

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Council held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 25 February 2026

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.56 pm

90 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence are set out at the end of the minutes.

91 **Declarations of interest**

Agenda Item 18: Exmouth Town Hall (Part B):

Councillors Aurora Bailey, Maddy Chapman, Olly Davey, Tim Dumper, Steve Gazzard, Matt Hal, Nick Hookway and Joe Whibley declared an ORI as members of Exmouth Town Council.

92 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 26 November and the meeting held on 10 December 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

93 **Public speaking**

There were three public speakers.

Agenda Item 12 – Agenda Item 12 – Revenue and Capital Budgets and Council Tax Resolution

Joanne Fotherington commented on the level of precepts that were being faced by local residents, particularly around the potential transfer of assets to local town councils. The speaker expressed concerns around the capacity of local town councils to manage assets and to ensure that asset transfer was managed and implemented in a planned way to minimise impacts.

Agenda Item 14 – Motion on Notice – Recognising and protecting the rights of rivers in East Devon.

Vicky Whitworth on behalf of the Friends of the River Axe spoke in support of the Motion on Notice (set out in Agenda Item 14 – Recognising and Protecting the rights of rivers in East Devon). As part of the statement the speaker requested that the Council considers appointing a representative to join the Triple Axe steering group.

Clem Davies on behalf of the Lypstone Water Quality Group welcomed the motions focus on rivers in the area but acknowledged the need to ensure that the Council worked in partnership with a range of community groups to protect the water environment across the district.

The Chair of Council thanked the speakers for their statements and question.

94 **Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

95 **Announcements from the Chair and Leader**

The Chair of Council welcomed Councillor Steve Hunt who had recently been elected to the Exmouth Halsdon ward.

The Chair of Council on behalf of the Council expressed their thanks to all emergency response agencies and officers at East Devon during the recent incident at Exmouth.

The Chair of Council also congratulated Team GB on their recent success at the Winter Olympics.

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

There were two items of confidential/exempt business to be conducted at Agenda Item 17 and 18 respectively.

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

The following Questions on Notice had been submitted and the responses to those questions were submitted to Council.

Question	Question from	Question	Response
1	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p>Question to Portfolio Holder for Finance</p> <p>Having been part of the overview and scrutiny looking at this year's budget, to help the public to understand the scale of the financial challenges facing EDDC. Could the portfolio holder for Finance explain the consequences for EDDC if LGR did not happen in 2027 for years 2028 and 2029.</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Finance</p> <p>This Council's future budget position beyond 2026/27 was given in the draft budget report to Cabinet on 7th January 2026. This gave an estimated budget deficit in 2027/28 of £2.8m and, if LGR was not implemented as planned in April 2028, then a further deficit of £4m in 2028/29.</p> <p>Since then, two factors have changed those numbers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overview, Scrutiny and Cabinet are

recommending to Council in the 2026/27 budget additional expenditure of £0.3m (special items). These items are recurring costs and add to the estimated budget deficit going forward.

2. The Final Local Government Finance Settlement published on 9th February has resulted in a further reduction in our funding compared with the Provisional Settlement by £1.2m for 2027/28 and 2028/29.

Taking these changes gives us a revised estimated budget deficit in 2027/28 of £4.3m and in 2028/29 £5.5m.

Again, as outlined in the 7th January Budget Report aligned reserves against these deficits are remaining sums in the order of £5.3m.

Therefore, allowing the Council to retain existing services and budget spends for the one year remaining in accordance with the existing government timetable. If extended to 2028/29, we would need to find savings in the order of £4.5m requiring a significant reduction in service spending to be

			<p>implemented for 2028/29.</p> <p>These are high level estimates, and a revised Medium Term Financial Strategy will be presented for Members consideration in July 2026 when more certainty is likely on LGR. This Council has an excellent record of planning and meeting budgetary challenges, however the changes to the government funding formula has had a significant effect on our finances to a degree not seen in recent years.</p>
2	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p>Question to Leader of Council Can the Leader explain why he is calling for the postponement of LGR in Devon, and does he realise the financial and service impact on East Devon District Council this could have.</p>	<p>Leader of Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I thank Cllr Goodman for his question. At East Devon I have consistently thanked our officers and the PH Cllr Loudoun, and all lead members and officers across Devon, for their work in meeting the demands of government re LGR. I have also signalled that we would enter a “political” phase. We now have. • LGR was not included in Labour’s July 2024 manifesto, while Devolution through Strategic Mayoral Authorities or Foundation Level was.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unfortunately for political reasons the then Secretary of State at MHCLG decided to force complete local government reorganisation onto the agenda.• We can be proud that as members and officers we have repeatedly met government's tight deadlines for i) initial submissions ii) final submissions. The sheer scale of work this has taken cannot be overstated• Throughout that period, MHCLG has repeatedly changed guidance eg around population numbers for new unitaries. At first, 500k or over, but then a loophole for Labour run city areas of 300k or more.• It also became clear through engagement with central government that their insistence on breaking up the current district/county structures was not about savings or efficiency. Baroness Taylor confirmed that the Treasury does not expect that. It is about a political wish to dismantle
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			<p>“Shire County” authorities which they fear are a traditional Conservative party powerbase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For many in local government, the final straw in what has always appeared a hurried, under-resourced and ill-considered project for LGR, was the cancellation of local elections, followed by their reinstatement after the Electoral Commission stated that there was no legal basis for cancellation. Trust in due process is at an all-time low. • It is worth noting in passing that in early 2025 the then Conservative Devon County was also unsuccessful, as Exeter has been this year, in having elections cancelled in their political self-interest. • The first authority to express its outrage last week was the Conservative run Norfolk County Council. They have stated that they will no longer co-operate with LGR. • This was followed at the end of the week by Labour
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			<p>Basildon making the same pledge, which brings into question whether wider Essex too can deliver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is clear that the LGR project has lost the confidence of most of the LG sector. In particular, the current timelines do not include sufficient time for Boundary Commission reviews and consultations.• Moreover, every district in Devon is involved in its own major projects which members were elected and officers employed to deliver. The resource burden and distraction has been immense since the end of 2024 when the government first brought LGR onto the agenda.• Due consultations continue as is appropriate and government promises a choice in July• On all prior evidence and experience of this process, even though it is becoming obvious that May 2027 is neither realistic nor in the interest of good local government in Devon, if there is
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			<p>to be a delay it will be left to the eleventh hour, perhaps in the Autumn, to announce it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders are discussing this week at a political level if there is consensus to write to MHCLG a) supporting ongoing rationalisation of services across Devon especially through future shared services b) acknowledging the possibilities of a Strategic Mayoral Authority as per the manifesto, and the possibility of delivering that through the Combined County Authority if Plymouth join the CCA c) that in the leaders' assessment, the timescales are not realistic, and request that the SoS decide as soon as possible if there is to be a delay. • Regarding our own medium-term financial plan, the PH for Finance has provided the answer at an earlier question. In the event the SoS was minded to postpone by a year, it is likely that provision would be made tbc
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At all times, it is the responsibility of the Devon council administrations to seek certainty on behalf of the public, the staff and officers, and in the interests of democracy.
3	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p>Question to Leader of Council</p> <p>In February 2025 the leader proposed a motion regarding the condition of our highways, this included a number of suggestions and some members that our roads were poor. Since then we have had ten months of the Lib Dems in power does the Leader believe our roads have improved.</p> <p>Motions Report.2.Highways.pdf</p>	<p>Leader of Council</p> <p>I thank Cllr Goodman for his constructive question. Clearly, during the ten months that the Liberal Democrats have been in power, the Highways team has been operating under a budget set by the previous (Conservative) administration . This has presented a number of challenges, not least because there was historically a reluctance to invest more capital or revenue funding into the department. This, coupled with poor central government funding, has seen a situation of unmanaged decline develop over some years. Despite the clear and obvious fiscal challenges presented, some progress has been made. The pothole trial (which saw non-safety defects repaired at the same time as reported safety defects within a defined area) was run in two divisions and was generally held to be a success – the scheme will be extended across a number of divisions in the finer months this year, which will include at least</p>

			<p>one East Devon Division. The road warden scheme, which has over 120 parishes as active users, is being extended through the Community Protocol Scheme, which gives town and parish councils better access to service delivery on projects they (the Town or Parish) wish to expedite and are happy to finance.</p> <p>At our recent budget meeting, the Liberal Democrat Administration, supported by all the other main parties, agreed an extra of 5.7% across the Climate Change, Environment and transport Department as a whole and an extra £19million specifically for highways this year, (£4million for revenue spending, £15 million capital) with an extra £10 million capital each year for the next 4 years. As such, it might be a fairer test to repeat this question in 12 months time, at which point the administration at DCC will have had the opportunity to prove their budget.</p>
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Follow up questions:

Question 1:

Councillor Mike Goodman asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance that if LGR was delayed what was the impact on the Councils finances and services likely to be. In response the Portfolio Holder for Finance confirmed that the current Medium Term Plan was prepared with LGR in mind and that a written response would follow.

Question 2:

Councillor Mike Goodman asked the Leader of Council that if LGR was delayed Delay to LGR and the significant impact this might have on East Devon and its residents. The

Leader commented that the Secretary of State had indicated that local government reorganisation was proceeding in line with the current timetable. The Leader referred to the original response which set details in full. The Leader of Council further commented that Leaders across Devon would be writing to the Secretary of State highlighting that constructive work was underway which would see all authorities across Devon working together on a range of services. The Leader confirmed that the current Medium Term Financial Plan had been prepared in light of LGR and that funding shortfalls would need to be addressed by Government if they delayed the current process of reorganisation in Devon,

Question 3:

Councillor Mike Goodman asked how many road schemes had been delayed or stopped in Devon. The Leader of Council responded that this matter should be addressed to the Portfolio Holder for Highways at Devon District Council.

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

The minutes from the following meetings were noted:

- Cabinet – 3 December 2025, 7 January and 4 February 2026
- Licensing and Enforcement Sub Committee – 28 January 2026
- Planning Committee – 16 December 2025 and 9 February 2026
- Strategic Planning Committee – 6 January 2026
- Cranbrook Placemaking Group – 8 December 2025 and 2 February 2026
- Scrutiny Committee – 12 January and 14 January 2026
- Overview Committee – 22 January 2026
- Audit & Governance Committee – 29 January 2026
- LATCo Shareholder Committee – 4 February 2026
- Personnel Committee – 28 January 2026
- Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum – 13 January 2026
- Exmouth Beach Management Steering Group – 28 November 2025
- Arts & Culture Forum – 26 November 2025
- Asset Management Forum – 19 January 2026

RESOLVED: That Council note the minutes of the meeting set out above.

99 **Recommendation from Audit & Governance Committee - Final Auditors Annual Report (VFM) 2024/2025**

The Council received a report setting out a recommendation from the Audit and Governance Committee relating to the final Auditor's Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2025.

Council noted that the report set out a summary of the work undertaken by Grant Thornton for East Devon District Council as the appointed external auditor.

Council noted the contents of the auditors report.

RESOLVED: That Council notes the final Auditor's Annual Report (VfM) for 2024/2025.

100 **Recommendation from Cabinet - Capital Strategy and Treasury**

Management Strategy 2026/2027 (incorporating Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy) 2026/2027

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy Statement incorporating Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2026/2027.

Council noted that these documents provided details on how the Council planned, prioritised and managed capital expenditure, financing and investment activity, its investments and borrowing along with prudential indicators which evidenced key performance measures including the affordability of borrowing.

Councillor Sam Hawkins proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Yehudi Levine and having been put to the vote were carried by a majority show of hands.

RESOLVED:

1. That Council adopts the Capital Strategy 2026/27 – 2029/30.
2. That Council adopts the Treasury Management Strategy including the Prudential Indicators for 2026/27.
3. That Council approves the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2026/27.
4. That Council approves the Annual Investment Strategy, creditworthiness criteria and updated list of counterparties.

101 **Revenue and Capital Budgets and Council Tax Resolution 2026/2027**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented a report setting out details of the revenue and capital budgets along with the Council Tax resolution for 2026/2027.

Councillor Sam Hawkins proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor John Loudoun and in accordance with legislation a recorded vote was taken.

Recorded Vote:

For: Councillors Paul Arnott, Brian, Aurora Bailey, Jess Bailey, Ian Barlow, Kevin Blakey, Kim Bloxham, Colin Brown, Jenny Brown, Alasdair Bruce, Chris Burhop, Maddy Chapman, Iain Chubb, Bethany Collins, Olly Davey, Tim Dumper, Peter Faithfull, Paula Fernley, Charlotte Fitzgerald, Steve Gazzard, Mike Goodman, Anne Hall, Matt Hall, Sam Hawkins, Paul Hayward, Nick Hookway, Steve Hunt, Sarah Jackson, Richard Jefferies, Vicky Johns, Geoff Jung, Fabian King, Dan Ledger, Yehudi Levine, John Loudoun, Duncan Mackinder, Melanie Martin, Fran McElhone, Todd Olive, Helen Parr, Henry Riddell, Marianne Rixson, Eleanor Rylance, Susan Westerman, Joe Whibley and Eileen Wragg.

Against: Councillors Roy Collins and Tony McCollum.

Abstentions: None.

The vote was carried by a majority (46 for and 2 against).

RESOLVED:

That Council approve the Cabinet recommendations on the Revenue and Capital Budgets 2026/27 (Minute Number 153) on the 4th February 2026 which gives the Council Tax requirement for this Council of £11,629,564 resulting in a Council Tax Band D amount of £176.92 and to approve the formal Council Tax Resolution set out as follows:

1. It be noted that on 7th January 2026 Cabinet (minute reference 136 refers) calculated the Council Tax Base 2026/27.
 - (a) for the whole Council area as 65,733.46 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
 - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as detailed in Schedule 1 attached.
2. As a preliminary step, calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2026/27 (excluding Parish precepts) is £11,629,564.
3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) £116,541,203.51 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
 - (b) £97,385,643.03 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) £19,155,560.48 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
 - (d) £291.41 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
 - (e) £7,525,996.48 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Schedule 1).
 - (f) £176.92 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.
 - (g) The amounts stated in column 5 of the schedule 1 attached given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area specified in column 1 of Schedule 1 divided in each case by the amount at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council in

accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area set out in column 1 of Schedule 1 to which one or more special items relate.

- (h) The amounts set out in Schedule 2 attached given by multiplying the amounts at 3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

4. That it be noted that for the year 2026/27 Devon County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the District Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands	Precepting Authority		
	Devon County Council	Police & Crime Com for Devon & Cornwall	Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue
A	£1,260.78	£202.13	£73.12
B	£1,470.91	£235.82	£85.31
C	£1,681.04	£269.51	£97.49
<u>D</u>	<u>£1,891.17</u>	<u>£303.20</u>	<u>£109.68</u>
E	£2,311.43	£370.58	£134.05
F	£2,731.69	£437.96	£158.43
G	£3,151.95	£505.33	£182.80
H	£3,782.34	£606.40	£219.36

That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3 (h) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts set out in Schedule 3 attached as the amounts of council tax for the year 2026/27 for each of the categories of dwellings shown in Schedule 3.

- 6 The Council has determined that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2026/27 is **not** excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992. As the billing authority, the Council has **not** been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2026/27 is excessive and therefore the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK Local Government Finance Act 1992.

102 **Recommendation from Cabinet - Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/2027**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2026/2027 for working age residents which was unchanged from the 2025/2026 scheme.

Councillor Sam Hawkins proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Dan Ledger and having been put to the vote was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED: That Council approve the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for working age residents for 2026/2027.

103 **Motion on Notice: Recognising and Protecting the Rights of Rivers in East Devon**

The Council considered a Motion on Notice - Recognising and Protecting the Rights of Rivers in East Devon.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Paula Fernley and seconded by Councillor Jess Bailey. The supporters of the motion included Councillors Paul Arnott, Charlotte Fitzgerald, Geoff Jung, Steve Hunt, Marianne Rixson, Sarah Jackson, Paul Hayward, Alasdair Bruce, Joe Whibley, Tim Dumper, Ian Barlow, Olly Davey, Anne Hall, Fabian King, Duncan Mackinder, Steve Hunt, Richard Jefferies and Bethany Collins.

In speaking to the motion Councillor Fernley requested that the Council notes that: East Devon is home to a network of rivers and streams — including the Axe, Coly, Otter, Sid, Exe, Clyst, Yarty, Lym and their tributaries, which are central to the district's ecology, landscape character, cultural heritage and community wellbeing. These waterways support wildlife, livelihoods, recreation, food production and the local economy.

Across East Devon and nationally, rivers are under increasing pressure from sewage pollution, agricultural runoff, over-abstraction, habitat loss and climate change. These pressures threaten biodiversity, public health, climate resilience and the long-term sustainability of our river catchments.

Councillor Fernley also called on the Council to safeguard these natural assets for current and future generations, East Devon District Council should demonstrate leadership by recognising the intrinsic value, ecological importance of rivers and they have rights, drawing inspiration from the principles set out in the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Rivers, including:

- the right to flow naturally and seasonally;
- the right to perform essential ecological functions;
- the right to be free from pollution;
- the right to be sustained by, and sustain, healthy freshwater sources;
- the right to support native biodiversity and ecological integrity; and
- the right to recovery and regeneration from environmental harm.

Councillor Fernley requested that the Council therefore resolves to:

1. Acknowledge the intrinsic ecological value of all rivers and streams within the jurisdiction of East Devon District Council, and that they have rights, including the Axe, Coly, Otter, Sid, Exe, Clyst, Yarty, Lym and their tributaries.

2. Affirm the Council's commitment, through its planning and policy functions, to giving due weight to river protection, flood prevention, sustainable drainage (SuDS), nutrient neutrality, biodiversity net gain and green infrastructure, including through the emerging Local Plan and development management processes.
3. Note that river protection and restoration principles have been embedded within the emerging Local Plan as far as current legislation allows, and that these considerations will continue to inform relevant planning decisions.
4. Continue to work in partnership with relevant national and regional bodies, including the Environment Agency, Natural England, DEFRA, Ofwat and South West Water, to formally communicate concerns about river health and to encourage stronger protections, effective enforcement and catchment-based approaches. As well as asking our MPs to put pressure on Government.
5. Recognise the value of citizen science and community-led river monitoring initiatives and commit to signposting communities to appropriate regulatory bodies and partners where concerns about river quality arise.
6. Encourage collaboration with community groups, NGO's, catchment partnerships and other stakeholders, where this aligns with existing Council priorities and resources, to share information, promote good practice and signpost relevant support.
7. Promote public awareness and engagement, within existing resources, on the importance of rivers to East Devon's natural environment, climate resilience and cultural heritage.
8. Request that the Environment Agency, working with local partners, publishes an annual "State of East Devon Rivers" report to improve transparency, understanding and accountability for river condition and management.

In seconding the motion Councillor Jess Bailey commented that it was important that there was an action plan in place to support the requests set out in the motion.

Having been duly moved and seconded the motion on notice was put to the vote and carried by a majority show of hands.

RESOLVED:

That Council:

1. Acknowledge the intrinsic ecological value of all rivers and streams within the jurisdiction of East Devon District Council, and that they have rights, including the Axe, Coly, Otter, Sid, Exe, Clyst, Lym and their tributaries.
2. Affirm the Council's commitment, through its planning and policy functions, to giving due weight to river protection, flood prevention, sustainable drainage (SuDS), nutrient neutrality, biodiversity net gain and green infrastructure, including through the emerging Local Plan and development management processes.
3. Note that river protection and restoration principles have been embedded within the emerging Local Plan as far as current legislation allows, and that these considerations will continue to inform relevant planning decisions.
4. Continue to work in partnership with relevant national and regional bodies, including the Environment Agency, Natural England, DEFRA, Ofwat and South West Water, to formally communicate concerns about river health and to encourage stronger protections, effective enforcement and catchment-based approaches. As well as asking our MPs to put pressure on Government.
5. Recognise the value of citizen science and community-led river monitoring initiatives, and commit to signposting communities to appropriate regulatory bodies and partners where concerns about river quality arise.
6. Encourage collaboration with community groups, NGO's, catchment partnerships and other stakeholders, where this aligns with existing Council priorities and resources, to share information, promote good practice and signpost relevant support.
7. Promote public awareness and engagement, within existing resources, on the importance of rivers to East Devon's natural environment, climate resilience and cultural heritage.

8. Request that the Environment Agency, working with local partners, publishes an annual “State of East Devon Rivers” report to improve transparency, understanding and accountability for river condition and management.

104 **Budget Setting & Capital Allocations Panel - Nomination of councillor**

The Council considered a nomination to fill a vacancy on the Budget Setting and Capital Allocations Panel.

Councillor Fran McElhone was nominated and having been proposed by Councillor Dan Ledger and seconded by Councillor Paul Arnott, was put to the vote and carried by a majority show of hands.

RESOLVED:

That Council appoint Councillor Fran McElhone to serve on the Budget Setting and Capital Allocations Panel.

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

Councillor Charlotte Fitzgerald moved a motion to pass a resolution under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting, on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the finance or business affairs of any particular person. The motion was seconded by Councillor Eleanor Rylance and having been put to the vote was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the finance or business affairs of any particular person.

106 **Recommendation from Cabinet - Bridge and Structure Inspections 2025**

The item was considered in exempt session under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A as it contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Council and third parties due to commercially sensitive tender information.

The Council considered a recommendation from the Cabinet on 4 February 2026 Members received a recommendation seeking additional funding to inspect Council owned bridges and structures.

Councillor Dan Ledger proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Geoff Jung and having been put to the vote was carried by a majority show of hands.

Resolved:

That Council agree to increase revenue budget Parks and Open Space by

£35,000 for FY2025-2026 and increase revenue budget by £11,380 in FY2026-2027 to ensure inspections are undertaken.

107 **Recommendation from Cabinet Exmouth Town Hall**

Councillors Aurora Bailey, Maddy Chapman, Tim Dumper, Dan Wilson, Brian Bailey, Nick Hookway, Olly Davey, Joe Whibley, Matt Hall and Steve Gazzard left the meeting before consideration of this item.

The item was considered in exempt session under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A as it contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Council and third parties.

Council considered a report setting out recommendations from Cabinet on 4 February 2026, seeking approval to dispose of a Council-owned building to support community uses.

Council supported the disposal of the Council owned building to support community use and the motion having been moved by Councillor Paul Hayward and seconded by Councillor Dan Ledger was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

Resolved:

That Council endorse the decision to dispose of a Council owned building to support community use.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

P Arnott	T Dumper	F King
A Bailey	P Faithfull	D Ledger
B Bailey	P Fernley	Y Levine
J Bailey	C Fitzgerald	J Loudoun
I Barlow	S Gazzard	D Mackinder
K Blakey	M Goodman	M Martin
K Bloxham	A Hall	T McCollum
C Brown	M Hall	F McElhone
J Brown	S Hawkins	T Olive
A Bruce	P Hayward	H Parr
C Burhop	N Hookway	H Riddell
M Chapman	S Hunt	M Rixson
I Chubb	S Jackson	E Rylance
B Collins	R Jefferies	S Westerman
R Collins	V Johns	J Whibley
O Davey	G Jung	E Wragg

Officers in attendance:

Simon Davey, Director of Finance
Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive
Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Andrew Wood, Director of Place

Councillor apologies:

V Bonetta
S Chamberlain
M Hartnell
J Heath
M Howe
S Hughes
B Ingham
C Nicholas
J O'Leary
S Smith
D Wilson

Chair

Date: