

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Council held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 9 April 2025

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.03 pm

96 Apologies

Apologies received from Councillors Jess Bailey, Ian Barlow, Kevin Blakey, Alasdair Bruce, Sarah Chamberlain, Paula Fernley, Mike Howe, Ben Ingham, Richard Jefferies, Geoff Jung, Melanie Martin, Tony McCollum, John O'Leary, Simon Smith and Joe Whibley.

97 Declarations of interest

Agenda Item 12:

Councillors Steve Gazzard, Andrew Toye and Dan Wilson declared affects NRI as members of Exmouth Town Council.

Councillor Marcus Hartnell declared affects NRI as a member of Seaton Town Council.

Councillors Peter Faithfull and Vicky Johns declared affects non registered interest as a member of Ottery St Mary Town Council.

Councillor Mike Goodman declared affects NRI as a member of Sidmouth Town Council.

Councillor Del Haggerty declared affects NRI as a member of Seaton Town Council.

Agenda Item 14:

Councillors Aurora Bailey, Brian Bailey, Councillor Olly Davey, Tim Dumper, Steve Gazzard, Matt Hall, Nick Hookway, Andrew Toye and Dan Wilson declared affects NRI as members of Exmouth Town Council.

Agenda Item 15:

Councillor Iain Chubb, Marcus Hartnell declared affects NRI as a member of Seaton Town Council.

Councillor John Heath declared affects NRI as a member of Beer Parish Council.

Councillor Stuart Hughes declared affects NRI as a member of Sidmouth Town Council and Devon County Council.

98 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 26 February and the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 19 March 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

99 Public speaking

One member of the public had registered to speak. The Chair of Council invited Catherine Sleight from Plant Based Devon to speak.

The speaker called on the Council to join the growing number of UK councils who ensure that all their internal catering and events are 100% plant based.

The Chair thanked the speaker for their comments.

100 **Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

101 **Announcements from the Chair of Council and Leader of Council**

The Chair of Council asked Councillors to join in a minute of silent reflection to mark the passing of former EDDC councillor Paul Jarvis, a Budleigh Salterton councillor from 2019 to 2023, Chair of Licensing and Enforcement Committee and Member of the Independent Group and Honorary Alderman Lieutenant Colonel Anthony John Mervyn Drake, of Musbury Barton, Axminster

The Leader of Council made no announcements.

102 **Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were two items of confidential/exempt business at the meeting set out in Agenda Items 14 and 15.

103 **To answer questions asked by Members of the Council pursuant to Procedure Rules No. 9.2 and 9.5**

There were no questions on notice.

104 **Reports from the Cabinet and the Council's Committees and questions on those reports**

The minutes from the following meetings were noted:

- Cabinet – 17 February and 5 March 2025
- Placemaking Exmouth Town & Seafront Group – 18 March 2025
- Overview Committee – 20 March 2025
- Asset Management Forum – 3 March 2025
- Poverty Working Panel – 24 February 2025
- Planning Committee 25 March 2025
- Audit & Governance Committee – 20 February and 20 March 2025

105 **Discretionary Planning Fees Review**

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning presented a report setting out the reasons for reviewing and increasing discretionary planning fees, focusing on enhancing service delivery, covering rising operational costs, and ensuring the sustainability of the Planning Service.

Councillors supported the review to increase discretionary planning fees to enhance the capacity, efficiency, and sustainability of the Planning Service. By aligning fees with operational costs and regional benchmarks, it would ensure that the service remained competitive and capable of meeting the needs of the community.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Todd Olive and seconded by Councillor Olly Davey and having been put to the vote was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED: That Council adopt the revised schedule of fees for discretionary planning fees.

106 **Strata Business Plan 2025/2026**

The Leader of Council presented the Strata Business Plan for 2025/2026 which would guide both the financial allocations and strategic initiatives essential to achieving our objectives which align with those set out by East Devon, Exeter City and Teignbridge Councils in their ambitious plans detailed in their digital strategies which formed the bedrock of the 2024/25 plan.

The Leader of Council proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor John Loudoun and having been put to the vote was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED: That the Strata Business Plan for 2025/2026 is approved.

107 **Coach & Tourism in East Devon**

Council received a report outlining the work of the Coach Tourism Task and Finish Forum (TAFF) set up in April 2024, which aimed to explore opportunities around coach tourism development in East Devon and help increase coach passenger visitors to the district. It provides summary on key benefits of coach tourism and key factors, which facilitate its development. The TAFF had been set up following a Motion on Notice to full Council in December 2023.

Council welcomed the recommendations proposed by the TAFF and Councillor Anne Hall proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Tim Dumper and having been put to the vote was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED: That Council agree that EDDC fund 50% of the costs of signage required for East Devon towns to satisfy the criteria for Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) Coach Friendly accreditation as identified through the formal CPT audit process, up to £1,500 per town and an overall maximum for the district of £12,000, subject to individual towns and parish councils meeting the remaining 50% of the costs.

108 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED: That Council agree that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be conducted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information defined as exempt in accordance with Paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person) in accordance with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

109 **Placemaking in Exmouth Town & Seafront Group**

Council received a report setting out proposals to acquire a property as set out in the exempt/confidential report.

It was noted that a budget as set out in the exempt/confidential report would be required. This report outlines the reasoning for supporting the acquisition of the Mess Room and the synergy of this acquisition alongside the release of the restrictive covenant on the adjacent public conveniences block together with recommendations to take this acquisition through to Cabinet and Council for approval.

RESOLVED: That Council approve a capital budget as set out in the exempt/confidential report to cover the purchase price and EDDC's acquisition costs including the usual due diligence i.e. legal work, building survey etc and, documenting a lease to the company named in the exempt/confidential report.

110 **Seaton Coast Protection Scheme**

The Portfolio Holder for presented a report outlining areas within Seaton to be enhanced as improved habitat under BNG regulations.

Councillor John Loudoun proposed the recommendation which having been seconded by Councillor Paul Hayward was carried by a majority show of hands.

RESOLVED: That Council approves an additional budget of in year funding up to the amount set out in the exempt report to ensure construction of the scheme can start and be completed in 2025.

Attendance List **Councillors present:**

P Arnott
A Bailey
B Bailey
K Bloxham
V Bonetta
C Brown
J Brown
C Burhop
M Chapman
I Chubb
B Collins
R Collins
O Davey
T Dumper
P Faithfull
C Fitzgerald
S Gazzard
M Goodman
D Haggerty
A Hall
M Hall
M Hartnell
S Hawkins
P Hayward

J Heath
N Hookway
S Hughes
V Johns
F King
Y Levine
J Loudoun
D Mackinder
C Nicholas
T Olive
H Parr
S Richards
H Riddell
M Rixson
E Rylance
A Toye
S Westerman
J Whibley
D Wilson
E Wragg

Officers in attendance:

Simon Davey, Director of Finance
Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Andrew Wood, Director of Place

Councillor apologies:

J Bailey
I Barlow
K Blakey
A Bruce
S Chamberlain
P Fernley
M Howe
B Ingham
R Jefferies
G Jung
D Ledger
M Martin
T McCollum
J O'Leary
S Smith

Chair

Date: