



**Agenda for Council  
Wednesday, 15th April, 2026, 6.00 pm**

To: All elected Members of the Council; Honorary Aldermen

**Venue:** Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton

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Dear Sir/Madam

**Meeting of the Council of the District of East Devon on  
Wednesday, 15th April, 2026 at 6.00 pm**

You are called upon to attend the above meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton. It is proposed that the matters set out on the agenda below will be considered at the meeting and resolution or resolutions passed as the Council considers expedient.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T. Hendren".

Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive

**1 Apologies**

**2 Declarations of interest**

Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)

**3 Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 5 - 23)**

- 4 **Public speaking**  
Information on [public speaking](#) is available online
- 5 **Matters of urgency**  
Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online
- 6 **Announcements from the Chairman and Leader**
- 7 **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, but if confidential minutes from Cabinet and/or the Council's Committees are being discussed, Officers may recommend consideration in the private part of the meeting.
- 8 **To answer questions asked by Members of the Council pursuant to Procedure Rules No. 9.2 and 9.5** (Pages 24 - 29)
- 9 **Reports from the Cabinet and the Council's Committees and questions on those reports** (Pages 30 - 84)
- 10 **Recommendation from Strata Joint Executive Committee - Strata Business Plan 2026/2027** (Pages 85 - 128)
- 11 **Recommendation from Constitution Working Group - Part 2: Delegated Powers of Committees** (Pages 129 - 156)
- 12 **Recommendation from Constitution Working Group - LATCo Terms of Reference** (Pages 157 - 164)
- 13 **Recommendation from Constitution Working Group - Overview and Scrutiny Committees Terms of Reference** (Pages 165 - 176)
- 14 **Motion on Notice - Protection of Terrestrial Television Access** (Pages 177 - 179)

## **Motion 1: Protection of Terrestrial Television Access**

**Proposed by:** Councillor Stuart Hughes

**Seconded by:** Councillor Colin Brown

**Supported by:** Councillors Mike Goodman, Jenny Brown, Iain Chubb, Helen Parr, Ben Ingham and Brian Bailey

This Council notes:

- Ongoing national discussions regarding the potential future switch-off of terrestrial television services in the UK.
- That a significant number of residents in East Devon — particularly older people, those on low incomes, and those in rural areas — rely on terrestrial TV as their primary means of accessing news, public information, and entertainment.
- That many households do not have access to reliable, affordable broadband and would face financial or practical barriers in transitioning to internet-based television services.

This Council believes:

- That access to public service broadcasting is a vital public good.
- That any transition away from terrestrial TV must not disadvantage vulnerable residents or deepen digital exclusion.
- That Government must ensure universal, affordable alternatives are in place before any switch-off is considered.

This Council resolves to:

1. Write to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport expressing this Council's concerns and requesting clarity on the Government's long-term plans for terrestrial TV.
2. Urge the Government to guarantee that no switch-off will occur until reliable, affordable broadband and suitable equipment are available to all households.
3. Request that Government commits to fully funded support for residents who would face financial or practical barriers in transitioning to digital-only services.
4. Share this motion with East Devon's Members of Parliament, inviting their support and asking them to raise the issue in Parliament.

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If you are recording the meeting, you are asked to act in a reasonable manner and not disrupt the conduct of meetings for example by using intrusive lighting, flash photography or asking people to repeat statements for the benefit of the recording. You may not make an oral commentary during the meeting. The Chair has the power to control public recording and/or reporting so it does not disrupt the meeting.

Members of the public exercising their right to speak during Public Speaking will be recorded.

[Decision making and equalities](#)

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**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><b>Question to Portfolio Holder for Finance</b></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><b>Portfolio Holder for Finance</b></p> <p>This Council's future budget position beyond 2026/27 was given in the draft budget report to Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> 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"> <li>1. Overview, Scrutiny and Cabinet are</li> </ol>

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 9<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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><b>Question to Leader of Council</b> 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><b>Leader of Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• LGR was not included in Labour’s July 2024 manifesto, while Devolution through Strategic Mayoral Authorities or Foundation Level was.</li> <li>• Unfortunately for</li> </ul>

			<p>political reasons the then Secretary of State at MHCLG decided to force complete local government reorganisation onto the agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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 "Shire County"</li> </ul>
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			<p>authorities which they fear are a traditional Conservative party powerbase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• This was followed at the end of the week by Labour Basildon making the same pledge,</li> </ul>
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			<p>which brings into question whether wider Essex too can deliver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Due consultations continue as is appropriate and government promises a choice in July</li> <li>• 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 to be a delay it will be left to the</li> </ul>
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			<p>eleventh hour, perhaps in the Autumn, to announce it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• At all times, it is the responsibility of the Devon</li> </ul>
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			<p>council administrations to seek certainty on behalf of the public, the staff and officers, and in the interests of democracy.</p>
3	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p><b>Question to Leader of Council</b>                  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.  <a href="#">Motions Report.2.Highways.pdf</a></p>	<p><b>Leader of Council</b></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 one East Devon Division. The road warden scheme, which has over 120</p>

			<p>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 was this likely to have a significant impact 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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.

## **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, Anne Hall, 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 Amott	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: .....



Report to: **Council**

Date of Meeting 15 April 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Questions on Notice

### Report summary:

The constitution provides that members of Council may ask: the Chair, the Leader or a Portfolio Holder Member of the Cabinet; or the Chair of any Committee or Sub Committee a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the district.

A member may only ask a question if either:

(a) they have given at least 3 working days' notice in writing of the question to the Chief Executive; or

(b) the question relates to urgent matters, they have the consent of the Chair to whom the question is to be put and the content of the question is given to the Chief Executive by noon on the day of the meeting.

In response to a question on notice an answer may take the form of:

(a) A direct oral answer;

(b) Where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or

(c) Where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

In accordance with the Constitution seven questions on notice have been received and they are set out in the report with the responses.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget                      Yes  No

Policy Framework      Yes  No

### Recommendation:

**To note the responses to the questions on notice.**

### Reason for recommendation:

In accordance with the Council's Constitution Rules Part 4, 9.2 Questions on notice at full Council; 9.3 Notice of questions.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager ([andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk))

Question	Question from	Question	Response
1	Cllr Stuart Hughes	<p><b>Question to Portfolio Holder for Finance</b></p> <p><b>Annual Car Parking Permit Renewals and Lack of Reminder Notices</b></p> <p>A Sidmouth resident, (aged 86), recently renewed their annual car parking permit but received no reminder from the council prior to its expiry on 17 March. They were subsequently informed that EDDC no longer issues renewal reminders and that the process is now entirely computer-based. The resident is concerned that, had they received a penalty during the period of unintentional lapse, it would have caused them significant financial hardship. They also highlight that many older residents in Sidmouth do not use computers and have not been informed that reminders have been discontinued.</p> <p>Can the Portfolio Holder outline the rationale for ending reminder notices, what assessment has been made of the impact on non-digital residents, and whether the council will review this policy to ensure that older and digitally-excluded residents are not unfairly disadvantaged?</p>	<p><b>Response from Portfolio Holder for Finance</b></p> <p>Most of our car parking permit interactions are digital, with permit holders managing their account online, and receiving reminders of their permit expiry by email. We do also provide a phone service for those who do not have access to the internet and prefer to buy their permit by speaking with one of our call centre team. For those who buy a permit over the phone and do not have access to an online account, written courtesy reminders of permit expiry are sent out via post. Following a recent digital upgrade in February, there was a short period of disruption to some parking services, which affected the permit reminder function amongst other services.</p> <p>I am pleased to confirm that this temporary issue has been resolved, and we will continue to send out postal reminders to those who do not have access to our online services.</p> <p>We apologise for any inconvenience to customers who were affected during this short period, and we would ask that customers contact our parking team directly should they have any questions regarding their permit.</p>
2	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p><b>Question to Leader of Council</b></p> <p>At the full council on February 26th a motion proposed by the Leader and agreed by this council asked the Leader to</p>	<p><b>Response from Leader of Council</b></p> <p>The motion was did not involve a letter being written from EDDC to DCC. It stated:</p>

		<p>a. Urgently review the value and efficiency of its existing outsourced highway maintenance contract,</p> <p>b. Urgently reconsider its decision to continue with “business as usual” at the earliest possible opportunity, inviting genuine consultation with partner authorities and communities through that process.</p> <p>This was to be a letter to Devon County Council can the Leader confirm what the answers were and what progress has been made on the state of our roads.</p>	<p>At Council on 26 February 2025 Council in respect of the Motion on Highways resolved:</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Asks that the Leader call on Devon County Council to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Urgently review the value and efficiency of its existing outsourced highway maintenance contract,</li> <li>b. Urgently reconsider its decision to continue with “business as usual” at the earliest possible opportunity, inviting genuine consultation with partner authorities and communities through that process;</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Requests that the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Invite the relevant Director at Devon County Council to attend a discussion with East Devon District Councillors to air concerns regarding Highways’ input into the planning process, and to raise these concerns with the relevant Devon County Council Scrutiny Committee following that meeting,</li> <li>b. Invite relevant Devon Highways officers to provide a briefing for East Devon District Councillors and Town &amp; Parish Councillors regarding how they assess planning applications and provide consultation responses, and</li> <li>c. Following the requested briefing session, to invite East Devon District Council’s Development Management team to consult with members regarding how the information provided in Devon Highways’ responses to consultation requests could be improved to provide additional reassurance to Members and the public; and</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Recommends that East Devon District Council’s Scrutiny Committee consider undertaking an investigation of these issues</li> </ol>
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			<p>in support of and in addition to the above measures.</p> <p>As far as I am aware this work has not yet been discussed at Cllr Goodman's Scrutiny committee</p>
3	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p><b>Question to Leader of Council</b></p> <p>At the full Council meeting on the 25th of February having asked a question on potholes the Leader replied to my supplementary question of how many road schemes had been delayed or stopped in Devon and he suggested that I write to the Portfolio Holder for Highways at Devon County Council. On the 26th February I took his advice and emailed the Portfolio Holder and copied him in. Despite several follow up emails I have not had a reply to this question which directly relates to the motion by the Leader in 2025.</p> <p>Would the Leader confirm that the only way I will receive a reply is via a freedom of information request.</p>	<p><b>Response from Leader of Council</b></p> <p>As Cllr Goodman knows this is a matter for the County Council. This remains the case.</p>
4	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p><b>Question to Leader of Council</b></p> <p>At the full council on the 25th of February I asked if the Leader in proposing to write to the secretary of state asking for LGR to be postponed and not to happen in 2027 was he aware of the effect this would have on services in East Devon. This council were not given an answer could I ask him again. A simple answer was he aware or not.</p>	<p><b>Response from Leader of Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I answered this question fully as is recorded in the minutes</li> <li>• Since then through parliamentary statements from the Sec of State, and published correspondence in the FT from the "cathedral cities", the risk that for Devon the enlarged Exeter proposal will be chosen in July is existential, leaving the majority of East Devon residents in a non-viable "Rural &amp; Coastal" devised</li> </ul>

			<p>by Labour Exeter and Plymouth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Sec of State has also stated he is minded to take the powers of the boundaries commission unto himself. Many perceive this as reckless, akin to the cancellation and uncancellation of local elections in Exeter</li> </ul> <p>As Cllr Goodman will know, many other councils in England have joined Norfolk in questioning the entire project, including Sussex and Kent. All three are in the "Devo Priority" cohort running a year ahead of us. The likelihood of legal challenge and consequentially delay is high as of today. If there is to be a delay, it will be up to government to make financial provision for services.</p>
5	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p><b>Question to Leader of Council</b></p> <p>When the Leader wrote to the Secretary of State requesting postponing the election what was the answer from the Secretary of State.</p>	<p><b>Response from Leader of Council</b></p> <p>No letter has been sent from Devon councils yet as the context following recent announcements from the Sec of State and challenges arising is evolving weekly.</p>
6	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p><b>Question to Leader of Council</b></p> <p>Is the Leader of Council aware of the devastating affect the implementation of a tourist tax as had on Scotland and the damage a similar tax if introduced in East Devon would have on tourism trade and other business in East Devon. Is the Leader of Council aware of the devastating affect the implementation of a tourist tax as had on Scotland and the damage a similar tax if introduced in East Devon would have on tourism trade and other business in East Devon.</p>	<p><b>Response from Leader of Council</b></p> <p>A "tourism tax" has not to the best of my knowledge been discussed at either EDDC or DCC.</p>
7	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p><b>Question to Leader of Council</b></p> <p>In late 2025 the government allowed councils to introduce a tourist tax, Cornwall Council are actively</p>	<p>Response from Leader of Council</p> <p>As above, this is not being considered. If any suggestion came forward, it would be a</p>

		considering introducing a tourist tax. Will the Leader and the administration agree with me that no such tax should be imposed in East Devon.	matter for the new unitaries or a possible Strategic Mayoral Authority. Cllr Goodman's personal view against is noted.
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Report to: **Council**

Date of Meeting 15 April 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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

### **Report summary:**

To receive reports from the Cabinet and the Council's Committees and receive any questions on those reports from meetings between 5 February 2026 and 8 April 2026.

Recommendations from Cabinet and the Council's Committees are set out as separate agenda items and contained in the agenda pack.

### **Is the proposed decision in accordance with:**

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### **Recommendation:**

To note the reports from Cabinet and the Council's Committees and the responses to any questions raised.

### **Reason for recommendation:**

In accordance with the Councils Constitution.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish (Democratic Services Manager) – [andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk)

### **Portfolio(s) (check which apply):**

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

### **Report in full**

The minutes from the following meetings are included:

Cabinet – 4 March and 1 April 2026

Licensing and Enforcement Committee – 11 February 2026

Planning Committee – 24 February and 24 March 2026

Strategic Planning Committee – 3 March 2026

Scrutiny Committee – 5 February 2026

Overview Committee – 26 March 2026

Audit & Governance Committee – 19 March 2026

Placemaking in Exmouth Town & Seafront Group – 17 March 2026

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**Financial implications:**

None.

**Legal implications:**

None.

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.01 pm and ended at 6.38 pm

#### **160 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting from Cabinet held on 4 February 2026 were agreed.

#### **161 Declarations of interest**

Min 168. Sidmouth and East Beach Coastal Defence Scheme - Contract above £100k. Councillor Ian Barlow, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Is a member of Sidmouth TC who are part funders to the scheme.

Min 168. Sidmouth and East Beach Coastal Defence Scheme - Contract above £100k. Councillor John Loudoun, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Is a member of Sidmouth TC who are part funders to the scheme.

#### **162 Public speaking**

Cllr Geoff Jung read out a statement on his role as a ward member when presented with planning applications in his ward. His ward included the village of Lympstone which was directly connected to the Exmouth sewage infrastructure. Following the recent planning meeting where he had asked for a Grampian condition on an application for development in Lympstone, an email was received from SWW confirming that they had no concerns about capacity for these connections. Cllr Jung said his dilemma was that the Planning team had asked him not to insist on the Grampian condition because of the SWW assessment, but this went against the evidence he had that there had been 912 spills at Lympstone Combined Sewer Overflows pouring into the Exe Estuary. He was concerned for all councillors facing this dilemma.

#### **163 Matters of urgency**

There was one late item dealt with in this way recorded at Minute 172.

#### **164 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There was one item dealt with in this way recorded at Minute 174.

#### **165 Minutes of Overview Committee held on 22 January 2026**

Members noted the minutes of the Overview Committee held on 22 January 2026.

#### **166 Minutes of Strata Joint Executive Committee held on 28 January 2026**

Members noted the minutes of the Strata Joint Executive Committee held on 28 January 2026.

167 **Minutes of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 28 January 2026**

Members noted the minutes of the Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 28 January 2026.

168 **Sidmouth and East Beach Coastal Defence Scheme - Contract above £100k**

Delegated authority was sought to award the Sidmouth and East Beach Coastal Defence Scheme Two Stage Contract involving the detailed design, modelling, consenting & statutory consultation within Stage One, with the option to progress to Stage Two, Construction Phase thereafter.

The Portfolio Holder Environment – Operations wished to thank Tony Burch and Chris Lockyear; advisory members of Sidmouth and East Beach BMP Project Advisory Group, for giving their experienced technical knowledge. The Director of Place thanked Tom Buxton-Smith and his Engineering team as well as South West Flood and Coastal members and wider stakeholders for their ongoing support.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

Grant delegated authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment Operations and Portfolio Holder Finance to award the contract to the preferred supplier.

**REASON:**

To enable the award of contract to the preferred supplier following completion of the tender exercise. The delegation would allow the contract to be entered without a further Cabinet paper, to ensure programme targets were met.

169 **Mutual Exchange Policy**

The Mutual Exchange Policy was presented which has been reviewed and updated to incorporate any relevant changes in practice, outlining EDDC's approach to managing mutual exchange requests.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

Approve the updated Mutual Exchange Policy.

**REASON:**

The Mutual Exchange Policy had been reviewed and updated to incorporate relevant changes.

170 **Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Allocation Policy**

The Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Allocation Policy had been reviewed and updated to incorporate any relevant changes in practice, outlining EDDC's approach towards meeting its responsibilities to provide temporary accommodation to eligible homeless applicants.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

Approve the updated Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Allocation Policy.

**REASON:**

The Temporary Accommodation Procurement and Allocation Policy had been reviewed and updated to incorporate relevant changes.

171 **Budget Monitoring Report - Month 10 January**

A summary of the Council's overall financial position for 2025/26 at the end of month ten (31 January 2026) was presented.

Current monitoring indicated that:

- The General Fund Balance was currently projected to be materially in line with budget, therefore, no action was recommended for members consideration.
- The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget strategy followed the Sustainability plan which required the restoration of the HRA Balance to £3.1m in £250k annual increments. This was set to be achieved, with any surplus used as an additional contribution to capital to reduce borrowing and the resultant interest burden.
- Capital in both the General Fund and Housing workstreams were significantly below budget expectations resulting in slippage into 2026/27.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

Note the variances identified as part of the Revenue and Capital Monitoring process up to Month 10.

**REASON:**

The report updated Members on the overall financial position of the Authority at set periods and included recommendations where corrective action was required for the remainder of the financial year.

172 **Local Government Reorganisation - Consultation Response**

Delegated authority was sought to enable a response to the current consultation on the options for local government reorganisation in Devon to be submitted by the deadline of the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026. The response was being developed in conjunction with the other District Councils and would be consistent with the Council's support for the 4-5-1 plus option.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

Delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Council, Corporate and External Engagement to develop the Council's response to the current consultation in relation to local government reorganisation and to submit this by the requisite deadline.

**REASON:**

To enable the Council to respond to the current consultation on the options for local government reorganisation.

173 **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 out in the agenda is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing these items in private session (Part B).

174 **Supported Accommodation**

**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
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

**Cabinet apologies:**

D Ledger	Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes & Communities
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**Also present (for some or all the meeting)**

Councillor Aurora Bailey  
Councillor Brian Bailey  
Councillor Ian Barlow  
Councillor Roy Collins  
Councillor Marianne Rixson

**Also present:**

**Officers:**

Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)  
Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer  
Emma Congerton, Assistant Director Statutory Housing  
Simon Davey, Director of Finance  
Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive  
Catrin Stark, Director of Housing and Health  
John Symes, Finance Manager  
Andrew Wood, Director of Place

Chair .....

Date: .....



## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 1 April 2026**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.05 pm and ended at 8.16 pm

#### **175 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting from Cabinet held on 4 March 2026 were agreed.

#### **176 Declarations of interest**

Min 183. Phear Park and The Green Car Park (Broadclyst) Resurfacing Works - Contract above £100k.

Councillor Brian Bailey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, member of the Town Council.

Min 184. Adoption of Exmouth Placemaking Plan and Strategic Outline Business Case. Councillor Aurora Bailey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, member of the Town Council.

Min 184. Adoption of Exmouth Placemaking Plan and Strategic Outline Business Case. Councillor Brian Bailey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, member of the Town Council.

Min 184. Adoption of Exmouth Placemaking Plan and Strategic Outline Business Case. Councillor Nick Hookway, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Devon County Councillor for Exmouth and member of the Town Council.

Min 184. Adoption of Exmouth Placemaking Plan and Strategic Outline Business Case. Councillor Paul Hayward, Affects Non-registerable Interest, DCC Chair for HATOC.

Min 186. Wild About Seaton NLHF Grant Submission.

Councillor Paul Arnott, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Devon County Councillor for Seaton.

Min 187. Sidmouth Jacobs Ladder Platform, seawall and slipway repairs.

Councillor Ian Barlow, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Member of Sidmouth Town Council.

Min 187. Sidmouth Jacobs Ladder Platform, seawall and slipway repairs.

Councillor Mike Goodman, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Member of Sidmouth Town Council.

Min 188. Sidmouth Connaught Gardens emergency cliff works - Standing orders Exemption.

Councillor Ian Barlow, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Member of Sidmouth Town Council.

Min 188. Sidmouth Connaught Gardens emergency cliff works - Standing orders Exemption.

Councillor Mike Goodman, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Member of Sidmouth Town Council.

177 **Public speaking**

There were no public speakers.

178 **Matters of urgency**

There were none.

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

There was one item dealt with in this way recorded at Minute 193.

180 **Minutes of Scrutiny Committee held on 5 February 2026**

Members approved the minutes and recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee held on 5 February 2026.

**Minute 54 Review of the impact of the ban on use of glyphosate**

1. Streetscene 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. The Director of Place to consider how the integrated weed management framework can be developed and brought for consideration by the Overview Committee, including consideration of resources and the impact from other services,
3. Councillors/Town and Parishes to continue to report areas of weed growth on pavements and roadsides to Devon County Council.

181 **Minutes of Strategic Planning Committee held on 3 March 2026**

Members approved the minutes and recommendations from the Strategic Planning Committee held on 3 March 2026.

**Minute 52: Cranbrook Category 4 Infrastructure Contributions**

That the 'Mechanism for the allocation of category 4 infrastructure contributions' included at appendix 1, together with the assessment criteria questions at paragraph 16 for use by the council in relation to category 4 infrastructure contributions received from developments in the Cranbrook Plan Area are adopted.

182 **Towards a Delivery Vehicle for Marlcombe and Wider Growth Corridor**

The Marlcombe new community was one of twelve locations shortlisted by the New Towns Taskforce in September 2025 and was the key strategic proposal in the Local Plan review. Despite not being selected as one of the seven high priority location in the current consultation on the New Towns Draft Programme, it was vital that this community was supported by all the requisite infrastructure and services that residents would need. The report put forward proposals to both strengthen governance arrangements and put in place dedicated delivery capacity with the objective of ensuring that an exemplar development comes forward that both learns the lessons from and was integrated with the wider growth programme.

The report set out a three-stage model for strengthening governance arrangements that would ultimately culminate in the establishment of a locally led development corporation. The first stage proposes both the creation of an Interim Growth Board, that would act in an advisory capacity with an independent chair, together with the establishment of a formal joint committee with the County Council. Alongside this a shared delivery team would be formed including resources from both the County Council and Homes England.

The Director of Place made clear that despite not being identified as a priority location in the current national New Towns programme consultation, all was not lost. Marlcombe was a credible development opportunity and there had been productive conversations with MHLCG and that Homes England and the local team had continued to provide their strong support. Joe Wharton from Homes England congratulated the Portfolio Holder Place, Infrastructure & Strategic Planning and the Director of Place and his team for the credible proposal that had been submitted which Homes England would still be supporting. He reminded everyone that the consultation was not finished and encouraged people to respond.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet;**

1. Supports the proposed governance structure and formation of the shared delivery team.
2. Nominates the Portfolio Holder for Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning to be the Council's representative on the Interim Growth Board.
3. Nominates the Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning to be the Council's representatives on the Joint Committee.
4. Delegates authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Director of Governance and Portfolio Holders for Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning and Council, Corporate and External Engagement to finalise the terms of reference for the Interim Growth Board and Joint Committee.
5. Delegates authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Director of Governance and Portfolio Holders for Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning and Council, Corporate and External Engagement to recruit the Chair for the Interim Growth Board.
6. Receives further reports regarding the
  - response to the New Towns Draft Programme consultation
  - establishment of a locally led development corporation as key milestones are reached.

**REASON:**

To ensure that effective governance and place leadership arrangements are in place to support the successful delivery of the Marlcombe new community and wider growth corridor.

183 **Phear Park and The Green Car Park (Broadclyst) Resurfacing Works - Contract above £100k**

The report requested delegated authority to award the Phear Park and The Green Car Park Resurfacing Works to a contractor after undertaking an open tender competition.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet;**

Grant delegated authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment Operations and Portfolio Holder Finance to award the contract to the preferred supplier.

**REASON:**

To enable the Assistant Director to award the contract to the preferred supplier following completion of the open tender competition. The delegation would allow the contract to be entered without a further cabinet paper to ensure programme targets were met.

184 **Adoption of Exmouth Placemaking Plan and Strategic Outline  
Business Case**

EDDC had completed the updated Exmouth Town Centre and Seafront Placemaking Plan (EPP) and its accompanying Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) following extensive Member, stakeholder and public engagement. A six-week consultation in late 2025 generated strong support for practical improvements to the town centre, seafront and station gateway, with clear priorities emerging around wayfinding, public realm, accessibility and environmental sensitivity. Several earlier large-scale proposals were removed in response to public feedback.

The final EPP and SOBC presented a refined, deliverable and community-supported framework for guiding future investment in Exmouth. Key partners including the Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group (PETS), Devon County Council and Exmouth Town Council had been asked to endorse the plan, a verbal update on this process would be provided at Cabinet.

The Portfolio Holder Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism thanked Naomi Harnett for her hard work in getting the Plan to fruition.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet;**

Adopt the Exmouth Placemaking Plan and the Strategic Outline Business Case.

**REASON:**

The Exmouth Placemaking Plan was a strategic document that provided a framework for future placemaking interventions and had been subject to a thorough consultation process. With the EPP now completed, adoption was required to progress key projects in Exmouth town and seafront.

185 **East Devon Local Nature Recovery Plan**

EDDC had provided detailed input into the recently adopted Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) process under the Environment Act 2021. Devon County Council was the identified 'Responsible Authority' for developing this spatial nature recovery Strategy and all of Devon's District Authorities were identified as 'Supporting Authorities' who would help with its implementation through their own Local Nature Recovery Plans.

The draft East Devon Local Nature Recovery (LNR) Plan had identified local priorities and taken full account of the data and priorities within the Devon LNRS. The actions the EDDC would need to take would flow from the East Devon LNR Plan once finalised and also be guided by the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan 2026 and Environment Act 2021 that targets and prioritises the most important and vulnerable habitats and species.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet;**

1. Agree to the public consultation of the draft East Devon Local Nature Recovery Plan.
2. Note and agree that the draft East Devon Local Nature Recovery Plan be published on the Council's website to fulfil the Council's statutory Biodiversity Reporting report duty for the period 1st September 2023 – 1st January 2026.

**REASON:**

This would enable EDDC to fulfil its role as a Supporting Authority as defined in the Environment Act 2021 and support the delivery of the Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy. It would also enable EDDC to adopt a Local Nature Recovery Plan and Local Habitats Map that would target the improvement of the priority habitats and species identified within the Plan.

186 **Wild About Seaton NLHF Grant Submission**

Permission was sought to apply to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for one of its Heritage Grants to support a project entitled Wild About Seaton.

Members thanked James Chubb and his team for producing a strong plan which included engagement with stakeholders. The project was positively received and would be a huge benefit to Seaton.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet;**

Approves the application for funding to National Heritage Lottery Fund for the Wild About Seaton Project.

**REASON:**

This gives EDDC the most efficient opportunity to fully fund the extension of Seaton Wetlands into newly acquired land; the creation of Sheeps Marsh intertidal scheme and the provision of access and interpretive infrastructure. To create a discovery trail around the town and provide marketing support to businesses within the town to benefit from this proven tourist driver. To work with the town's museum to update its natural history collection and utilise their exhibits and information in interpretive work throughout the town.

187 **Sidmouth Jacobs Ladder Platform, seawall and slipway repairs**

The report requested delegated authority to award the Sidmouth Jacobs Ladder Platform, seawall and slipway repairs to a contractor on the Environment Agency AOMR Framework that EDDC had access to.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet;**

Grant delegated authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment Operations and Portfolio Holder Finance to award the contract to the preferred supplier.

**REASON:**

To enable the Assistant Director to award the contract to the preferred supplier following completion of the tender exercise. The delegation would allow the contract to be entered without a further cabinet paper, to ensure programme targets were met.

188 **Sidmouth Connaught Gardens emergency cliff works - Standing orders Exemption**

The report outlined the discovered cliff works issue, the risk of prolonged path closure and sought approval to direct award a contract to complete the design and build to secure the cliff.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet;**

1. Note a standing orders exemption to appoint John Grimes Associates for the contract for investigation and design of cliff repairs at Connaught gardens. Note a standing orders exemption to appoint a yet appointed contractor for the contract for delivering cliff repairs at Connaught gardens.
2. Agree to delegate authority to the Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Operations to award the contracts.

**REASON:**

Running a procurement would add an additional 2 -3 months before the path could be reopened which would be during the summer months. The risk of a failure would also remain until it could be fixed.

189 **Woodbury Neighbourhood Plan - Examiner's Report**

The report provided feedback on the outcome of the independent examination of the Woodbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan. The Examiner had found that with proposed modifications the Plan met the necessary 'basic conditions' and recommended to the Council that it could go forward to referendum. In accordance with the relevant legislation, the Council must now consider its response to the Examiner's recommendations and satisfy itself that the Plan met the necessary 'basic conditions'.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet;**

1. Agree to endorse the Examiner's recommendations on the Woodbury Neighbourhood Plan.
2. Agree a 'referendum version' of the Plan be produced (incorporating the Examiner's modifications with minor amendments for corrections where stated, as set out in Annex 1 of this report) and proceed to referendum, and that a decision notice to this effect be published.
3. Congratulate Woodbury Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on their hard work.

**REASON:**

The legislation required a decision notice to be produced at this stage in the process. The Plan was the product of significant local consultation and had been recommended to proceed to referendum by the Examiner subject to modifications which were accepted by the Parish Council.

190 **East Devon social media channel approach**

EDDC's communications approach was shaped by its statutory responsibilities to inform, consult, and engage with residents, partners, and businesses. The council must ensure that all publicity remains lawful, objective, cost-effective and politically neutral, while also providing transparent access to information that enables public understanding and

scrutiny of local decision-making. Social media plays a central role in delivering timely, accessible communication, particularly during emergencies and supports the council's duty to reach audiences "where they are."

The Corporate Communications team continuously monitors platform performance and sector trends to ensure channels align with both audience needs and organisational requirements.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet;**

Notes the content of the report

**REASON:**

The report recommended maintaining the existing channel strategy, increasing investment in video capability and training, and continuing to monitor analytical data and industry developments, with bi-annual reporting to Cabinet.

191 **Forward Plan**

Members noted the contents of the forward plan for key decisions for the period 1st March 2026 to 30th June 2026.

192 **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).

193 **District Heating in the West End**

The 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

**Cabinet apologies:**

R Jefferies

Portfolio Holder Environment - Nature & Climate

**Also present (for some or all the meeting)**

Councillor Aurora Bailey

Councillor Brian Bailey

Councillor Ian Barlow

Councillor Roy Collins

Councillor Peter Faithfull

Councillor Mike Goodman

Councillor Sophie Richards

Councillor Marianne Rixson

**Also present:**

**Officers:**

Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer

Marie Ainsworth, Place & Prosperity Officer

Tom Buxton-Smith, Engineering Projects Manager

Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Leisure

James Chubb, Countryside Team Manager

Simon Davey, Director of Finance

James Docherty, Assistant Director Governance & Legal

Will Dommett, District Ecologist

Naomi Harnett, Corporate Lead (Interim) – Major Projects & Programmes

Tracy Hendren, Chief Executive

Charles Plowden, Assistant Director Countryside and Leisure

Andrew Wood, Director of Place

Chloe Woodman, Assistant Director - Communications, Digital Services and Engagement

Joe Wharton, Homes England

Sam Evans, Stride Project Management

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Licensing and Enforcement Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 11 February 2026**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.02 am and ended at 11.10 am

#### **31 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 November 2025 were agreed and signed as a true record.

#### **32 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **33 Public Speaking**

There were no public speakers.

#### **34 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **35 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were no confidential or exempt items.

#### **36 Committee update report - Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005, Taxis and General Licensing**

The Licensing Manager introduced the report which provided an update on the activities of the Licensing Service under the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005, Taxi and Private Hire Licensing and General Licensing including Street Trading and Pavement Licensing.

Discussion and responses to questions included the following points:

- Regarding misuse of taxi ranks across the District, and particularly the taxi rank in Imperial Road, Exmouth, the Licensing Manager was waiting for a response from Devon County civil enforcement regarding the possibility of changing the highway designation to prevent unlawful parking in the taxi rank of vehicles using local amenities;
- The reporting period covered by the update report was October to December 2025;
- It was noted that the Imperial Road taxi rank, Exmouth, was the closest rank to Exmouth station and had been constantly misused for a number of years. Licensing Officers would continue to raise this with Devon County Council;
- Further action could be considered at the next meeting if a response had not been received from DCC. Cllr Dumper would also raise this via the HATOC;
- Regarding the Pavement Licensing Policy, it was noted that the majority of renewals fall in September to October and it would be possible to review the fees prior to that at the April or July Committee meeting;
- It was agreed that the number of applications received under the Licensing Act 2003 could be broken down into categories for future reporting;

- Regarding the Department for Transport consultation on potential benefits and challenges of making all local transport authorities responsible for taxi and private hire licensing, it was agreed to leave the consultation response to the Devon Licensing Officers Group to formulate a Devon wide response;
- The Licensing Manager was waiting for authority to recruit for the part time Licensing Officer role. Once received, both vacant posts [1x full time; 1x part time] could be advertised on the same advert;
- During the recruitment process, the Licensing team would have to cut back on proactive site visits due to reduced capacity, however, all statutory obligations would continue to be met.

The update report was noted.

## 37 **Pavement Licensing Policy**

The Licensing Officer provided an overview of the report. A draft pavement licensing policy was developed jointly by local authorities across Devon and Cornwall through 2025 and presented to the Licensing and Enforcement Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025. On that date, the Committee approved moving to a public consultation on the draft pavement licensing policy.

The consultation ran until 30 September 2025 and was open for 10 weeks. The consultation received 253 contributions, and the report summarised the responses and feedback received. It was noted that numerous responses had cited a need for an earlier start time than the 10:00am start which had been proposed. Officers proposed that consideration be given to amending the general opening hours start time to 9:00am following the feedback received.

The policy, if approved, would ensure that the Council carries out its pavement licensing responsibilities in a fair, equitable and consistent manner, and in line with other Devon authorities who have adopted the policy.

Discussion and responses to questions included the following points:

- The proposed amended start time for the policy of 9:00am was supported as this would assist small businesses;
- The 2m width rule on the pavement was vital, particularly for visually impaired persons;
- It was noted that an applicant could apply for an earlier start time than that set out in the policy, with evidence to support the application, and that a decision could be made under officer delegation;
- Applications would not be progressed where clearance was not sufficient to comply with Government mobility legislation;
- Fees initially charged by EDDC were lower than other Devon authorities, however, more information was now available regarding costs to EDDC to better inform setting fees going forwards;
- Concern was expressed that there needs to be some balance when assessing applications which did not meet the pavement width requirements;
- Officers would conduct site visits to assess localities on an individual basis to find the right balance between business needs and mobility requirements;
- It was noted that there was no right of appeal to an external organisation. Appeals would be made directly to EDDC.

The Licensing & Enforcement Committee gave consideration to the feedback received during the public consultation and

**RESOLVED**

To approve the adoption of the draft policy with an amended start time for general opening hours in the policy of 9:00am.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and expressed the Committee's thanks to those officers who were shortly to leave the Council's employment.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

I Barlow  
K Bloxham (Vice-Chair)  
V Bonetta  
T Dumper  
S Gazzard  
Y Levine  
M Rixson  
J Whibley (Chair)

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

R Collins

**Officers in attendance:**

Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer  
Phillippa Norsworthy, Licensing Manager  
Giles Salter, Solicitor  
Lee Staples, Licensing Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

B Bailey  
M Chapman  
O Davey  
C Nicholas  
S Westerman

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Planning Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 24 February 2026**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.01 am and ended at 5.07 pm

#### **78 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 February 2026 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

#### **79 Declarations of interest**

Minute 84. 25/0382/VAR, 25/0383/VAR, 25/0384/VAR & 25/0944/V106 (Other)  
DUNKESWELL & OTTERHEAD.

Councillor Colin Brown, Affects Non-registerable Interest, is a EDDC ward member.

Minute 84. 25/0382/VAR, 25/0383/VAR, 25/0384/VAR & 25/0944/V106 (Other)  
DUNKESWELL & OTTERHEAD.

Councillor Yehudi Levine, Affects Non-registerable Interest, is a EDDC ward member.

Minute 84 25/0382/VAR, 25/0383/VAR, 25/0384/VAR & 25/0944/V106

In accordance with the Code of Good Practice for Councillors and Officers dealing with planning matters as set out in the Constitution, the Committee advised lobbying in respect of this application.

Minute 84 25/0382/VAR, 25/0383/VAR, 25/0384/VAR & 25/0944/V106

Councillor Maddy Chapman declared that she had pre-determined this application so took no part in the discussion or vote.

Minute 88. 23/2740/OUT (Minor) EXMOUTH HALSDON

In accordance with the Code of Good Practice for Councillors and Officers dealing with planning matters as set out in the Constitution, the Committee advised lobbying in respect of this application.

Minute 88. 23/2740/OUT (Minor) EXMOUTH HALSDON.

Councillor Aurora Bailey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, is an Exmouth Councillor.

Minute 88. 23/2740/OUT (Minor) EXMOUTH HALSDON.

Councillor Brian Bailey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, is an Exmouth Councillor.

Minute 88. 23/2740/OUT (Minor) EXMOUTH HALSDON.

Councillor Olly Davey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, is an Exmouth Councillor.

Minute 88. 23/2740/OUT (Minor) EXMOUTH HALSDON.

Councillor Steve Gazzard, Affects Non-registerable Interest, is an Exmouth Councillor.

Minute 88. 23/2740/OUT (Minor) EXMOUTH HALSDON.

Councillor Tim Dumper, Affects Non-registerable Interest, is a EDDC ward member and the Vice Chair for Planning for Exmouth Town Council.

80 **Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

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

There were none.

82 **Planning appeal statistics**

The Committee noted the appeal statistics report.

83 **25/0382/VAR, 25/0383/VAR, 25/0384/VAR & 25/0944/V106 (Other)  
DUNKESWELL & OTTERHEAD**

**Applicant:**

Dunkeswell Raceway Limited

**Location:**

Dunkeswell Raceway Dunkeswell EX14 4AH

**Proposal:**

25/0382/VAR: Variation of wording of condition 4, and removal of condition 3 for planning permission 05/0540/FUL

25/0383/VAR: Variation of wording of condition 1 and removal of condition 2 for planning approval 06/3353/FUL

25/0384/VAR: Removal of condition 1 and condition 3 and variation of wording of condition 4 for variation 15/0280/VAR

25/0944/V106: Application to discharge Section 106 Agreement pursuant to planning permissions 05/0540/FUL and 06/3353/FUL

**RESOLVED:**

The four applications at Dunkeswell were refused contrary to the officer recommendation for the following 2 reasons:

1. The increased frequency of noise arising from the proposal to extend the days and hours of use of the karting track will have a significant adverse impact on the residential amenity of nearby residents, in particular within the village of Shelwell. As such the proposal is contrary to Policies D1 and EN14 of the East Devon Local Plan, 2013 to 2031
2. The increased frequency of noise arising from the proposal to extend the days and hours of use of the karting track will have a significant adverse impact on the tranquillity of the Blackdown Hills National Landscape and will fail to further the purpose of the National Landscape contrary to Strategy 46 of the East Devon Local Plan, 2013 to 2031

Delegated authority was given to officers to add relevant neighbourhood plan and NPPF references to the reasons for refusal.

84 **25/0368/MFUL (Major) WEST HILL & AYLESBEARE**

**Applicant**

Mr Sam Slade

**Location**

Rosamondford Farm Perkins Village Devon EX5 2JG

**Proposal**

Construction of four dwellings, formation of new access track and associated landscaping

**RESOLVED:**

Refused as per officer recommendation.

85 **25/2125/VAR (Other) BUDLEIGH & RALEIGH**

**Applicant**

Mr Jorge Pineda-Langford (EDDC)

**Location**

Toilets Salting Hill Budleigh Salterton

**Proposal**

Retrospective variation of condition 2 (approved plans) on planning permission 23/2626/FUL (Proposal to demolish existing public toilets, and replace with a new public toilet building), to relocate downpipes, add extractor fans, emergency beacons, and mesh security fencing and repositioning of door.

**RESOLVED:**

Approval as per officer recommendation.

86 **25/2209/FUL (Minor) WEST HILL & AYLESBEARE**

**Applicant**

Mr Andrew and Paul Lightfoot

**Location**

Land Adjoining White Farm Lane West Hill Ottery St Mary

**Proposal**

Construction of 1no. dwelling

**RESOLVED:**

Refused contrary to officer recommendation for the following reason:

The siting of the dwelling in close proximity to trees would lead to pressure to fell and/or prune the trees which would result in adverse impacts on the landscape character and

amenity of the area and biodiversity, contrary to Strategies 46 and 47 and Policies D1 and D3 of the East Devon Local Plan, 2013 to 2031.

Delegated authority was given to officers to add relevant neighbourhood plan and NPPF references to the reasons for refusal.

87 **23/2740/OUT (Minor) EXMOUTH HALSDON**

**Applicant**

Mr B Penny

**Location**

Land South of Courtlands Lane Exmouth

**Proposal**

Outline permission for the construction of up to six dwellings sought with all matters reserved other than access

**RESOLVED:**

Refused contrary to officer recommendation for the following reason:

The proposed development would adversely impact the undeveloped and open status of this designated Coastal Preservation Area and would not help to conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the natural and historic landscape character of the area. The harm arising significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits of developing 6 open market dwellings on the site. As such the development is contrary to Strategies 44 and 46 of the East Devon Local Plan, 2013 to 2031.

Delegated authority was given to officers to add relevant neighbourhood plan and NPPF references to the reasons for refusal.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

B Bailey  
I Barlow  
C Brown  
M Chapman  
B Collins  
O Davey (Chair)  
S Gazzard  
J Heath  
S Hughes  
S Hunt  
Y Levine  
S Smith  
E Wragg (Vice-Chair)

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

A Bailey  
R Collins  
T Dumper

G Jung

**Officers in attendance:**

Nigel Barrett, Senior Planning Officer

Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer

Ed Freeman, Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Services

Jill Himsworth, Planning Officer

Damian Hunter, Planning Solicitor

Wendy Ormsby, Development Manager

Ian Winter, Environmental Health Officer

**Councillor apologies:**

M Howe

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Planning Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 24 March 2026**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.05 pm

#### **88 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 February 2026 were agreed as a true record subject to Councillor Kim Bloxham's apologies being formally noted.

#### **89 Declarations of interest**

Minute 93. 23/2077/MOUT (Major) OTTERY ST MARY.

In accordance with the Code of Good Practice for Councillors and Officers dealing with planning matters as set out in the Constitution, the Chair, Councillor Olly Davey, on behalf of the Committee, advised lobbying in respect of this application.

Minute 94. 25/2593/PIP (Other) CLYST VALLEY.

In accordance with the Code of Good Practice for Councillors and Officers dealing with planning matters as set out in the Constitution, Councillor Olly Davey, advised lobbying in respect of this application.

Minute 94. 25/2593/PIP (Other) CLYST VALLEY.

Councillor Mike Howe, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Clyst Valley Ward Member.

#### **90 Matters of urgency**

There were none.

#### **91 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were none.

#### **92 Planning appeal statistics**

The Committee received the planning appeal statistics report noting that an appeal had been lodged for planning application 23/2627/MFUL – land north east of Parkfield Cottages, Pink House Corner, Lypstone for the construction of an 'Educatering' facility. The Committee also received an update on three enforcement appeals and were pleased to hear that all three appeals had been dismissed with the Enforcement Notices upheld.

#### **93 23/2077/MOUT (Major) OTTERY ST MARY**

##### **Applicant:**

Mr Graham Hudson.

##### **Location:**

Land south of Hansford Way, Ottery St Mary.

**Proposal:**

Outline application for single storey class B8, E(c) and E(g) development comprising floor space of up to 2640 sq.m. (all matters reserved).

**RESOLVED:**

Approved with conditions in accordance with officer recommendation.

94 **25/2593/PIP (Other) CLYST VALLEY**

**Applicant:**

Mr Christopher Heal.

**Location:**

Land adjacent to A376 Exmouth Road, Ebford Lane, Ebford.

**Proposal:**

Permission in principle for the development of up to five detached dwellings.

**RESOLVED:**

Permission in Principle be approved in accordance with officer recommendation.

95 **23/2663/FUL (Minor) YARTY**

**Applicant:**

Mr & Mrs Raggio.

**Location:**

Lily Cottage, Goldsmith Lane, All Saints, Axminster, EX13 7LU.

**Proposal:**

Demolition of cottage and erection of new dwelling.

**RESOLVED:**

1. The Appropriate Assessment be adopted.
2. Approved in accordance with officer recommendation subject to a S106 agreement to secure a foul drainage upgrade and subject to an amendment to Condition 10 to read as follows:  
"Prior to first occupation, a written report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority confirming that the sustainability measures identified in the Design & Access Statement (December 2023), or updated measures or equivalent or superior performance, have been installed and commissioned. These shall include:
  - (a) a low-carbon heating system, such as a ground or air source heat pump, or any alternative technology that achieves equal or greater energy efficiency and carbon savings;
  - (b) a whole-dwelling mechanical ventilation system with heat recovery;
  - (c) an eaves mounted renewable electricity-generating system with capacity equal to or exceeding 7.5kWp installed in accordance with the details under Condition 8;
  - (d) on-site energy storage with capacity equal to or exceeding 13.5 kWh;
  - (e) a breathable, bio-based fabric construction, including hob, straw bale and wood fibre;

The approved measures, or approved updated equivalents, shall thereafter be retained and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

(Reason – To ensure the dwelling achieves and maintains the very high levels of sustainability that form a key component of the planning balance under NPPF paragraph 139.)

96 **25/1601/OUT (Minor) WOODBURY & LYMPSTONE (APPLICATION DEFERRED)**

**Applicant:**

Mr Anthony.

**Location:**

Car park land south of Underhill Close, Lymestone.

**Proposal:**

Outline application for the erection of three detached dwellings (all matters reserved)

**This application was deferred to a later date.**

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

I Barlow  
K Bloxham  
C Brown  
B Collins  
O Davey (Chair)  
J Heath  
M Howe  
S Hughes  
Y Levine  
S Smith  
E Wragg (Vice-Chair)

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

J Bailey  
R Collins  
P Faithfull  
D Mackinder

**Officers in attendance:**

Nigel Barrett, Senior Planning Officer  
Andrew Digby, Senior Planning Officer  
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer  
Jill Himsworth, Planning Officer  
Damian Hunter, Planning Solicitor  
Wendy Ormsby, Development Manager

**Councillor apologies:**

B Bailey

S Gazzard

Chairman .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Strategic Planning Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 3 March 2026**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.01 am and ended at 2.10 pm. The meeting was adjourned at 12.45 pm and reconvened at 1.20 pm.

#### **45 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 January 2026 were confirmed as a true record.

#### **46 Declarations of interest**

Minute 50. Update on work on production of the East Devon Local Plan. Councillors Brian Bailey, Paula Fernley, Geoff Jung advised lobbying in respect of Exmo\_20

Minute 51. East Devon Water Cycle Study  
Councillors Geoff Jung advised lobbying in respect the River Otter and sewage.

Minute 52. Cranbrook Category 4 Infrastructure Contributions.  
Councillor Jessica Bailey, Other Registerable Interest, Devon County Councillor and a member of Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority.

Minute 53. Habitat Regulation Non-Infrastructure Contributions.  
Councillor Geoff Jung, Affects and prejudicial Non-registerable Interest, Chair of South and East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee.

#### **47 Public speaking**

Nigel Humphrey addressed the Committee regarding the draft Local Plan. He reminded Members that he had spoken at the meeting in January, asking them to consider the public's concerns about Exmo\_20, which had received over 2,500 objections. He expressed disappointment that these concerns appeared to be disregarded, noting that any alteration to the Local Plan at this stage would be treated as a significant change and therefore not permitted – yet he questioned, there is no clear definition of what constitutes a significant change.

Mr Humphrey also highlighted the absence of a Habitat Regulations Assessment and an air quality mitigation report raising doubts about whether such reports could adequately address the issues associated with Exmo\_20 and the Pebblebed Heaths. He further questioned the realism of the spatial strategy, asking why Exmouth was expected to accommodate the highest level of growth when the area has only two access routes, both already operating beyond capacity.

Mr Humphrey urged the Committee to give serious reconsideration to Exmo\_20 before it's too late.

Thomas Shillitoe addressed the Committee regarding the draft Local Plan stating that in his view it represented a missed opportunity to resolve significant shortcomings and was therefore unadoptable, being both unsound and unlawful. He formally alleged maladministration in relation to what he described as misleading and unreliable evidence relating to Exmo\_20.

He stated that over a year ago there had been no supporting Habitat Regulations Assessment and no mitigation strategy in place and that despite this the Committee were advised that officers were satisfied impacts can be mitigated, a conclusion which Mr Shillitoe argued was unsupported by evidence. He added that as recently as November, qualified professionals working on this matter were still indicating that there may be no option capable of fully mitigating the impacts.

Mr Shillitoe also highlighted additional constraints affecting Exmo\_20 that had emerged since the site was selected, most recently the discovery of prehistoric archaeology. He reminded the Committee that, in light of these developments, they had a duty to revisit the site's viability.

John Hamill addressed the Committee regarding the draft Local Plan. He noted that over 18 months, Members had been presented with detailed accounts of procedure breaches, yet Exmo\_20 remains within the Plan, despite many Members acknowledging – often 'with a heavy heart' – that it should not be included.

In his view the Council was relying on government housing numbers and requirements as justification, and he suggested that removing the site at this stage was being portrayed as jeopardising the entire Local Plan. He argued that Members had lost sight of the needs and the wishes of the local community and of the significant harm Exmo\_20 could cause to the natural and historic environment, the already fragile water and sewage systems and the local road network.

Kerin Hamill addressed the Committee regarding the Local Plan and drew attention to the definition of the word 'consultation' noting that the Oxford dictionary describes it as a process undertaken before a decision is finalised, with the purpose of gathering opinions and advice. She expressed concern that despite the large number of comments submitted for Exmo\_20, the Council had not taken them into account, which in her view suggested a degree of arrogance, lack of care and a failure to respect the area's natural landscape.

Mrs Hamill compared Exmo\_20 to a housing allocation in Dunkeswell that had not been supported for development on the grounds that it lay within a National Landscape, was poorly located and would erode, detract from and harm the setting of the Conservation Area. She highlighted what she perceived as inconsistency between the decision and the approach taken toward Exmo\_20.

She also questioned the need for further housing in the area, noting that many new properties remain empty and others have been unoccupied for years. Mrs Hamill urged Members to show courage in protecting the district's heritage and countryside.

A statement was read out on behalf of Emily Glanfield who contended that the housing figures within the Local Plan were incorrect, inconsistent and based on outdated data. She noted that several supporting documents contained mathematical errors and did not reflect the correct calculation, which she believed to be 924.7 homes per year.

Ms Glanfield explained that pandemic-era housing trends had distorted East Devon's figures, resulting in a number 22% higher than the 2024 figure. She added that if the 2025 data was similar to 2024, the five-year average would fall, meaning current targets were significantly overestimated. She also questioned the increasing headroom figures that East Devon had stated was a requirement from central government. The headroom was originally set at 10%, increased to 13% and expected to shortly rise to 16%. Ms Glanfield argued that headroom should remain at 10% for the first five years.

The statement warned that the Local Plan would commit the district to building on far more land than necessary, raising concerns about food security. She proposed instead 925 homes per year plus 10% for five years, reducing the total requirement from 23,408 to 20,805. Finally, Ms Glanfield encouraged councillors to use existing mechanisms to lower housing targets so that future decision-makers were not constrained.

In response to the statement from Emily Glanfield the Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services explained the recent change to the standard method for calculating housing need. He noted that this issue had been covered in a report presented at the meeting on 2 September 2025. The report made clear that the calculation changes every year because it is based on the affordability ratio. As a result, the standard method figure had recently gone down, but no alterations were proposed because the figure could rise or fall again in the future.

He also reminded Members about the 80% transition arrangements, stressing that keeping a reasonable level of headroom in the housing numbers would be important if the Council wished to defend its position.

The Chair responded to the allegations made against the Council, by explaining that, should residents believe they have grounds to claim maladministration, they must follow the formal complaints procedure. Through that process, he and the officers would address matters based on evidence, rather than accusations made in the court of public opinion. He also added that, they have the option of pursuing a judicial review if they feel it is necessary.

48 **Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency to discuss.

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

There were no confidential or exempt items to discuss.

50 **Update on work on production of the East Devon Local Plan**

The Committee received a report providing an update on the preparation of the East Devon Local Plan, following the close of the second stage of Regulation 19 consultation on 26 January 2026. Members were advised that approximately 3,200 separate comments had been submitted which included points that had been previously raised and including a significant number of objections to specific site allocations - particularly Exmo\_20, which received 1,500 responses. It was noted that a detailed feedback report summarising the consultation responses would be presented at the next meeting.

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services outlined further technical work that still needed to be completed, including:

- West End focussed transport assessment to consider growth impacts around Marlcombe, the M5 and the A30,
- An assessment of Air quality impacts at the Pebblebed Heaths, required to ensure a satisfactory Habitat Regulations Assessment prior to the submission of the Local Plan. This work is being undertaken by independent consultants Ricardo.

The current timetable for preparing the Local Plan is as follows:

- Submission: Spring 2026
- Strategic Planning Committee: May 2026
- Full Council: Early June 2026
- Examination, including Inspector's Hearings: June 2026

The questions raised included:

- Confirmation was requested about whether there remains a requirement to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and how confident officers are that this can be achieved. The Committee noted that the requirement remains in place and were advised that the latest monitoring report showed the Council currently has a 3.5 year housing supply. Officers confirmed that this will continue to be monitored and that the five-year figure is expected to be demonstrated at the point of adoption.
- Whether additional time will be provided to resolve any outstanding issues with the Plan. It was confirmed that further time could be allowed during the examination period if additional work on the Local Plan was required. It would depend on how the Plan was viewed by the Inspectors and what recommendations they made.
- Further information was sought on how air quality impacts could be addressed on the Pebblebed Heaths. While no definitive mitigation strategy is in place at present, it was advised that the independent consultants Ricardo have identified potential measures, including encouraging the uptake of electric vehicles and exploring changes to farming practices, such as introducing covered digestate storage facilities.
- Clarification was sought about the length of time for the technical work to be completed. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services confirmed that all technical reports must be completed by 12 June 2026 to submit for examination.
- The Chair asked for clarification on what steps could be taken if evidence indicates that the Council does not have a satisfactory mitigation strategy. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services explained that achieving a satisfactory outcome to the Habitat Regulations Assessment is a legal requirement. If this cannot be achieved within the current timeframe, the Council will need to revise the schedule to allow sufficient time to reach compliance. At present, the Council is awaiting the findings from Ricardo, the independent environment consultancy.
- A question was raised about the use of AI and how will the accuracy of AI-generated summaries of residents' input be verified. It was confirmed that AI will be used to assist in producing summaries, and the Committee was reassured that a checking process will be carried out to ensure the summaries are accurate and reflective of the responses received.
- Clarification was sought on whether the Pebblebed Heath mitigation strategy considers planting to encourage stronger vegetation growth along the roadsides to help improve the air quality. It was suggested that such planting could help address pollution impacts at ground level and potentially improve soil nutrient

conditions. Other management measures could include the uptake of electric vehicles

- Clarification was sought regarding the potential status of the Local Plan following Local Government reorganisation. If adopted, the Local Plan will remain in force by the new unitary authority until it is superseded by the next Local Plan, which is reviewed every 5 years.
- A question was asked about the extent to which the Water Cycle Study will influence the overall Local Plan and in response it was confirmed that no changes to the Plan are currently envisaged as a result of the study.
- A question was raised regarding site allocation Exmo\_20 and its relationship to the survey on housing needs in Exmouth. It was noted that Exmo\_20 does not reflect the survey findings in terms of type and quality of housing identified as needed, which emphasised affordable housing. Concerns were expressed about whether the minimum requirement for affordable housing would be delivered on this site, and why the Council is continuing to pursue Exmo\_20. The Chair reminded the Committee that it had previously agreed the affordable housing policy, which provides for 35% affordable housing, comprising 70% shared ownership and 30% social rent.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the report be noted and the proposed programme of works going forward be endorsed.

51 **East Devon Water Cycle Study**

The East Devon Water Cycle Study report provided the Committee with a summary of the findings of the study and the responses received from the consultation which included the responses from statutory consultees including Natural England and the Environment Agency and how the work should be taken forward. The Committee noted that a final detailed feedback report will be provided at a later meeting.

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services advised that the main findings identified significant issues with wastewater capacity. Several wastewater treatment works, including those at Colyton, Honiton, Fluxton, Feniton, Otterton, Maer Lane and Dunkeswell are projected to exceed or approach their permitted dry weather flow limits post developments and will require upgrades or phased developments.

The Committee noted that particularly serious capacity issues were reported for the Maer Lane and Countess wear treatment works. Significant upgrade works are required at both sites, and a new wastewater treatment works will be needed to accommodate future pressures at Countess wear.

Key recommendations:

- Adopt the lower water efficiency standard of 110 litres/person/day for new development.
- Monitor and strictly regulate new abstractions and wastewater discharges.
- Phase development to match infrastructure upgrades and capacity increases.
- Where new developments are within the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIAs) Regulations ensure that they include assessment of their impacts on water services and protected habitats.
- Integrate biodiversity-friendly design and restrict development in sensitive coastal and riverine areas.

- Continue stakeholder collaboration (EDDC, SWW, Environment Agency, Natural England) to ensure sustainable growth and environmental protection.

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services referred to the RAG rating table in the report which reflected the significance of the comments received from South West Water, Environment Agency and Natural England. He drew the Committee's attention in particular to the Environment Agency's comments, which raised a number of detailed technical points and provided reassurance that although further work is required, there is no need to make any material changes to the Local Plan.

Feedback has been requested from the consultants, Haskoning, and from South West Water, with the intention of obtaining additional data and information to update and amend the study in order to address the concerns raised.

Questions and points raised included:

- Clarification was sought about why storm overflows and the EDM data did not feature within the report. In response the Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services stated that these did not feature because the study was based on dry weather flows.
- A question was asked about how the requirement for smart water butts, imposed through Planning Committee, would be enforced. It was noted that monitoring compliance on new developments would be challenging due to limited enforcement capacity, which makes it difficult to carry out checks to ensure installation.
- A question was asked about whether Grampian conditions can be appealed. It was advised that any condition can be appealed and overturned.
- A point was raised about the need to clearly identify which wastewater treatment works are operating ineffectively, as well as those requiring upgrades and the nature of those upgrades.
- A query was raised about conflicting comments from the statutory consultees and how a robust and sound Water Cycle Study can be achieved in light of the differences.
- A point was raised about the insufficient infrastructure available to support water supply for new developments, noting in particular that it is proposed for the new town, Marcombe, to receive its water supply from Wimbleball.
- It was noted that the Environment Agency intends to reduce abstraction from the Otter by 14 million litres a day and questioned whether the Water Cycle Study has been informed of the timing of this change.
- Concern was raised about the Countess wear Sewage Treatment Works, noting that it also serves Exeter and Teignbridge, both of which are accommodating new housing developments. It was highlighted that there is a need for discussions with both authorities to ensure a coordinated approach.
- Concern was raised about the implications of diverting wastewater away from the west end of East Devon, noting that the Exe Estuary is a protected area where no further deterioration of its environment is permitted and South West Water has been very reluctant to provide detailed information.
- A question was raised about how the Council can address its lack of confidence in South West Water and whether the recommendation should be strengthened to reflect this.
- A question was raised about whether the Local Plan could include a policy requiring South West Water to provide evidence on sewage capacity for every new planning application. In response the Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services confirmed that South West Water is challenged where

its findings do not align with those of the Water Cycle Study and further evidence has been requested in such cases.

- It was noted that the Water Cycle Study should feature prominently within the introductory section of the Local Plan.

In response to comments about the lack of confidence in South West Water and the need for a strengthened recommendation the Chair proposed an amendment to the second recommendation as follows:

That Members note that further work is required with the Environment Agency, Natural England, South West Water and other stakeholders, to:

- i. Agree a common understanding on the current position of East Devon's water infrastructure, particularly in relation to current areas of infrastructure capacity failures and the Environment Agency's responsibility for enforcement, to ensure appropriate environmental safeguards are put in place, and
- ii. Ensure the impacts of the Local Plan on water resources are addressed in line with development coming forward.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Water Cycle Study and comments received through the Regulation 19 Consultation be noted.
2. That Members note that further work is required with the Environment Agency, Natural England, South West Water and other stakeholders, to:
  - i. Agree a common understanding on the current position of East Devon's water infrastructure, particularly in relation to current areas of infrastructure capacity failures and the Environment Agency's responsibility for enforcement, to ensure appropriate environmental safeguards are put in place, and
  - ii. Ensure the impacts of the Local Plan on water resources are addressed in line with development coming forward.

52

### **Cranbrook Category 4 Infrastructure Contributions**

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services presented the report, which sought the Committee's approval for the proposed approach to bidding for, and assessing bids relating to, Category 4 infrastructure necessary for the effective functioning of the expansion areas at Cranbrook.

The assessment criteria will follow the principles of the CIL bidding process, while remaining flexible to reflect the different stages of the projects, its eligibility, its need, value for money and deliverability as outlined in paragraph 16.

It was noted that the process and criteria for Category 4 contributions had been considered and endorsed by the Cranbrook Placemaking Group, and that the recommendation to Cabinet is that the proposed mechanism for allocating Category 4 infrastructure contributions be adopted for use by the Council.

The Chair reminded Members that questions should focus solely on the process for allocating Category 4 infrastructure funds and should not extend to wider issues relating to infrastructure at Cranbrook.

Questions included:

- A query was raised about how the list of projects was determined and the extent of input provided by Cranbrook Town Council. In response it was advised that the projects were set out in the Cranbrook Plan and the town council had a role in the Placemaking Group.
- Further information was required on sustainable transport enhancement. It was advised it could include bus improvements, walking and cycling routes and improvements along London Road for the expansion areas.
- Clarification was sought on the spending process. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services explained the need to balance differing priorities and maintain flexibility between what can be delivered at a given time and the overall priorities.

**RESOLVED:**

The Committee recommends to the Cabinet that the ‘Mechanism for the allocation of category 4 infrastructure contributions’ included at appendix 1, together with the assessment criteria questions at paragraph 16 for use by the council in relation to category 4 infrastructure contributions received from developments in the Cranbrook Plan Area are adopted.

**RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:**

The Committee recommends to the Cabinet that the ‘Mechanism for the allocation of category 4 infrastructure contributions’ included at appendix 1, together with the assessment criteria questions at paragraph 16 for use by the council in relation to category 4 infrastructure contributions received from developments in the Cranbrook Plan Area are adopted.

53

**Habitat Regulation Non-Infrastructure Contributions**

As Councillor Geoff Jung had declared an affects and prejudicial interest for this item, he did not take part in discussions or the vote.

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services presented the report on the Habitat Regulation Non-Infrastructure Contributions, outlining the financial contributions required from residential developments located within 10km of the Exe Estuary and East Devon Pebblebed Heaths. The report related to the Joint Mitigation Strategy agreed between this Council, Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council.

Members noted that in order to deliver the joint strategy it was essential to substantially increase the proposed revised non-infrastructure habitat mitigation charges as set out in table 3 paragraph 2.7 of total contribution required from future EDDC dwellings to £790.41 for the Exe Estuary, £804.64 for the Pebblebed Heaths and £825.41 for both.

Questions raised included:

- A query was raised about the need to review these figures on a regular basis to keep up with inflation. It was confirmed these figures would be reviewed regularly, noting that the last review occurred approximately 7 years ago.
- An explanation was requested on the rationale for the slight increase for both the Exe Estuary and Pebblebed Heaths and how will it work in allocating funding. In response the Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services

advised that as the joint contribution was across both sites it would mean effectively there would be only one payment and gave an example of one SANGS officer doing the work across both sites.

- Clarification was sought on whether this contribution was in addition to site specific contributions and will it apply to all homes across the district. The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services explained that the charges only apply to dwellings within 10km of the protected habitats and are in addition to a proportion of CIL which is used to fund the infrastructure elements of the mitigation strategy while these charges relate to the non-infrastructure elements of the strategy.

## RESOLVED

That the revised non-infrastructure habitat mitigation contributions as shown in table 3 within the report be adopted and required for all planning applications for residential development within the habitat mitigation zone received after 1 April 2026 be agreed.

## 54 **Response to Proposed Reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and Other Changes to the Planning System December 2025**

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services invited Members to consider, for submission, the proposed summary responses to the questions raised in the Government’s consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and wider reforms to the planning system.

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services highlighted several key proposed changes, including:

- Structural changes to the overall document;
- Specific amendments to policies across chapters, with a clearer distinction between plan-making policies and decision-making policies, intended to improve clarity and reduce misinterpretation when determining planning applications;
- The introduction of national decision-making policies;
- Support for urban densification, including consideration of low-density plots, upward extensions and in-fill developments.
- The introduction of ‘medium sites’, defined as sites delivering 10 to 49 homes or up to 2.5 hectares;
- A stronger emphasis on a ‘predict and provide’ approach to transport planning;
- Measures to secure a more diverse mix of homes, including a mandatory minimum requirement of 10% social rent on major developments
- A national minimum standard of 45% accessible and adaptable homes for new housing;
- Support for development around railway stations with mandatory minimum density requirements.

The Assistant Director – Planning Strategy and Development Services responded to questions and points raised by Members:

- **Q43 (page 63)** – A question was raised about the weight proposed to be given to the reuse of buildings and materials, and whether demolition would be treated as a last resort. Although the Council’s draft response does not specifically reference this issue, it was acknowledged as an important factor in addressing climate change and reducing carbon footprint. It was suggested that additional wording could be included to encourage the Government to strengthen this aspect if Members wished.

- **Chapter 6, Q48 (page 68)** – A request was made to strengthen the response in challenging the target-driven approach to housing need assessment, and to suggest that need should instead be based on the Council’s own assessments. The Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Services acknowledged the value of local assessments but noted that, in practice, they often involve significant expenditure on consultants to determine housing need.
- **Q53 (page 70)** – A suggestion was made to challenge the five-year housing land supply requirement, on the basis that it can lead to poor decisions and speculative applications. It was proposed that an additional comment could be included to state that this is not an appropriate mechanism, should Members wish to do so.
- **Land banking** – A query was raised about whether any question within the consultation related to land banking. It was confirmed that no such question appeared to be included.
- **Green wedges** – A query was raised about whether green wedges could be referenced in the Green Belt question to help reinforce their role within planning policy. It was noted that Green Belts are a national designation and carry the highest level of planning protection. While green wedges share some similarities in purpose, they carry significantly less weight when challenged.
- **Focus on urban areas** – It was observed that many of the consultation questions were framed with an urban focus, resulting in the need for the Council’s responses to be caveated.

Members thanked officers for producing a comprehensive report that clearly reflected the views of East Devon District Council.

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the consultation be noted and the responses to each consultation question included in this report be agreed for submission as the Council’s response.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

B Bailey  
J Bailey  
K Blakey  
O Davey  
P Faithfull  
P Fernley  
C Fitzgerald  
M Howe (Vice-Chair)  
G Jung  
Y Levine  
T Olive (Chair)  
H Parr

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow  
R Collins

**Officers in attendance:**

Ed Freeman, Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Services  
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer

Damian Hunter, Planning Solicitor

**Councillor apologies:**

P Hayward

B Ingham

D Ledger

Chairman .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 5 February 2026**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.48 pm

#### **48 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 January 2026 were agreed and signed as a true record.

#### **49 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **50 Public speaking**

Cllr John Loudoun had registered to speak. Cllr Loudoun is a Sidmouth Town Councillor.

Cllr Loudoun referenced the report, section 1 on page 9, which referred to Sidmouth Town Council submitting a report containing images of weeds causing damage along footpaths, pavements and in roadside gutters, and which stated that the Town Council had advocated the reversal of the ban [on the use of glyphosate].

Cllr Loudoun has been a member of Sidmouth Town Council for almost 7 years and according to the Town Clerk, the Town Council's position on the use of glyphosate is that it follows the advice of EDDC on this, and other similar matters. This position remains unaltered.

Cllr Loudoun expressed concern that the report as presented to Scrutiny might lead the Committee's Members to believe that Sidmouth Town Council submitted a report for this review and that it "*advocated the reversal of the ban (on glyphosate)*". It should be made clear that Sidmouth Town Council had not submitted a report and had not advocated the reversal of the ban on glyphosate.

Cllr Loudoun was also concerned that by providing a link to this report and stating that it is "*(from Sidmouth Town Council)*" is misleading as the Town Council has not submitted this, and it is not an official Town Council document. Rather, a Sidmouth Town Councillor drafted and submitted the report for submission to this committee as a personal set of observations.

Cllr Loudoun had spoken to the author of this document and they had authorised him to say –

*"I was asked to submit my personal observations. I sent copies to (Councillor) Ian (Barlow) and (Councillor) Mike Goodman) as my local EDDC councillor and Mike as head of scrutiny. If you look carefully at the top in the introduction, I make a clear statement "I am submitting this material as an independent person. These are my opinions based upon an intimate study of the growing problem I have witnessed in the Sid Valley".*

*Also, for reasons of full disclosure I write I am Vice Chair of STC (Sidmouth Town Council) and a member of the Conservative Party. I am personally not happy at having my contribution labelled as STC and when I saw that I immediately told Hilary (Sidmouth Town Council Chair) of my unhappiness that this had happened”.*

I am most concerned that forever anyone accessing and reading this report will read these significant and misleading inaccuracies relating to Sidmouth Town Council.

The Chair thanked Cllr Loudoun for his statement and advised that this would be minuted for the record.

51 **Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

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

There were no confidential or exempt items.

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

There were none.

54 **Review of the impact of the ban on use of glyphosate**

The Streetscene Operations Manager introduced the report. EDDC banned the general use of glyphosate in September 2022 based on evidence of environmental damage and public health concerns from the use of glyphosate. At its meeting in September 2025, 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 set out the results of Streetscene’s glyphosate alternative trials and feedback from Councillors in relation to areas where weed growth was a concern. The trials related 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.

The Streetscene Operations Manager advised the Committee that there is no Council approved policy regarding glyphosate use. Following the ban, the Horticultural Technical Officer had created a weed treatment plan which had been used to inform the report to the Committee.

The report sets out the response from Councillors to the call for evidence on problem areas. The response had been very low, which indicates that there are no major issues with EDDC maintained areas. The problem areas highlighted by Councillors were maintained by Devon County Council.

The report set out the trials of alternatives to glyphosate: vinegar; hot foam.

Responses to questions and discussion included the following points:

- It was noted that other local authorities are currently reviewing their policies on the use of glyphosate;

- It was clarified that EDDC does not have a policy regarding glyphosate use and the report therefore did not cover policy review;
- There should be no issue with the use of spraying weedkiller if used correctly;
- Concern was expressed regarding the Council's use of dicophar and the perception that this was more environmentally friendly than glyphosate;
- The Horticultural Technical Officer clarified that EDDC's decision to ban glyphosate use in 2022 related solely to glyphosate and not to other herbicides or pesticides. The Council therefore continues to use herbicides and pesticides widely across areas such as sports pitches. Dicophar is also widely used by other local authorities on areas such as sports pitches and bowling greens;
- Concern was expressed that, according to the Pesticide Action Network, dicophar is more harmful than glyphosate;
- It was noted that glyphosate kills everything, whereas dicophar is a selective weed killer which does not kill grasses, and so is used on sports pitches;
- Concern was expressed that there is no suitable alternative to dicophar available for use on sports pitches and amenity turf, however, the Council was also using dicophar as a spot treatment for weeds and it was questioned whether this had been trialled by the manufacturer and was therefore certified for uses other than sports pitches and amenity turf;
- In response to a query whether any measurement of the effects on the microbiome under the soil surface was carried out when trialling alternatives such as hot foam, it was noted that, due to capacity, it was not possible to measure impacts below the soil surface;
- Concern was expressed as to the unintended consequences of the initial ban on the use of glyphosate, particularly when alternatives required funding and capacity which was not available;
- It was noted that the public and farmers can use dicophar widely with no training or knowledge, so it may be more appropriate for the Council to use glyphosate selectively as a safer alternative to dicophar, in order to redress the balance following EDDC's ban on its use;
- It was confirmed that Streetscene has licensed operatives to use pesticides and herbicides and PPE is provided and checked regularly;
- Giant Hogweed was a concern and should be treated accordingly;
- The use of dicophar as a spot treatment had not been tested and should not be used by the Council;
- It was vital to understand the impact of all treatments beneath the soil surface in order to make informed decisions;
- Regarding the persistence of dicophar in the soil, the half-life of one of the ingredients was between 6 and 15.1 days;
- Dicophar was used in a very small quantity on a localised bed as a spot treatment during the trial; it was unclear whether other authorities were using dicophar in this way;
- Limited resources should not be used as an excuse to use potentially toxic products;
- Glyphosate was still being used by the Countryside Team to deal with Japanese knotweed;
- Concern was expressed that the Council does not currently have a policy for weed management; this could be referred to the Overview Committee;
- Decline in honey bee colonies and efficiency was of serious concern;
- Exmouth Town Council had invested in a ride on weed-ripper which provided a good alternative for weed management;
- There should be a balance between tidiness and wild areas, given that weeds are wildflowers which are important for pollinators.
- It was important for people's well-being to properly maintain certain areas and carefully controlled use of certain products, supported by scientific knowledge, provided a good means to do this.

The Director of Place highlighted the reference in the report to the 'integrated weed management framework' which provides a hierarchy whereby chemicals are only used

as a last resort. It was understood that the Committee was seeking reassurance that this was the case.

The Director of Place would discuss this with Officers in terms of what resources would be required to bring further consideration of the integrated weed management framework to the Overview Committee within a reasonable timescale.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommended to Cabinet that:

1. Streetscene 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. The Director of Place to consider how the integrated weed management framework can be developed and brought for consideration by the Overview Committee, including consideration of resources and the impact from other services,
3. Councillors/Town and Parishes to continue to report areas of weed growth on pavements and roadsides to Devon County Council.

The Chair thanked Officers for their assistance in taking this matter forwards.

## **55 Climate Change Action Plan review**

The Portfolio Holder Environment – Nature and Climate introduced this item and highlighted key achievements over the past year. The Portfolio Holder thanked Officers for their work.

The Assistant Director Environmental Health introduced the report which provided a review of the Climate Change Action Plan, looking at actions achieved and impact on carbon emissions. The Assistant Director provided a presentation which highlighted key points from the report.

It was noted that the Action Plan forming part of the report is an interim Plan which is slightly different from the previous Plan considered by the Committee. The new draft Strategy and Action Plan are currently being produced, and when finished, will be presented at Councillor workshops for members' feedback.

Responses to questions and discussion included the following points:

- Councillor workshops would take place prior to the Strategy and Action Plan going to the Overview Committee and Cabinet to enable members to have input;
- It was noted that the carbon footprint increased in 2023-24, compared with UK figures, however the Council had seen an almost 5% reduction in carbon emissions in 2024-25;
- Supporting others, such as repair cafes, is vital and community action has a further reach than the Council can achieve alone;
- The Council promotes community action on the website and through social media;
- Devon County Council has a dedicated officer to promote reuse and recycling throughout communities;
- Encouraging and supporting Councillors, neighbours and community groups, including town and parish councils, to work together to deliver the Strategy will be key to its success going forwards;
- It was noted that scope 3 emissions were hard to measure and it was unlikely that an alternative measuring tool would be introduced before Local Government Reorganisation.

Changing the metric for measuring scope 3 emissions would also require retrospectively amending previous years' figures for accurate comparison;

- Carbon literacy training is on-going and there is now a short presentation as part of the Council's induction training;
- The appointment of the new interim Corporate Lead Programmes and Strategies would ensure that climate change is embedded in every Council project in a consistent way going forwards;
- Increased tree planting would assist with effective carbon capture and flood prevention;
- Hedges are also vital for biodiversity and for flood prevention and, wherever possible, the Council should be working with partners to increase tree and hedgerow planting;
- Reducing the carbon footprint becomes harder over time and it was unlikely that the target would be met;
- Adaptation was also a key factor in dealing with climate change;
- Planning enforcement should be more robust with regard to removal of trees and hedges, and climate action should be embedded across the whole Council so that each part of the Council abides by the commitment to carbon reduction;
- The Council could provide support for community groups by way of advice on governance;
- It was disappointing that local actions on climate change were not supported by Government decisions.

The Chair thanked Officers for attending and for their report.

## **AGREED**

That the Scrutiny Committee complimented the service for their excellent work and progress being made in achieving the actions specified in the Climate Change Action Plan.

## **56 Work programme 2025 - 2026**

The Committee considered the work programme.

Cllr Barlow raised the matter of planning enforcement and information which has been requested by Sidmouth Town Council regarding enforcement action in the town.

It was agreed that a scoping report on planning enforcement be brought to the April Committee meeting.

It was noted that the Overview Committee could also consider Local Government Reorganisation as a means of facilitating discussion among Councillors.

The work programme was agreed.

## **Attendance List**

### **Councillors present:**

I Barlow  
K Blakey  
A Bruce

O Davey  
P Fernley  
M Goodman (Chair)  
A Hall  
V Johns  
Y Levine  
D Mackinder (Vice-Chair)

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

R Collins  
P Faithfull  
R Jefferies  
G Jung  
J Loudoun

**Officers in attendance:**

Matthew Blythe, Assistant Director Environmental Health  
Catherine Causley, Climate Change Officer  
Paul Fealey, Horticultural Technical Officer  
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer  
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)  
Andrew Wood, Director of Place  
Julia Woodbridge, StreetScene Operations Manager  
Barry James, Interim Corporate Lead Programmes & Strategies

**Councillor apologies:**

J Brown  
B Collins  
M Hall  
J Whibley

Chairman .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Overview Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 26 March 2026**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.40 pm

#### **60 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 January 2026**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 January 2026 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

#### **61 Declarations of interest**

Minute 66. Public Toilets programme review options appraisal.  
Cllr Aurora Bailey, Affects Non-Registerable Interest, Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Minute 66. Public Toilets programme review options appraisal.  
Cllr Brian Bailey, Affects Non-Registerable Interest, Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Minute 66. Public Toilets programme review options appraisal.  
Cllr Ian Barlow, Affects Non-Registerable Interest, Member of Sidmouth Town Council.

Minute 66. Public Toilets programme review options appraisal.  
Cllr Tim Dumper, Affects Non-Registerable Interest, Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Minute 66. Public Toilets programme review options appraisal.  
Cllr Matt Hall, Affects Non-Registerable Interest, Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Minute 66. Public Toilets programme review options appraisal.  
Cllr John Heath, Affects Non-Registerable Interest, Member of Beer Parish Council.

Minute 66. Public Toilets programme review options appraisal.  
Cllr Dan Wilson, Affects Non-Registerable Interest, Member of Exmouth Town Council.

#### **62 Public Speaking**

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

#### **63 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **64 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There was one confidential/exempt item (minute 66 refers).

#### **65 Work Programme 2025 - 2026**

The Overview Committee's Work Programme 2025-2026 was received and noted.

Following review of proposal forms received, Members agreed to add the following items to the Work Programme:

- Community Action Groups Devon update; and
- Preventative maintenance of trees in high amenity use area and another policy for tree maintenance of trees in EDDC controlled social housing.

## 66 **Public Toilets programme review options appraisal**

The Assistant Director Place, Assets & Leisure presented this report concerning the Public Toilets Programme Review, together with a confidential options appraisal.

The report followed a Member briefing to the Overview and Scrutiny committees in July 2025, a report to Overview Committee on 30 September 2025, and recommendations from Cabinet on 4 February 2026 which included the following:

- The principle, and community benefit, of transferring council-owned public conveniences to town and parish councils with the possibility of the concurrent release of proportional amounts of residual capital funding, subject to the timely review of the existing refurbishment arrangements, and potential transfer protocols, by the Overview Committee to ensure best value for both EDDC and the lower tier authorities.

The Committee was asked to consider the options appraisal and make recommendations to Cabinet in order to inform next steps.

The Vice-Chair moved 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 out in the agenda is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing these items in private session (Part B). The motion was carried by a majority show of hands.

Members discussed the options appraisal and relevant considerations in detail and at length, including the following points:

- Views were expressed that transferring public toilets to Town and Parish Councils was the only option to protect them going into Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), given that they are a discretionary service.
- There was no indication that LGR would not go ahead; however, should it halt, the Finance Director explained that the spending review received recently had hit district councils hard and there were significant savings to be made. It would therefore be necessary to look at areas of discretionary spend.
- It was possible, subject to budget, to complete the Public Toilets programme and, prior to vesting day, enter into conditional contracts with Town and Parish Councils to transfer the toilets on completion of the programme. This would involve this Council needing to find millions of pounds of additional budget, and would be a Member decision.
- In the event that this Council completed the Public Toilets programme and retained the assets, the successor authority could nevertheless take the decision to close them or sell the sites for commercial development.
- If public toilets were transferred to Town and Parish Councils with a dowry then it was suggested that the Town and Parish Councils should be free to decide how the money was spent, without restriction.
- The Assistant Director explained there was an intention to include contiguous assets such as parks and open spaces in the package offered to Towns and Parish Councils, to make the proposal more attractive and with a view to protecting community assets.

- One Member suggested that adding contiguous assets would make the proposals more complicated and expensive and could scare Towns and Parish Councils who would not want the cost of maintaining parks and gardens.
- This Council needed to understand and provide detailed costings to Town and Parish Councils before negotiations could commence, and this work required resource across services including Streetscene, Legal, HR, Finance and Place.
- It was suggested to have joint working groups between the district and parish and town councils, which could help both tiers of councils to make decisions in a better way and help to spread an understanding of how the transfers could work.
- The Assistant Director stated that he would check if the Council was in contract with the payment provider to continue charging for the 4 pay-to-use sites.

Following the discussion, Members agreed by a majority show of hands, to support the recommendation that public toilets be transferred to Town and Parish Councils in current condition and with a dowry reflecting appropriate share of remaining approved capital budget.

Members considered the role Overview Committee was to have in the Public Toilets Programme moving forward, and indicated that the Committee would like to be appraised with the transfer protocols in order to have oversight of them.

### **Attendance List**

#### **Councillors present:**

A Bailey  
B Bailey  
B Collins  
R Collins  
T Dumper (Vice-Chair)  
A Hall (Chair)  
M Hall  
J Heath  
Y Levine  
D Mackinder  
D Wilson

#### **Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

I Barlow  
M Goodman

#### **Officers in attendance:**

Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Leisure  
Simon Davey, Director of Finance  
James Docherty, Assistant Director Governance & Legal  
Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer  
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

#### **Councillor apologies:**

K Bloxham  
P Fernley

Chair: .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Audit and Governance Committee held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House on 19 March 2026**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 2.35 pm and ended at 4.40 pm

#### **46 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 29 January 2026 were confirmed as a true record.

#### **47 Declarations on interest**

There were none given.

#### **48 Public speaking**

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

#### **49 Matters of urgency**

There were none.

#### **50 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were none.

#### **51 Minutes of Information Governance Board held on 25 February 2026**

Members noted the Minutes of Information Governance Board held on 25 February 2026.

#### **52 Internal Audit Activity Progress Report – Quarter 3 2025/26**

The report outlined the progress in delivering the 2025/26 Internal Audit Plan and provided a summary of outstanding internal audit actions as of 27 February 2026.

During discussion concern was raised over the management of contracts and the range of issues highlighted in the audit. These included:

- Not offering best value if there was no knowledge of contracts being chased up
- It was in the scope of the Committee to seek assurance on the procedures in place for contract management and how these were all linked
- This was basic management which the public would expect the council to get right
- There could be no outstanding actions on the audit for this area
- That contract management needed to be on the Risk Register
- That the request for this audit had come from the Director of Governance at the start of her taking over the contract management procedures at the council.

The Committee asked that the Community Asset Transfer report be raised at the next Asset Management Forum for scrutiny with required actions considered for follow-up improvement.

In response to questions concerning the Corporate Health and Safety audit the Assistant Director Environmental Health stated his disappointment for the limited assurance rating from the audit. The department had asked for the audit due to going through a lot of change in corporate safety and the level of resources allocated to it. Most of the issues had been identified in the corporate action plan which he found reassuring and had a plan to deal with these issues, this was not going to be a quick fix. A new corporate health and safety system was presently going through procurement; this would make the management of health and safety a lot easier for everybody.

**RESOLVED:**

That the progress against the 2025/26 Internal Audit Plan as of 27 February 2026 and the findings reported be noted.

**53 Internal Audit Plan and Internal Audit Charter 2026/27**

SWAP Internal Audit Services (SWAP) had prepared the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2026/27. SWAP required formal approval from the Audit and Governance Committee to proceed with the Plan.

The Global Internal Audit Standards required chief audit executives to develop and maintain an Internal Audit Charter. The Internal Audit Charter must set out the internal audit functions.

The Internal Audit Charter had to be approved by the board that oversees the internal audit function. At East Devon District Council, this board was the Audit and Governance Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

That the 2026/27 Internal Audit Plan and 2026/27 Internal Audit Charter be approved.

**54 Financial Monitoring report 2025/26 - month 10**

The report was presented to Cabinet on 4 March 2026. The report was presented to Audit & Governance Committee to inform of the financial position for month 10 January 2026 and to note any recommendations to Council.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Financial Monitoring month 10 2026 position and the recommendations to Cabinet on 4 March 2026 be noted.

**55 Statement of Accounts 2025/26 - Review of Accounting Policies**

It was good practice for the Audit and Governance Committee to approve the Accounting Policies to be adopted in advance of the preparation of the Statement of Accounts.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Accounting Policies for the 2025/26 Statement of Accounts be approved.

**56 Risk Policy**

The latest risk information was provided to allow the Committee to monitor the risk status of Strategic and Operational Risks. This followed a review of risks by responsible officers (Risk Owners) in conjunction with the Interim Corporate Lead – Programmes and Strategies during February 2026.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Audit and Governance Committee reviews and considers the Strategic and Operational Risks as part of the Council's responsibility to ensure all risks were being monitored, and that control actions were implemented by Directorates and Services across the Authority.

57 **Review of Whistleblowing Policy**

The Whistle-Blowing Policy had not been updated since 2022. The opportunity had therefore been taken to conduct a review, to ensure that it was up-to-date and fit for purpose.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Audit and Governance Committee approve the updated policy subject to the date in paragraph 10.1 being changed from March 2026 to March 2029.

**RECOMMENDED to Council:**

- (2) That the Policy is submitted to Full Council, via the Constitution Working Group for inclusion in the Council's Constitution.

58 **Audit and Governance Forward Plan**

Audit and Governance Committee Forward Plan items to be considered at the next committee included:

- External Audit Committee update
- External Audit Plan 2025 - 2026
- Internal Audit Annual Opinion 2025/26
- Internal Audit Progress Report - Quarter 4 2025-26
- Risk Report quarter one 2026/27
- Draft Statement of Accounts 2025/26 including Annual Governance Statement
- Financial Monitoring report update 2026/27
- Review of the Contract Management Procedure report

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

I Barlow  
C Brown  
C Burhop (Chair)  
R Collins  
O Davey (Vice-Chair)  
M Goodman  
F King  
Y Levine

**Officers in attendance:**

Robert Wood, Independent Person  
Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer  
Matthew Blythe, Assistant Director Environmental Health  
Simon Davey, Director of Finance  
James Docherty, Assistant Director Governance & Legal  
Barry James, Interim Corporate Lead Programmes & Strategies  
Connor McLaughlin Nester, Principal Auditor  
John Symes, Finance Manager

**Councillor apologies:**

C Fitzgerald

Chair .....

Date: .....

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held at Online on 17 March 2026**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 10.59 am

#### **13 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 October 2025**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 October 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.

#### **14 Declarations of interest**

Cllr A Bailey – Minute 18; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr O Davey – Minute 18; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr T Dumper – Minute 18; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr N Hookway – Minute 18; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council and Devon County Council.

#### **15 Public speaking**

One member of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

Mrs Ann Membery raised questions regarding the future plans for the Harbour View Café, and advocated for public engagement. Mrs Membery also made suggestions concerning the use of the former Fun Park on the seafront, and an electric operated Park and ride service from the Maer Road car park.

The Chair thanked Mrs Membery for her contribution and outlined how the Placemaking Plan addresses seafront assets, fun park redevelopment and transport ideas.

#### **16 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

#### **17 Confidential/exempt items**

There were no confidential/exempt items.

#### **18 Adoption of Exmouth Placemaking Plan**

The Corporate Lead – Major Projects and Programmes presented this report which summarised the review of the Exmouth Placemaking Plan (EPP) and minor changes made based on feedback received from the public consultation exercise, member and

officer workshops and sought an endorsement from the Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group of the EPP and the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC).

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- The Corporate Lead was unable to confirm the budget spent on the Placemaking project to date having only been involved since 2024 but stated that she would provide this information outside of the meeting. It was noted that some of the expenditure had come from external sources such as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Once adopted, the Placemaking Plan will have a 10 year life, offering reassurance and opportunity to local businesses, and certainty to funders. Furthermore, it will serve to protect the seafront from inappropriate development particularly following Local Government Reorganisation.
- Loss of parking, or restrictions on traffic are always controversial and some members were disappointed that the pedestrianisation of Queen's Drive had been dropped from the Placemaking Plan. It was suggested that national and local government needed to be bolder and do things that were unpopular but which may be to everybody's benefit in the long run.
- The Placemaking Plan does not make specific reference to the arts; however, the Council has adopted an East Devon Cultural Strategy which sets out the approach for the district. The Corporate Lead suggested that she could review the Placemaking Plan to consider if there was anything further that could be added concerning the arts.
- Councillors were keen that the Council delivers some tangible outcomes from the Placemaking Plan as quickly as possible and it was suggested that a signage and wayfinding strategy could be implemented as a visible, actionable project subject to the availability of funding.
- The Strategic Outline Business Case sets out an indicative cost of £50k for a signage strategy which will not only consider where the signage may go but will also consider the design of the signage and how it fits within the placemaking approach.
- It was suggested to reassess how much needs to be spent on a signage strategy and to benchmark the cost against other authorities, to ensure value for money.
- Councillors expressed disappointment that there is no mention of a long term goal to have a transport hub by the station, and emphasised the importance of transport improvements. The Council has an advocacy role to ensure that the town gets the transport it needs not only for the town centre and seafront but also linked to the rest of the town.

Following the discussion the Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group agreed to endorse the Exmouth Placemaking Plan and Strategic Outline Business Case.

**RECOMMENDED to Cabinet:**

1. That the Exmouth Placemaking Plan and Strategic Outline Business Case is adopted by East Devon District Council.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

P Arnott (Vice-Chair)  
A Bailey  
O Davey  
T Dumper  
A Hall  
N Hookway (Chair)  
T Olive  
D Conduit (Exmouth Town Council)  
G Deasy (Exmouth Town Council)

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

P Faithfull  
I Barlow  
M Hall  
G Jung  
E Wragg

**Officers in attendance:**

Anne Mountjoy, Growth Point Communications Officer  
Louie Belfield  
Marie Ainsworth, Place & Prosperity Officer  
Naomi Harnett, Corporate Lead (Interim) – Major Projects & Programmes  
Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer  
Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Leisure  
Andrew Wood, Director of Place  
Barry James, Interim Corporate Lead Programmes & Strategies

**Also in attendance:**

Lisa Bowman, Exmouth Town Clerk

**Councillor apologies:**

P Hayward

Chair: .....

Date: .....

Report to: Council

Date of Meeting 15 April 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



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## Strata Business Plan 2025/2026

### Report summary:

This report sets out the Strata Joint Executive Committee recommendation to Council arising from their consideration of a report on the Strata Business Plan for 2026/2027.

Note: The references in this report to Paper A relate to the relevant report considered by the Cabinet with recommendations for Full Council to consider and are appended to this report for reference.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That the Strata Business Plan for 2026/2027 is approved.

### Reason for recommendation:

The partnership has embarked on ambitious plans to set a blueprint for the future of modern councils. This work lays the foundation for future reorganisation ensuring their technology remains scalable and forward thinking in light of LGR.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager ([andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk))

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# STRATA JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STRATA JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**DATE OF MEETING:** 28 JANUARY 2026  
11 FEBRUARY 2026

**PUBLICATION DATE:** 7 JANUARY 2026

**REPORT OF:** BUSINESS PLAN 2026/27

**SUBJECT:** STRATA BUSINESS PLAN REVIEW 2026/27

## 1. PURPOSE

1.1 This report set outs key details of the 2026/27 business plan.

## 2. BACKGROUND

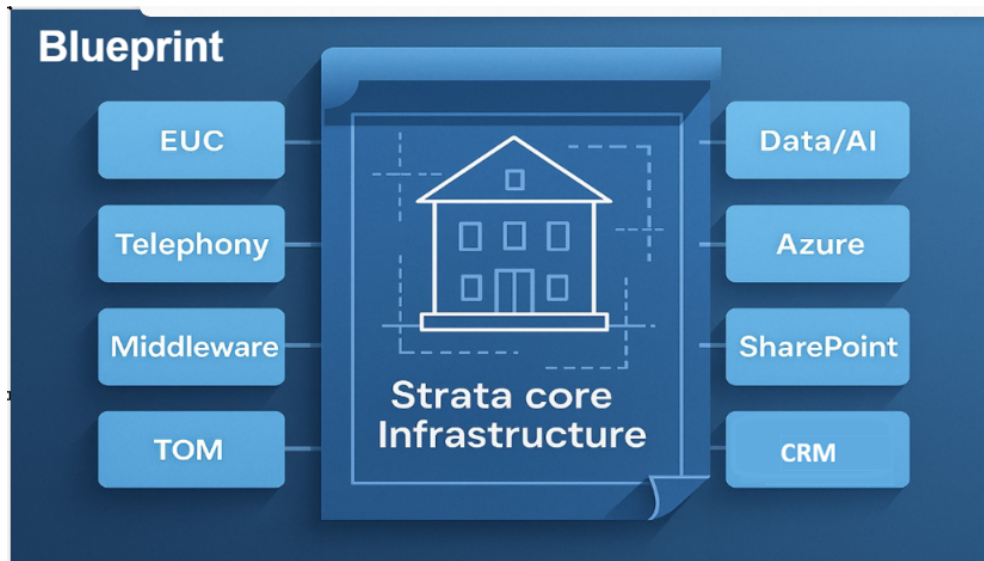
2.1 The partnership has embarked on ambitious plans to set a blueprint for the future of modern councils. This work lays the foundation for future reorganisation ensuring their technology remains scalable and forward thinking in light of LGR.

## 3. MAIN IMPLICATIONS

### **The blueprint.**

Having a designed enterprise architecture helps position Strata and its partners in the future ensuring that technology is there to transform any council and enable maximum efficiency.

These key pillars defined as the Blueprint set the Architecture that will support the councils transformation throughout 26/27:



Target Operating Model	ITIL-aligned operating model, requirements-led delivery new control boards, improved KPI performance and strong throughput (231 requests, 254 closures).
End user Computing (laptops and Desktops)	Intune-managed devices, reusable app catalogue, cloud-first delivery, building-agnostic working, supports future AVD rollout, rapid onboarding for LGR.
Corporate Telephony	NICE CXone cloud platform, AI routing, real-time Management information, integration, resilience during organisational change, scalable across councils.
Middleware (integration)	Cloud-hosted integration layer, reusable APIs, proactive notifications, reduced technical debt, supports CRM/One & Done model.
Azure (Cloud hosting)	Scalable cloud infrastructure, mobility, resilience, compliance (CAF/PSN), reduced hardware reliance, supports virtual desktops and modernisation.
SharePoint ( Document management)	Local Government Classification Scheme aligned document management, automated retention, compliance, collaboration, building-agnostic access.
Data/AI	Microsoft Fabric, Purview governance,( Microsoft data management tools) medallion architecture, predictive analytics, unified data layer, AI-ready ecosystem.
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)/Middleware	Single customer view, unified data flows, reduced hand-offs, consistent multi-channel

	experience, key enabler during reorganisation.
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### Themes of projects for 26/27

Strata have consulted with partners, and estimated the ICT resource allocation for 26/27 based on required critical LGR enabling projects. A high level overview of the themes can be seen below:

Service Maximisation	Extending existing platforms (telephony, Uniform, SAM, Legend) across councils, reducing procurement, ensuring standardisation, lowering risk/cost.
Corporate Efficiency	Automation (Disaster Recovery, Cloud optimisation), governance, AI tooling for document redaction, housing AI, CRM exploration, reducing manual workloads.
Data Driven	Data dashboards linking risk/finance/operational data, semantic models, automated pipelines, better decision insight for Members/officers.
Embedding transformation	Ongoing enabler work (SharePoint, notifications), Power Apps automation, Exeter transformation support, improving digital maturity.
Infrastructure	Transition to leased lines, virtual desktops implementation, firewall replacement, cloud network, cloud migration nearing completion, improved resilience and security.
Security/Ops	Build on MHCLGs affirmation of exemplar service, Disaster recovery rehearsals, Cyber Essentials automated patching and backup, secure-by-design architecture, improved cyber posture.

## 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 That the Joint Scrutiny Committee and Joint Executive Committee note the contents of the Plan and recommend to the Full Councils of the three Partner Authorities for approval.

Steve Mawn Director of ICT and Transformation	Contact details E-mail: <a href="mailto:steve.mawn@Strata.solutions">steve.mawn@Strata.solutions</a>
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# Business Plan 2026/2027

Author:

Strata Management Team

Version:

0.1

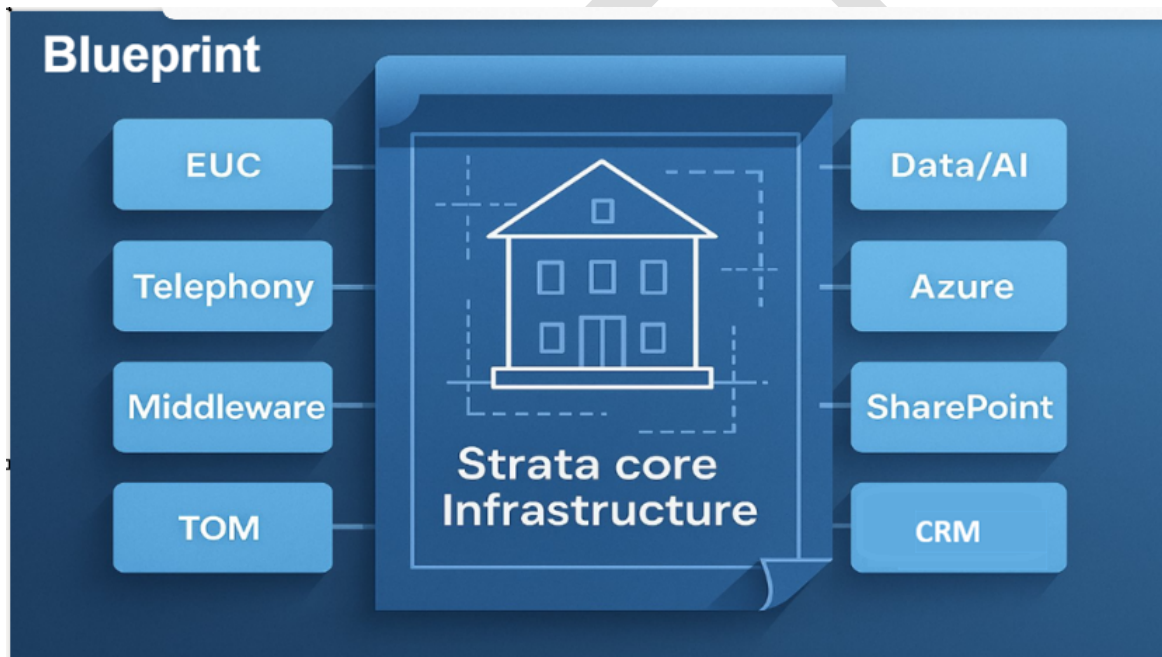
1. Introduction	3
2. Overview of 25/26	11
3. Staff Survey	16
4. Themes of Projects for 26/27	19
5. Corporate Training Schedule	21
6. KPI Review and Value Setting	25
7. Overview of Workload	29
8. Finance	30

DRAFT

# 1. Introduction

In 2023-24 Strata set out on an ambitious plan to lay the foundations to implement a scalable enterprise architecture for its partners. Having a designed enterprise architecture helps position Strata and its partners in the future ensuring that technology is there to transform any council and enable maximum efficiency.

These key pillars defined as the Blueprint set the Architecture that will support the councils transformation throughout 26/27:



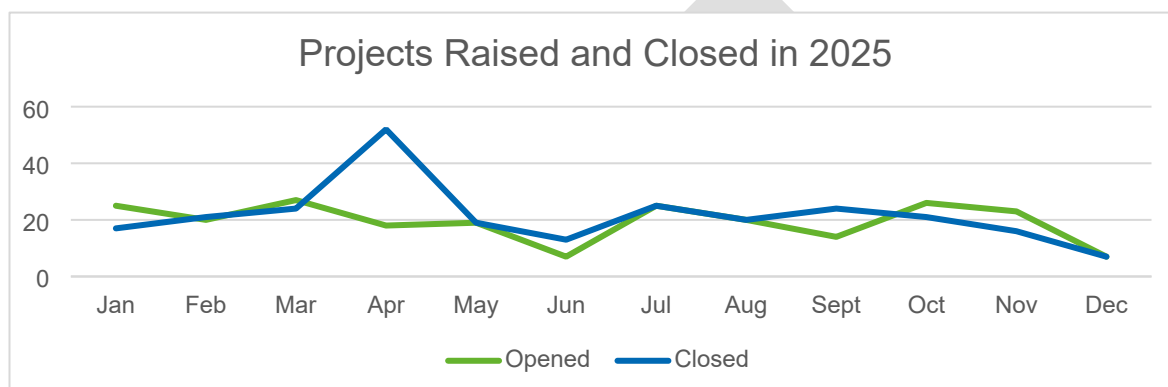
## 1.1 Target operating Model (TOM)

Strata and partners in 2024/25 realigned the operating model to be ITIL focused moving to a requirements, design and delivery led service. This joined with new operational control boards has been instrumental in exceeding KPI's and

demonstrating Strata’s true delivery power. This can be seen clearly in the management information provided on a regular basis.

For calendar year 2025, up until 10<sup>th</sup> December when the data was captured, Strata have received 231 new Project requests and have closed 254 projects.

Carry-over from previous years was 171 projects. This equates to an average of 20 new projects a month and an average of 23 project closures.



The number of open Projects reached a peak of 180 in January and a low of 131 in October. The spike in closed Projects in April relates to a full review with the authorities of all priorities, which resulted in a higher than usual rate of close.

As Strata gears up for significant change for our customers having a designed enterprise architecture will be critical to the future in transitioning services to new entities:

## 1.2 End User Computing (EUC)

Strata’s approach to End User Computing (EUC) is a cornerstone of its scalable, future-ready blueprint for local government IT. By replacing legacy thin client technology with modern, Intune-managed laptops and packaging most applications into a centralised application catalogue, Strata has created an environment where digital resources can be rapidly deployed, reused, and scaled to meet evolving organisational needs and accelerating any future deployments.

### **1.2.1 Scalable Application Packaging**

A key strategic achievement is the packaging of most line-of-business applications into a reusable catalogue. These pre-packaged applications are ready for immediate deployment, supporting consistent user experiences and operational resilience, regardless of where staff are based or how the organisation evolves. This means that should the organisational footprint expand, such as during Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), new users, teams or even entire councils can be onboarded quickly and efficiently. Applications are not tied to specific hardware or locations; instead they are delivered on-demand to any authorised device, ensuring consistency, security and ease of management.

### **1.2.2 Building-Agnostic Digital Infrastructure**

The EUC model is fundamentally building-agnostic. Devices and applications are managed in the cloud enabling staff to work securely and productively from any location. This flexibility is critical during periods of organisational change, estate rationalisation or emergency response, ensuring that services remain available and staff remain connected regardless of physical premises.

### **1.2.3 Strategic Value in Local Government Reorganisation**

In the context of LGR whatever happens it is recognised Strata will need to be flexible in its approach as organisations merge and change. Strata's scalable EUC solution offers several key advantages whatever the footprint or model:

- **Rapid onboarding:** New councils or teams can be integrated or migrated to a digital environment with minimal disruption, leveraging the pre-packaged application catalogue.
- **Consistent user experience:** Standardised devices and applications ensure that all staff have access to the tools they need regardless of location or organisational structure.
- **Operational resilience:** Cloud-based management and delivery reduce dependency on legacy infrastructure, supporting business continuity and service excellence.
- **Cost efficiency:** Reusable application packages and centralised management lower support costs and streamline IT operations.

### **1.2.4 Future-Ready Platform**

Strata's EUC strategy is designed to support ongoing transformation including the future implementation of Azure Virtual Desktop for specialised functions. This ensures that the digital environment remains adaptable, secure and aligned with the broader migration to cloud infrastructure.

### **1.3 Cloud Telephony (Nice/CxOne)**

The transition to a cloud-based telephony platform marks a pivotal step in Strata's blueprint for a resilient, future-ready IT environment. With the retirement of Skype at the beginning of 2025, Strata undertook a rigorous selection process to identify and implement a scalable, enterprise-grade telephony solution. The chosen platform, NICE CXone, is designed to deliver private sector-grade management information, automated call routing, AI ready, and advanced artificial intelligence-driven call handling.

By leveraging cloud technology, the telephony platform is no longer tied to physical infrastructure or specific buildings. This building-agnostic approach ensures that communication services remain robust and accessible regardless of office relocations, estate rationalisation, or organisational restructuring. This means seamless continuity of service during periods of change enabling staff to remain connected and responsive wherever they are.

In the context of local government reorganisation, the cloud telephony solution provides the flexibility to adapt rapidly to new models or organisations. IT resources can be scaled up or down as needed, without the constraints of legacy hardware or on-premise systems. This agility is essential for maintaining high-quality service delivery and operational resilience during times of transition.

The NICE CXone platform introduces market leading automated routing and AI-powered call handling, streamlining workflows and enhancing customer experience. Management information tools provide real-time visibility into agent availability, queue performance and service demand, supporting data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement. Integration with single sign-on and presence information further simplifies day-to-day operations for council staff.

Migrating to a cloud telephony platform reduces dependency on ageing, on-premise equipment, lowers maintenance costs, and minimises the risk of service disruption. Councils benefit from predictable, consumption-based pricing and can redirect resources from infrastructure management to value-adding digital initiatives. The move also supports sustainability goals by optimising energy use and enabling smarter capacity management.

A unified cloud telephony solution will foster collaboration between councils, enabling joint projects, shared expertise, and consistent service delivery across organisational boundaries. The platform's interoperability and integration capabilities make it easier to connect systems, share data securely, and deliver a unified experience for staff and citizens.

#### **1.4 Middleware**

As part of the reduction of technical debt strata created a middleware platform that sits between any data source and presentation to applications, citizen developers and the public via the online portal. The design ensures the platform being situated in the cloud is building and network agnostic allowing a "plug and play" mode of operation allowing partners and future partners to benefit from any application integrations within the catalogue. The platform is core to proactive communications monitoring data changes within back-office systems triggering notifications via a multitude of medias i.e. txt, email call back etc.

#### **1.5 Azure Cloud Technology**

Cloud technology and specifically the adoption of Microsoft Azure, is now central to Strata's vision for a future-proof, scalable enterprise architecture. In the context of local government reorganisation, the move to a building-agnostic cloud server platform is not just a technical upgrade it is a strategic enabler for transformation, operational resilience and service innovation.

Azure provides a highly scalable infrastructure that can dynamically adjust to the changing demands of partner councils. As local government structures evolve whether through re-organisation, shared services, or new partnership models the cloud ensures that IT resources can be rapidly scaled up or down without the

constraints of physical premises or legacy hardware. This flexibility is essential for supporting both day-to-day operations and major transformation programmes.

By decoupling IT infrastructure from specific buildings, Azure enables true mobility and continuity of service. Councils can consolidate, relocate or repurpose office space without being limited by server rooms or on-premise systems. This is particularly valuable during periods of organisational change, estate rationalisation or emergency response, ensuring that critical services remain available to staff and citizens regardless of location.

Harnessing Microsoft's ongoing investment in security Azure delivers robust protection for council data and systems. The platform benefits from advanced threat detection, automated patching and compliance with national and international standards. This is vital for local authorities who must safeguard sensitive information and demonstrate compliance with frameworks such as the Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) and Public Services Network (PSN) requirements.

Migrating to Azure reduces dependency on ageing, on-premise hardware, provides comparable maintenance costs and minimising the risk of service disruption. Councils benefit from predictable, consumption-based pricing and can redirect resources from infrastructure management to value-adding digital initiatives. The cloud also supports sustainability goals by optimising energy use and enabling smarter capacity management

Azure underpins the delivery of modern digital services, from virtual desktops and remote working to advanced analytics and AI-driven solutions. It provides a standardised, future-ready platform for application modernisation, integration and the rapid deployment of new capabilities empowering councils to respond quickly to citizen needs and policy changes.

A unified cloud platform fosters collaboration between our partners councils, enabling shared services, joint projects, and the pooling of expertise. Azure's interoperability and integration capabilities make it easier to connect systems, share data securely and deliver consistent experiences across organisational boundaries.

Migrating to Azure takes a considerable amount of skill ensuring the business case is comparable and when configured in this tried and tested approach cost remains comparable to on premise but provides significantly more benefits.

## **1.6 SharePoint and Local Government Classification Scheme**

The deployment of SharePoint as Strata's document management system is a key to a modern, scalable, and resilient information environment. In today's local government context—where the volume, diversity, and importance of unstructured documents are ever-increasing—SharePoint provides a robust, cloud-enabled platform that ensures secure document retention, discoverability, and compliance.

SharePoint's cloud-based architecture and the way it has been implemented means that document management is no longer tied to physical servers or specific locations. This building-agnostic approach is critical for councils across Devon, especially during periods of organisational change, office relocations, or estate rationalisation. Staff can access, collaborate on, and manage documents securely from anywhere, supporting flexible working and business continuity.

At the heart of this SharePoint deployment is the adoption of the Local Government Functional Classification Scheme (LGFCS). Unlike traditional department-based filing structures, this standard organises documents by function reflecting the actual services and activities delivered by councils. This approach ensures that records are consistently categorised, regardless of organisational changes, mergers or restructures. It supports efficient information retrieval, robust retention policies and seamless compliance with statutory requirements.

SharePoint's integration with the Local Government Classification standard underpins strong governance and compliance. Automated retention schedules, audit trails and access controls ensure that sensitive information is protected and retained in line with legal and regulatory obligations. This is particularly vital for local authorities who must demonstrate transparency, accountability and adherence to frameworks such as the Public Services Network (PSN) and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

By providing a unified platform for document management, SharePoint enables cross-council collaboration, knowledge sharing and the pooling of expertise plus interoperability with other cloud services such as Microsoft Teams and OneDrive.

## **1.7 Fabric, Purview, Data and AI**

Strata's blueprint emphasises the strategic adoption of Microsoft Fabric as the pillar of our data architecture. Fabric enables a unified data lake and warehouse approach, reducing time-to-insight and supporting advanced analytics and AI-driven services across partner councils. Complementing this, Microsoft Purview will provide robust governance, cataloguing and compliance capabilities, ensuring data integrity and security throughout its lifecycle. Together, these platforms will empower councils to leverage predictive analytics, machine learning and Copilot technologies, creating actionable insights that enhance service delivery and operational efficiency.

This data and AI strategy is not standalone it builds on the foundational work undertaken including the deployment of enterprise middleware, SharePoint migration, and cloud telephony solutions. Middleware continues to serve as the integration layer, enabling seamless API management and secure data exchange between line-of-business systems and the Fabric data platform. SharePoint remains critical for structured document management and compliance, while the shift to cloud telephony underpins omnichannel communication and collaboration. These enablers collectively form a resilient digital ecosystem, positioning Strata to deliver scalable, interoperable, and future-ready services for partners.

## **1.8 'One and Done' via CRM, Middleware and Data Integration.**

A significant part of the blueprint is providing a single, authoritative view of the customer to council staff. By centring the CRM on the entire customer record—not just isolated transactions it ensures that every interaction is consistent, informed, and resolved at the first point of contact. The CRM provides this consolidated record and supports straightforward, efficient customer journeys across channels.

Strata's Enterprise Middleware Architecture (EMA) sits between any data source (line-of-business systems, legacy databases, external partners) and the CRM and user-facing applications. Acting as the integration layer, EMA standardises

connectivity, governs APIs and surfaces back-office data to the CRM and the contact centre—so agents can view status, update records, and resolve cases without hand-offs or rekeying. This reduces technical debt, enables reuse, and presents clean, secure data services to citizen developers and portals.

With CRM, Middleware and data platform working as a unified fabric, customer interactions it provides a streamlined customer approach, and will provide much needed continuity of service during times of structural change.

## 2 Overview of 2025/26

During the past year, Strata has delivered a number of priority digital projects in support of the partner councils objectives. These have focused on modernising core platforms, improving service resilience and reducing reliance on ageing technologies while maintaining alignment with agreed strategic and financial plans.

### 2.1 Copper Switch Off

Progress across the councils has been consistently strong, with delivery ahead of plan in several areas. Teignbridge District Council was completed by October 2025 achieving delivery approximately two months earlier than scheduled. Exeter City Council is now almost complete and remains on track for full completion by the end of the calendar year. East Devon District Council is also nearing completion, with fewer than ten remaining lines, excluding the Home Safeguard service which is not held by Strata.

The programme has successfully removed legacy PBX infrastructure and replaced it with Microsoft Teams telephony, modernising the telephony estate and reducing dependency on ageing on-premise equipment. Where sites have transitioned from FTTC to FTTP connectivity, there has been a clear improvement in internet access performance, contributing to greater reliability and an improved user experience.

Delivery has met the original BTS deadline of December 2025, rather than the later revised target of January 2027, demonstrating effective planning and

execution. In addition to these operational improvements, the programme has delivered tangible financial benefits, reducing the annual BT bill of approximately £18,000 to around £500 per year.

## **2.2 Enterprise Middleware Architecture (EMA)**

The EMA platform has been successfully implemented in the production environment and is supporting several live, business-critical services, including missed bin reporting and licensing. Knowledge transfer activities have been undertaken to support ongoing operation and future extension of the platform by the councils.

EMA is providing integration aligned with Council objectives relating to platform standardisation, efficiency, and digital enablement. The adoption of standardised API management, monitoring, and security controls has enabled future system changes to be delivered with reduced integration risk and improved consistency across services.

## **2.3 Power Platform and Centre of Excellence**

The core Centre of Excellence (CoE) capability has been implemented, including governance and monitoring, supported by defined security roles and data loss prevention controls.

Structured training and guidance have been delivered to support staff use of Power Apps and Power Automate, and governance standards have been established for environment management, naming conventions, and connector usage. An initial pipeline of use cases has been developed, with early solutions focused on internal process automation and service efficiency. While adoption levels vary across councils, this has informed a planned focus on targeted engagement, internal champions, and shared learning to increase uptake. Overall, the programme supports the councils' digital strategies by enabling proportionate innovation, improving time-to-value, and maintaining strong governance.

## **2.4 Contact Centre Transformation**

Following the July go-live, the CXone platform has consolidated contact handling across the partner councils onto a single, cloud-based solution. Since

implementation, the platform has processed customer interactions, providing a consistent foundation for multi-channel service delivery aligned with Business Plan objectives relating to customer access, service efficiency, and operational resilience.

Operational feedback from front-line teams indicates improved visibility of agent availability, queue performance, and service demand. Integration with single sign-on and presence information has simplified day-to-day workflows and reduced dependency on manual processes.

A structured training approach, delivered through the NICE Dojo platform, has supported capability development across agent, supervisor, and administrator roles. While early implementation phases identified interoperability and device-related issues, these were addressed through targeted workstation changes and client configuration updates. Further work is underway to enhance reporting maturity and deepen user training as part of an agreed programme of continuous improvement.

Overall, the CXone programme has delivered measurable operational value, improved service oversight and reduced fragmentation across council contact handling arrangements.

## **2.5 End User Compute (EUC)**

The End User Computing (EUC) project was initiated to address the limitations and increasing risk associated with legacy thin-client and Global Desktop technologies, while supporting 24/25 Business Plan objectives relating to workforce productivity, flexible working, and security. The project delivered the transition to modern, Microsoft Intune-managed Windows 11 devices, alongside standardised application delivery and cloud-based data access through Microsoft 365 services, including OneDrive for Business.

From a strategic perspective, the project has reduced dependency on ageing end-user infrastructure, simplified device lifecycle management, and improved alignment with Microsoft security baselines. The approach provides a more consistent and supportable end-user platform across all partner councils and better supports location-independent working. The approach taken to modernise

application delivery has been designed to support the future implementation of Azure Virtual Desktop and to remain consistent with the overall Azure migration strategy.

Post-implementation staff survey results indicate that the EUC project has met its intended objectives. Feedback highlights improvements in device performance, reliability, and access to core productivity applications when compared with the previous Global Desktop model. The ability for staff to work effectively across different locations was identified as a key benefit, aligning with organisational expectations around flexible working and service continuity.

In addition to internal feedback, Microsoft has provided informal assurance that the programme represented one of the fastest and most successful Windows 11 and Intune rollouts they have observed within the Southwest. This external perspective provides further confidence in the effectiveness of the delivery approach and the capability of the delivery team.

## **2.6 Azure Migration**

Strata have migrated a range of workloads from the on-premise infrastructure to Microsoft Azure and is continuing to do so in the new year as this project progresses. This will improve platform resilience and security, is reducing dependency on end-of-life hardware and will enable more flexible capacity management. The move supports sustainability objectives and establishes a standardised cloud platform to support further services, including virtual desktops (Azure Virtual Desktop) and application modernisation.

## **2.7 Cyber Assessment Framework**

Strata, working with the three partner councils, has completed the initial phase of the Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) assessment, covering Objective A (Managing Security Risk) and Objective D (Minimising the Impact of Cyber Security Incidents). The assessment was conducted independently and provides formal assurance against nationally defined cyber security outcomes. The review confirmed that all councils demonstrate a strong and consistent approach to cyber risk management. Strong compliance was indicated for Objective A, with evidence of mature governance structures, defined risk management processes, and effective oversight arrangements in place across the partnership.

## **2.8 Progression to the Next CAF Phase**

Based on the outcomes of the initial assessment, Strata and partner councils have been invited by MHCLG to participate as early adopters in the next phase of CAF delivery as an exemplar service. This phase will assess Objective B (Protecting Against Cyber Attacks) and Objective C (Detecting Cyber Security Events) and is expected to commence in 2026. In response to the CAF findings and to prepare for future objectives, Strata has initiated a number of structured programmes within its security improvement roadmap.

## **2.9 Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS)**

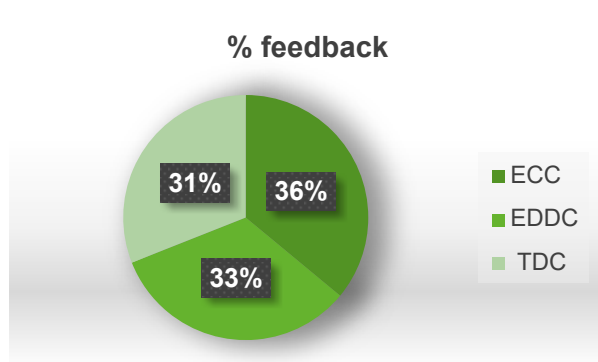
The DRaaS programme establishes a consistent framework for recovery planning and incident response across the partnership. This includes regular recovery rehearsals, annual tabletop and simulation exercises aligned to the hybrid Azure architecture and the development of CAF-aligned incident playbooks covering scenarios such as phishing, malware incidents and account compromise.

## **2.10 Security as a Service (SaaS)**

The Security as a Service programme provides continuous vulnerability management and remediation across infrastructure and platform services. It includes regular patching cycles, automated compliance, risk reporting and targeted consultancy and assurance activity to maintain alignment with CAF and PSN CoCo requirements.

### 3. Staff Survey

The Strata survey was conducted during November 2025 and received **200 responses** (approx. 10% of the Strata service users). Respondents were asked the same questions as in the 2023 survey to allow for an accurate comparison of responses, plus some additional questions.



200 responses were received with an even distribution of staff from each authority, in line with numbers of staff.

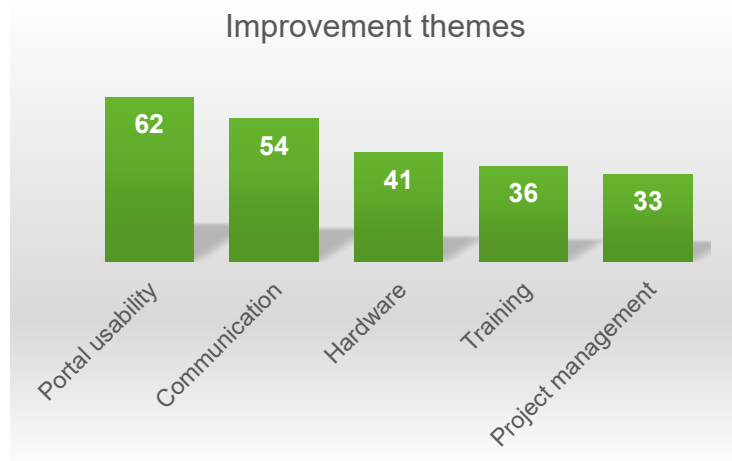
Overall satisfaction with Strata increased by 2% between 2023 and 2025 to **71% overall satisfaction** with the 50% of respondents scoring **80% or higher**.



The number of respondents that gave low satisfaction scores between 2023 to 2025 also fell by 4%

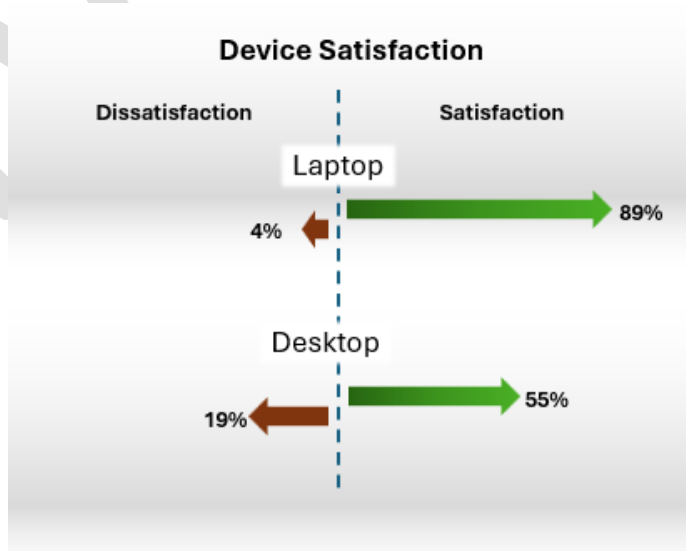
There were **pockets of dissatisfaction** and the survey highlighted areas for improvement. These are highlighted in the graph.

By far most common area of concern was the usability of the **portal**, including ease of finding the correct request type, ease of tracking request status and getting feedback once a request has been closed. These concerns will be addressed and improvements made during 2026/27.



Another element highlighted was **training**. Comments are related to Strata not providing training on third party software such as Uniform, Academy etc, rather than the quality of other training delivered by our internal trainer (who received very positive feedback)

In terms of **Hardware**, negative feedback generally related to the desktop PCs and older mobile devices. The Survey asked questions relating to user satisfaction of the desktop pcs and laptop devices. There were significant differences between the 2 types of devices, with users being much mor satisfied with the new EUC laptops compared to the older desktop PCs.



DRAFT

# 4. Themes of Projects for 2026/27

## 4.1 Service Maximisation

Prioritising the reuse and extension of established applications and services promotes rationalisation and standardisation across all three councils. Extending systems into councils where they are not yet adopted is typically lower risk, faster to implement and more cost-effective than procuring new platforms, particularly where contracts, integrations, skills and governance arrangements are already in place. This reduces architectural complexity and avoids unnecessary duplication.

2026/27 Targets:

- Telephony Phase 2
- EDDC Street Scene replacement
- Comino D360 upgrade
- Review use of Uniform
- Health and Safety system
- Implementation of the Solution for Rostering, Time and Attendance
- Review and Implement improvements to iTrent
- Enhancements to Leisure digital offer via Legend
- Assets improvement work to SAM

## 4.2 Corporate Efficiency

During 2026/27 Strata will embed automation practices into the architecture, enabling capabilities such as automated Azure resource scheduling to reduce infrastructure running costs, scripted and repeatable disaster recovery procedures to improve recoverability and reduce operational risk, and the application of AI-enabled services to streamline information governance. Automating document redaction using AI and enforcing information lifecycle compliance through platforms such as Microsoft Purview (integrated with SharePoint) will be continued. Collectively, these measures should reduce manual effort, improve consistency and compliance, and support the incremental evolution of the Strata Architecture Blueprint.

2026/27 Targets:

- DevOps:
  - Azure server power automation (cost saving)
  - Azure Disaster Recovery automation (compliance)

- Waste LatCo
- Purview (compliance)
- Artificial Intelligence:
  - Housing
  - Automated document redaction
- Permissions Self Service website
- CRM system exploration
- Digital solution to compare plans and documents
- Digital solution for neighbourhood requests
- Waste management stage 2

### 4.3 Data Driven Authorities

Through delivery of Microsoft Fabric and the medallion architecture, Strata will work with the Councils to integrate performance, risk and finance data into automated, validated dashboards, with the aim of creating a clear “golden thread” between data and decision-making. Developing semantic models, curated workspaces and repeatable deployment pipelines to enable consistent data flows, reliable reporting and greater visibility, empowering officers and Members with actionable insights is the aim within 2026 and beyond.

2026/27 Targets:

- Assist in the Development and implementation of Council organisational data strategy
- Develop and support the use of Power BI within each Council

### 4.4 Embedding Transformation

Continuing the delivery of long-tail enabler projects and extending existing enablers to strengthen and support council operations.

2026/27 Targets:

- SharePoint
- Support Exeter Transformation programme.
- Enabler 7: Notifications
- Digital process improvement work from M25
- Implement automation (Power apps)

## 4.5 Infrastructure

2026 will see the continued evolution of the shared ICT infrastructure with the migration from dark fibre to leased lines, along with the implementation of Azure virtual desktop and finalisation of the Azure migration, all of which will further strengthen the Councils' digital infrastructure. The replacement of the external firewalls will bolster operational performance and security, SDWAN will enhance connectivity, while transition to IKEN will streamline data management.

### 2026/27 Targets:

- Dark Fibre and Leased lines migration
- Azure virtual desktop
- Azure migration
- Civic Centre Closure
- Operations and Maintenance - External Firewall Replacement
- IKEN Cloud Migration
- SDWAN

## 4.6 Security, Operations and Maintenance

Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS) supports the alignment with NCSC guidance and the Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) by providing demonstrable and tested recovery capability in the event of cyber or service disruption. Continued adoption of Azure services enables the automated management of backups, patching and security updates, supporting the NCSC principles of resilience, recovery and secure system operation.

### 2026/27 Targets:

- Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS)
- Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF)
- Azure Updates
- Azure Backup

# 5. Corporate Training Schedule

Our aim for 2026/27 is to build on our Performance Development Review (PDRs) framework that was introduced in June 2024 ensuring that specific training needs were met. This

process has given us the opportunity to continually assess the skills of our team to ensure that they are aligned with the ongoing requirements as set out within our business plan.

In December 2025 we installed a Performance Management system which will allow us to adopt a more strategic approach to the development needs of our team. This system includes a specific Personal Development Plan portal which will enable managers and team members to continually review training ensuring that any skills gaps are addressed.

## 5.1 Training 2025/26

Throughout 2025 our focus has been to fulfil the training objectives that were set within the 2024/25 Performance Development Plans (PDRs) this was the first opportunity for Strata to create a framework that highlights a clear organisational commitment to strategic alignment, professional growth and operational excellence across all teams. The objectives were directly linked to the Strata Business Plan, focusing on business transformation, technology adoption and service improvement.

## 5.2 Technical Training Completed 2025

Department	Technical Needs	Training Completed (core areas)
Business Systems	Support for strategic initiatives, technology rollouts, and service improvements; alignment with the business plan.	Microsoft certifications (Power BI, Azure, MS365), data analysis, business systems knowledge.
Infrastructure, Security and Product Delivery	Advanced certifications, project management, and cybersecurity expertise.	Microsoft Intune, Azure, security certifications, self-funded project management courses.
Support Desk	ITIL processes and business plan alignment.	Dell/Apple/MS technical certifications, Azure, Intune.

Document Management	Service delivery, process improvement, and upskilling in technical and operational areas.	Printer knowledge, HTML for designers.
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Alongside technical training, Strata developed and launched an in-house ‘Introduction to Management’ programme designed for junior managers who identified a need for further support with people management and soft skills, this was partly due to the restructure that took place in 2024 as several members of the team took on Line Management responsibilities and highlighted the need for such training within their PDR’s. The programme included the following modules: management and leadership; team building; people management; planning and organising; self-reflection and awareness and presenting to the Senior Management Team (SMT). Six team members participated in these highly successful sessions.

The completion of 2025/26 PDRs highlights Strata's continued commitment to further developing its training framework and to supporting ongoing transformation and improvement. Using the data from the PDRs we have developed a Training Needs Analysis for 2026, which will enable us to further enhance our technical capabilities and supports any skills gaps that have been identified within this process, in addition all team members must complete relevant Microsoft base-level certificates (core certificates) as a minimum requirement.

### 5.3 Technical Training Identified for 2026

Department	Technical Needs	Planned Training (core areas)
Business Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Certifications</li> <li>• Data Engineering</li> <li>• Ongoing Technical Skills</li> <li>• Process Standardisation</li> </ul>	Microsoft 365 Fundamentals (all) Training towards Data Engineer Associate certification Upskilling in Power BI, PowerShell automation and data warehousing

Infrastructure, Security and Product Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Certifications</li> <li>• Cloud skills</li> <li>• Security and Patching</li> <li>• Compliance and Audit</li> </ul>	<p>Azure, MS 365, Intune, AZ - 140/AZ-900/AZ-500</p> <p>Azure Migration and Azure virtual desktop</p> <p>Windows Training and 3<sup>rd</sup> party patching processes, Fortinet firewall management</p> <p>Phishing simulation, regulatory frameworks and audit readiness</p>
Support Desk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Certifications</li> <li>• Asset Management</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> </ul>	<p>MS 365 Fundamentals (all)</p> <p>CMDB and Asset Lifecycle process</p> <p>Ongoing development of ITIL processes, customer centric training</p>
Document Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Certificates</li> <li>• Cloud skills</li> </ul>	<p>Printer knowledge/GDPR</p> <p>MS Teams and One Drive</p>

As we continue through 2026 and into 2027, we will maintain our focus on monitoring requirements through, monthly one to ones, ongoing interim and annual reviews and an annual skills audit.

By adopting this approach, our training initiatives will stay aligned with both the team's and clients' needs, meet the objectives that are set out within this business plan, promote continuous professional development and enhance operational effectiveness.

## 6. KPI Review and Value Setting

The Strata Board reviewed the Proposed KPI's, and a baseline value was set at 85% to allow the incoming ICT Director to implement changes and transformation at scale. Industry standard response times were adopted and implemented as below:

### SLAs by Priority:

P1 - Resolution Target: 4 Working Hours  
P2 - Resolution Target: 7 working hours  
P3 - Resolution Target: 2 working days  
P4 - Resolution Target: 5 working days

An average for last rolling year is 93% with the change curve visibly being shown within the data trends.

<<< DS Graph >>>

Now a baseline has been established and considerable change undertaken a new target value proposed for 26/27 of 90% whilst the level of transformation activity remains so high aligning more to actual performance levels and demonstrating continual improvement in line with ITIL practice.

## 6.1 Proposed new KPIs for 26/27

### Requests

#### 6.1.1 Data

Theme	Indicator	Trigger	Effort – Working Days
Add data to Data Warehouse	Acknowledgement of Request	Date Request received	4
Add data to Data Warehouse	Issue of Pre Load Documentation for completion by Authority	Date Request Received	2
Add data to Data Warehouse	Load data into Bronze area of the data Lakehouse/ warehouse	Date Completed documentation received	5
Add data to Data Warehouse	Curate Data to Silver Gold Level – effort assessment	Date request received	5
Permissions	Grant user permissions to data schema in Warehouse	Date approval received from data owner	2

#### 6.1.2 Power Platform

Theme	Indicator	Trigger	Effort – Working Days
Licensing	Purchase and assign new Power Platform Premium License	Date Request Received	10*
Permissions	Grant user access to Power Platform Environments	Date Request Received	1
New Flow or App Development	Assessment of effort required to develop new Flow or App	Date Request Received	5
Advice	Advice or 'How do I do x' with Power Platform	Date Request Received	5

#### 6.1.3 GovService (Firmstep)

Theme	Indicator	Trigger	Effort – Working Days
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New Process	Assessment of effort required to develop new GovService Process/ Form	Date Request Received	5
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### 6.1.4 Project

The Project KPIs are a work in progress as we redefine our project processes and review the data available from existing Project systems (KanbanFlow, ASM and Microsoft Planner).

Theme	Indicator	Subject to	Trigger	Effort – Working Days
New Project Submission	Assessment of Effort required	Submission meets requirements of providing enough information to perform an assessment	Date Request Received	10
Feasibility	Produce agreed Business Requirements Document (BRD) or Options Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business understands their problem and can articulate the To Be status</li> <li>• Business availability</li> <li>• Where involving multiple businesses, that there is an agreement of what the requirements should be</li> </ul>	Authority prioritises the new submission in Portfolio Board, request is moved into Feasibility column	5
Design	High Level Design document, submitted to TDA (Technical Design Authority)	BRD articulates requirements and appropriate information is available from authority and supplier	Business Requirements are signed off	20
Project Closure	Project closure document completed, if required. Task moved to Done		Customer approval to move request to Project Closure Phase.	3



# 7. Overview of Workload

The resourcing analysis for the forthcoming year indicates that, while overall staffing capacity remains broadly stable, there are shortfalls in several specialist delivery roles. Pressures are evident within data, project management, development, and business analysis functions, where forecast demand exceeds available capacity based on the current programme of work. Conversely, capacity in some platform and operational areas is forecast to be sufficient, highlighting an imbalance in capability rather than an overall headcount issue.

These shortfalls have been identified and are being actively addressed. Where specialist capability is required to deliver defined programmes, capital funding will be used to supplement core capacity through funded roles or time-limited specialist resources (fixed term or contractors). This approach allows delivery of priority transformation activity while maintaining flexibility and avoiding permanent increases to the core headcount where demand is project driven.

## 7.1 Alignment of Resourcing

It should be noted that the resourcing calculations are based on known and sized projects at the time the analysis was completed in November 25. However, analysis of project submission activity over the past year indicates a sustained and variable flow of new demand. During the year, monthly project submissions ranged from 7 to 27 requests, with several periods where the number of new requests met or exceeded delivery capacity, contributing to backlog and reprioritisation activity. While some months show strong closure rates, this has been achieved through active management rather than a reduction in underlying demand. In addition, several new project requests have been submitted since these figures were compiled and have not yet been sized or scheduled. Taken together, this demonstrates that demand is not static and is likely to continue to increase. This reinforces the need for councils to manage project submissions at a strategic level, with clear prioritisation, sequencing, and entry controls, to ensure that delivery remains achievable within available capacity and that resources are focused on agreed corporate priorities.

# 8. Finance

## 8.1. Current financial status of the company

One of the key objectives originally set for Strata by the owners was to deliver cost savings as set out in the original business case and subsequently amended each year since 2017/18. The original ten-year Business Case has met its objectives and saving profile and the 2024/25 Business Plan moved away from delivering a savings profile and shifted to a transformational focus.

The forecast outturn for the 2025/26 Budget is a net underspend of £297k.

	Revenue budget 2025/26	Projected 2025/26 outturn	Outturn variance to budget
Income - revenue	£8,762,795	£8,711,245	£-51,550
Investment interest	£20,000	£69,590	£49,590
Employees	£-3,965,500	£-3,840,356	£125,144
Supplies & services	£-4,745,396	£-4,559,811	£185,585
Transport	£-7,499	£-10,279	£-2,780
Support services	£-60,000	£-60,000	£0
Tax on interest	£-4,400	£-13,191	£-8,791
<b>Net Income/(Expense)</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£297,198</b>	<b>£297,198</b>
<b>2023/24 hand back spend</b>	<b>£-166,394</b>	<b>£-26,953</b>	<b>£139,441</b>
<b>2024/25 hand back spend</b>	<b>£-516,606</b>	<b>£-274,016</b>	<b>£242,590</b>
<b>Total net savings incl hand back</b>			<b>£679,229</b>

The projected underspend of £297k against the core Budget is due to the following:

- **Employee costs** £125k Favourable variance due to EDDC Graphics team budget removal and later onboarding of staff for new posts created by the reorganisation than Budgeted, partially offset by redundancy costs from the reorganisation.
- **Supplies & Services** £185k Favourable variance
- **Income** £52k Adverse to Budget due to removal of EDDC Graphics team budget, partially offset by additional postage recharges from local elections not factored into Budget
- **Investment interest** £41k Favourable (net of Corporation Tax) due to continued high level of Base Rate, compared with more conservative Budget assumption

In the financial year 2025/26 £166k of savings distributed to the councils at the end of 2023/24 and £517k of savings distributed at the end of 2024/25 was handed back to Strata to continue to fund the programme of transformational change and transition to a cloud-based server system. £301k of these funds are forecast to be spent in 2025/26 leaving £382k which will continue into the financial year 2026/27. It is proposed that these funds along with any unspent funds distributed to the councils at the end of the 2025/26 financial year will be handed back to Strata to fund the additional expenditure expected to be incurred in 2026/27 whilst the onsite servers continue to be used and maintained during the transition to the Cloud (Azure) in 2026/27 as outlined in this business plan. The 2026/27 Budget set out in this Business Plan does not reflect the costs associated with the transition from onsite servers to the Cloud (Azure).

## **8.2 The company's accounts**

The Strata Board has employed PKF Francis Clark to deliver an independent external audit of the company's accounts. The external audit provides confidence to the Board and the councils that the financial performance reported, gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the company. Acting as a company under the terms and conditions of a local authority does however bring challenges.

The company's balance sheet is vulnerable to movements in interest rates due to the Local Government Pension Scheme, and there is no simple solution, whilst the pension scheme remains open to new entrants. The weakness is a risk insofar as it affects the credit rating of the company.

However, the guarantee provided by the three owners of the council enables the directors to assess the company as being able to continue trading despite the Balance Sheet position. The balance sheet value as of 31 March 2025 is £774k (net assets) a small reduction on the prior year. The pension scheme liability was £195k as of 31 March 2025 due to high interest rates however the scheme liabilities will increase as and when interest rates reduce in the future. The balance sheet value in the prior financial year had an overall net asset value of £807k as of 31 March 2024.

## **8.3 Internal audit**

In addition to the external audit, Strata uses Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) to provide an internal audit service. The latest assurance report from November 2025 confirmed an audit opinion of 'Reasonable Assurance' and stated:



There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

Each of the specific sections reviewed were assessed to have a Reasonable Assurance level of Assurance. In 2026/27, with recognition of the progression of Local Government Reorganisation, Internal Audit will be reviewing value for money, legacy projects and the Cloud Financials finance system project.

## 8.4 Summary of revenue budget

The basis of the Business Plan Budget for 2026/27 is a build-up of the expected income and costs of the business with an income from the three councils to cover the costs of the business net of any sundry income. The supplies and services cost forecast has been worked up in detail to aid budget monitoring. There is no contingency built into the cost base and therefore should any unexpected additional funding be required it will be requested on an exceptional basis.

The table below shows the cost and income projections for the next three years.

		Budget 2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Income	Contract payment	£9,090,805	£9,304,115	£9,436,718
	Document Centre recharges	£19,000	£19,722	£20,215
	Mobile telephony recharges	£29,894	£31,030	£31,807
	Interest income	£20,000	£20,760	£21,279
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,159,699</b>	<b>£9,375,628</b>	<b>£9,510,019</b>
Staff costs		<b>-£4,017,488</b>	<b>-£4,038,013</b>	<b>-£4,038,963</b>
Transport		<b>-£8,672</b>	<b>-£9,002</b>	<b>-£9,228</b>
Supplies and services	Core	£160,035	£166,116	£170,269
	Infrastructure	£1,438,578	£1,493,244	£1,530,575
	Document Centre	£340,920	£353,875	£362,722
	Compliance and security	£127,344	£132,183	£135,487
	Business systems	£2,692,607	£2,794,926	£2,864,799
	WAN	£315,418	£327,404	£335,589
	Telephony	£31,780	£32,988	£33,812
	Product delivery	£10,000	£10,380	£10,640
	Service desk	£16,857	£17,497	£17,935
	<b>Total</b>	<b>-£5,133,539</b>	<b>-£5,328,613</b>	<b>-£5,461,828</b>

	Budget 2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Net income/(expense)	£0	£0	£0

## 8.5 Income

Strata's income comprises of a contract payment from the councils and sundry income from interest income, mobile phone and Document Centre recharges.

The Contract Payment to be paid to Strata by the Councils in 2026/27 is £9,090,805. The Contract Payment has been calculated to cover the projected costs of the business net of any sundry income/recharges. A comparison of the forecast contract payment by council in each financial year is set out in the table below:

Contract Payment	Budget	Share by council	2027/28	2028/29
	2026/27	2026/27		
EDDC	£3,512,806	38.6%	£3,602,480	£3,653,823
ECC	£3,042,197	33.5%	£3,125,579	£3,170,125
TDC	£2,535,802	27.9%	£2,576,056	£2,612,770
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,090,805</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>£9,304,115</b>	<b>£9,436,718</b>

The 2026/27 contract payment reflects a net increase on the 2025/26 payment due to:

- Inflationary increases in the existing contract estate net of any contract terminations and other operating expenditure;
- Staff cost inflation and inflationary increases on sundry staff and insurance costs, net of a reduction in pension contributions;
- New additions to the contract estate proposed in this Business Plan; and
- New contracts acquired by the councils since the last Business Plan to date.

Since the original baseline Council Budgets were passed over to Strata on implementation in 2014/15, each Councils' Contract Payment has increased accordingly for the above factors, resulting in a Contract Payment share in 2026/27 as set out in the table below:

Contract Payment	Cost share by Council 2014/15*		Net cost movement by Council 2014/15 – 2026/27	Contract Payment 2026/27	
EDDC*	37.3%	£1,933,864	£1,578,941	38.6%	£3,512,806

<b>ECC</b>	34.6%	£1,792,920	£1,249,277	33.5%	£3,042,197
<b>TDC</b>	28.1%	£1,454,430	£1,081,372	27.9%	£2,535,802
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>£5,181,214</b>	<b>£3,909,591</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>£9,090,805</b>

\* Note: Due to significant differences in the Print, Post, Design and Scanning services at each Council at the outset that, although still included within Strata for cost savings reasons, the original shareholding for each Council was calculated with the budget for this service excluded.

The total income budgeted to be received by Strata from the Councils in 2026/27 of £9,139,699, as set out in the table below, in respect of the Contract Payment and recharges has increased by 4.3% overall on the 2025/26 Budget of £8,762,795.

Council Payments	Budget 2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Contract Payment	£9,090,805	£9,304,116	£9,436,718
Document Centre Recharge	£19,000	£19,722	£20,215
Mobile Tariff Access Recharge	£29,894	£31,030	£31,807
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,139,699</b>	<b>£9,354,867</b>	<b>£9,488,740</b>

Document Centre recharges are projected based on expected costs in 2026/27 and are higher than 2025/26 due to expected Election activity. Both Document Centre and Mobile Tariff Access recharges reflect inflation at 3.0% in 2027/28 and 2.5% in 2028/29.

As in the 2025/26 Business Plan Strata is proposing that Contract Payments in 2026/27 are paid as follows:

- Quarter 1 – 30%
- Quarter 2 – 30%
- Quarter 3 – 20%
- Quarter 4 – 20%

The forecast for interest on bank deposits is estimated to be lower than the outturn forecast for 2025/26 due to uncertainty over interest rate reductions. A conservative estimate for interest income of £20k has been factored into the 2026/27 budget, net of Corporation Tax at 19%.

## 8.6 Staff costs

Staff costs are projected to increase by c.£147k in 2026/27 compared with 2025/26, before capitalising any staff costs.

The budgeted staff salaries reflect inflation of 3.0% (2.5% inflation + 0.5% for increment increases) for 2026/27 and on-costs (for example, NI employers and pension contributions) are applied and account for an additional c31.2% of staff salary costs. The pension contribution assumption has reduced from 18.75% in 2025/26 to 17.9% in 2024-25, a reduction of c£28k.

The Business Plan assumes that £300k of costs relating to staff working on development projects will be capitalised (£216k capitalised 2025/26).

As in previous years the staff costs figures do not include the Business Systems team resources which are paid for and dedicated to an authority capital project. These resources are capitalised and recharged to the relevant authority.

An inflation assumption of 3.0% has been applied to staff costs in 2027/28 and 2.5% in 2028/29.

## **8.7 Transport**

An inflation assumption of 3.5% has been applied to the forecast 2026/27 costs to calculate the budgeted 2026/27 cost. An inflation assumption of 3.0% has been applied to transport costs in 2027/28 and 2.5% in 2028/29.

## **8.8 Supplies and services**

Contract costs have been estimated for 2026/27 using an RPIX contract renewal inflation assumption of 3.8% that has been applied on renewal for existing contracts in 2026/27, except where a higher than inflation increase is expected, for example where an existing multi-year contract is to be renewed or a product upgrade is to be delivered, or the price is currently fixed by an existing multi-year contract. Other non-contract based operating expenditure has 3.8% inflation applied to the expected annual cost.

The Supplies & Services cost reflects contracts that have been removed from the contract estate and new contracts that have been entered into since the previous Business Plan. A significant addition to the Supplies & Services contract estate for 2026/27 is the incumbent eFinancials finance system (EDDC and ECC only) which was due to be replaced by the Cloud Financials finance system in 2025-26 however the project is currently on hold. The contract payment includes provision for Cloud Financials contract costs in 2026/27 as a contingency for the project which will be returned to the councils if not required.

An inflation assumption of 3.0% has been applied to the forecast 2026/27 cost in 2027/28 and 2.5% in 2028/29.

## **8.9 Summary of capital budget**

The capital requirements of the business in 2026/27, as outlined in this business plan, are summarised on the next page.

The capital requirements are in addition to the annual £150k capital Tri-Payment for infrastructure requirements. At the end of 2025/26 there is forecast to be a £210k Tri-Payment reserve that will be carried forward into 2026/27. All Tri-Payment capital spend will be appropriated by the Architecture Board for infrastructure replacement and rectification needs.

As in previous years, any remaining 2025/26 approved capital budget not spent in the approved year is proposed to be carried forward into 2026/27. Earmarks will only be drawn down should projects be approved via Architecture Board and are to enable the councils' internal budgetary purposes.

	Total	Funded by EDDC	Funded by ECC	Funded by TDC
<b>Percentage split as per the original business plan</b>		36.7%	35.9%	27.4%
<b>Project</b>				
Housing AI	£10,000	£10,000	£0	£0
Telephony phase 2	£100,000	£36,692	£35,936	£27,372
Purview	£10,000	£3,669	£3,594	£2,737
Leisure digital Enhancements	£20,000	£0	£0	£20,000
Plans and documents solution	£50,000	£0	£0	£50,000
Neighbourhood requests	£50,000	£0	£0	£50,000
Document redaction solution	£30,000	£0	£0	£30,000
Corporate asset management system	£150,000	£0	£150,000	£0
Azure virtual desktop	£70,000	£25,684	£25,155	£19,161
Miscellaneous System Upgrades	£100,000	£36,692	£35,936	£27,372
EDDC Street Scene replacement	£200,000	£200,000	£0	£0
Civic Centre Closure	£400,000	£0	£400,000	£0
Comino D360 upgrade - Cloud Migration	£140,000	£80,184	£0	£59,816
XLPrint - Cloud Migration	£35,000	£12,842	£12,578	£9,580
IKEN Cloud Migration	£80,000	£29,354	£28,749	£21,897
SDWAN (Discovery)	£75,000	£27,519	£26,952	£20,529
Review use of Uniform	£20,000	£0	£0	£20,000
ITrent improvements	£20,000	£0	£0	£20,000
AI implementation plan	£50,000	£18,346	£17,968	£13,686
Digitalisation of paper records	£53,000	£0	£53,000	£0
Exeter tickets website	£12,500	£0	£12,500	£0
One Housing migration	£100,000	£0	£100,000	£0
Parks and Green Spaces	£20,000	£0	£20,000	£0
Exeter RIT	£120,000	£0	£120,000	£0
Waste Management	£30,000	£0	£30,000	£0
Telephony routing	£10,000	£3,669	£3,594	£2,737
Staff cost capitalisation	£300,000	£110,076	£107,808	£82,116
<b>Total capital Funding</b>	<b>£2,255,500</b>	<b>£594,727</b>	<b>£1,183,770</b>	<b>£477,003</b>

DOCUMENT END





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page 128



**Report to:** Council

**Date of Meeting** 15 April 2026

**Heading/Title:** Changes to the Constitution – Terms of Reference and Delegated Powers of Committees – Part 2

**Cabinet Member(s):** Communications and Democracy (Councillor Sarah Jackson)

**Director/Assistant Director:** Governance (Melanie Wellman)

**Author and Directorate:** Andrew Melhuish (Democratic Services Manager – Governance Directorate)

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**Key decision No**

**If a Key Decision has it appeared on Forward Plan N/A**

**Document classification:** Part A Public Document

**Exemption applied:** None

#### **Report Summary and Recommendations/Decision**

The report includes an update on amendments to the Council's Constitution following a review of the Constitution by the Constitution Working Group.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution Full Council is responsible for the changes to the Constitution.

This is a tracked change document setting out a number of changes to the Delegated Powers of Committees Part 2. These set out the Terms of Reference and delegated powers of committees and has been updated using tracked changes to reflect changes in job titles and reflects current operational working arrangements at the Council. A summary of the key changes is included at Appendix 1 and the main document sets out the changes with additions in red and deletions in blue at Appendix 2.

The Terms of Reference have been considered by the Constitution Working Group and it is recommended that Council approves them.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Council:

1. Approves the Terms of Reference and delegated powers of committees Part 2 (Appendix 2) to be included in the Council's Constitution.
2. Delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communications and Democracy to make any minor drafting changes to the Terms of Reference prior to publication on the Council's website.

## **1. Background**

### **Updating of the Constitution**

- 1.1 The Constitution Working Group has been carrying out a phased review of key elements of the Constitution over a series of working group meetings.
- 1.2 The Constitution Working Group was set up in 2024 at Annual Council to review the Constitution. The Constitution Working Group is a cross-party membership consisting of:  
  
Councillor Sarah Jackson (Chair & PFH for Communications & Democracy), Councillors Paul Arnott, John Loudoun, Tim Dumper, Mike Goodman, Jenny Brown, Mike Howe, Peter Faithfull and Kim Bloxham and officer support is provided by the Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services Team.
- 1.3 The Terms of Reference were reviewed by the Constitution Working Group and reflect changes to the overall management structure of the Council and to reflect current legislation.
- 1.4 The Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees has been reviewed separately and is contained in another report set out on the agenda for this meeting.

## **2. Reasons for Recommendations/Decision**

- 2.1 It is important that the Council's Constitution is regularly reviewed to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and meets the Council's requirements.
- 2.2 This report recommends the approval of the Terms of Reference and delegated powers of committees.

## **3. Options**

- 3.1 This work forms part of a review of the Constitution to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects current job titles and working practices.

## **4. Relevance to Council Plan/priorities**

Set out how report links to the Council Plan/priorities:

- A supported and engaged community that has the right homes in the right places, with appropriate infrastructure.

- ☒ A sustainable environment that is moving towards carbon neutrality and which promotes ecological recovery.
- ☒ A vibrant and resilient economy that supports local business, provides local jobs and leads to a reduction in poverty and inequality.
- ☒ A well-managed, financially secure and continuously improving council that delivers quality services.

Having an up-to-date Constitution ensures the Council is able to support its Council Plan and priorities through the governance arrangements set out in the Constitution.

## **5. Financial Comments/Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report as the budget for allowances payable to Panel members is from within existing budgets.

## **6. Legal Comments/Implications**

- 6.1 Under Section 9P of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council is required to prepare and keep up to date a Constitution containing the standing orders of the Council and such other information as is required or desirable.

## **7. Risk Implications**

- 7.1 It is important that the Council keeps its Constitution up to date to reflect best practice and any changes in legislation.

## **8. Equality Implications (Public Sector Equality Duty)**

- 8.1 No specific negative equalities implications have been identified with the proposals set out in the new Constitution. Decisions taken by the Council, in accordance with its Constitution, will consider equalities implications and have due regards to its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010. The arrangements for committee meetings will take full consideration of equalities and public accessibility requirements. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not considered necessary for this decision as there are no direct impacts.

## **9. HR and Workforce Implications**

- 9.1 There are no HR and Workforce implications arising from the recommendations in the report.

## **10.2 Community Safety Implications (Crime and Disorder)**

- 10.1 There are no Community Safety Implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **11. Climate Change Implications**

- 11.1 There are no Climate Change implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **12. Health & Safety and Health & Wellbeing Implications**

12.1 There are no public health, health and safety or health and wellbeing implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

12.2 There are no safeguarding issues that may arise from the recommendations in the report.

## **13. Procurement and Social Value implications**

13.1 There are no procurement and social value implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **14. Land and Buildings (non-housing)/Asset Management Implications**

14.1 There are no land and buildings/asset management implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **15. Overview and Scrutiny Committees Comments/Recommendations**

15.1 N/A.

## **16. Digital and Data**

16.1 N/A

## **17. Consultation and Engagement**

17.1 The Terms of Reference have been subject to consultation with senior officers to ensure that they met current working practices and legislation.

## **18. Communications**

18.1 Subject to approval by full Council the Council's website will be updated.

## **19. Next Steps**

19.1 To update the Council's website to reflect the recommendations arising from this report.

## **20. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Summary of key changes

Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference and delegated powers of committees.

## **21. Background Papers**

21.1 None.

## Section 2: Terms of reference and delegated powers of committees

### Summary of Key Changes

Section	Key Change
General	Member(s) changed to Councillor(s). He/she/him/her changed to they/them.
1.1.5 Cabinet	Clarified that Cabinet may take decisions including those referred by Portfolio Holders or officers, replacing previous wording restricting decisions to “non-delegated” matters. Deletion of historical text that limited key decisions solely to Cabinet.
1.1.11 Terms of Reference	Clarified (d) To determine key decisions unless delegated to Portfolio Holders or Officers
1.1.12 Leaders’s Scheme of Delegation to Portfolio Holders	Delete (i) as this is not required. Renummer (i – vi).
1.1.12 Leader’s Scheme of Delegation to Portfolio Holders – General Delegations to all Portfolio Holders	c) Tender acceptance threshold increased to £200,000, based on best value rather than lowest tender.  Updated delegations for leases, licences, asset disposals and covenants, with financial thresholds increased up to £200,000 and responsibilities shifted to the Director of Place.
1.1.16 Specific Delegations to the Portfolio Holder for Finance	b) Delete – authority to accept the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel as this is a function for full Council (Part 4 Council Procedure Rules). c) Delete – authority to agree the establishment of an Interview Panel as this is a function for full Council.
1.1.17 Portfolio Teams	New wording to give more flexibility for setting up informal teams by Portfolio Holders.
1.2 Overview Committee	Existing Terms of Reference for Overview Committee, Scrutiny Committee and Housing Review Board deleted and replaced by a new section (a separate agenda item sets out the details of the proposed new terms of reference – Article 7).
1.5 Licensing and Enforcement Committee	New restriction on membership – only one councillor from the same household.
1.6 Standards Committee	Membership: Membership number should be 7 councillors, plus 3 non-voting Town/Parish Councillor representatives and 2 non-voting Independent Persons and 2 non-voting independent representatives.
1.6.4 Terms of Reference	New responsibility added:

	(d) Advise on the content of documents relating to ethical governance and receive regular updates on declarations of interest and the declaring of gifts and hospitality.
1.6.12 Assessment Sub Committee	Terms of Reference updated wording to clarify roles e.g., Assessment Sub-Committee now explicitly considers complaints rather than only investigation reports). Clearer rules on substitutes, membership eligibility, and alignment with officer employment procedures
1.8 Planning Committee	The Chair and Vice Chair shall not be elected to the same ward. New restriction on membership – only one councillor from the same household. No more than 4 serving members of Cabinet are eligible to serve and no member of Cabinet shall be the Chair of Vice Chair of the Planning Committee.
1.11 Panels and Forums	Clarifies when Cabinet members may or not participate.
1.12 Joint Bodies	Updated list of Joint Bodies to reflect current joint bodies.

## Section 2: Terms of reference and delegated powers of committees

### Summary of changes

This document sets out tracked changes that have been made and considered by the Constitution Working Group and are recommended to Council.

Additions are marked in red and items deleted are shown in blue.

#### 1.1 Cabinet

- 1.1.1. **Constitution:** Up to 10 Councillors including the Leader and Deputy Leader, as may be appointed by the Leader. The Cabinet does not need to be politically balanced.
- 1.1.2. **Meetings:** 11 times per year (or more frequently as appropriate).
- 1.1.3. The Cabinet will be the executive arm of the Council with the authority to action policies within the plans, strategies and budget approved by the Council.
- 1.1.4. All decisions and actions taken by the Cabinet or a Portfolio Holder shall comply with the relevant Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution. In particular all decisions taken by the Cabinet or a Portfolio Holder will be as a result of considering and debating a written report which shall contain a summary of the legal, financial and all other relevant implications arising from the proposed decision.
- 1.1.5. Subject to this the Cabinet has the power to take all decisions within its remit ~~that are not already~~ including those delegated to **Portfolio Holders** or officers where the relevant **Portfolio Holder** or officer has referred the matter to the **Cabinet for decision**. ~~Only the Cabinet acting collectively may take “key decisions”. All other decisions may be taken by a Portfolio Holder subject to the requirements referred to in this section of the Constitution.~~
- 1.1.6. The membership of Cabinet is not required to follow the rules of proportionality relating to political parties. The Leader of the Council, as elected by Council, shall chair the Cabinet meetings.
- 1.1.7. The Leader will appoint members of the Cabinet as Portfolio Holders, together with any deputies or assistants. The Leader will normally remain without portfolio.
- 1.1.8. The Leader shall have the authority to change the responsibilities and numbers of Portfolio Holders.

- 1.1.9. If for any reason the Leader is unable to act or the office of leader is vacant, the Cabinet must act in the Leader's place or must arrange for a Member of the Cabinet to act in the Leader's place. Members of Cabinet remain in post until such time as the new Leader appoints a new Cabinet.
- 1.1.10. The Leader shall prepare the Forward Plan of key decisions to be made by the Cabinet. For the avoidance of doubt, any reference to partnerships contained below may not include legally binding partnerships.
- 1.1.11. **Terms of reference** are:
- a) To exercise those functions that are not the responsibility of the Council, another Committee or an officer.
  - b) To provide effective strategic leadership to the Council.
  - c) To implement policies as determined by Council, and monitor service delivery.
  - d) To ~~collectively~~ determine key decisions **unless delegated to Portfolio Holders or Officers.**
  - e) To advise the Council on financial and economic policy and to recommend annually, as determined by statute, proposals for the Council Tax. To exercise overall responsibility for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.
  - f) To maintain overall control of the accounts, approved budgets and receive reports on virement requests in accordance with financial regulations.
  - g) To recommend the fees and charges relating to licences, registrations and all other matters.
  - h) To submit annually to the Council a Performance Plan, to monitor its effectiveness and to establish the Performance Assessment Framework within which the Council will operate.
  - i) To approve (in consultation with Audit and Governance Committee), implement and monitor the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.
  - j) To receive for consultation purposes the Local Development Scheme, Statement of Community Involvement and Annual Monitoring Report.
  - k) To approve Supplementary Planning Documents.
  - l) To consider reports from the Council's external auditors, ombudsman and other bodies and to take or propose appropriate action.
  - m) To prepare, or consider (new or amended policies) from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees for the consideration of Council.

- n) To ensure adequate training and development for all elected **Councillors** **Members**.
- o) To let contracts on behalf of the Council in accordance with Contract Standing Orders.
- p) To oversee the Council's corporate accommodation and to ensure the provision of safe, well maintained premises to staff and public and to recommend the acquisition and disposal of such property.
- q) To be responsible for the acquisition, management, maintenance and disposal and letting of all property of the Council and to consider the views of the Council before making a compulsory purchase order.
- r) To be responsible for the review and implementation of the Council's Asset Management Plan and Capital Strategy.
- s) To prepare and advise Council on proposed changes to Procedural Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Contract Standing Orders, and delegations.
- t) To take any decisions within these terms of reference that are urgent in nature and also to act on behalf of the Council in any cases where urgent decisions are required and such matters cannot conveniently be dealt with by the Council or by another appropriate committee or under the delegated powers of staff.
- u) To advise the Council on proposals for emergency planning and to ensure an adequate response to incidents affecting the district.
- v) To exercise general control over the information, public relations and publicity services of the Council.
- w) To prepare, submit, implement and revise the Council's ICT Strategy.
- x) To respond on behalf of the Council to external reports and consultation papers.
- y) To authorise exceptions to approved policies only where the particular merits of individual cases justify the exceptions being made.
- z) To appoint a discretionary rate relief panel to determine applications for rate relief from charities and non-profit making organisations in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1988.
- aa) To appoint or nominate persons to outside organisations which relate to housing, leisure, environmental health, community safety and other functions of the Cabinet.
- bb) To agree the council tax base for each financial year.

#### 1.1.12. **Leader's Scheme of Delegation to Portfolio Holders**

Such decisions as the Cabinet or Leader may from time to time delegate to them subject at all times to the following provisos:

~~(i) The decision in question is not a “key decision”.~~

Renumber rest accordingly (i – vi)

- (ii) The power to make the decision has not previously been delegated to an officer.
- (iii) The Portfolio Holder has considered what consultation is necessary with regard to the proposed decision – including the need to consult with local Ward Councillors.
- (iv) The proposed decision is compliant with the terms and conditions of the existing policy framework.
- (v) Receipt and consideration of a written report containing a summary of the legal, financial and all other relevant implications arising from the proposed decision.
- (vi) Publication of the proposed decision in accordance with the Executive Procedure rules referred to in Part 4 of the Constitution.
- (vii) If the Leader varies the scheme of delegation to Portfolio Holders s/he shall report the changes to the next practicable Council meeting for information.

**General Delegations to all Portfolio Holders** (subject to requirement that the matter is within the terms and reference of their respective portfolios):

- a) Authority to issue press releases and deal with the press.
- b) Authority to approve proposals and schemes in respect of operational matters that are required to implement the policy framework.
- c) Authority to accept the ~~lowest~~ tender **which achieves best value taking into account financial and/or quality considerations**, provided it falls within **an approved budget and the consideration does not exceed £200K** ~~the sum set by the Cabinet~~, if payment is to be made by the Council, or the highest tender (**not exceeding £200K**), if payment is to be received by the Council, ~~such acceptance to be reported to the next meeting of the Cabinet where tenders or offers are invited by the Council for.~~ **For the avoidance of any doubt reference to tender** shall include but **is** not limited to:
  - i. the carrying out of work in accordance with a Specification and/or Bills of Quantities, or
  - ii. the purchase or sale of vehicles, equipment or machinery surplus to the Council's needs ~~where the consideration exceeds £30,000~~, or

- iii. concessions in accordance with detailed particulars provided the accepted sum is within estimates.
- d) Authority to approve alterations and extensions to schedules/specifications to contracts that do not have the effect of exceeding a previously approved budget sum, subject to legal advice.
- e) Authority to approve a maximum 5% “over-spend” in respect of expenditure on works for a specified project within an approved budget and virement requests in accordance with Financial Regulations.
- f) Authority to approve grant aid if within budget.
- g) Authority to grant or enter into licences, leases and the negotiation of terms following receipt / service of notices under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 for the renewal of tenancies provided they are in accordance with the Policy Framework and subject to relevant terms and conditions being negotiated by the Director of [Place Finance](#) where: (i) the term is 125 years or less; and (ii) either the premium, if payable, exceeds £30,001 but is less than £200,000 and/or the annual licence fee / rent is between £15,001 and £100,000
- h) Authority to agree the variation or release of (a) restrictive covenant(s) benefitting (former) Council owned (non-housing) property where the premium payable exceeds £30,001 **up to £200K** and where in accordance with the Policy Framework and subject to relevant terms and conditions being negotiated by the Director of [Place Finance](#).
- i) Authority to agree the variation or release of (a) restrictive covenant(s) burdening Council owned (non-housing) property where the premium payable exceeds £30,001 **up to £200K** and where in accordance with the Policy Framework and Budget and subject to relevant terms and conditions being negotiated by the Director of [Place Finance](#).
- j) Authority to increase or alter fees and charges subject to statutory consultation and/or advertisement procedures where applicable.
- k) Authority to dispose of freehold (non-housing) property assets which have a market value between £30,001 and £200,000.

**1.1.13. Specific Delegations to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities** are:

- a) Authority to authorise the execution of Consents to Dealing in favour of approved Housing Associations.
- b) Authority to approve requests to purchase (housing) land from the Council (provided the request has the support of all the local Ward Councillors).
- c) Authority to approve requests by tenants to carry out a business.

- d) Authority (in consultation with Ward Councillors), to determine applications in all cases (other than those where consent may not be withheld) for consent for resale (pursuant to S.104C of the Housing Act 1957, S.19 of the Housing Act 1980 or S.157 of the Housing Act 1985) of former Council dwellings and to determine applications to remove restrictions imposed under those sections.
- e) Authority to approve Housing Association partners for the provision of rented housing, as provided in the Capital Programme.
- f) Authority to agree funding, in connection with tenant participation, under £500 for individuals and/or groups.
- g) Authority to take decisions within the advisory remit of the Housing Applications Review Panel where the Panel so advises.
- h) Authority, in consultation with the Chair of the East Devon Sports Council (plus the particular sport representative where appropriate), to determine submitted applications for revenue support grants for sports clubs under the recreation strategy in respect of qualifying schemes (a maximum of one scheme per organisation to be approved each year).
- i) Authority to agree the variation or release of (a) restrictive covenant(s) benefitting (former) Council owned (housing) property where the premium is £30,001 or more and where in accordance with the Policy Framework and subject to relevant terms and conditions being negotiated by the Director of Housing, Health and Environment.
- j) Authority to agree the release of (a) restrictive covenant(s) burdening Council owned (housing) property where the premium is £30,001 or more and where in accordance with the Policy Framework and Budget and subject to relevant terms and conditions being negotiated by the Director of Housing, Health and Environment.

**1.1.14. Specific Delegations to the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning are:**

- (a) Authority to give written notice required in accordance with the Town and Country Planning regulations authorising the seeking of deemed planning consent for schemes included within the approved Capital and Revenue Programmes.
- (b) Authority to accept renewal of the contract for advertising the weekly list of planning applications on the basis of two or three years so long as the cost does not exceed the annual rate of inflation published for the previous twelve months.
- (c) Authority to authorise emergency action under the Building Act 1984 and Building Regulations, the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Local Government (Misc. Provisions) Act 1976 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and all associated legislation where such action would result in the expenditure of money by the Council.

1.1.15. **Specific Delegations to the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Assets**  
are

- a) Authority to approve the grant of wayleaves and easements (in fee simple or for a term certain) where in accordance with the Policy Framework and subject to relevant terms and conditions being negotiated by the Director of Finance.
- b) Authority to approve the disposal of assets to town and parish councils at below market value in line with the Policy Framework and in accordance with the General Disposal Consent (England) Order 2003.

1.1.16. **Specific Delegations to the Portfolio Holder for Finance** are:

- a) Authority to approve financial assistance in respect of the following matters:
  - i. grants under the Ring and Ride scheme;
  - ii. grants to the Citizens Advice Bureaux;
  - iii. Village Shop Rate Relief;
  - iv. Relief from Business Rates in respect of Charities/Good Causes and cases of hardship;
  - v. annual grants to individual Tourist Information Centres.

~~b) Authority to accept the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.~~

~~c) Authority to agree the establishment of an Interview Panel and all relevant associated procedures/requirements following the resignation of the Head of Paid Service or a Chief Officer. Move to Chair of Council and Leader (Article 4 The Full Council).~~

- d) Authority to appoint a valuer to advise on the rateable values of properties on which the Council is liable for rates and where considered appropriate, lodge appeals.
- e) Authority to approve/determine revenue support or small capital grants through the Lottery or Arts programmes.
- f) Authority to determine applications for feasibility studies (but not project development) costing up to £5,000 for proposed National Lottery Fund schemes.
- g) Authority to approve temporary changes to the charges applied and operational procedures in respect of the management of the Council's car parks.

1.1.17. **Portfolio Teams:**

The Leader and Portfolio Holders can set up a Portfolio Team. The Portfolio Teams will be informal and flexible to advise the portfolio holder utilising the relevant skills and experience within the Council. They do not need to be politically balanced, however, cross-party working is encouraged where possible.

~~Each Portfolio Holder and the Leader will be advised and assisted in carrying out their responsibilities by a group of Members appointed by the Council. The groups will be informal and flexible to establish all-party working within each portfolio area. Their primary function will be to enable the Leader/Portfolio Holders to initiate the review and development of policies to discuss major issues which have yet to be considered by the Cabinet or the implementation of matters which have already been approved in principle and to advise on budget monitoring. It is the prerogative of the Leader/Portfolio Holder to call meetings of the Portfolio Teams and to frame their agendas—although other Group Members and the Chief Executive will be able to suggest topics for discussion and the Cabinet will be entitled to refer items to a Portfolio Team for debate. Portfolio Teams will not be decision-making bodies and their meetings will therefore not be in public. Portfolio Teams will normally be aligned to Portfolios. Portfolio Teams meetings will be divided as follows:~~

#### ~~Leader's~~

~~Climate Action and Emergency Response~~

~~Coast, Country & Environment~~

~~Council and Corporate Coordination~~

~~Communications & Democracy~~

~~Economy~~

~~Finance & Assets~~

~~Strategic Planning~~

~~Sustainable Homes and Communities~~

~~Culture, Leisure, Sports & Tourism~~

Following to be replaced by new Terms of Reference – these changes are set out in Article 7 see separate agenda item.

## **1.2. Overview Committee**

1.2.1. ~~**Membership:** 13 Councillors (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality). The Chair of the Committee shall be a Councillor from the majority party.~~

1.2.2. ~~**Meetings:** 6 times per year (or more frequently as appropriate).~~

1.2.3. ~~**Quorum:** 5~~

1.2.4. ~~**Terms of Reference:** The role of this Committee is to develop new and review existing policy (other than those falling within the remit of the Strategic Planning Committee) and evaluate its implementation. The committee shall also review service delivery options following consultation exercises and consider formative policy proposals. Full details of the Committee and its terms of reference are set out in detail in Article 7 of this Constitution.~~

1.2.5. ~~The Committee shall have the following powers:~~

- ~~a) To assist Council and the Cabinet in the development of the budget and overall policy framework and to make proposals to the Cabinet for new or amended policies;~~
- ~~b) To receive reports (including any report from the Scrutiny Committee) on the effectiveness of policy implementation and to make further recommendations to Council and / or Cabinet as appropriate;~~
- ~~c) To make reports or recommendations to Council and/or any other Council committee or sub-committee or any joint committee or sub-committee on which the local authority is represented with respect to the discharge of any functions of the authority or on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area;~~
- ~~d) To comment upon and make recommendations to the Cabinet on external reports and consultation papers;~~
- ~~e) Delegated budgetary powers in order to procure specialist information services designed to supplement resources ordinarily available to the Committees.~~

Following to be replaced by new Terms of Reference

## **1.3. Scrutiny Committee**

1.3.1. ~~**Membership:** 15 Councillors (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality). The Chair shall be a Councillor from the opposition party / group agreed at Annual Council but in the event that no Councillor is proposed by the opposition then the Leader shall retain the right to nominate the Chair.~~

- 1.3.2. ~~**Meetings:** 10 times per year (or more frequently as appropriate).~~
- 1.3.3. ~~**Quorum:** 5~~
- 1.3.4. ~~**Terms of Reference:** The role of this Committee is to evaluate the effectiveness of service delivery and to scrutinise where and when appropriate. The Committee will also monitor the delivery of the Council Plan.~~
- 1.3.5. ~~The Committee will also develop strong links with partner agencies and act as the Crime and Disorder Committee for the purposes of section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 Full details of the terms of reference are set out in detail in Article 7 of this Constitution.~~
- 1.3.6. ~~The Committee shall have the following powers:~~
- ~~a) To make reports or recommendations to Council and/or any other Council committee or sub-committee or any joint committee or sub-committee on which the local authority is represented with respect to the discharge of any functions of the authority or on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area;~~
  - ~~b) To scrutinise policy decisions and the draft budget to ensure compliance with approved policy objectives and report to Council as appropriate;~~
  - ~~c) To review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions of the authority. Where review or scrutiny takes place of a decision made but not yet implemented, the Committee's powers include the ability to recommend the decision be reconsidered by the person or body that made it or to arrange for Council to carry out the review or scrutiny function.~~
  - ~~d) To review the performance of the Cabinet against relevant performance plans and to report to Council as appropriate.~~
  - ~~e) To comment upon and make recommendations to the Cabinet on external reports and consultation papers.~~
  - ~~f) Delegated budgetary powers in order to procure specialist information services designed to supplement resources ordinarily available to the Committees.~~

Following to be replaced by new Terms of Reference for Housing Scrutiny Committee

#### ~~**1.4. Housing Review Board (Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee)**~~

- 1.4.1. ~~**Membership:** 5 Councillors (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality); 5 tenant and leaseholder representatives; and 2 independent community representatives. The non-councillor members will be co-opted members and shall have the right to vote. Council shall appoint the Chair. The Board will elect its own vice Chair.~~

- 1.4.2. ~~**Meetings:** 4 times per year (or more frequently as required).~~
- 1.4.3. ~~**Quorum:** 4~~
- 1.4.4. ~~**Appointments:** Council Members and co-opted members on the Board will be appointed at the annual Council meeting. Tenant and leaseholder representatives on the Board will initially be selected by interview (unless there is no need because the number of candidates equals the number of places) and serve a four year term. Should a vacancy occur during the four year term, the unsuccessful candidate who received the highest score in the last interview, within the previous six months, will normally be offered the appointment. All tenant and leaseholder appointments are subject to Council approval. Normally non-councillor Board members will serve for a maximum of eight years, subject to annual reappointment by the Council, with the objective that every four years one quarter of the non-councillor members will stand down.~~
- 1.4.5. ~~**Terms of Reference:** The Housing Review Board is one of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and will consider matters relating to the Council's landlord and housing management functions. The Board will advise the Council's Cabinet on housing policy and operational practice, where this affects the Council's tenants and leaseholders. The Board will keep under review the housing stock options appraisal and monitor the conditions which will influence the future arrangements for the ownership and management of the Council's housing stock. Council officers and others, where appropriate, will support the work of the Board.~~

## **1.5. Licensing and Enforcement Committee**

- 1.5.1. **Membership:** 15 Councillors (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality). Serving members of Cabinet are not eligible for appointment to this committee. **There shall be no more than one Councillor from the same household appointed to this Committee.**
- 1.5.2. **Meetings:** 4 times per year (or more frequently as appropriate).
- 1.5.3. **Quorum:** 4.
- 1.5.4. **Terms of Reference:** The role of the committee is to carry out the licensing and enforcement functions of the Council relating to:
- (a) Hackney carriage and private hire vehicles, gaming, entertainment, food and miscellaneous licensing, health and safety and certain deposits on highways as set out in Sections B, C and I(5) of Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000;
- (b) Licensing and enforcement functions relating to the Licensing Act 2003

(c) Contaminated land, control of pollution and the management of air quality as set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000;

(d) Licensing and enforcement functions relating to the Gambling Act 2005 with the exception of a resolution not to issue a Casino licence and the approval of the licensing policy for gambling (functions of Council).

1.5.5. In particular the Committee will consider and determine:

(a) Applications relating to licences, permits, approvals, orders, consents or similar authorisations, under the above provisions where the relevant officer considers that the matter merits the Committee's attention or is otherwise outside the scheme of delegation to officers.

(b) Whether or not the holder of a licence etc., is a fit and proper person to continue to benefit from the grant of the licence etc.

(c) Amendments to the hackney carriage fare tariff.

(d) The introduction of or amendments to, licence conditions, byelaws, orders, consents, approvals, permits or other similar authorisations.

(e) The institution of prosecution proceedings or other enforcement action where the relevant officer considers the matter merits the Committee's attention.

#### **1.5.6. Licensing Sub-Committee**

1.5.7. **Membership:** 3 Councillors. The sub-committee will be chaired by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Licensing and Enforcement Committee (if present). It will sit as and when required with councillors drawn from the Licensing and Enforcement Committee. Otherwise the sub-committee will elect their Chair for the hearing on the day.

1.5.8. **Quorum:** 2.

1.5.9. **Role:** To determine all licensing applications where a hearing or committee approval is required and any related function in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003 or Gambling Act 2005 and regulations made thereunder; and to carry out any other licensing function already delegated to the Licensing and Enforcement Committee.

1.5.10. In a Council regular election year when there is a need to hold a hearing in the period between election day and the Annual Meeting of the Council, those Members of the Licensing and Enforcement Committee who are re-elected as Councillors may meet as the Licensing Sub-Committee to exercise any of the functions of the Licensing Sub-Committees and shall elect a Chair for the hearing on the day.

#### **1.6. Standards Committee**

- 1.6.1. **Membership:** ~~7~~ ~~13~~ Councillors comprising Chair of Council (who will be the Chair) ~~and 6 District councillors~~ (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality), ~~3~~ ~~2~~ non-voting Town/Parish Councillor, ~~2 non-voting Independent Persons representatives~~ and 2 non-voting independent ~~representatives members~~. There shall be substitute ~~members councillors~~ for each political group of the Council entitled to a seat to ensure flexibility in case of any conflict of interest and to ensure political balance.
- 1.6.2. **Meetings:** 4 times per year (or more frequently as appropriate).
- 1.6.3. **Quorum:** 4 committee members (of which three shall be ~~Members Councillors~~ with voting rights).
- 1.6.4. **Terms of Reference:** All elected ~~Councillors Members~~ (and any co-opted members) are subject to the Code of Conduct for Councillors. The Standards Committee will exercise the roles and functions referred to in Article 9 of the Constitution. It is a committee that is subject to the procedural rules of the Local Government Act 1972 and shall be politically balanced unless full Council votes to the contrary unanimously. In addition the Standards Committee will:
- (a) Advise on the discretionary elements of the Local Code; including monitoring and updating.
  - (b) Advise on the implementation of the Local Code, including the training of ~~Members Councillors~~ in matters of conduct and advice to ~~Members Councillors~~ on such issues as the treatment of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and personal interests and more general conduct issues.
  - (c) To the extent allowed by law make arrangements for ~~Members Councillors~~ to receive dispensations to speak on, or participate in, matters in which they have interests.
  - ~~(d) Advise on the content of documents relating to ethical governance and receive regular updates on declarations of interest and the declaring of gifts and hospitality.~~
  - (d) Appoint such Sub Committees (including Membership thereof) as appropriate to discharge the functions.
- 1.6.5. The Committee will support and be supported by the Council's Monitoring Officer, reinforcing his/her informal role of helping to maintain standards of conduct by encouragement, advice and persuasion.
- 1.6.6. Council will appoint at least one Independent Person to discharge the relevant functions under the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's internal procedures.
- 1.6.7. The Council will appoint members of the Standards Committee at its annual meeting.

1.6.8. The Committee will report directly to the Council, and reports to Council shall be under the name of the Chair. The Committee shall receive guidance from the Monitoring Officer or ~~his~~ ~~their~~ Deputy. The Committee may make recommendations to the Council on changes to the Code of Conduct, procedure, or guidelines relating to the conduct of ~~Councillors~~ ~~Members~~.

#### **1.6.9. Assessment Sub Committee**

1.6.10. **Membership:** 3 Councillors drawn as necessary from the Standards Committee, and one non-voting Independent Member, one non-voting ~~Town~~/Parish Member and one Independent Person. The Chair and membership to be rotated and it can be called on an ad hoc basis.

1.6.11. **Quorum:** 3 District Councillors,

1.6.12. **Terms of Reference:** To consider ~~investigation reports~~ ~~complaints~~ referred to the sub-committee by the Monitoring Officer concerning complaints of breaches of the Code by District councillors or ~~Town~~/Parish Councillors within East Devon.

#### **1.6.13. Hearings Sub Committee**

1.6.14. **Membership:** 3 Councillors drawn as necessary from the Standards Committee, and one non-voting independent Member, and one non-voting ~~Town~~/Parish Council Member. The membership shall be rotated and it can be called on an ad hoc basis. The Chair of the Council shall Chair if sitting. The membership shall not include any ~~Councillor~~ ~~member~~ who sat on the Assessment Sub-Committee that considered the complaint at the earlier stage, save where to do so would mean that the Hearing Sub-Committee is incapable of being constituted.

1.6.15. **Quorum:** 3 District Councillors.

1.6.16. **Terms of Reference:** To consider investigation reports referred to the sub-committee by the Monitoring Officer concerning complaints of breaches of the Code by District councillors or ~~Town~~/Parish councillors within East Devon.

#### **1.7. Strategic Planning Committee**

1.7.1. **Membership:** 15 Councillors (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality). No more than 4 may be from the Cabinet.

1.7.2. **Meetings:** 4 times per year (or more frequently as appropriate).

1.7.3. **Quorum:** 5.

1.7.4. **Terms of Reference:** The role of the committee is to:

(a) To consider and recommend the Local Development Scheme, Statement of Community Involvement and Annual Monitoring Report to Council.

- (b) To consider and recommend Development Plan Documents to Council for submission for examination and subsequent adoption.
- (c) To consider and recommend any Local Development Documents (including Supplementary Planning Documents) which are not Development Plan Documents to Cabinet for adoption.
- (d) To authorise public consultations with regard to planning policy documentation including Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.
- (e) To consider (when appropriate) and advise Cabinet on Neighbourhood Planning matters.
- (f) To consider and adopt any planning policy related document (including evidence and strategy documentation) that is not a Local Development Document.
- (g) To receive reports on planning policy related matters including 5 year land supply, consultations from government, neighbouring authorities and Devon County Council on their planning policies and to approve the Council's response where appropriate.
- (h) To consider and advise Council on matters relating to the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- (i) To provide advice to the Planning Committee on the interpretation of the policies of the Development Plan if requested to do so by either officers or the Planning Committee.
- (j) To designate conservation areas and to agree extensions and alterations to the boundaries of conservation areas.
- (k) To approve the Community Infrastructure Levy Annual Funding Statement
- (l) consideration and approval for publication and submission of the Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement

1.7.5. Cabinet will receive, for consultation purposes, the Local Development Scheme, Statement of Community Involvement and Annual Monitoring Report. Recommendations concerning Supplementary Planning Guidance (and other Local Development Documents which are not Development Plan Documents) shall be made to Cabinet since under regulations dealing with Local Choice functions this must be a function of Cabinet.

## **1.8. Planning Committee**

1.8.1. **Membership:** 16 Councillors (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality). The Chair and Vice Chair shall not be ~~from~~ **elected to** the same Ward and **no more than 4** serving members of Cabinet are ~~not~~ eligible for appointment to this committee **and serving members of Cabinet shall not be the Chair or Vice Chair of the Planning Committee. There shall be no more than one Councillor from the same household appointed to this Committee.**

1.8.2. **Meetings:** 12 per year (or more frequently as required).

1.8.3. **Quorum:** 4.

1.8.4. **Terms of Reference:** To exercise on behalf of the Council powers and duties within existing policies and practices as a District Planning Authority (except such matters as are specifically referred to another Committee of the Council) including the following:

- a) Development Management decisions
- b) Applications for Advertisement Consent (under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations
- c) Tree Preservation Orders
- d) Building Preservation Notices
- e) Enforcement Notices
- f) Building Control
- g) Temporary Markets (powers under S.37 of the Local Government Misc. Provisions Act 1982)
- h) Street Naming
- i) Local Development Orders
- j) Where necessary / appropriate to carry out site inspections before determining a matter.
- k) Remove permitted development rights through Article 4 Directions; Revocation and modification notices, Building Preservation notices and undertake other functions under the Town and Country Planning Acts which are not carried out by officers of the Council or which are not specified as being within the remit of the Strategic Planning Committee.

1.8.5. Where the Cabinet proposes carrying out development on the Council's own land which requires planning permission the Cabinet shall submit its proposals to the Planning Committee for decision. The Planning Committee having carried out the appropriate consultation through the Assistant Director Planning Strategy & Development Management shall then, if it is so minded, grant permission unconditionally or subject to such conditions as may be thought fit. If after due consideration the Planning Committee is not minded to grant planning permission then the matter shall be referred to Council for the Council itself to make a final decision.

## **1.9. Audit and Governance Committee**

1.9.1. **Membership:** 10 Councillors (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality) and a co-opted non-voting Independent Member who shall be suitably qualified to support elected representatives in scrutinising local authority finances.

- 1.9.2. **Meetings:** 5 per year (or more frequently as required).
- 1.9.3. **Quorum:** 3.
- 1.9.4. **Terms of Reference:** The purpose of the Audit and Governance Committee is to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process. The Committee shall:
- a) Consider the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements, the control environment and associated anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements.
  - b) Seek assurance that action is being taken on risk related issues identified by auditors and inspectors.
  - c) Be satisfied that the authority's assurance statements, including the Statement of Internal Control, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it.
  - d) Following review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control, and in consultation with Cabinet approve the annual governance assurance statement.
  - e) Approve internal audit's strategy, annual work plan and monitor performance.
  - f) Review a summary of internal audit reports and the main issues arising, and seek assurance that action has been taken where necessary.
  - g) Receive the annual report of internal audit and review the effectiveness of internal audit.
  - h) Consider those reports of external audit and inspection agencies not the province of the Cabinet in addition to those referred to it by the Cabinet.
  - i) The monitoring of the use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act.
  - j) Ensure that there are effective relationships between external and internal audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted.
  - k) Review the external auditor's opinion and reports to **Councillors Members**, and monitor management action in response to issues raised by external audit.
  - l) Approving the Council's annual statement of accounts, income and expenditure and balance sheet or record of receipts and payments.
  - m) To receive any issue referred to it by the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer, Director of Finance, or any Council body.
  - n) Ensuring oversight of information governance across the Council including the creation of an Information Governance Board and Information Governance Working Group, the Board to provide an annual report on its work to the committee.

## **1.10. Personnel Committee**

1.10.1. **Membership:** 15 Councillors (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality). The Leader, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder with Human Resources responsibilities shall be members. There shall be substitute ~~councillors~~ ~~members~~ for each political group of the Council entitled to a seat to ensure flexibility in case of any conflict of interest and to ensure political balance and that the Sub Committees can be constituted.

1.10.2. The Committee may invite a representative of the Union (Unison) and / or representatives from the body of employees to attend when relevant for them to do so. These attendees will not have any voting rights.

1.10.3. **Meetings:** 4 times per year (or more frequently as required)

1.10.4. **Quorum:** 4

1.10.5. **Terms of Reference:**

- a) Council has delegated to the Committee the power to determine the terms and conditions on which employees hold office including procedures for their dismissal (s.112 Local Government Act 1972) and to devise and develop overall employment policies (including relating to Health & Safety, grievances and employee relations, retirements, redundancies), training and development plans.
- b) Consider and make recommendations to Council in relation to the Pay Policy Statement.
- c) Consider and determine collective disputes between the Council as employer and the Union
- d) Monitor the management performance information and develop and monitor implementation of any related organisational improvement plan
- e) Council has delegated the following functions to the Personnel Committee through one of its Sub Committees (as detailed below) to be discharged in accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules and having regard to the model procedures and associated guidance of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Chief Executives and Chief Officers;
  - Consider any allegations/complaints regarding the conduct and any capability issues of the Chief Officers.
  - To take appropriate action (including suspension) where appropriate in relation to any of the Chief Officers) save that such action shall not include dismissal which may only be a decision of the Council.

- To recommend to Council the preferred option(s) for resolution and parameters of any negotiation that may lead to the redundancy of, or severance payment to, any of the Chief Officers including where this arises out of a fixed term contract.
- To recommend to Council on the appointment of Chief Officers and their remuneration and terms and conditions of service.
- To hear and determine any grievance submitted by the Head of Paid Service or by an employee against the Head of Paid Service provided in either case that it has been referred by the Monitoring Officer.

1.10.6. **Interviewing (Chief Officers) Sub Committee**

1.10.7. **Membership:** 7 Councillors drawn from the membership of the Personnel Committee which shall include at least one member of the Cabinet (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality). Substitute ~~members~~ **councillors** can be used when necessary.

1.10.8. **Quorum:** 7

1.10.9. **Terms of Reference:** To make recommendations on the appointments of the Chief Officers to the Council (including temporary appointments) when vacancies arise in these posts and to take such other action as it deems necessary leading up to the making of those appointments.

1.10.10. **Investigating and Disciplinary Sub Committee**

1.10.11. **Membership:** 5 Councillors drawn from the membership of the Personnel Committee (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality) none of whom shall have sat on any Grievance Sub Committee relating to the same matter and which shall include at least one member of the Cabinet (which may not be the Leader). Substitute ~~councillors~~ **members** can be used when necessary.

1.10.12. **Quorum:** 5

1.10.13. **Terms of Reference:** To consider disciplinary matters (including the authority to suspend) in relation to Chief Officers which are recommended to be dealt with by this Committee in the relevant Conditions of Service and the Council's Disciplinary Procedure for Statutory and Chief Officers. The Committee will have detailed regard to the Officer Employment Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution. The Committee will also consider and, in the absence of any appeal, recommend to Full Council any decisions regarding redundancy of Chief Officers.

- 1.10.14. **Employment Appeals Sub Committee**
- 1.10.15. **Membership:** 5 Councillors drawn from the membership of the Personnel Committee (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality) none of whom shall have sat on any Investigating and Disciplinary Committee relating to the same matter and which shall include at least one member of the Cabinet (which may not be the Leader). Substitute **members councillors** can be used when necessary.
- 1.10.16. **Quorum:** 5
- 1.10.17. **Terms of Reference:** To determine appeals from the Chief Officers against any decision of the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee involving disciplinary sanctions amounting to less than dismissal. To determine redundancy decisions following an appeal from the decision of the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee with the decision then recommended to Full Council for approval. To consider any appeal by the Head of Paid Service in relation to a grievance following a decision of the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee in accordance with Stage 2 of the model procedures and associated guidance of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Chief Executives.
- 1.10.18. **Grievance Sub Committee**
- 1.10.19. **Membership:** 5 Councillors drawn from the membership of the Personnel Committee (subject to the rules relating to political balance / proportionality).
- 1.10.20. **Quorum:** 3
- 1.10.21. **Terms of Reference:** To determine grievances by / against the Head of Paid Service that cannot be resolved informally in accordance with the model procedures and associated guidance of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Chief Executives and Chief Officers
- 1.11. **Panels and Forums**
- 1.11.1. Panels and forums may be either permanent or ad hoc groups set up to assist and advise Cabinet or any of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to deal with such matters as they may deem necessary within their remit or to deal with matters referred to them by the Cabinet.
- 1.11.2. Panels and Forums will normally consist of 7 Councillors, with a quorum of 3.
- 1.11.3. Members of the Cabinet are not permitted to form part of a Panel or Forum appointed by any of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees but may be called upon **to** attend to provide explanation or advice. A Cabinet Member may form part of a Cabinet appointed Panel or Forum.

- 1.11.4. The terms of reference and responsibilities of a Panel or Forum will be defined when they are set up; there shall be explicit consideration whether any specific restriction in terms of eligibility of ~~Members~~ **Councillors** to sit on the panel or in its terms or reference or operation would be helpful in managing potential conflicts of interest, or public perceptions of conflict of interest.
- 1.11.5. A Panel or Forum will normally sit in public. They will not have any direct executive role. They will be chaired by an elected Councillor.
- 1.11.6. **Panels:** These are defined as groups of Councillors and/or staff set up to develop, for example, a particular policy or project. Their life span is likely to be that of the duration of the task they have been set, but they might have a role in continuing monitoring and review.
- 1.11.7. **Forums:** These include representatives of outside interests facilitated by the Council discussing specific areas of activity. Forums may have a permanent role to ensure that specific policies are properly considered, co-ordinated and delivered. They will be an important vehicle for ensuring the involvement of the community in policy development and review. Where recommendations involve expenditure, an assessment of the service improvement which should result should be included, together with funding proposals.

## 1.12. Joint Bodies

- 1.12.1. At Annual Council, ~~Members~~ **Councillors** are also formally appointed to the following Joint Bodies:

Arts and Culture Forum

**Budleigh Salterton Beach Management Plan Steering Group**

Cranbrook Strategic Delivery Board (**Cranbrook Placemaking Group**)

County Committees including East Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee

**Team Devon Joint Committee**

East and Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership

Exeter and East Devon Enterprise Zone Board

East Devon Traveller Forum

Exmouth Beach Management Plan Steering Group

Exmouth Queens Drive Delivery Group

~~Heart of the South-West Joint Committee~~

Lower Exe Mooring Authority Management Committee

Recycling and Waste Partnership Board

Sidmouth Beach Management Plan Steering Group

[Sidmouth Port Royal Project Reference Group](#)

STRATA (Joint Executive Committee and Joint Scrutiny Committee)

South East Devon Habitat Regulations Executive Committee

Woodbury, Exmouth and Budleigh Community Health and Wellbeing Board



**Report to:** Council

**Date of Meeting** 15 April 2026

**Heading/Title:** Changes to the Constitution – Terms of Reference for the LATCo Shareholder Committee

**Cabinet Member(s):** Communications and Democracy (Councillor Sarah Jackson)

**Director/Assistant Director:** Governance (Melanie Wellman)

**Author and Directorate:** Andrew Melhuish (Democratic Services Manager – Governance Directorate)

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**Key decision No**

**If a Key Decision has it appeared on Forward Plan N/A**

**Document classification:** Part A Public Document

**Exemption applied:** None

#### **Report Summary and Recommendations/Decision**

The report includes an update on amendments to the Council's Constitution following a review of the Constitution by the Constitution Working Group.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution Full Council is responsible for the changes to the Constitution.

This is a new document proposed to be included in the Constitution to set out LATCo Shareholder Committees terms of reference for the Committee. These set out its purpose, functions and operating arrangements, to ensure it undertook the Council's role as owner of the Company in an effective manner.

The Terms of Reference have been considered by the Constitution Working Group and it is recommended that Council approves them.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Council:

1. Approves the LATCo Shareholder Committee Terms of Reference to be included in the Council's Constitution.
2. Delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communications and Democracy to make any minor drafting changes to the Terms of Reference prior to publication on the Council's website.

## **1. Background**

### **Updating of the Constitution**

- 1.1 The Constitution Working Group has been carrying out a phased review of key elements of the Constitution over a series of working group meetings.
- 1.2 The Constitution Working Group was set up in 2024 at Annual Council to review the Constitution. The Constitution Working Group is a cross-party membership consisting of:  
  
Councillor Sarah Jackson (Chair & PFH for Communications & Democracy), Councillors Paul Arnott, John Loudoun, Tim Dumper, Mike Goodman, Jenny Brown, Mike Howe, Peter Faithfull and Kim Bloxham and officer support is provided by the Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services Team.
- 1.3 The Shareholder Committee (SHC) had been established to carry out necessary functions of the Council in its capacity as owner of the company East Devon Environmental Services Limited, to deliver waste and recycling services on behalf of East Devon District Council.
- 1.4 The Terms of Reference were considered by the LATCo SHC and recommended to the Working Group.
- 1.5 The Terms of Reference covers the following areas:-  
  
Membership of the LATCo SHC;  
  
Meeting frequency;  
  
Reserves (substitute members);  
  
Quorum;  
  
Competency;  
  
Functions of the LATCo SHC.

## **2. Reasons for Recommendations/Decision**

- 2.1 It is important that the Council's Constitution is regularly reviewed to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and meets the Council's requirements.
- 2.2 This report recommends the approval of the Terms of Reference for the LATCo Shareholder Committee to enable the Council to carry out necessary function in its capacity as owner of the property.

### **3. Options**

- 3.1 As this is a requirement of formation of the LATCo (East Devon Environmental Limited) no other options were considered.

### **4. Relevance to Council Plan/priorities**

Set out how report links to the Council Plan/priorities:

- A supported and engaged community that has the right homes in the right places, with appropriate infrastructure.
- A sustainable environment that is moving towards carbon neutrality and which promotes ecological recovery.
- A vibrant and resilient economy that supports local business, provides local jobs and leads to a reduction in poverty and inequality.
- A well-managed, financially secure and continuously improving council that delivers quality services.

Having an up-to-date Constitution ensures the Council is able to support its Council Plan and priorities through the governance arrangements set out in the Constitution.

### **5. Financial Comments/Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report as the budget for allowances payable to Panel members is from within existing budgets.

### **6. Legal Comments/Implications**

- 6.1 Under Section 9P of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council is required to prepare and keep up to date a Constitution containing the standing orders of the Council and such other information as is required or desirable.

### **7. Risk Implications**

- 7.1 It is important that the Council keeps its Constitution up to date to reflect best practice and any changes in legislation.

### **8. Equality Implications (Public Sector Equality Duty)**

- 8.1 No specific negative equalities implications have been identified with the proposals set out in the new Constitution. Decisions taken by the Council, in accordance with its Constitution, will consider equalities implications and have due regards to its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010. The arrangements for committee meetings will take full consideration of equalities and public accessibility requirements. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not considered necessary for this decision as there are no direct impacts.

## **9. HR and Workforce Implications**

- 9.1 There are no HR and Workforce implications arising from the recommendations in the report.

## **10.2 Community Safety Implications (Crime and Disorder)**

- 10.1 There are no Community Safety Implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **11. Climate Change Implications**

- 11.1 There are no Climate Change implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **12. Health & Safety and Health & Wellbeing Implications**

- 12.1 There are no public health, health and safety or health and wellbeing implications arising from the recommendations in this report.
- 12.2 There are no safeguarding issues that may arise from the recommendations in the report.

## **13. Procurement and Social Value implications**

- 13.1 There are no procurement and social value implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **14. Land and Buildings (non-housing)/Asset Management Implications**

- 14.1 There are no land and buildings/asset management implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **15. Overview and Scrutiny Committees Comments/Recommendations**

- 15.1 N/A.

## **16. Digital and Data**

- 16.1 N/A

## **17. Consultation and Engagement**

- 17.1 The Terms of Reference were prepared by external legal advisors, Bevan Brittan and were considered by the LATCo Shareholder Committee.

## **18. Communications**

- 18.1 Subject to approval by full Council the Council's website will be updated.

## **19. Next Steps**

19.1 To update the Council's website to reflect the recommendations arising from this report.

**20. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference – LATCo Shareholder Committee.

**21. Background Papers**

21.1 None.

## LATCO Shareholder Committee Terms of Reference

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL  
SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

*For insert at Part 3 Section 2: Terms of reference and delegated powers of committees at 2.1 Cabinet (to follow 'Portfolio Teams'). We would suggest the following preamble, 'Committees of the Executive', is inserted before the Shareholder Committee Terms of Reference. Alternatively, this preamble may be added to Article 6.*

**Committees of the Executive**

The Leader or the Cabinet may delegate any of its functions to a committee of the Cabinet. Committees of the Cabinet shall report to the Cabinet. The Leader or the Cabinet may establish decision-making committees which may only include Cabinet members. The Leader or the Cabinet may establish advisory committees, the membership of which need not be limited to Cabinet members. The Leader or the Cabinet may change them, abolish them, or create further ones, at its own discretion.

Committees established by the Leader or the Cabinet shall be empowered to perform these functions with immediate effect unless the Leader or the Cabinet impose any express restriction when they are established. Unless stated otherwise, all decision-making committees will continue in operation until expressly abolished by the Leader or the Cabinet and all advisory or consultative committees will continue in operation only until the first meeting of the Cabinet in the next civic year following their establishment when they must be expressly renewed or they cease to exist.

All functions that have been delegated to a committee established by the Leader or the Cabinet can still be taken by the Cabinet as the parent body (where the Cabinet has delegated that function) or by the Leader either personally or in accordance with the Leader's delegation of those functions to an individual Cabinet member or an alternative committee of the Cabinet.

The establishment, abolition or cessation of committees and the amendment of their terms of reference will be reported to Full Council in due course for noting in the Council's Constitution.

**Shareholder Committee**

**Membership:** 5 Cabinet Members including the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member with Portfolio Responsibility for Environment Operations, the Cabinet Member with Portfolio Responsibility for Finance, and 2 other Cabinet Members.

The Head of Paid Service, the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer), the Monitoring Officer and representatives of Council companies shall be invited to meetings on a non-voting basis.

The Committee will be chaired by the Cabinet Member with Portfolio Responsibility for Environment Operations.

**Meetings:** 4 times per year (or more frequently as appropriate)

**Quorum:** 3

**Reserves:** Members of the Shareholder Committee may appoint reserve members from within the Cabinet, including substituting membership with the relevant Cabinet portfolio lead for the company activities being considered.

**Competency:** All members of the Shareholder Committee and Cabinet members attending as reserves must:

- (a) have undertaken mandatory training in the relevant law and procedures which relate to the Committee's work; and

- (b) undertake further mandatory training, on an ad hoc basis, when there are changes to procedure or relevant legislation that are deemed significant by the relevant Director.

**Terms of reference:** The purpose of the Shareholder Committee is to represent the Council's interests as the owner of East Devon District Council's companies. The Shareholder Committee shall approve and oversee the Council's strategic objectives across its companies and to support the development of these companies in line with the Council's regulations and ambitions. The Shareholder Committee will provide strategic oversight of the Council's companies and provide assurance to the Cabinet that these companies are compliant with the Council's constitution, rules and procedures; its corporate objectives; are achieving best value; and are fit for purpose.

The Shareholder Committee will not have operational control over the Council's companies. The day-to-day operation of each company is the responsibility of the directors of each company. Operational liaison with the Council's companies will be between the client service of the Council and the managing director of each company. The following matters are reserved for the Shareholder Committee. In the event that the Committee was not minded to determine any matter reserved to it, it may refer those matters to the Leader or Cabinet for determination:

- (a) The Shareholder Committee has the right to access the following information from Council companies to undertake the work of the Sub-Committee:
  - (i) The statutory accounts of the company;
  - (ii) Business plans including risk registers;
  - (iii) Reports on major projects;
  - (iv) Any reports on engagement and commercial activity; and
  - (v) Any additional information it considers necessary to undertake the work of the Committee.
- (b) To hold the Council's companies to account, providing strategic oversight of the arrangements with the companies including the delivery by the companies of the Council's policy aims;
- (c) To appointment/remove company directors;
- (d) To appoint auditors;
- (e) To approve changes to the constitution of the company;
- (f) To exercise any shareholder consents;
- (g) To approve the business plans of each of the Council's companies and any in-year variations to it, including providing strategic advice to the Cabinet on the robustness and suitability of each of the business plans;
- (h) To approval any matter outside of the business plan and/or which exceeds the thresholds as detailed in the reserved matters within the Shareholder Agreement
- (i) To approve any proposals to make a significant capital or revenue investment in any of the Council's companies;
- (j) To approve any other Reserved Matters provided for in the Shareholder Agreement;
- (k) To take any decisions in relation to the overall commissioning arrangements;
- (l) To prepare and maintain a strategic risk register in relation to the Council's companies;
- (m) To review and analyse the annual statement of accounts of each of the Council's companies;
- (n) To determine the distribution of any surplus or the issue of any dividends from any of the Council's companies
- (o) To be consulted on the following by the Council's companies:
  - (i) the strategy, business plan, financial and corporate performance of the company;
  - (ii) Company policies;
  - (iii) matters reserved for shareholder approval as and when appropriate; and
  - (iv) emerging issues and opportunities which may impact the company, to discuss solutions proposed by the company.
- (p) To provide assurance that:
  - (i) strategic commissioning arrangements for the Council's companies are fit for purpose or provide recommendations to ensure that they are;
  - (ii) the overarching performance arrangements for each of the Council's companies are fit for purpose or provide recommendations to ensure that they are;
  - (iii) the arrangements for Council's companies comply with the Procurement Act 2023;

- (iv) all Council's companies are complying with the relevant statutory and regulatory framework for their respective areas of operation.
- (q) To prepare and present a strategic report to the Cabinet at least once a year on the overall governance, financial and performance arrangements for the Council's companies.



**Report to:** Council

**Date of Meeting** 15 April 2026

**Heading/Title:** Changes to the Constitution – Terms of Reference Overview & Scrutiny Committees

**Cabinet Member(s):** Communications and Democracy (Councillor Sarah Jackson)

**Director/Assistant Director:** Governance (Melanie Wellman)

**Author and Directorate:** Andrew Melhuish (Democratic Services Manager – Governance Directorate)

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**Key decision No**

**If a Key Decision has it appeared on Forward Plan N/A**

**Document classification:** Part A Public Document

**Exemption applied:** None

#### **Report Summary and Recommendations/Decision**

The report includes an update on amendments to the Council's Constitution following a review of the Constitution by the Constitution Working Group.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution Full Council is responsible for the changes to the Constitution.

It has not been possible to provide a document with tracked changes due to the nature of the changes proposed. The table attached at Appendix 1 sets out a summary of the main changes that have been considered by the Working Group and are recommended for approval and inclusion in the Constitution.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Council:

1. Approves the Terms of Reference of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees (Article 7) to be included in the Council's Constitution.
2. Delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communications and Democracy to make any minor

## **1. Background**

### **Updating of the Constitution**

- 1.1 The Constitution Working Group has been carrying out a phased review of key elements of the Constitution over a series of working group meetings.
- 1.2 The Constitution Working Group was set up in 2024 at Annual Council to review the Constitution. The Constitution Working Group is a cross-party membership consisting of:  
  
Councillor Sarah Jackson (Chair & PFH for Communications & Democracy), Councillors Paul Arnott, John Loudoun, Tim Dumper, Mike Goodman, Jenny Brown, Mike Howe, Peter Faithfull and Kim Bloxham and officer support is provided by the Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services Team.
- 1.3 The Scrutiny Improvement Plan recommendations from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny recommended that the current structure of the three committees is maintained but that work takes place to ensure that they operate in a complementary manner. This recommendation proposed a rework of the Terms of Reference.
- 1.4 The first part of the revised Terms of Reference aims to give clarity to the way in which the three committees operate and gives details of the legal provision affecting the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, this is currently included in the current Constitution.
- 1.5 It has not been possible to provide a document with tracked changes due to the nature of the changes proposed. The table at appendix 1 sets out a summary of the main changes that have been considered by the Working Group and are recommended for approval and inclusion in the Constitution.

## **2. Reasons for Recommendations/Decision**

- 2.1 It is important that the Council's Constitution is regularly reviewed to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and meets the Council's requirements.
- 2.2 The changes to Article 7 take into account the recommendations from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny recommendations that the current structure of the three committees is maintained but that the three committees operate in a complementary manner.
- 2.2 This report recommends the approval of the Terms of Reference for the Overview & Scrutiny Committees.

## **3. Options**

- 3.1 This work forms part of a review of the Constitution to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects current job titles and working practices.

#### **4. Relevance to Council Plan/priorities**

Set out how report links to the Council Plan/priorities:

- A supported and engaged community that has the right homes in the right places, with appropriate infrastructure.
- A sustainable environment that is moving towards carbon neutrality and which promotes ecological recovery.
- A vibrant and resilient economy that supports local business, provides local jobs and leads to a reduction in poverty and inequality.
- A well-managed, financially secure and continuously improving council that delivers quality services.

Having an up-to-date Constitution ensures the Council is able to support its Council Plan and priorities through the governance arrangements set out in the Constitution.

#### **5. Financial Comments/Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report as the budget for allowances payable to Panel members is from within existing budgets.

#### **6. Legal Comments/Implications**

- 6.1 Under Section 9P of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council is required to prepare and keep up to date a Constitution containing the standing orders of the Council and such other information as is required or desirable.

#### **7. Risk Implications**

- 7.1 It is important that the Council keeps its Constitution up to date to reflect best practice and any changes in legislation.

#### **8. Equality Implications (Public Sector Equality Duty)**

- 8.1 No specific negative equalities implications have been identified with the proposals set out in the new Constitution. Decisions taken by the Council, in accordance with its Constitution, will consider equalities implications and have due regards to its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010. The arrangements for committee meetings will take full consideration of equalities and public accessibility requirements. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not considered necessary for this decision as there are no direct impacts.

#### **9. HR and Workforce Implications**

- 9.1 There are no HR and Workforce implications arising from the recommendations in the report.

## **10.2 Community Safety Implications (Crime and Disorder)**

10.1 There are no Community Safety Implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **11. Climate Change Implications**

11.1 There are no Climate Change implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **12. Health & Safety and Health & Wellbeing Implications**

12.1 There are no public health, health and safety or health and wellbeing implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

12.2 There are no safeguarding issues that may arise from the recommendations in the report.

## **13. Procurement and Social Value implications**

13.1 There are no procurement and social value implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **14. Land and Buildings (non-housing)/Asset Management Implications**

14.1 There are no land and buildings/asset management implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **15. Overview and Scrutiny Committees Comments/Recommendations**

15.1 N/A.

## **16. Digital and Data**

16.1 N/A

## **17. Consultation and Engagement**

17.1 The Terms of Reference have been subject to consultation with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the three overview and scrutiny committees and their comments during the consultation have been incorporated into the updated document.

## **18. Communications**

18.1 Subject to approval by full Council the Council's website will be updated.

## **19. Next Steps**

19.1 To update the Council's website to reflect the recommendations arising from this report.

## **20. Appendices**

**21. Background Papers**

21.1 None.

## Proposed update of the Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

### Summary of Changes Overview and Scrutiny Committees

#### Article 7: The Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Part 3 Responsibility for Functions

The Scrutiny Improvement Plan recommendations from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny recommended that the current structure of the three committees is maintained but that work takes place to ensure that they operate in a complementary manner. This recommendation proposed a rework of the Terms of Reference.

The first part of the revised Terms of Reference aims to give clarity to the way in which the three committees operate and gives details of the legal provision affecting the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, this is currently included in the current Constitution.

It has not been possible to provide a document with tracked changes due to the nature of the changes proposed. This table sets out a summary of the main changes that have been considered by the Working Group and are recommended for approval and inclusion in the Constitution.

<b>Proposed Change</b>	<b>Summary of Change</b>
Membership of committees	Proposed that all committees have 15 seats. Currently each committee has a different number of seats.
Frequency of meeting	Frequency of meetings for Scrutiny Committee 6 meetings per year, Overview Committee and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee to meet 4 times per year (further meetings can be called where required).
Quorum of meetings	5 councillors (no change to existing).
Restrictions on membership	Cabinet members cannot be a member of a committee, this is in line with the current wording in the Constitution.
Restrictions on Chair/Vice Chair	The Chair and Vice Chair may be any councillor of the committee. The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee cannot be from the ruling group.
Housing Review Board	Rename to Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee Details around the non-councillor membership remain unchanged i.e. tenant representatives.
Overview and Scrutiny functions	Wording in the proposed Terms of Reference remain unchanged from the current Constitution.

Role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees	Role of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee has been amended to cover all aspects of the landlord and housing management functions.
Role of the Overview Committee	Role of the Overview Committee has been amended to provide greater clarity to the role and function of the committee.
Role of the Scrutiny Committee	The role of the Scrutiny Committee has been amended to provide greater clarity to the role and function of the committee.
Excluded Matters	New section added setting out what the overview and scrutiny committees are not able to review due to legislative requirements, i.e. planning matters.

## Article 7: The Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Terms of reference

### **Overview and Scrutiny Terms of Reference (including Overview Scrutiny, Scrutiny Committee and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee.**

It is a statutory requirement that Councils with executive governance arrangements (Cabinet) must have an overview and scrutiny function. EDDC has an Overview Committee, a Scrutiny Committee and a Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee ('the Overview and Scrutiny Committees'). Collectively, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees fulfil a check and constructive challenge function for decisions, actions, and policies made by the Cabinet in order to improve services in East Devon. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees operate in accordance with the committee procedure rules in Part 4 to fulfil the statutory 'overview and scrutiny' functions.

The legal provisions affecting the Overview and Scrutiny Committees are contained in section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and regulations under section 9 and 32 of the Local Government Act 2000, the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committees have no decision-making powers but make recommendations for improvements. Each committee can appoint time-limited Task and Finish Forums to undertake specific scrutiny reviews and make recommendations back to that committee. They may also undertake 'Spotlight Sessions' to inform Councillors who can then delve deeper into topics.

These terms of reference should be read in conjunction with the scrutiny protocol and call in procedures.

### **Membership, Chair and Quorum of each Committee**

Number of Members	15
Substitute Members permitted	No
Political Balance Rules apply	Yes
Appointments/Removals from Office	By resolution of full Council

Restrictions on Membership	Cabinet members cannot be members of a committee
Restrictions on Chair/Vice Chair of Overview Committee and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	None. The Chair and Vice Chair may be any member of the committee.
Restrictions on Chair/Vice Chair of Scrutiny Committee	The Chair should not be any member of the ruling group.
Quorum	5 councillors
Number of ordinary meetings per Council year:	
Scrutiny Committee	6
Overview Committee	4
Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	4
Additional meetings may be convened at the request of the Chair, having taken advice from relevant officers.	

### **Membership of Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee consists of 8 Council Member representatives; 5 tenant and leaseholder representatives; and 2 independent community representatives. The non-councillor members are co-opted members and have the right to vote. Normally non-councillor committee members will serve for a maximum of eight years, subject to annual reappointment by the Council, with the objective that every four years one quarter of the non-councillor members will stand down. Council officers and others, where appropriate, will support the work of the committee.

### **Overview and scrutiny function**

In respect of their functions, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees will:

1. Assist the Cabinet / Council in budget and policy development;
2. Consider any matter affecting the district of East Devon or its inhabitants and businesses;
3. Ensure active engagement of councillors, the public, media, stakeholders, partners and officers in the work of the Council and the Committee and to enable the voice of the wider community to be heard within the Council;
4. Make reports and/or recommendations to the Full Council and/or the Cabinet, Council, other Committees and/or partner bodies;
5. Scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to discuss their activities and performance.
6. The Overview Committee and the Scrutiny Committee will consider the directorate plans and draft budget by way of a joint meeting between the two committees in December and January each year respectively, (or such time as is appropriate).
7. Consider requests by Cabinet, Council or any other Committee of the Council, and, where appropriate, to add such requests to the work programme;
8. Review Government policy as appropriate, and assess the impact on the Council's area and make relevant recommendations to Cabinet or Council;

9. Review national best practice and guidance on effective scrutiny and recommend any changes as a result to Cabinet or Council;
10. Report annually to full Council on the work undertaken.

The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees is underpinned by the following guiding principles of effective scrutiny promoted by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny:

- Provide constructive “critical friend” challenge;
- Amplify the voice and concerns of the public;
- Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role;
- Drive improvement in public services.

### **Role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees (Overview Committee, Scrutiny Committee and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee)**

#### **Role of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

- Consider matters relating to the Council’s landlord and housing management functions
- Advise the Cabinet on housing policy and operational practice affecting tenants and leaseholders.
- Scrutinise decisions that Cabinet is planning to take or has taken on housing policy and operational practice affecting tenants and leaseholders.
- Maintain an active involvement in the ongoing review of the options for the future ownership and management of Council owned homes and make recommendations.
- Promote good practice and oversee service improvements
- Monitor performance on core housing management activities and report to the Cabinet.
- Assist the Cabinet monitor and prepare the Housing Revenue Account budget and the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.
- Promote tenant and leaseholder involvement, and the updating and implementation of the Resident Involvement Strategy.
- Encourage good practice in relation to equality and diversity issues, and ensure that the needs of vulnerable tenants are satisfied.
- Advise and scrutinise on any other matters affecting the Council’s landlord duties and responsibilities.

#### **Role of the Overview Committee**

- Develop new and review existing policy (other than that falling within the remit of the Strategic Planning Committee) at its own initiative and at the request of Council or Cabinet.
- Receive reports on the effectiveness of policy implementation and make recommendations to Council and/or Cabinet, as appropriate.

- Have delegated budgetary powers in order to procure specialist information services designed to supplement resources ordinarily available to the Committee.
- Conduct research and carry out or oversee community and other consultations and develop formative policy proposals for recommendation to Council and/or Cabinet.
- Comment upon and make recommendations to Council and/or Cabinet on external reports and consultation papers.
- Question members of the Cabinet and/or committees and Senior Officers about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area.
- Liaise with external organisations operating in the area to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working.
- Consider which items from the Cabinet Forward Plan will be added to the Overview Committee's annual Work Programme for pre-decision scrutiny prior to formal decisions being taken, and have regard to referrals made to it for pre-decision scrutiny, by Council or Cabinet.

### **Role of the Scrutiny Committee**

- Hold the Cabinet (the Council's policy and decision-making group) to account.
- Examine decisions that have been made by the Cabinet and Council officers.
- Evaluate performance and progress in relation to the Council Plan priorities, Council's policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas.
- Ensure that consultation, where necessary, has been carried out
- Highlight areas for improvement.
- Make recommendations to the Cabinet and/or Cabinet arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process.
- Exercise the right of call-in, for reconsideration of decisions made but not yet implemented by the Cabinet and/or a Portfolio Holder member of the Cabinet.
- Ensure services are effective and responsive to the needs of East Devon's residents by:
  - Review services, including the performance of other public bodies in the area.
  - Ensure the public are consulted where change is being proposed.
  - Ensure that services delivered represent value for money.
  - Encourage public involvement by:
    - Consider issues that are of interest to the local community.
    - Provide accessible information on the scrutiny process and activities.
  - Carry out the role of the Crime and Disorder Committee, as required for the purposes of section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006, including the scrutiny of the East and Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership.

### **Excluded matters**

The Overview and Scrutiny (Reference by Councillors) (Excluded Matters) (England) Order 2012 excludes from referral to Overview and Scrutiny the following:

- i. a planning decision;
- ii. a licensing decision;

- iii. any matter concerning an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity has a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal conferred by or under any enactment;
- iv. any matter which is vexatious, discriminatory or not reasonable to be included in the agenda for, or to be discussed at, a meeting of the Overview Committee or Scrutiny Committee.

A matter does not fall within the above if it consists of an allegation relating to items (i) to (iii) and it is alleged that a function for which the authority is responsible has not been discharged at all or that its discharge has failed or is failing on a systemic basis.



Report to: Council



Date of Meeting 15 April 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Motion on Notice – Protection of Terrestrial Television Access

### Report summary:

The constitution provides that members of Council may submit written notice of motions for debate at Council. A motion must be signed by the proposer and seconder and at least 3 members and submitted not later than 10 clear days before the date of the meeting.

Motions must be about matters for which the council has a responsibility, or which affect East Devon District Council and will be listed on the agenda in the order in which notice received.

Motions for which notice has been given will be listed on the agenda in the order in which notice was received unless the member giving notice states, in writing, that they propose to move it to a later meeting or withdraw it.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That the Motion on Notice – Protection of Terrestrial Television Access

### Reason for recommendation:

The constitution makes provision for motions on notice to be debated and decided by Council.

Officer: Andrew Melhuish, Democratic Services Manager ([andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.melhuish@eastdevon.gov.uk))

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

The impact is low as this report is dealing with the submission of motions on notice. Any work undertaken following the consideration of the motion on notice would be subject to an equalities impact assessment being undertaken.

## **Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk; A risk assessment would need to be completed on any works or further investigations resulting from the motions of notice.

## **Links to background information** N/A

### **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**

### **Motion 1: Protection of Terrestrial Television Access**

**Proposed by: Councillor Stuart Hughes**

**Seconded by: Councillor Colin Brown**

**Supported by: Councillors Mike Goodman, Jenny Brown, Iain Chubb, Helen Parr, Ben Ingham and Brian Bailey**

### **This Council notes:**

- **Ongoing national discussions regarding the potential future switch-off of terrestrial television services in the UK.**
- **That a significant number of residents in East Devon — particularly older people, those on low incomes, and those in rural areas — rely on terrestrial TV as their primary means of accessing news, public information, and entertainment.**
- **That many households do not have access to reliable, affordable broadband and would face financial or practical barriers in transitioning to internet-based television services.**

### **This Council believes:**

- **That access to public service broadcasting is a vital public good.**
- **That any transition away from terrestrial TV must not disadvantage vulnerable residents or deepen digital exclusion.**
- **That Government must ensure universal, affordable alternatives are in place before any switch-off is considered.**

**This Council resolves to:**

- 1. Write to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport expressing this Council's concerns and requesting clarity on the Government's long-term plans for terrestrial TV.**
- 2. Urge the Government to guarantee that no switch-off will occur until reliable, affordable broadband and suitable equipment are available to all households.**
- 3. Request that Government commits to fully funded support for residents who would face financial or practical barriers in transitioning to digital-only services.**
- 4. Share this motion with East Devon's Members of Parliament, inviting their support and asking them to raise the issue in Parliament.**

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**Financial implications:**

To be confirmed, subject to the outcome of the consideration on the Motion on Notice.

**Legal implications:**

The motions on notice have been submitted in accordance with the Part 4 of the Council's Constitution – Rules of Procedure 10.1 Notice: Except for motions which can be moved without notice under Rule 11, written notice of every motion, signed by at least 5 members, must be delivered to the Chief Executive not later than 10 clear days before the date of the meeting.