

Agenda for Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 5th February, 2026, 6.00 pm

Members of Scrutiny Committee

Councillors: I Barlow, K Blakey, J Brown, A Bruce, M Chapman, B Collins, O Davey, P Fernley, M Goodman (Chair), A Hall, M Hall, V Johns, Y Levine, D Mackinder (Vice-Chair) and J Whibley

Venue: Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton

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(or group number 01395 517546)

Wednesday, 28 January 2026



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- 1 Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 3 - 6)
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Declarations of interest
Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)
- 4 Public speaking
Information on [public speaking](#) is available online
- 5 Matters of urgency
Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online
- 6 Confidential/exempt item(s)
To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded. There are no items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.
- 7 Decisions made by Cabinet called in by Members for scrutiny in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules
There are no items identified
- 8 Review of the impact of the ban on use of glyphosate (Pages 7 - 15)
- 9 Climate Change Action Plan review (Pages 16 - 40)
- 10 Work programme 2025 - 2026 (Pages 41 - 54)

1. Scrutiny work programme
2. Cabinet forward plan of key decisions 1 January to 30 April 2026

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[Decision making and equalities](#)

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EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 12 January 2026

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 5.57 pm

29 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 October 2025 were agreed and signed as a true record.

30 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

31 Public speaking

No members of the public had registered to speak.

32 Matters of urgency

There were no matters of urgency.

33 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There were no confidential or exempt items.

34 Decisions made by Cabinet called in by Members for scrutiny in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules

There was one item to consider which was dealt with at minute 35.

35 Call In request: Cabinet decision 3 December 2025 - In perpetuity funding for management of Clyst Meadows SANG - Cabinet minute 118

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, a valid call-in request had been received in respect of a Cabinet decision taken on 3 December 2025: In perpetuity funding for the management of Clyst Meadows SANG.

On 3 December 2025 it was resolved that Cabinet:

1. Approves the creation of an investment fund of £1.1m, funding from CIL, to secure the in perpetuity funding for the management of Clyst Meadows.
2. Delegates the authority to the Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Management, Finance Director, Place Director and Director of Governance, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders, to set up and arrange for the management of this fund.

A call-in request was received on 9 December 2025, signed by five Councillors, including the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, Cllr Mike Goodman, and Cllrs Ian Barlow, Colin Brown, Brian Bailey and Aurora Bailey.

The call-in was requested on the following grounds:

- The Cabinet debate was split, with two members voting for and two against the proposal, and the Chair using a casting vote to approve the decision.
- Concerns were raised that spending this money does not represent good value for EDDC.
- The item was initially considered by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) working group, where a request for £2m was rejected. The revised request of £1.1m is still considered an expensive way to use capital sums to finance a park.
- There are other more urgent infrastructure projects that could benefit from this funding.

The Green Infrastructure Project Manager, Paul Osborne, provided a brief summary of the costs of maintaining the SANG in perpetuity and the investment options available. There was concern that there may not be sufficient CIL monies available to meet future costs and Officers had therefore recommended the approach as set out in the report to Cabinet on 3 December 2025. The recommended fund, CCLA Investment Management, was used by 245 local authorities nationally and had a fund value of approximately £1bn.

It was noted that further infrastructure projects, funded by CIL monies and including SANG delivery, would be brought forward and a Strategic SANG Delivery Strategy 2026 – 2040 was in course of preparation jointly with Teignbridge District Council and Exeter City Council. A report would be brought to the Overview Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee in the spring. Currently £2.1m CIL remained unallocated, which would be reduced to £1m should the Cabinet decision stand.

Officers' recommendation remained that the in perpetuity funding remained the best option, carrying the lowest risk for the Council.

The Chair briefly outlined the previous decisions made by Cabinet and the CIL working group with respect to this matter.

Discussion, questions and Councillors' views expressed included the following points:

- It was vital to guarantee funding for the SANG for 80 years and to ensure that Natural England procedures are followed;
- A reduction in development would see a corresponding reduction in CIL receipts;
- The proposed investment of £1.1m could be better spent on more important infrastructure and the costs of maintaining the SANG could be funded, as are other projects, through annual CIL drawdown;
- Concern was expressed that investing in commercial property was risky and that the initial cost of investing in the proposed fund was expensive. Alternative investment funds were available and there was no guarantee of the returns shown in the financial modelling;
- The CCLA fund was well known to local authorities and had a good track record;
- It was emphasised that the Clyst Meadows SANG project would proceed and the only issue in question was the method of providing future funding;
- Noted that the financial modelling was only as good as the estimated figures used;
- It was difficult to balance the arguments for the alternative methods of funding the project and the view was expressed that the Committee should agree with Officers' recommendations;
- Concern was expressed that there could be huge changes over the lifetime of the proposed investment which meant a high level of uncertainty regarding relying on a steady performance over 80 years;

- Concern was expressed that SANGS are being treated individually with their own ring-fenced additional pot of money. Managing multiple SANGS on the same basis could enable money to be moved between projects;
- Not spending the proposed £1.1m now would not have a significant impact on the need for funding for currently identified infrastructure projects;
- The view was expressed that the matter would be best discussed by full Council to obtain a wider number of Councillors' views;
- The view was expressed that the decision should be referred back to Cabinet to reconsider.

It was proposed and seconded that the decision not be referred back to Cabinet and that therefore the decision made by Cabinet on 3 December 2025 should stand.

RESOLVED

That the decision made by Cabinet on 3 December 2025 with regard to the in perpetuity funding for the management of Clyst Meadows SANG stands.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

K Blakey
P Fernley
M Goodman (Chair)
Y Levine
D Mackinder (Vice-Chair)

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

C Burhop
R Collins
G Jung
T Olive

Officers in attendance:

Ed Freeman, Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Services
Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer
Paul Osborne, Green Infrastructure Project Officer
Charles Plowden, Assistant Director Countryside and Leisure
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Andrew Wood, Director of Place

Councillor apologies:

I Barlow
J Brown
A Bruce
B Collins
O Davey

A Hall
M Hall
V Johns
J Whibley

Chair

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Date:

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Report to: Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 5th February 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Report summary:

East Devon District Council banned the general use of glyphosate in September 2022 based on evidence of environmental damage and public health concerns from the use of glyphosate (see Links to background information). At its September 2025 meeting, the Scrutiny Committee agreed to conduct a review into the impact of banning glyphosate and be updated on the trials of various alternatives. The report below sets out the results of Streetscene's glyphosate alternative trials and feedback from Councillors in relation to areas where weed growth is a concern. The trials relate only for EDDC areas that are managed and maintained by Streetscene. Devon County Council are responsible for all pavements, gutters, roadways, traffic islands, etc. in East Devon.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That Scrutiny recommends the following recommendations to Cabinet:

1. Streetscene to discontinue the use of the hot foam method of treatment and continue to use glyphosate-free alternatives and/or manual methods until the efficiency of recent trials can be established.
2. Streetscene to continue to use *Dicophar* selective weedkiller (where suitable) and for its use to be rolled out more widely, subject to the continued success of trials.
3. Councillors/Town and Parishes to continue to report areas of weed growth on pavements and roadsides to Devon County Council.

Reason for recommendation:

The recommendations set out above stem from the ongoing use and trials of glyphosate alternatives, the results of the trials, feedback from Streetscene colleagues, and responses received from ward members.

Officers:

Julia Woodbridge: Operations Manager, Streetscene.

Paul Fealey: Horticultural Technical Officer, Streetscene.

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Assets and Economy
- Communications and Democracy
- Council, Corporate and External Engagement
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- Environment - Nature and Climate
- Environment - Operational
- Finance
- Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Climate change: Low Impact

Risk: Low risk

Links to background information

[Glyphosate, pathways to modern diseases III: Manganese, neurological diseases, and associated pathologies - PMC](#) (Dr Stephanie Seneff, an MIT research scientist, holds 5 degrees and has published over 30 academic papers in peer-reviewed medical journals on topics such as modern-day diseases, analysis of drug side effects, impacts of nutritional deficiencies, and environmental toxins on human health).

[Dicophar trials](#)

[Dicophar Safety Precautions](#)

[Hot foam trial](#)

[Vinegar trial](#)

[Scoping document use of glyphosate](#)

[Feedback from Councillors on weed-related issues](#)

[A Growing Problem v2 STC](#) (from Sidmouth Town Council)

Link to Council Plan

Priorities (check which apply)

- A supported and engaged community
- Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
- Resilient economy that supports local business
- Financially secure and improving quality of services

Report in full

1. Introduction

As part of the Scrutiny Committee review into specific issues with weeds and where they were occurring in the district, ward members were asked to feed back on the following:

1. 'Details of any particular problem areas where weeds are causing issues – please be as specific as possible in identifying the exact locations. If you are able to, use "what3words" www.what3words.com to provide location details that would be appreciated;'
2. 'Details as to whether the weeds are causing structural damage, e.g., to hard surfaces, or, if not causing damage, are unsightly;'
3. 'Whether Town/Parish Councils have received any complaints from residents regarding weeds. Any relevant photographs.'

Responses were low so many not be representative to Councillors in general, with only Exmouth, Exe Valley, and Sidmouth ward members providing feedback. Sidmouth and Exe Valley also included feedback from 3 other Councillors combined. It is felt that if many other Councillors had specific concerns, more responses would have been received. The responses can be seen in the Links to Background Information section above.

Many of the weed issues highlighted appear to be along roads and pavements that are managed by Devon County Council's Highways department. A Bramford Speke Councillor expressed opposition to using glyphosate again to treat weed growth, supporting the need to maintain the current ban in place. In contrast, Sidmouth Town Council submitted a report containing images of weed causing damage along footpaths, pavements and in roadside gutters, and advocated the reversal of the ban. Importantly, all areas referred to by Councillors in the responses are either not the responsibility of StreetScene to maintain or are not specific enough to define land ownership and responsibility. As an example of areas highlighted as issues, *paths/footpaths* are referred to in the documents 9 times, and *roads/roadsides* are referred to 8 times. There are also numerous references to weed issues on *pavements*. *Gutters, drains, culverts* and *traffic islands* also receive mentions. In contrast, *parks* and *play parks* are referred to once each in the following statement that emphasises hard surfaces: '*There are no specific areas and no particular complaints that I receive other than the fact that the town/pavements look a mess with weeds growing everywhere, in roads, pavements, esplanade, parks, play parks, etc*'.

2. Trials of Glyphosate Alternatives

Cabinet banned the general use of glyphosate in 2022, based on evidence of environmental damage and public health concerns. Streetscene staff have carried out various trials on alternatives. In an ideal scenario, the timeframe between the warning of the ban and the ban taking effect would have been much longer than several months. The results of glyphosate alternative trials are outlined below.

Vinegar – Chemical 'contact' weed control method

After extensive research, StreetScene operatives were supplied with vinegar-based weed killer as a glyphosate alternative in early 2022. The RHS vinegar weed killer is under license by the Royal Horticultural Society, which advocates for eco-friendly alternative to glyphosate. The vinegar has a

commercial strength of 60% acetic acid, which is 12 times stronger than household vinegar. It is a *contact* weed killer because it affects all weeds in comes into contact with.

Vinegar trial: A section of a very old path in Sidmouth cemetery was selected by the Horticultural Technical Officer for the trial due to it being out of the way, easy to police, containing a variety of established weed species, and being in poor condition, which was being worsened by the extensive weeds. The trial's first treatment began in September 2021 – 1 year before the glyphosate ban. This treatment was followed by 3 successive treatments, ending in November 2021. The results of this trial were referred to in the 2022 Chemical Review Audit report to Cabinet. Vinegar weed killer was then supplied to grounds teams upon notification of an impending glyphosate ban after Cabinet's decision. Vinegar has been used by grounds teams since 2022, and operatives have become more experienced over the last few years of which weeds the vinegar will kill and which it will not, so experience has helped establish a system of Integrated Weed Management.

Short-term results: The effects of very strong vinegar sprayed on weeds' leaves has been shown to be almost immediate, as plants' internal tissues and structures break down. Fluids containing sap, sugars, enzymes, acids, proteins and dissolved nutrients were lost within hours, and leaves looked dry and wilted. After 1 or 2 days, all leaves were completely brown, dry – and dead. When removed, the condition of weeds – whether alive or dead – was unknown until they either re-grew or they didn't. Re-growth occurred almost exclusively in established weeds, whereas young, small and annual weeds inevitably were killed, even after the first treatment.

Longer-term results: It takes a lot of stored energy for plants to replace those essential elements that make up their tissues, and they don't have leaves to replace lost energy through photosynthesis, so only plants that have developed energy stores in root networks are able to re-growth. These are typically perennials with taproots or fibrous root networks. However, successive treatments when re-growth occurs, but before weeds can absorb more energy, was expected to continue to deplete energy stores as the weeds then tried to replace above-ground tissues. However, it is a difficult task to get the re-spray timing right for weeds across the district. As a result, the longer-term effects for most weed numbers/species were shown to be sustained re-growth after successive treatments.

Conclusion: The results of the trials were mixed, with the vinegar having little effect on perennial grasses, moss and established broadleaf weeds. It was clear that the preferred spraying locations were paved areas in town centres, due to vinegar being adept at killing small/young weeds. See the **Links to Background Information** section above.

VINEGAR WEED CONTROL	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Low energy use	Only used in small quantities (knapsack)
Kills young and annual weeds	Resource heavy
Breaks down quickly	Expensive due to undiluted use
Can be used all year	Operator PPE required
No access limitations for operators	Weather dependent
No spraying certificate required	Short-term control for established and perennials/grass

Safer for operators	Repeated applications on soil should be avoided
Ready to use (no mixing) so no user error	Risk of affecting non-target weeds via drift

Hot foam – Thermal ‘contact’ weed control method

Hot foam has been used on weeds by Streetscene since 2023 in various situations in and around green spaces and town centres across the district. An organic, biodegradable and safe additive that is made from vegetable extracts is added to boiling water to create a boiling hotfoam that surrounds weeds and keeps heat targeted for up to 1 minute, which boils them. Operatives’ feedback was initially positive (as it was after the 2 trials that were set up by the manufacturer when interest was expressed), but it soon became, and has remained, negative. This is due to them needing to return to the same weeds every few weeks after a treatment. The only positive feedback was the result of hot foam on newly germinated or small, annual weeds, as well as on moss.

Hot foam trial: Systematic hot foam treatments were carried out in Underfleet car park, Seaton, in early 2025, starting in January. The trial fully tested the efficacy of the hot foam in a designated space that contained a wide variety of weeds. Treatments were carried out with a frequency of between 4 and 5 weeks, based on re-growth speed, with the emphasis of preventing weeds’ re-growth from photosynthesising new energy stores. The final treatment was carried out in May 2025. Streetscene’s Horticultural Technical Officer oversaw the trial and attended each hot foam application to ensure continuity and regularly monitored signs of re-growth over the trial period.

Short-term results: All leaves and the stems of all but woody weeds became limp within a minute of the hot foam being applied, were mushy after several minutes, and had either turned black or had disintegrated to the point of being unidentifiable by the following day. Only the stems of several weed species remained upright, such as Alexanders, docks, and brambles. Although a large volume of hot foam was used in each treatment, the extent of damage to weeds’ roots was unknown, but the hope was that the roots would also be boiled to a point of no return. However, despite hundreds of litres of boiling water being applied to them on multiple occasions, the re-growth of most weeds showed that the roots, although potentially damaged, were not killed. It was felt that the difference in treatment was that the surface plant parts suffered continued heat due to the insulating effect of the foam, whereas the lack of foam below ground allowed the heat to dissipate as the boiling water continued to infiltrate through the soil before most roots could be killed.

Longer-term results: The longer-term results were the same as doing nothing for most weeds. The expectation that each treatment would further weaken most weeds until a tipping point was reached was not fulfilled.

Conclusion: Weed growth was *controlled* for several months during the intensive trial, with re-growth being treated as soon as leaves appeared. However, *controlled* in this context refers to preventing their spread during their inactivity with invasive weeds, and preventing other weeds from flowering and seeding by interrupting their life cycles. 2 months after the last treatment, the coverage and species of weeds in the target area was very similar to how it looked pre-trial, which highlighted the unsuitability of busy grounds operatives using this control method for established weeds, weeds with tap roots, weeds with woody stems, and other perennial broadleaves and grasses. The results

support most of the negative feedback (i.e., time consuming, resource heavy and ineffective on established weeds). Other feedback involved the advantage of hot foam being an excellent moss killer, which can have positive effects for public safety on mossy paths in green spaces and town centres, such as under trees. See the Links to Background Information section above.

HOT FOAM WEED CONTROL	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Non-chemical	High use of water and other resources
Non-toxic	Labour intensive
Non-harmful	Restrictions of use due to access
Can be used all year	High energy use
Is not weather dependent	Requires initial investment
Immediate weed control	Weed control is often short-term
Safe for operators	Loud for operators/residential areas
No pesticide qualification required	Non-selective – targets all plants in area
Very good public perceptions	Requires dedicated staff for best results
Weed seeds in the soil are sterilised	Can kill underground bulbs and organisms

Dicophar – Chemical ‘selective’ weed control method

The solution to the evidenced limitations of the vinegar and hot foam control methods was to trial a non-glyphosate chemical weedkiller, but this time its mode of action would be systemic, whereby toxins would translocate to all parts of selected weeds to cause the plants to die. After extensive research, permission was granted for a chemical weed killer with the brand name of Dicophar to be used in small, isolated areas with problem weeds. Dicophar is a *selective* weed killer because it selects its targets. Selective weedkillers are often used on sports pitches because they target broadleaf weeds.

If operatives are given permission to use Dicophar on a wider scale if trials’ outcomes are successful – but only in target areas and not in excluded areas, set out by the Horticultural Technical Officer – after successful trials, the only limitation would be weeds that are not broadleaf, such as grasses, would not be killed, but those weeds would be controlled manually and mechanically over the winter months, when systemic and contact chemical weed killers are not effective. With an Integrated Weed Management approach, annual weed removal is carried out via hand pulling and using hand-held manual tools, whereas mechanical weed removal is with equipment such as the recently procured walk-behind, battery-powered ‘weed rippers’, which are effective in town centres. Non-glyphosate chemical weed killers would be used for problem areas.

Many selective weed killer brands were researched, and Dicophar was decided upon due to its widest range of kill methods for broadleaf weeds, as well as it breaking down faster in soil/degrading into compounds that are far less harmful than glyphosate-based compounds. Additionally, Dicophar does not impact the neurology, navigation, or behaviour of bees, which mounting evidence against glyphosate points to it being a major cause of pollinator decline, so it does not reduce important biodiversity.

How Dicophar functions

Dicophar contains 4 synthesised plant hormones that mimic plants' natural hormones. These artificial hormones are absorbed into plant tissues due to their similar molecular structures being mistaken for natural hormones, which allows the synthetics to get past plants' defences. Each of the 4 synthetic hormones in Dicophar affects plants in specific ways, and it is the combined effects of the 4 different methods that ensures targeted weeds kill themselves. Their plant responses are disorganised and uncontrolled cell division that causes stems to break apart, abnormal cell enlargement that causes the collapse of leaf tissues, malformed leaves and roots that prevent re-growth, and the prevention of photosynthesis that starves plants. Grasses are less affected because they are less sensitive to hormonal changes, so they are slower to respond before the synthetic hormones degrade. The intention is to monitor how grasses respond to repeated treatments over recommended timescales.

Dicophar trial 1: Permission was given for Dicophar to be trialled in beds at Seaton's Underfleet overspill car park by Streetscene's senior management and EDDC's Health & Safety Officer. The beds met the criteria of being small, being away from public access (the overspill car park is closed in the winter), and containing weeds that the grounds team have struggled to control, such as the notoriously resistant ground elder.

Dicophar trial 2: Due to a resident's report of hogweed in a copse in The Green in Budleigh Salterton, Dicophar was used to spot spray several hogweeds. Streetscene's Horticultural Technical Officer identified hogweeds and a small/young giant hogweed. Barrier and signage precautions were installed and kept in place until the plants were re-assessed 1 month later. All the above-ground parts of hogweeds and giant hogweed were seen to be dead, but because they may only be dormant, potential re-growth will be monitored before concluding on the efficacy of Dicophar.

Short-term results: The leaves and stems of the treated weeds did not show any immediate signs of treatment, due to the weed killer being systemic – where the synthetic hormones travelled to all parts of the plants – so needed to maintain leave's vascular structures for transport. 2 days later, it was difficult to identify any differences. A week later, the effects of weeds' hormonal responses were identifiable. After 2 weeks, the changes were pronounced in all leaves and stems, and the targeted weeds looked very unhealthy.

Longer-term results: All leaves were brown/dead after 4 weeks in Trials 1 and 2, and the weeds looked to be dead. The leaves were left in place in Trial 1, but were removed in Trial 2, for public safety. The areas were monitored for potential re-growth until Autumn 2025; there was none. Final assessments will be made in the spring and summer of 2026, following the Standard Operating Procedure to re-assess after 12 months.

Conclusion: Trial 1 was assessed as being provisionally successful but will the need for the weeds to be re-assessed in the spring, and Trial 2 needs assessments until July 2026 before firm conclusions can be made. See the Links to Background Information section above.

DICOPHAR WEED CONTROL	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Not resource heavy	1 application in each location per 12 months
Can seemingly mostly replace glyphosate	Pesticide qualification required
No access issues for operators	Cannot be used all year (only March to October)
Economical	Toxic/harmful if used incorrectly
More environmentally friendly than glyphosate	No restrictions for operator access
Able to treat notifiable weeds to maintain public safety Selective – does not affect grasses More operator PPE and legislated requirements	Potential for drift onto other plants
Wide range of uses	Spraying logs must be kept, so an increase in admin.
Removing the cost of a specialist contractor for giant hogweed	
More efficient than glyphosate alternatives used from 2022	
Removes the potential for glyphosate resistance	
Compliant with regulations	
Concurs with Integrated Weed Management	

Summary of actions: Results of re-assessments of potential re-growth of the single giant hogweed and multiple hogweeds in the Trial 2 area, along with the re-assessment of the targeted ground elder re-growth in Trial 1 will be used to decide on the level of success of the very restricted Dicophar trials. This will be communicated when complete. If shown to be very successful, there will be the recommendation for a wider use of Dicophar across all grounds teams/qualified operatives, but only in specifically designated Streetscene areas; other weed control methods will continue as normal in less troublesome areas in the Integrated Weed Management approaches that teams have developed since 2022, often through the trial and error of glyphosate alternatives. The Risk status on Page 1 has been set as Low. However, this risk level would increase if the glyphosate ban was reversed, as it would, again, become the sole method of weed control.

This potential wider-scale use of Dicophar would mean the return of operatives using backpack sprayers to spray chemicals to control weeds, as they did with glyphosate, but it would be in a prescriptive way and for a trial period in designated areas that they have struggled to control weeds.

When Councillors, residents and even grounds teams call for the return of glyphosate, it is important to understand if they are simply calling for something that kills most weeds (on Streetscene land) as well as glyphosate has in the past, rather than specifically wanting glyphosate. A wider scale roll out of Dicophar in selected areas for a trial period will clarify this.

Financial implications:

Although the differing cost implications have not been covered in the report, it is assumed that they are not material, and preferred solutions can be met within existing budget provision.

Legal implications:

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to this report (ALW/002541/Feb).

Report to: Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting 5th February 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Climate Change Action Plan Review

Report summary:

A review of the Climate Change Action Plan, looking at actions achieved and impact on carbon emissions.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

1. That Scrutiny Committee note the progress made in achieving the actions specified in the Climate Change Action Plan 2024- 2025

Reason for recommendation:

To support the Council priority to move towards becoming Net-Zero

Officer: Matthew Blythe, Assistant Director, Environmental Health.

Matthew.blythe@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change High Impact Whilst this report does not in itself have any direct impact on progress with delivery of the Council's actions, it is an important review of progress.

Risk: Medium Risk; Whilst this report does not in itself have any direct impact on progress with delivery of the Council's actions, as a Council priority there is an associated risk.

Links to background information

[EDDC Carbon Descent Plan](#)

List of Appendices

Appendix 1. Climate Change Action Plan with RAG Rating

Link to Council Plan

Priorities (check which apply)

- A supported and engaged community
- Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
- Financially secure and improving quality of services

1. Introduction

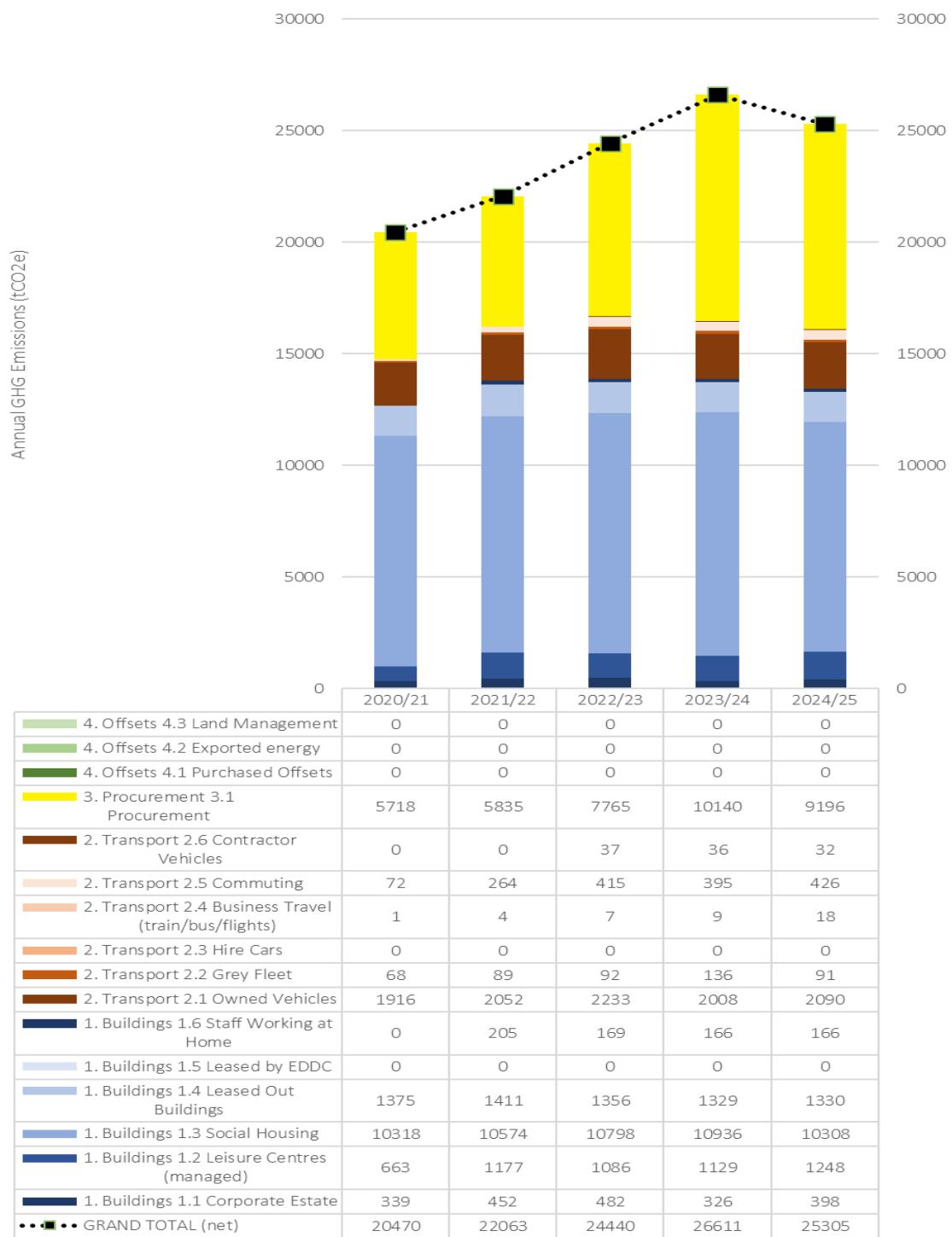
- 1.1. At Council on 24 July 2019, it was resolved that East Devon District Council would sign up to and endorse the Devon Climate Emergency Declaration, adopting a target of 2040 for carbon neutrality at the latest. Council also resolved to embed tackling the Climate Emergency as a key strategic priority of all parts of East Devon District Council and reflect this as a priority in the new Council Plan and future updates of Services Plans and relevant corporate policies.
- 1.2. At Council on 8 January 2020, it was resolved to adopt the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan as part of the Council's response to Devon's declaration of a Climate Emergency. The strategy sets out the Council's vision:

"To become a carbon neutral council working within a low carbon economy and lifestyle, reflected in our travel, homes, businesses, visitor experiences and communities."
- 1.3. Our overall target is to reduce our carbon emissions annually, and to be carbon neutral by 2040.
- 1.4. The Strategy and Action Plan were to be reviewed after five years (2025). This was completed and the plan is in the process of being adopted. The next step in this process is to have councillor feedback workshop sessions, which are planned for February/March 2026.
- 1.5. This report updates Scrutiny Committee on progress with the Climate Action Plan. It aims to analyse the level of achievement of actions, highlight where EDDC have made the most progress, reflect on challenges, lessons learnt and recommendations for approaches.

2. Current Position

- 2.1. Since our carbon footprint exercise in 2018/19 our carbon footprint has dropped significantly. However, in the intervening period the Covid19 pandemic meant a reduction in Council services and a commensurate reduction in calculated emissions. This has meant that since 2020/21 carbon emissions have risen due to a 'bounce back' effect, as services came back online. In 2020/21 our carbon footprint was 24,882 tonnes CO₂e and in 2023/24 it was 26,611 tonnes CO₂e.
- 2.2. In the most recent 2024/25 carbon footprint, the figure was 25,305 tonnes of CO₂e. This is a **4.9% reduction** from 2023/24.

Fig 1. EDDC Carbon Emissions 2020/21 – 2024/25



2.2 The majority of the longer-term change is due to an increase in emissions from procured goods and services which were 10,140 tCO₂e in 2023/24 and 7,765 tCO₂e in 2022/23 – a 2,375 tCO₂e increase. Again, this can be linked to the gradual return to business-as-usual post the pandemic. It should be noted that the calculation method used for procurement is very high level and strongly influenced by the amount of spend. It is recommended by SWEEG that more supplier-specific approaches are adopted going forward to give better accuracy.

- 2.3 Emissions associated with the supply chain (procurement 36.3% of the total) together with operational emissions from social housing (40.7%) continue make up the majority of the footprint.
- 2.4 In the 2024/25 footprint, procurement emissions dropped to 9196 tCO₂e, a 944 tonne / 9.3% reduction.
- 2.5 The Council has also seen a significant reduction in social housing emissions between 23/24 and 24/25 and smaller but significant reduction in grey fleet emissions (628 tonnes / 5.7% and 45 tonnes / 33% reduction from the previous year).
- 2.6 The overall reduction is positive.
- 2.7 The next carbon footprint exercise will take place in May 2026 and cover April 2025 to March 2026.

3. Key achievements

3.1. During 2024/25, the Council has continued to make tangible progress in delivering its climate change and environmental ambitions. In addition to the overall reduction in carbon emissions, there was activity spanning nature recovery, climate adaptation, decarbonisation, skills development, infrastructure investment and community engagement. Collectively, these actions demonstrate a whole-system approach to addressing climate change while delivering wider social, economic and environmental benefits for East Devon. The action plan has been reviewed and 'RAG' rated (Appendix 1). A summary of key actions are given below.

3.2. Actions Achieved:

- Drafted the updated Climate Change Strategy which outlines our commitment to climate change action and our vision for a Net Zero 2040.
- Drafted the updated Climate Change Action Plan derived from the Carbon Descent Plan, outlining the pathway to Net Zero by 2040. The Action Plan is a live document that sets out service specific actions that contribute to the overall strategy.
- Delivered Carbon Literacy Training to 36 Council officers and achieved full training accreditation for Catherine Causey and Brendan Carnell. Delivered the Welcome to Devon climate change presentations, to ensure that new starters are fully aware of the Council's commitment to addressing climate change.
- Engaged with all four Housing Tenant Participation events in 2025.
- Completed work for external review through the Climate Score Cards Organisation.
- Nature recovery, tree planting and climate adaptation have been a significant focus. It has been a particularly strong year for tree planting, to enhance green spaces, sequester carbon and support biodiversity. This included the planting of 3,000 trees supported by £25,000 of Section 106 funding, transferred to Saving Devon's Treescapes and match funded, delivering planting schemes in Poltimore and Broadclyst parishes. In addition, a third "tiny forest" was planted in Exmouth, delivering substantial biodiversity benefits while also slowing surface water flow onto the adjacent highway. This project was delivered in partnership with a local school and the wider community, with volunteer planters ranging in age from early years to older residents (6 to 93 years old), demonstrating strong intergenerational engagement.

- At Clyst Meadows, work is underway to deliver over 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, including new hedgerows and orchard planting, reprofiling of site ditches to capture surface water run-off, and management of meadows as coastal grazing marsh to enhance biodiversity. Flood resilience has also been improved through the opening of highway drainage near Shercroft Close and the incorporation of below-ground water storage beneath new crushed stone surfaces associated with the Mosshayne Lane to Station Road shared path and car park. Wherever possible, locally sourced, durable materials have been used to reduce embodied carbon and long-term maintenance requirements, including chestnut fencing from Dorset, crushed stone from Westleigh Quarry in Devon, and benches manufactured from fallen hardwoods by a Devon-based company. Volunteers have worked alongside the Council's site ranger to deliver planting and site works, with education events planned in partnership with Broadclyst Parish Council.
- Green infrastructure and strategic mitigation have also progressed. Cabinet approval was secured to invest Section 106 funding in Percy Wakley Woods as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), subject to lease arrangements with the Woodland Trust. This investment will improve access from the Grange phase of Cranbrook, connect to adjacent developer-provided SANG, and secure long-term positive management of the woodland. Alongside this, officers have continued to work with developers across Cranbrook and other growth areas to secure sustainable, in-perpetuity management of developer-provided SANG, delivering tree and hedgerow planting, biodiversity enhancement and community engagement in line with strategic mitigation requirements.
- The Council has also invested in the future supply of local trees through Green Team funding to support Broadclyst Tree Nursery, securing its operation for a further three years. This funding enables a part-time manager to coordinate volunteers and ensures a supply of locally grown trees for planting within East Devon, strengthening local resilience and reducing transport-related emissions. Looking ahead, work has begun on a Future Strategic SANG Delivery Plan (2025–2040), which will identify approximately 100 hectares of strategic SANG, alongside developer-delivered sites. This plan will integrate opportunities for active travel, climate mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity net gain, tree and hedgerow planting, inclusive access, health and wellbeing, and education. These ambitions are reinforced through strengthened green infrastructure policies within the emerging Local Plan, including support for the Clyst Valley Regional Park.
- Public electric vehicle infrastructure continues to expand, with EV chargers installed in 14 Council car parks during the year and a further 14 planned by 2026. Energy-intensive security lighting across Council assets is being replaced with LED alternatives, delivering an estimated 81% reduction in running costs and associated carbon emissions.
- Investment in businesses, communities and skills has remained a core priority. Year 3 delivery of the Carbon Action Fund supported 15 projects (seven businesses and eight community organisations), providing grant funding for decarbonisation equipment identified through carbon action planning. These projects are expected to deliver 80 tonnes of carbon savings per year. The Retrofit Skills Programme, delivered by Exeter College, supported 85 additional learners to gain net-zero-related skills and accreditations, strengthening the local retrofit supply chain and supporting economic transition. The Council has also commissioned and overseen a new £207,000 Carbon Action Programme, supporting East Devon businesses to understand their emissions and develop effective action plans. This programme includes diagnostics, workshops and tailored carbon footprinting and

complements existing Shared Prosperity Fund business support. Since July, 69 organisations have received one-to-one support and training, with 20 organisations completing detailed carbon footprint surveys and action plans.

- The Council funded the Community Action Group (CAG) project delivered strong results by supporting local community groups to deliver sustainability projects and drive community led projects. Groups engaged included local repair cafes, citizen science monitoring initiatives, rewilding and community food garden projects. The environmental impact of this work has been calculated at 150 tonnes carbon emissions avoided, 54 tonnes of waste prevented, and 35 tonnes of waste diverted away from landfill energy-from-waste. The value of volunteer time is estimated at £57,000. Due to the success of the partnership the Green Team approved an extension of a further 12 months.
- Community engagement and access to nature have delivered strong outcomes. Seaton Wetlands welcomed almost 125,000 visitors in 2025, representing an 11% increase on the previous year, helping more residents and visitors connect with nature and understand the value of the natural environment. Volunteer involvement remains exceptional, with 6,327 volunteer hours recorded in 2025, equivalent to approximately £77,000 of contractor value, demonstrating the strength of community participation in environmental stewardship. Events run on the site had a 100% customer satisfaction score which is a tribute to the quality of the offering and included subjects such as bat watching, moth identification and wood carving. Working with SWEET and Exmouth Town council, the Green Team funded a carbon footprint exercise and toolkit to reduce the impact of local events, this used Exmouth Festival as the pilot event, the findings of this work were then turned into a toolkit that can then be rolled out and used to reduce the impact of events that happen on our land.
- Progress continues in the decarbonisation of housing, with 120 social housing properties identified to receive energy efficiency upgrades, including improvements to insulation, windows, heating. These improvements will reduce household energy bills, cutting carbon emissions and contributing to improved health and wellbeing for residents. 60 of these properties will see an uplift in their EPC rating from a D to a B.

3.3. Taken together, the activities delivered in 2024/25 demonstrate sustained progress towards the Council's climate and environmental objectives, with clear evidence of delivery, partnership working and community benefit. The programme of work continues to balance immediate action with longer-term strategic planning, ensuring East Devon is better prepared for the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change.

4. Lessons Learnt

4.1 In order for the Council to deliver on its commitment to becoming carbon neutral, the next Carbon Action Plan has been designed to be much 'SMARTer' with actions based on quantifiable carbon reduction over a specified time frame and wherever possible costed.

4.2 To this end the Council has been working with its partner Southwest Energy and Environment Group (SWEET) to quantify the scale of the issue and they have produced a theoretical carbon descent plan (Appendix 1) which outlines a reasonable estimation of what can be achieved over the term of the next strategy based on assumptions on the use of available technology. This descent plan will be reviewed in 2027 to match progress against the theoretical descent target.

4.3 With the redesign of the carbon action plan, it aims to implement SMART- er targets, the aim is that carbon metrics and reporting schedules will be considered at the project inception

stage. This will give the opportunity for specialist advice to be sought, where required leading to better quantification of carbon metrics.

- 4.4 The setting up of the ‘Green Team’ in early 2023 was designed to give a corporate oversight of climate change, comprising senior officers from all services. Overall it has been successful in bringing together the different services, raising visibility of climate change, sharing knowledge and considering funding requests from the services (making recommendations to Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet where appropriate). In the period covering 2024/25 funding with a value of £252,000 was allocated to services to progress various climate related projects. We are reviewing its terms of reference relating to the Green Team to ensure its effectiveness going into Local Government Reorganisation.
- 4.5 Whilst there has been significant learning from the Council’s first carbon action plan period, this should not undermine the excellent work carried out in specific areas, such as the progress being made with the decarbonisation of our fleet, increased work with the community on adaptation and mitigation, training and provision of ‘green’ grants to local business and residents. This work will build in momentum as the new climate action plan is adopted after gaining councillor insight.

5. Challenges

- 5.1 Local Government Reorganisation required a review of approach.
- 5.2 A restructure of the Governance Directorate will see Climate Change move here from Housing and Environmental Health.
- 5.3 In mid-2025 a new Climate Change Manager post was introduced. Unfortunately, recruitment was unsuccessful and this is now delayed until the restructure is implemented.
- 5.4 Both the Climate Change Officer and Climate Change Support officer suffered from lengthy absences from work which slowed some progress.
- 5.5 Data collection continues to be challenging and relies on the Climate Change Team to directly approach teams and then to manually enter the data. Due to the scale of the task it is only realistic to achieve this annually as part of the production of the annual carbon footprint. The Climate Change Team have requested that the new Inphase performance management system include climate related metrics. System roll out has been delayed but by ensuring that carbon metrics are in the second wave, this will support good reporting and accountability.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Overall, the near 5% reduction in carbon emissions over the past year is very encouraging.
- 6.2 There have been a number of positive actions that the Council has delivered towards the strategy in the past year.
- 6.3 The Council needs maintain this progress with the implementation of the new Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan in 2026.

Financial implications:

There are no new financial implications identified in the report.

Legal implications:

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to this report.

Appendix 1. Action Plan – RAG rating

Complete	In progress	Not started	No data

Directorate and Service	Team	Action	Progress
PAL	PLANNING	<p>Provide intelligence and input to the development of the new Local Plan with a focus on establishing robust, effective and defensible policies and proposals in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green infrastructure • Habitat mitigation • Zero carbon development • Energy 	<p>The draft new Local Plan is out to consultation until the 26th Jan including policies addressing these issues informed by the work of the climate change team</p>
PAL	PLANNING	<p>To progress the Local Plan through to a publication draft in accordance with the timetable set out within the local development scheme and in accordance with members aspirations outlined in the Council Plan including zero carbon development, promoting walking and cycling, bio-diversity net gain, affordable housing, promoting a green and</p>	<p>The publication draft consultation ends on 26th Jan and subject to Member sign off will be submitted for examination in June.</p>

		resilient economy and the diversification of town centres.	
PAL	PLANNING	To complete work on a water cycle study to understand the implications of the new Local Plan on water supply, flooding and waste water infrastructure and to undertake engagement with South West Water to understand how required infrastructure will be brought forward and new development phased to ensure that impacts on the water quality of water courses are acceptable and that they do not lead to flooding.	A completed Water Cycle Study was published alongside the publication draft of the Local Plan with an opportunity for interested parties to comment. Engagement with South West Water is ongoing and is aiming to align growth trajectories in the local plan with SWW investment plans.
PAL	PLANNING	To continue to work to reduce the carbon emissions involved in the operation of the service by seeking to minimise the need to travel both to and from the offices but also to site visits and explore opportunities to travel more sustainably where such travel cannot be avoided.	We continue to work flexibly to avoid unnecessary travel and make best use of technology to deliver the service while minimising carbon emissions.
PAL	PLANNING	To develop planning policies within the new Local Plan requiring all new residential and commercial developments to be built to minimise their energy demands and maximise their use of renewable energy ensuring that they are net zero carbon.	The policies within the draft Local Plan have been developed with SWEEG to maximise the carbon savings that can be achieved through planning policy within the limitations imposed by government which limit us going beyond building regulations requirements
PAL	PLANNING	To develop planning policies that encourage sustainable travel making walking and cycling the preferred means of travel through ensuring	All site allocations in the draft Local Plan have been assessed in terms of sustainable travel considerations with a key objective of

		that homes, jobs and facilities are located close together and clear and accessible routes facilitate easy travel between them and that public transport is readily available for longer journeys.	the plan to develop 20 minute neighbourhoods where key services and facilities are within easy walking and cycling distance wherever possible.
PAL	PLANNING	To develop planning policies to ensure that new developments are located so that they are not susceptible to the impacts of coastal change or flooding and that they are resilient to climate change and incorporate measures such as sustainable drainage systems, permeable hard surfaces etc.	The draft Local Plan includes new policies identifying coastal change management areas and policy requirements linked to these areas preventing vulnerable developments coming forward and setting a policy framework for the consideration of developments to relocate susceptible developments to less vulnerable locations
PAL	PLANNING	To produce and consult on a revised Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule and Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	Alongside the draft Local Plan consultation is a revised infrastructure delivery plan which sets out the infrastructure needed to deliver the development proposed in the plan. Revisions to CIL are being progressed.
PAC	ASSETS	Swimming Pools Decarbonisation Project. The project will establish the interventions required and related costs to decarbonise EDDC's three swimming pool sites. The work will consider each decarbonisation project to RIBA Stage 3 and prepare detailed information required to apply for external funding should opportunities arise	Stopped due to the leisure centre review.

PAC	ASSETS	Capital Projects – Various Construction Projects (priority includes A Greener East Devon)	There are a number of capital projects we deliver, whenever possible we integrate green technologies and practices leading to energy/carbon savings, although those will be difficult to quantify. This also applies to the maintenance work we do. For example, when replacing lighting or any equipment, we look for / specify energy saving options such as LED lighting, PIR / MWS lighting controls, etc.
	LEGAL / GOVERNANCE	Reduce travel to work through improved systems/processes	
	REVS AND BENS	Online Services (via Gov Services) system including automation to reduce the amount of paper bills issued, reduce postage costs and staff efficiencies: Self Service / e-billing for Council Tax and Business Rates	
	STREETSCENE	Recycling & Waste Future Services – Major change project – reviewing options for contract replacement in 2026 and industry adjustments arising from Simpler Recycling & Env. Act.	July 2026 launch
	STREETSCENE	Recycling & Waste Simpler Recycling changes - Prepare for Environment Act changes – Extended Producer Responsibility, Deposit Return Scheme, Simpler Recycling and Digital Waste Tracking requirements	Legislation changes are still on-going. - Extended Producer Responsibility payments are now active and EDDC are receiving funding from this.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simpler Recycling – we are in a good position already with the materials collected from kerbside. The only change we are implementing is extending our green waste service to our narrow access customers (by 1st April 26) and we will need to start collecting plastic film and flexibles by March 27. No concrete plans on this yet. - Digital waste tracking – No concrete information on this yet, however scheduled implementation is Oct 26. - Deposit Return Scheme – Minimal detail, scheduled for implementation Oct-27
	STREETSCENE	Achieve target of 20,400 green waste bins, helping improve our recycling rate and capture of green waste (removing from residual stream) in 2024/25	22,381
	STREETSCENE	Review use of tetrapods and recycled concrete with lower carbon footprint than hard rock for coastal defence schemes.	There was an attempt to progress a real world test of some of these units at Sidmouth, to gain real world data for potential use on the scheme. However our lead at a company offering this moved on, and other work took priority for EDDC. However with Sidmouth main scheme developing, there may be a chance to review their use again, and further away, a future Exmouth beach scheme.

	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To produce an East Devon Air Quality Strategy. 2. To produce and publish an East Devon Scrap Metal Licensing Policy. 3. To review the Council's Contaminated Land Strategy. 4. To monitor sewage spills to land, sea and rivers and work with South West Water and the Environment Agency to reduce numbers and amount. 5. To prioritise, review and update the current Environmental Protection webpages. To complete a review of Fees & Charges relevant to Environmental Protection 6. Finalise and publish the new Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. 7. Promote and embed the work of the Green Team in Services. 8. Individual 'climate action' service plans agreed. 9. Power BI Dashboard for Climate Change data. 10. Produce a programme of training of staff/members. 11. Develop; publish and promote the Town and Parish council support pack 12. 'Green' procedure for procurement as we change to sustainable office products. Track the cost of products / sustainable alternatives and monitor any positive or 	<p>1 ASR completed annually</p> <p>2. Stopped.</p> <p>3. Complete</p> <p>4. Ongoing Business as Usual</p> <p>5. Complete but ongoing BAU</p> <p>6. Drafted for adoption in 2026</p> <p>7. This is an ongoing piece of work and now forms part of BAU.</p> <p>8. Part of Corporate Plan</p> <p>9. Deferred due to Inphase implementation</p> <p>10. Training delivered to 36 officers and cllrs. Induction training</p>
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		<p>negative feedback to support Climate Change Action Plan.</p> <p>13. Review Eyecare Voucher Scheme ensuring that the provider is cost effective alternative and least carbon impactful.</p>	<p>11. Reviewing approach</p> <p>12. No progress</p> <p>13. Complete</p>
	COMMS AND DIGITAL SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to provide better communication and engagement with town and parish councils • Coordination of all grant schemes across the council and will work with partners on how these can be better promoted and distributed • Through our media communications and community engagement we will raise awareness of climate change issues, biodiversity, and ecological recovery. Wherever relevant, we will link climate actions to other positive impacts beyond the environment, such as economic growth. • We will lessen our digital carbon footprint by taking actions such as deleting files and emails that are no longer needed. 	
HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and creation of a Strategic Housing Asset Management Strategy aligned with a review of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan. This will drive a programme of planned works across 	In progress

		the stock to ensure we are delivering decent homes	
HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver projects via government funding opportunities (ie. Social housing decarbonisation fund in order to ensure we are taking opportunities to improve energy efficiency measures in our properties). 	Funding withdrawn by central government
HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Councils approach, options and opportunities to meet decarbonisation objectives. 	In progress
HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	HOUSING 25/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the development of the Strategic Housing AMS by 2026. 	In progress
HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	HOUSING 25/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete works on 120 properties to be coordinated by Graham Baker. Ongoing and good progress is being made (additional data requested). 	<p>60 properties will see an uplift in the EPC score from a D to B</p> <p>Measures Installed Currently 0</p> <p>Measures due to be installed:187</p> <p>Window Retrofits 30</p> <p>Door Retrofits 31</p> <p>Loft Insulation 39</p> <p>Cavity Insulation 23</p>

			Solar PV 50 Heating Retrofits 14
HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	HOUSING 25/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procure RAND to review ASHP (Air Source Heat Pump) installations in 140 properties. This includes developing a strategy for communications and training around the installations. Nearly done. 	In progress
STREETSCENE		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council Wide Fleet Decarbonisation – 51% 2. Assess needs relating to home charging and wider district charging infrastructure for our owned fleet and reimbursement for home charging with HR and input into Green Travel Plan. 3. Access SWEEG support to review fleet data and produce an EV fleet strategy for decarbonising our transport by 2030. 4. Review and consider appropriate fleet management software linking with Strata. 5. Through annual tender and machinery replacements switch over to electric/low carbon alternatives. Target an increase proportion of electric from internal combustion of 30% to 35% 6. Show the environmental/carbon reduction and HAV benefits of switching and report via a dashboard 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 51% 2. This is still to progress with HR, due to internal re organisation, this may be allocated elsewhere. 3. This was agreed to pause by SLT/Cabinet to focus on Community Asset Transfer work in preparation for LGR. 4. This is being reviewed in conjunction with the recycling and waste LATCo, potential for us to procure the same Fleet Management System. 5. Currently 38% this does fluctuate when we introduce new larger pieces of machinery where the technology isn't quite there for electric. Will review again in April 2026 now when the replacement

		<p>7. All StreetScene teams to consider embodied carbon during procurement, actively seeking carbon reduction measures and environmental improvements through comparing alternative products or services with lower carbon or lower environmental impact options.</p> <p>8. Recycling & Waste Future Services – Major change project – reviewing options for contract replacement in 2026 and industry adjustments arising from Simpler Recycling & Env. Act. (KP)</p> <p>9. Recycling & Waste Simpler Recycling changes - Prepare for Environment Act changes – Extended Producer Responsibility, Deposit Return Scheme, Simpler Recycling and Digital Waste Tracking requirements (KP). UPDATE LOU HODGES</p> <p>10. Achieve target of 20,400 green waste bins, helping improve our recycling rate and capture of green waste (removing from residual stream) in 2024/25.</p> <p>11. Review use of tetrapods and recycled concrete with lower carbon footprint than hard rock for coastal defence schemes. – Tom Buxton Smith</p>	<p>machinery is brought in for the new season.</p> <p>6. we haven't yet been able to progress this without the use of a fleet management system to monitor our vehicles and machinery.</p> <p>7. This is being included in all procurement opportunities being raised by Engineers, Fleet and StreetScene Operations.</p> <p>8. Service launches July 2026</p> <p>9. Legislation changes are still on-going.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extended Producer Responsibility payments are now active and EDDC are receiving funding from this. - Simpler Recycling – we are in a good position already with the materials collected from kerbside. The only change we are implementing is extending our green waste service to our narrow access customers (by 1st April 26) and we will need to start collecting plastic film and flexibles by March 27. No concrete plans on this yet. - Digital waste tracking – No concrete information on this yet, however scheduled implementation is Oct 26.
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deposit Return Scheme – Minimal detail, scheduled for implementation Oct-27 10. 22,381 11. Attempted to progress a real world test of some of these units at Sidmouth, to gain real world data for potential use on the scheme. However our lead at a company offering this moved on, and other work took priority for EDDC. However with Sidmouth main scheme developing, there may be a chance to review their use again, and further away, a future Exmouth beach scheme.
	COUNTRYSIDE	<p>District Ecologist to deliver following targets for 2024/25:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appointment of Ecology Officer and Trainee Ecologist into the team to manage Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements from 2024/25. 2. Identify as part of the new BNG duty suitable land to create a Local Habitat Bank to secure a district natural credit scheme. 3. Work with Development Management (DM) team in providing guidance and training on Biodiversity Net Gain implementation. 4. Work with the Planning Policy team on the biodiversity chapter and supporting evidence of the new local plan, to include 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ecology Officer appointed in January 2024. Trainee Ecologist TBC 2. Appraisal of some EDDC owned land, e.g., Clyst Meadows SANG and Honeyditches Seaton, undertaken. Currently investigating possibility of generating EDDC BNG units as a co-benefit of land reversion scheme through the Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund. Have created a framework for assessing private habitat banks and now have function to open a call for sites for habitat banks, expected in spring 2026.

		<p>10% BNG policy for East Devon, and assessment/integration of biodiversity within site allocation process.</p> <p>5. Collaborate with Devon Local Nature Partnership to develop new statutory Local Nature Recovery Strategy with targets for east Devon sites to improve the district's biodiversity.</p>	<p>3. Have provided internal BNG validation checklist, delivered in-house training to DM on BNG, provided presentation to Planning Agent Forum on <u>BNG</u> in February 2025, maintained and updated <u>EDDC website on BNG</u>, provide continued support to DM team on BNG including assessment of planning applications, commenting on planning obligations, and messaging/information sharing on new updates as/when they are provided.</p> <p>4. Redrafted Local Plan policy on BNG, e.g., to only include 20% policy on major applications (previously covered all applications). Draft ED Nature Recovery Plan has mapped key habitat and identify where best to create new habitat. Currently working on statutory biodiversity reporting duty and completion of ED Nature Recovery Plan to provide additional weigh to the BNG policy.</p> <p>5. Have worked with DCC feeding into the LNRS, both as an officer representing EDDC as a Supporting Authority and providing feedback in specialist working groups for bats and protected species. Provided 14-pages of detailed feedback on draft LNRS prior to Christmas break</p>
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			and worked with Cllrs to keep them informed, e.g., of feedback.
	COUNTRYSIDE	<p>Countryside team and District Ecologist to develop proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for both further habitat acquisition in the District that can facilitate commitments to nature recovery • carbon reduction/adaptation such as the Seaton Wetlands utilising the emerging Local Habitat map to implement nature recovery networks. 	On going
	COUNTRYSIDE	<p>Work with Forestry England and Offwell Woodlands Trust to deliver in 2024/25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take on tenancy of the Offwell Woods site as a Countryside Team managed woodland to enable the declaration of a new Local Nature Reserve for East Devon. • Embed existing volunteers into the wider countryside volunteering framework 	On going
	COUNTRYSIDE	Develop a Tree Strategy that sets out the framework for engaging with climate change, tree wardens and community engagement, tackling pests and diseases, and requirements for trees within development sites	Complete

	COUNTRYSIDE	<p>Tree team to establish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on planting initiatives across East Devon working with climate change officer, Streetscene, Housing to get a council wide approach. • Engage local stakeholders / landowners for large scale planting including the identification of appropriate street tree planting locations throughout East Devon. <p>Actively engage and develop tree warden scheme across East Devon to help with the protection of existing trees and planting of new trees.</p>	On going
	COUNTRYSIDE	<p>Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment: Improve the environmental practices of the district's cultural festivals to establish them as leaders in sustainable event management (pilot with Exmouth Festival)</p> <p>1</p>	In progress, toolkit complete
	?	<p>Support the Economic Development Team on the new Climate Action Programme (CAP, replacing Culture, Leisure and Tourism Fund) to administer decarbonisation grants to community organisations</p>	Complete

	Assets	EDDC's Leisure & Built Facilities Strategy 2022-31 and delivery plan to achieve new work areas in 2024/25:	In progress strategy adopted
	Assets	Implement programme of energy reduction measures with replacement of existing boilers with air source heat pumps etc.	
	Countryside	Embed consideration of climate change into biodiversity assessments, policy, and decision making, such as consideration for suitable plant species, control of invasive species, and use of technology to minimise carbon consumption, e.g., by reducing travel.	On going
	Countryside	THG 'Climate Conversations programme'. Encouraging artists and groups to promote climate justice as part of our ongoing programme.	36 events reaching over 1750 people that directly connected in some way or another to the climate or climate action
	Streetscene	Improve the environmental practices of the district's cultural festivals to establish them as leaders in sustainable event management working with Exmouth Festival in 2024 as a pilot to create a template for other festivals in East Devon to achieve carbon footprint reductions	Complete
	Countryside	Following on from members of the THG team receiving Carbon Literacy "train the trainer training", we aim to deliver Carbon Literacy awareness and sound bites to THG staff,	Training delivered to staff and community groups the impact of our collective training has changed much of our method and delivery, for example: in terms of how we

		<p>volunteers, young people, artists and wider groups</p>	<p>manage our waste - inside and in the garden; sourcing of materials for workshops, shifting further to recycled and reclaimed materials; encouraging car sharing with artists and visitors as well as between ourselves.</p> <p>We have run 36 events reaching over 1750 people that directly connected in some way or another to the climate or climate action. We do still hope to deliver some further Carbon Literacy training as listed before and I have downloaded the updated Museums Toolkit from the Carbon Literacy Project with this in mind, but we have no specific time frame for this at present.</p>
	Countryside	<p>Undertake carbon reduction evaluation on events using toolkit such as Julie's Bicycle to capture reduced emissions achieved</p>	<p>We have shaped our audience evaluation in order to link up with Julie's Bicycle's data collection - to begin capturing our audience emissions. This is still a work in progress but we will soon be evaluating what we know in order to feedback on our closing Arts Council Funding pot. This approach now forms BAU.</p>
	Countryside	<p>Work with Climate Change Officer to help develop the Council's Carbon Descent plan</p>	Complete

		with an audit of the carbon footprint of existing buildings, assets etc	
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Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025 - 2026

Work for scoping and/or allocation to the Work Programme 2025 - 2026

Updated: 24 November 2025

Proposed date	Topic
5 February 2026	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Climate change report: update on progress with the climate change action plan 2020-2040 (follow up from report on 7 November 2024) (Officers: AD Environmental Health; Climate Change Officer) 2. Report on the impact of the ban on the use of glyphosate (agreed September 2025) (Officers: Streetscene Operations Manager and Horticultural Technical Officer)
5 March 2026	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invitation to Community Safety Partnership Councillor representative (Cllr Dan Wilson) to update the Committee, with a focus on current priorities for the Partnership, including update on anti-social behaviour. (Officer: Anti-Social Behaviour & Community Safety Co-ordinator) 2. UKSPF evaluation update report (Officers: Economic Development Manager & Economy Projects Assistant) (previous update January 2025)
2 April 2026	
Dates TBC	Topic – dates to be confirmed with lead Officers
TBC September 2026?	<p>Exmouth Motorhome Parking – Overnight stopovers</p> <p>Follow up from report to Cabinet 30 July 2025 (Officer: Parking Services Manager)</p>
	<p>Agreed at Council meeting on 26 February 2025</p> <p>Motion 2: Highways (Agenda item 22)</p>

	<p>Recommends that East Devon District Council's Scrutiny Committee consider undertaking an investigation of these issues in support of and in addition to other measures agreed at the meeting.</p> <p>Scrutiny Spotlight Session with senior officer(s) from DCC proposed, to cover input from DCC Highways as consultee on planning applications and attendance at EDDC Planning Committee meetings. Director of Place to follow up, subject to Deputy Monitoring Officer checking Constitution regarding most appropriate Committee to scrutinise item (Scrutiny or Strategic Planning).</p> <p>Agreed 10/07 Committee meeting:</p> <p>Request that the Deputy Monitoring Officer takes the item on Devon County Council's responses to planning applications back to the Strategic Planning Committee.</p>
TBC	Portfolio Holder reports: Awaiting the Scrutiny Action Plan and recommendations from the Constitution Working Group regarding changes to the Committee's terms of reference
Correspondence regarding Scrutiny Committee topics	
Date received	Details

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Forward Plan of Key Decisions - For the 4-month period: 1 January 2026 to 30 April 2026

This plan contains all the Key Decisions that the Council's Cabinet expects to make during the 4-month period referred to above. The plan is rolled forward every month.

12.1.1 Key decisions: A “key decision” means an executive decision which is likely:

- (a) to result in the Council incurring expenditure or the making of savings of £100,000 or more; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the Council's area:
 - (i) In accordance with section 38 of the Local Government Act 2000, in determining the meaning of “significant” regard shall be had to any guidance for the time being issued by the Secretary of State
 - (ii) A decision taker may only make a key decision in accordance with the requirements of the Executive Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

A public notice period of 28 clear working days is required when a Key Decision is to be taken by the Council's Cabinet even if the meeting is wholly or partly to be in private.

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The Cabinet may only take Key Decisions in accordance with the requirements of the Executive Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of the Constitution and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to information) (England) Regulations 2012. A minute of each Key Decision is published within 2 days of it having been made. This is available for public inspection on the Council's website <http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk>, and at the Council Offices, Blackdown House, Border Road, Heathpark Industrial Estate, Honiton. The law and the Council's constitution permit urgent Key Decisions to be made without 28 clear days' notice of the proposed decisions having been published provided certain procedures are followed. A decision notice will be published for these in exactly the same way.

This plan also identifies Key Decisions which are to be considered in the private part of the meeting (Part B) and the reason why. Any written representations that a particular decision should be moved to the public part of the meeting (Part A) should be sent to the Democratic Services Team (address as above) as soon as possible. **Members of the public have the opportunity to speak on the relevant decision at the meeting in accordance with the Council's public speaking rules.**

Obtaining documents

Committee reports in respect of Key Decisions include links to the relevant background documents. If a printed copy of all or part of any report or background document is required, please contact Democratic Services (address as above) or by calling 01395 517546.

Members of the public who wish to make any representations or comments concerning any of the Key Decisions referred to in this Forward Plan may do so by writing to the Leader of the Council c/o Democratic Services (as above).

Key Decision	Portfolio (Lead Officer)	Documents to be considered before Cabinet take decision	Whether other documents will be considered before decision taken [Y/N]	Other meetings where matter is to be debated / considered	Date of Cabinet meeting	Part A = Public meeting Part B = private meeting [with reasons]
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Towards Zero Carbon Development in the West End: Interconnector Project Final Investment Decision (Parts 2)	Director of Place	Full Business Case				Part B
Use of Climate Change Budget to support Green Loans to Householders	Assistant Director Environmental Health					Part A
Air Quality/Contaminated Land Strategies	Assistant Director Environmental Health					Part A
Anti-Poverty Strategy	Asst Director Revenues, Benefits, CSC, Fraud & Compliance	Outcomes from consultation		Poverty Working Panel	4 March 2026	Part A
Formation of an Exmouth Town and Seafront Subgroup	Assistant Director Place Assets & Leisure	Steering Group ToR		Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group		Part A
Council Depots Review	Project Manager Place, Assets & Commercialisation					Part B (commercially sensitive)

Key Decision	Portfolio (Lead Officer)	Documents to be considered before Cabinet take decision	Whether other documents will be considered before decision taken [Y/N]	Other meetings where matter is to be debated / considered	Date of Cabinet meeting	Part A = Public meeting Part B = private meeting [with reasons]
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Exmouth Town Hall	Assistant Director Place Assets & Leisure					Part B (commercially sensitive)
Hayne Lane Masterplan	Assistant Director Place Assets & Leisure	Hayne Lane Masterplan	No	Asset Management Forum		Part A
Strategic Development Review → Exeter Science Park Limited	Director of Place		No			Part B
Public Toilets Review	Assistant Director Place Assets & Leisure					Part A
Supported accommodation	Assistant Director - Statutory Housing Services				4 March 2026	Part B
Ukraine support funding	Assistant Director - Statutory Housing Services				4 March 2026	Part B
Mutual Exchange Policy	Assistant Director - Statutory Housing Services				4 March 2026	Part A

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Temporary Accommodation Allocations and Procurement Policy	Assistant Director - Statutory Housing Services				4 March 2026	Part A
Housing Strategy	Director Housing and Health			Overview Committee		Part A
Cranbrook Category 4 contributions mechanism for allocation and spend	Assistant Director Place Assets & Leisure					Part A
Dog Control Enforcement Policy	Assistant Director Environmental Health			Overview Committee		Part A
Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy	Assistant Director Environmental Health					Part A
Climate Change Strategy	Assistant Director Environmental Health				Winter 2025/26	Part A
EDDC Local Nature Recovery Plan	Assistant Director Countryside, Environment and Ecology				4 March 2026	Part A

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Supported Housing Services	Assistant Director Statutory Housing Services					Part A
Procurement of CBRE through the Crown Commercial Services Framework to undertake work in relation to the second new community	Delivery Manager					Part A
Colyford Road and Fosse Way Viability Assessment	Assistant Director Place Assets & Leisure	Colyford Road and Fosse Way Viability Assessment	No	Asset Management Forum		Part A *possibly some Part B commercially sensitive
Cloakham Lawns Employment Site Viability Assessment	Assistant Director Place Assets & Leisure	Colyford Road and Fosse Way Viability Assessment	No	Asset Management Forum		Part A *possibly some Part B commercially sensitive
Exmouth Town and Seafront Placemaking Plan Adoption	Assistant Director Place Assets & Leisure	Placemaking Plan and appendices	Yes some Strategic Outline Business Cases (SOBC)	Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group		Part A *possibly some Part B commercially sensitive

Key Decision	Portfolio (Lead Officer)	Documents to be considered before Cabinet take decision	Whether other documents will be considered before decision taken [Y/N]	Other meetings where matter is to be debated / considered	Date of Cabinet meeting	Part A = Public meeting Part B = private meeting [with reasons]
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Biodiversity Duty Report	Assistant Director Countryside, Environment and Ecology				4 March 2026	Part A
Sidmouth and East Beach BMP – Approval to enter design and Construction contracts	Assistant Director StreetScene				4 March 2026	Part A
Community Asset Transfer Programme	Interim Director of Place	Programme Initiation Document			1 April 2026	Part B
Disposal Opportunities	Assistant Director Place, Assets & Leisure			Asset Management Forum		Part B

Key Officer/Portfolio Holder Decisions

Key Decision	Portfolio (Lead Officer)	Documents to be considered before Cabinet take decision	Whether other documents will be considered before decision taken [Y/N]	Other meetings where matter is to be debated / considered	Date of Cabinet meeting	Part A = Public meeting Part B = private meeting [with reasons]
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Sale of Workshop Site, Exmouth	Estates Surveyor					Part B Portfolio Holder Assets & Economy Decision
Individual property: external and internal repairs and refurbishment	Assistant Director Housing					Part B Officer Decision
Individual property: external and internal repairs and refurbishment	Assistant Director Housing					Part B Officer Decision
Individual property: external and internal repairs and refurbishment	Assistant Director Housing					Part B Officer Decision
Procurement Support from Devon County Council – renew 5-year SLA	Director of Finance					Officer Executive Decision

Key Decision	Portfolio (Lead Officer)	Documents to be considered before Cabinet take decision	Whether other documents will be considered before decision taken [Y/N]	Other meetings where matter is to be debated / considered	Date of Cabinet meeting	Part A = Public meeting Part B = private meeting [with reasons]
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Household Support Fund – Determining groups for targeted support	Assistant Director Customer Services, Revenues & Benefits		As per Cabinet recommendation at their meeting 30 October 2024			Officer key decision
Sewerage Treatment Plant Replacement Programme 2025/26	Planned Works & Climate Change Manager					Appointment of contractor. Request for Officer Executive Decision
Bathroom Adaptations to 20 properties	Planned Works & Climate Change Manager					Appointment of contractor. Request for Officer Executive Decision
Bathroom Adaptations to properties ED0322-24	Planned Works & Climate Change Manager					Appointment of contractor. Request for Officer Executive Decision
Structural Repairs & Refurbishment – 33, 35 & 37 Underleys, Beer	Planned Works & Climate Change Manager					Appointment of contractor. Request for Officer Executive Decision

Key Decision	Portfolio (Lead Officer)	Documents to be considered before Cabinet take decision	Whether other documents will be considered before decision taken [Y/N]	Other meetings where matter is to be debated / considered	Date of Cabinet meeting	Part A = Public meeting Part B = private meeting [with reasons]
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Refurbishment of Flats, Langford Avenue, Honiton	Planned Works & Climate Change Manager					Appointment of contractor. Request for Officer Executive Decision
Refurbishment of 4no. Blocks of Flats, Arcot Park, Sidmouth	Planned Works & Climate Change Manager					Appointment of contractor. Request for Officer Executive Decision
Refurbishment & Extension of 1 School Lane, Newton Poppleford	Planned Works & Climate Change Manager					Appointment of contractor. Request for Officer Executive Decision
Internal Adaptations to various properties	Planned Works & Climate Change Manager					Appointment of contractor. Request for Officer Executive Decision
LAD 1 Completion – Heating & Fabric Upgrades	Planned Works & Climate Change Manager					Appointment of contractor. Request for Officer Executive Decision
Upgrade of Peazen Flats, Beer	Planned Works & Climate Change Manager					Appointment of contractor. Request for Officer Executive Decision

Key Decision	Portfolio (Lead Officer)	Documents to be considered before Cabinet take decision	Whether other documents will be considered before decision taken [Y/N]	Other meetings where matter is to be debated / considered	Date of Cabinet meeting	Part A = Public meeting Part B = private meeting [with reasons]
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Internal Adaptations Q2-25	Planned Works & Climate Change Manager					Appointment of contractor. Request for Officer Executive Decision
Radon Testing and Mitigation Contract for the Compliance Department	Compliance Surveyor					Appointment of contractor. Request for Officer Executive Decision

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Officer Decisions to enter into Contract

Recycling and Waste: - MRF/Baling Plant Refurbishment/Site Compliance - vehicle refurbishment programme	Assistant Director StreetScene	
Seaton Wetlands southern expansion and habitat creation project – HLF bid over £100K	Countryside Manager	EOI by January/Feb 2025 TBC
Radon Testing & Mitigation	Compliance Manager	

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Electrical Testing and remedials	Compliance Manager	
East Devon National Landscape HLF Open Programmes bid for Landscape Connections project	East Devon NL Manager	EOI Dec 2024
Recycling & Waste – Green Waste Narrow Access Vehicle purchase.	Assistant Director StreetScene	
Resurfacing Land of Canaan and Foxholes Car Parks	Assistant Director StreetScene	11 December 2025

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