

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 4 February 2026

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.16 pm

142 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting from Cabinet held on 7 January 2026 were agreed.

143 Declarations of interest

Min 157. Exmouth Town Hall.

Councillor Nick Hookway, Other Registerable Interest, Member of Exmouth Town Council and DCC Councillor.

Min 158. Cranbrook Leisure, Health and Wellbeing Campus - Neighbourhood Health Centre - Section 2.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Affects Non-registerable Interest, has family connections in Cranbrook as well as working for the NHS.

Min 159. Focussed Programme of Community Asset Transfers.

Councillor Paul Hayward, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Employee of local town council.

Min 159. Focussed Programme of Community Asset Transfers.

Councillor Sarah Jackson, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Member of a local town council.

144 Public speaking

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

145 Matters of urgency

There were none.

146 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There were three items dealt with in this way recorded at Minutes 157-159.

147 Minutes of Cranbrook Placemaking Group held on 8 December 2025

Members noted the minutes of the Cranbrook Placemaking Group held on 8 December 2025.

148 Minutes of Scrutiny Committee held on 12 January 2026

Members noted the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 12 January 2026.

149 Minutes of the joint budget meeting of the Scrutiny Committee and

Overview Committee held on 14 January 2026

Members noted the Minutes and approved the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee and Overview Committee held on 14 January 2026.

Minutes 42 - 46 Draft Directorate Plans 2026 - 2028

That Cabinet approves the Directorate Plans for 2026 – 2028 for the Place, Housing & Health, Finance and Governance Directorates.

Minute 47 Draft Revenue and Capital Budgets 2026 - 2027

1. That the Play Park Consolidation Study at a cost of £20,000 be included in the budget.
2. That the Cultural Strategy Delivery at a cost of £37,500 and the Tourism Strategy Delivery at a cost of £30,000 be included in the budget.
3. That the CVC service by Devon Communities Together - £63,000 be included in the budget.
4. That the amounts of £118,000 and £34,000 to cover Streetscene operational staff pressures be included in the budget.
5. That the draft revenue and capital budgets for 2026 – 2027, including the associated fees and charges schedule, be approved.

150 **Minutes of Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum held on 13 January 2026**

Members noted the Minutes of the Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum held on 13 January 2026.

Minute 38 Leisure Project update

To note the contents of this update

151 **Minutes of Housing Review Board held on 22 January 2026**

Members noted the Minutes and approved the recommendations of the Housing Review Board held on 22 January 2026.

Minute 92 Draft Housing Revenue Account and Capital Budget report 2026-27

That the draft revenue and capital estimates as recommended by the Housing Review Board were approved.

Minute 94 Income Management Policy

That the proposed updated income management policy was approved.

Minute 95 Possession of Council Homes and Garages Policy

That Cabinet approve the proposed updated possession of council homes and garages policy was approved.

Minute 96 Mutual Exchange Policy

That Cabinet approved the updated mutual exchange policy was approved.

152 **Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2026/27**

This report sought Members' consideration and approval of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTR) for 2026/27, which recommended it remained un-changed from the 2025/26 scheme. The reason for this was that the current scheme continued to support

low-income households who were still finding the current economic situation challenging, in the most cost-effective way.

The intention was to carry out a review of the CTR working age scheme for 2027/28 due to the removal of the two-child cap the government announced in the Autumn Budget (19 November 2025), and the need to start to consider aligning the working age scheme with neighbouring Devon authorities in readiness for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Any proposed changes to the scheme would be consulted on before a final draft policy was brought to Members for consideration and approval.

RESOLVED that Cabinet;

1. Fully considered the Equality Impact Assessment in relation to the scheme.

RECOMMENDED to Council:

2. that the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for working age residents is approved for 2026/27.

REASON:

The council was required by law to decide whether to revise or replace its CTR scheme each year. The proposal was that the scheme remains unchanged from 2025/26 as the current economic climate remains difficult for those on low incomes. Leaving the scheme as it was, would ensure that those households on the lowest income and therefore falling into Income band 1 would continue to receive 100% support towards their Council Tax charge.

153 **Revenue and Capital Budgets 2026/27**

Cabinet initially supported the draft Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2026/27 at its meeting on 7 January 2026. A joint meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees reviewed draft Directorate Plans and the draft budget on 14 January, and the Housing Review Board considered the Housing Revenue Account budget on 22 January.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committees recommended the approval of the Directorate Plans as presented and the draft 2026/27 budget with no amendments to the main budget, but a further recommendation on the inclusion of special item bids totalling £302,500. These had now been added to the draft budget in line with those recommendations. The Housing Review Board recommended no amendment to the draft Housing Revenue Account budget.

RECOMMENDED to Council;

1. To propose the Net Expenditure Revenue General Fund Budget for 2026/27 of £28.096m (including £302,500 additional special item bids identified in 2.2 of this report) requiring £1.174m to be met from the MTFP Risk Reserve.
2. A Council Tax increase is approved of £5.14 a year giving a Band D council tax of £176.92 a year for 2026/27.
3. That the Housing Revenue Account Estimates with a net budget of nil (total expenditure met by income) is approved with a 4.8% increase on Council dwellings rents.
4. That the Net Capital Budget totalling £16.779m for 2026/27 is approved

RESOLVED that Cabinet;

5. Approve the Directorate Plans

REASON:

There was a requirement for the Council to set a balanced budget for both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account and to set a Council Tax for 2026/27.

154 **Appointment of Specialist Support in Relation to Local Government Reorganisation**

Approval was sought to appoint specialist advisers in relation to supporting the development of the 'Reimagining Devon' proposals for local government reorganisations including initial preparatory work to support implementation. This work was being commissioned as part of the Council's role in providing programme management support for these proposals. The costs would be met equally between the seven District and Borough Councils promoting this option.

RESOLVED that Cabinet;

1. Approves the appointment of specialist advisers on behalf of the constituent Councils progressing the 4-5-1 model of local government reorganisation.
2. Delegates authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Director of Governance and the Portfolio Holder for Council, Corporate and External Engagement to conclude the associated legal agreement.

REASON:

To ensure that the 4-5-1 model of local government reorganisation continued to be developed in the most robust way possible and to support initial implementation planning.

155 **Annual programme of Committee meetings 2026/2027**

To consider the calendar of meetings for the Council's 2026/2027 civic year.

RECOMMENDED to Council;

To refer the Annual Programme of committee meetings for East Devon District Council for 2026 – 2027 to the annual meeting of the Council.

RESOLVED that Cabinet;

- Agree that the Annual Council Meeting for East Devon District Council is held on Wednesday 13 May 2026 at 6.00pm.
- To acknowledge the implications set out in the report for making changes to the annual programme and to ensure such changes are kept to a minimum.

REASON:

To ensure the Council had an annual programme of meetings in order to carry out its functions. To minimise impacts on staff resources, room availability, councillor commitments and statutory requirements.

156 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, of the description set page 7 Cabinet 29 October 2025 out on the agenda, is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing this item in private session (Part B).

157 **Exmouth Town Hall**

RESOLVED: that the recommendations as set out in the report were agreed.

158 **Cranbrook Leisure, Health and Wellbeing Campus - Neighbourhood Health Centre - Section 2**

RESOLVED: that the recommendations as set out in the report were agreed.

159 **Focussed Programme of Community Asset Transfers**

RESOLVED: that the amended recommendations as set out in the report were agreed.

Attendance List

Present:

Portfolio Holders

P Arnott	Leader of the Council
S Hawkins	Portfolio Holder Finance
P Hayward	Portfolio Holder Assets and Economy
N Hookway	Portfolio Holder Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
S Jackson	Portfolio Holder Communications and Democracy
G Jung	Portfolio Holder Environment - Operations
D Ledger	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes & Communities
J Loudoun	Deputy Leader & Portfolio Holder Corporate, Council & External Engagement
T Olive	Portfolio Holder Place, Infrastructure & Strategic Planning
R Jefferies	Portfolio Holder Environment - Nature & Climate

Also present (for some or all the meeting)

Councillor Ian Barlow
Councillor Kevin Blakey
Councillor Roy Collins
Councillor Peter Faithfull
Councillor Mike Goodman
Councillor Marianne Rixson

Also present:

Officers:

Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer
Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Leisure
Sharon Church, Benefits Manager
Simon Davey, Director of Finance
Naomi Harnett, Corporate Lead (Interim) – Major Projects & Programmes
Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive

Catrin Stark, Director of Housing and Health
John Symes, Finance Manager
Andrew Wood, Director of Place

Chair

Date: