIL - Accounts for approval at the EGM Town Council Meeting - 24th August 2023**

PV NO			VAT	NET	TOTAL
1	PV41	R Coombes		134.67	134.67
2	11/08	C&R Construction South West Ltd.	976.00	4,880.00	5,856.00
3	11/08	Devon County Council	22.00	110.00	132.00
4	11/08	DS Electrical	-	1,200.00	1,200.00
5	14/08	DVLA	-	320.00	320.00
6	15/08	EDF Energy	68.60	343.00	411.60
7	16/08	Acorn	64.98	324.90	389.88
8	16/08	Newberry Recycling	131.44	657.20	788.64
9	17/08	SLCC	50.00	250.00	300.00
10	18/08	Mr S Long		44.00	44.00
11	18/08	HMRC		5,379.88	5,379.88
12	23/08	Acorn	64.98	324.90	389.88
13	23/08	Mow-It Garden Machinery	5.98	29.92	35.90
14	24/08	Council Staff & DCC Pension Fund		16,964.80	16,964.80
15	28/08	Just Office	16.50	82.44	98.94
16	28/08	Enterprise	171.60	858.00	1,029.60
17	28/08	RGB	5.10	25.47	30.57
18	28/08	Blights	50.03	250.14	300.17
19	28/08	Tamar Trading	42.18	210.88	253.06
20	DD	BT	24.20	121.02	145.22
21	DC20	BJ's Value House	9.49	47.48	56.97
22	CC11	Mole Valley Farmers	10.57	52.86	63.43
			<b>1,713.65</b>	<b>32,611.56</b>	<b>34,325.21</b>
Bank Balances at 24 Aug 23					
			- Current Account	<b>11,715.60</b>	
Bank Balances at 24 Aug 23			- Deposit Account	<b>445,366.74</b>	

## Minute Number 63.

### Port of Bideford Heritage Harbour - ‘anchoring the past in the present’.

I know Geoffrey Cox MP recently presented to the council about levelling up funds and projects. Heritage Harbour is one project he mentioned, and is enthusiastic about. The idea for Heritage Harbour came from a paper presented to him by Bideford based charity Way of the Wharves.

In my three-minutes today I want to give a bit more detail and encourage the Council to support the application for Heritage Harbour projects and for levelling up funding.

Heritage Harbours are a joint initiative by the Maritime Heritage Trust, National Historic Ships and Historic England. There are currently four heritage harbours in the UK: Medway HH1, Faversham & Oare HH2, Maldon & Hetbridge HH3 and the most recent **Port of Exeter HH4**.

There is no application or ongoing fee for HH status although there are of course certain obligations:

- Research and publish about the heritage significance of the port.
- Create and publish an asset register of historic features and vessels.
- Identify local skills for upkeep of historic vessels and heritage infrastructure.
- Identify stakeholders, speak at local community and/or Council meetings.
- Establish a website, develop a vision statement and strategic plan.

The WOTW project on the history of the wharves at East the Water is a proven model for HH.

The WOTW ‘Bideford Heritage Harbour Introduction April 2023’ paper has been presented to: Bideford Port Committee and Bideford Regeneration Board, Torridge DC Officers, Local MP and some county, district and town councillors.

Many of the components of HH already exist:

- Working harbour: The Quay, Harbour Master and Lundy Shore Office
- Historic/heritage vessels including: *SS Freshspring*, *Lifeboat Jane Hannah MacDonald III*, *MS Oldenburg*, *MSC Severn Scimitar*, *Hindustan*, *Ionia*
- Heritage buildings including Custom House, Bideford Long Bridge, Ropewalk, Cooper Street and sculptures of past trades.
- Burton Art Gallery and Museum exhibits
- Wharves East the Water interpretation panel, heritage guided walk map, book
- Bideford Railway Heritage and exhibits

In addition, HH projects should be to:

- Hold a forum meeting for stakeholders and community in the autumn. Purpose: to inform about HH, get feedback and gain community support. More than 50 organisations from: heritage, community, education, environment, government, leisure and commercial sectors have been identified. Objective Autumn 2023
- Establish Port of Bideford Heritage Harbour logo, website, Facebook page and email newsletter. Use WOTW model. Objective Autumn 2023
- Publish self-guided Bideford Maritime Heritage Walk Map (west bank) to complement WOTW East the Water heritage map. Objective March 2024
- Work with Bideford Community Archive to create, maintain and publish an asset register: buildings, vessels, heritage skills Objective March 2024.
- Work with [Steamship Freshspring Trust \(and others\) to augment local maritime history by bringing heritage vessels to Bideford. This group is currently exploring the possibility of purchasing Kathleen & May, to be moored in her home port as an operational vessel.](#)
- Complete a feasibility study for the creation of a Bideford Maritime Heritage Centre: a central point for display and celebration of the ‘ancient maritime town’. Topics to include: shipbuilding, lime burning, coal mining, pottery, gravel barges. As the site where all these activities took place the re-developed East the Water wharves would be an ideal location.
- Establish a Bideford Maritime Heritage Day with open house for heritage assets, talks and guided walks, external speakers. The model is Heritage Open Days <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk>. This could become an annual event.

In line with the ‘Place Based Culture Strategy for North Devon’ (North Devon DC and Torridge DC), which states the importance of the biosphere designation and the quality of natural, archaeological and built heritage, HH status can benefit the local community and visitors by:

- Helping bring communities together, giving them a sense of belonging and ownership.
- Helping extend the tourist season, heritage attracts visitors all year round.
- A co-ordinated and joined up promotion for heritage organisations, museums, sport, tourist attractions and companies along the estuary.
- Emphasising the importance of the maritime industry and environment to the future as well as the past on the Torridge. The award of £15.6m levelling up funding for the Appledore Clean Maritime Innovation Centre has demonstrated this.

Heritage Harbour Vision: Guardians and storytellers about the maritime heritage of the Port of Bideford and the Torridge Estuary. Anchoring the past in the present.

WOTW and the other participating groups encourage the Council to support the application for Heritage Harbour projects and for levelling up funding to help achieve this.

Michael Teare 24/08/23

Chair Way of the Wharves

Please email [wotw.wharves@gmail.com](mailto:wotw.wharves@gmail.com) if you would like to get a copy of the WOTW paper: ‘Bideford Heritage Harbour Introduction April 2023’