

SIDMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Sidmouth Town Council
held at the Council Chamber, Woolcombe House, Sidmouth,
on Monday 7 September 2026 at 6.30pm

Ward	Councillors Present:
Sidmouth North	Stuart Hughes
Sidmouth South	Kelvin Dent
	Paul Dodds
	Chris Lockyear (Vice Chair)
	Rachel Perram
	John Nicholson
Salcombe Regis	Ian Barlow
	Edward Willis Fleming
Primley	Francetta Bridle
	Hilary Nelson (Chair)
	Kevin Walker
Sidford	Mike Goodman
Sidbury	John Loudon

Apologies: Peter Blackmore, Bernie Davis, Joanne Dodds

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.15pm.

59 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 3 August 2026 were signed as a true and accurate record.

60 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

61 Matters of Urgency or report from the Chair

- The Chair asked Members to note the recent election of Peter Blackmore in North Ward. The cost of the election was approximately £7000.
- The recent Town Surgery held at Stowford Community Centre on 22nd August 2026 was a success with 46 members of the public attending. Some of the issues raised included planning applications, rights of way, Local Government Reorganisation and Jacobs Ladders Steps.
- Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) has been paused and currently under review. This would mean local elections will go ahead in May with the existing boundaries.

62 Withdraw Part B Item

Members noted that agenda item 14, Devon County Council Lease of Stowford Community Centre, had been withdrawn from the agenda due to incomplete information and Members were not in a position to consider the issue.

63 Public Open Question Time

Mrs Green raised concerns over the proposed plans for an anaerobic digester in Branscombe. Her main concerns were over the traffic load on the A3052 with up to 50 tankers a day potentially using the route. Councillor Barlow reminded Mrs Green that the issue was still in the pre-application stage and would be considered by Devon County Council. He also advised her that concerns could be shared with her current MP.

64 Police Advocate Report

Councillor Dodds reported there had been 145 incidents reported to the Sidmouth Policing Team in August 2026, with 65 of these non-attendance crimes. Of the 66 crimes recorded, the most common offence type was stalking and harassment, followed by 12 crimes of violence and 8 crimes of criminal damage. Comparing this to the crimes reported in August 2025, this was a 7% increase however, there was a 43% decrease in violent crimes which was positive as it covered the Folk Festival.

Councillor Dodds also updated Members on the new educational programme being introduced to help young recognise unhealthy relationships and coercive control. The programme was being funded by the Commissioner and would be introduced in schools from January 2027.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

65 Committee/Working Group Reports

65.1 Planning Committee Report

a) Councillor Dent presented the report of the Planning Committee meetings held on Wednesday 22 July and Wednesday 12 August 2026.

RESOLVED: That the Planning Committee report be noted and agreed.

b) Members agreed to change the date of the next Planning Committee meeting from Wednesday 23 to 30 September 2026.

65.2 Tourism, Economy, Arts and Culture Committee Report

Councillor Willis Fleming presented the report of the Tourism and Economy Committee. Members were updated on the success of the Folk Festival and Sidmouth Town Council were thanked for their support. It was also reported that despite the poor weather and Red Arrows not doing their display, the Regatta was still an enjoyable event. Councillor Willis Fleming would like a letter of thanks to be sent to the members of the committee for all their hard work.

The upcoming events in September include the classic car show on the 12th September, the Walking Festival from 12-18th September and the Health and Wellbeing festival from 12-19th September. Councillor Willis Fleming thanked Councillor Bridle for all her hard work on the Health and Wellbeing Festival. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 23rd September 2026.

RESOLVED That the Tourism and Economy Committee report be noted and agreed.

65.3 Environment Committee Report

Councillor Barlow presented the report of the Environment Committee which was due to meet on 28 September and would have a representative of the Environment Agency in attendance talking about Flood awareness.

RESOLVED: that the Environment Committee report be noted and agreed.

65.4 Youth Provision Committee

a) Councillor Dodds presented the report of the Youth Provision Committee meeting held on Tuesday 18 August 2026.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and agreed.

b) Members agreed to change the date of the next Youth Provision Committee meeting from 10 to 18 November 2026.

66 Reports from Members with Special Responsibilities

66.1 Finance Report

Finance Officer Councillor Chris Lockyear presented the July report. Members were also updated on the recent consultation with local maintenance contractors. 5 local contractors were contacted and asked to provide some quotes based on certain criteria including price, response time and quality. It was reported that Gaters were the preferred choice.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

66.2 Sidmouth and East Beach Coastal Defence Scheme Advisory Group

Councillor Lockyear attended the latest advisory Group meeting which took place on 2 September and was attended by approximately 30 people representing EDDC, STC, the chosen contractors and a range of local interest groups. The history of the project was summarised and a number of the interest groups expressed wishes with regard to the potential impact of the scheme on their activities.

South West Flood and Coastal, working with EDDC, announced the chosen contractors for the detailed design and construction were Atkins Realis and Boskalis Westminster respectively. Work would now start on detailed design which was likely to feature 2 or 3 additional breakwaters, a beach recharge and splash wall replacement. It was anticipated that the detailed design will be finalised by August 2027. This would be followed by planning permissions for both offshore and onshore activities. Construction was anticipated to start in Spring 2028.

66.3 South West Water

Councillor Lockyear updated Members that the tank was now complete and SWW are now looking at getting The Ham re turfed which would happen when the weather allowed. The final phase was the re-routing of the surface water. Modelling work is currently underway and 3 different scenarios would be tested. The impact of the new tank was still unknown due to the lack of rain. The other issue Councillor Lockyear addressed was the integrity of the rising main as this still hadn't been looked into.

67 Twinning Visit in 2027

Members noted that Sidmouth was due to host a visit from its twin town of Le Locle in 2027. The dates recommended by the Twinning Committee were Sunday 13th to Friday 18th June 2027.

RESOLVED: That Members agreed for the Chair of Council to issue an invitation to Le Locle for a visit from Sunday 13th to Friday 18th June 2027.

68 Review of Sidmouth Neighbourhood Plan

Members noted an update from the Chair of Planning on the review of the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan and considered the allocation of funds for the planning consultant to be taken from general reserve.

RESOLVED: That Members agreed to an allocation of up to £50000 to be taken from the General Reserve to fund the planning consultant to review the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan.

69 Safety Inspection Report

Members were asked to note the Safety Inspection Report 2025/26.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

.....
CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL