



Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting 4 February 2026

Heading/Title: Annual Programme of committee meetings 2026/2027

Cabinet Member(s): Council Coordination and External Engagement

Director/Assistant Director: Interim Assistant Director Governance

Author and Directorate: Andrew Melhuish, Governance

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Key decision No

If a Key Decision has it appeared on Forward Plan

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

1. Background

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed Annual Programme of committee meetings for East Devon District Council for 2026 – 2027.
- 1.2 This report examines the implications of altering the approved timetable of council meetings. Changes can significantly impact staff resources, room availability, councillor commitments, and statutory compliance. Recommendations are provided to mitigate risks if changes become unavoidable.
- 1.3 The approved timetable of meetings is designed to ensure efficient governance, compliance with statutory deadlines, and effective resource planning. Alterations to this schedule can disrupt established workflows and create logistical challenges.

- 1.4 The importance of setting an annual programme of meetings is vital in the decision making of the Council and impacts arising from not keeping to the key dates set out include:
- Staff Resources – the programme of meetings is set in such a way to ensure sufficient staff resources are available, this is severely compromised when changes are made to the programme and could lead to impacts on meeting statutory requirements.
 - Room Availability – the programme of meetings ensures that rooms are available (usually the Council Chamber) for all meetings, any changes will impact on the ability to hold meetings in the chamber.
 - Councillor commitments – changes to the annual programme of meetings impacts councillors, particularly those working or those with particular caring responsibilities which in turn leads to reduced attendance at meetings.
- 1.5 The draft calendar is attached at Appendix ‘1’ and follows the pattern set in previous years in terms of frequency of meetings, start times and meeting days for the various committees, adapted to address any issues that have arisen during the year and taking into account service requirements.

2. Recommendations/Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet are requested to refer the Annual Programme of committee meetings for East Devon District Council for 2026 – 2027 to the annual meeting of the Council.
- 2.2 To agree that the Annual Council Meeting for East Devon District Council is held on Wednesday 13 May 2026 at 6.00pm.
- 2.3 To acknowledge the implications set out in the report for making changes to the annual programme and to ensure such changes are kept to a minimum.

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Decision

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

4. Options

- 4.1 The calendar of meetings provides a framework for the democratic and decision-making processes that will underpin the delivery of the Council’s key priorities. It is proposed to agree the dates as set out in Appendix 1.
- 4.2 As in previous years, efforts have been made to avoid holding meetings during school holiday periods, with particular reference to August. However, it is necessary for a small number of meetings to be

held, particularly regulatory committees where time limits apply for the determination of applications.

4.3 Other key points to note in relation to the proposed calendar are:

- The Annual Council meeting will take place on 13 May 2026 at 6.00pm.
- Full Council Meetings have been scheduled taking into account the reporting timetable for Budget and Policy Framework items.
- The Budget Council (Council Tax set) meeting is programmed for 25th February 2026. Additional Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings have been scheduled specifically to scrutinise the budget proposals and Directorate Service Plans.
- As far as possible meetings have been minimised during other school holidays and major political party national conferences.
- Each Committee meets wherever possible on the same day of the week.
- The Committee Chairs have the power to call additional or extraordinary meetings, when required, to accommodate urgent or unscheduled matters of business.

5. 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

The annual programme of committees ensures that the Council is able to meet its Council Plan priorities during the year.

6. Financial Comments/Implications

- 6.1 The cost of administering the proposed meetings will be met from within existing budgets (JS19.01.2026).

7. Legal Comments/Implications

- 7.1 Council and Committee meetings have been scheduled to fulfil the Council's constitutional and legal obligations. Additional Committee meetings to those proposed will have resource implications. (ALW/002545).

8. Risk Implications

- 8.1 The approved timetable of meetings is designed to ensure efficient governance, compliance with statutory deadlines, and effective resource planning. Alterations to this schedule can disrupt established workflows and create logistical challenges.

9. Equality Implications (Public Sector Equality Duty)

- 9.1 This relevance assessment aims to analyse gathered information for potential relevance to equality. If a Full Equality Impact Assessment is required ([Equality analysis impact assessment form](#)), include it as an appendix. At the minimum, the following table must be completed.

Scope (<i>Provide an overview, including objectives and desired outcomes</i>)	Approval of an annual programme of committee meetings.												
Evidence gathered and engagement (<i>List stakeholders consulted and relevant processes, policies, and data sources</i>)	None.												
Relevance assessment findings (<i>If relevant to equality, undertake a full EIA or If no relevance to equality, explain why with supporting information</i>)	<p>A full EIA is required: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, this assessment has demonstrated relevance to equality with regard to: Please check relevant boxes</p> <table><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Age</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and maternity</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Disability</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Race</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Sex</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Marriage or Civil Partnership</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Armed Forces</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2"><input type="checkbox"/> Other, e.g. carers, care leavers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.</td></tr></table> <p>If no, explain why: Annual programme of meetings in place to ensure sufficient diary management by councillors and officers.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage or Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/> Armed Forces	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, e.g. carers, care leavers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.	
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<input type="checkbox"/> Other, e.g. carers, care leavers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.													
Relevance ranking	<input type="checkbox"/> High – Very relevant to protected characteristics <input type="checkbox"/> Medium – Somewhat relevant to protected characteristics												

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low – Not relevant to protected characteristics
Key findings and impacts	<p>Accessibility of Meetings: Changes to meeting times or locations must consider accessibility for people with disabilities, including physical access.</p> <p>Impact on Caring Responsibilities: Rescheduling meetings may disproportionately affect councillors or staff with childcare or other caring responsibilities.</p> <p>Advance Notice: Providing sufficient notice of changes helps mitigate negative impacts on those who need to arrange transport, interpreters, or personal assistance.</p>
Conclusion drawn (<i>i.e No major changes needed; EIA found no negative impact or adjust policy/process to remove identified barriers</i>)	No major changes needed by adhering to the annual programme of committee meetings.
Actions (<i>Proposed actions to mitigate negative impacts on identified groups</i>)	Approval of the annual programme of meetings.
Signed off by	Andrew Melhuish

10. HR and Workforce Implications

10.1 Support to the committees is provided from the Democratic Services Team.

11. Community Safety Implications (Crime and Disorder)

11.1 There are no Community Safety Implications arising from this report.

12. Climate Change Implications

12.1 There are no Climate Change implications arising from this report.

13. Health & Safety and Health & Wellbeing Implications

13.1 There are no Health & Safety implications.

13.2 There are no Health & Wellbeing Implications.

14. Procurement and Social Value implications

14.1 There are no procurement and social value implications.

15. Land and Buildings (non-housing)/Asset Management Implications

15.1 The Facilities Team supports the room set up associated with the calendar of meetings.

16. Overview and Scrutiny Committees Comments/Recommendations

16.1 There are none.

17. Digital and Data

17.1 Meetings listed on the calendar of meetings are available to view via the Council's YouTube.

18. Consultation and Engagement

18.1 Portfolio Holder for Council Coordination and External Engagement.

19. Communications

19.1 The annual programme of meetings will be made available on the Council's website.

20. Next Steps

20.1 Following approval of the annual programme of committee meetings the Democratic Services Team will circulate diary appointments to all Councillors and ELT and other key officers. A list of the meetings will also be added to the Council's website for public inspection.

21. Appendices

21.1 Annual Programme of committee meetings 2026 – 2027.

22. Background Papers

22.1 None.

Appendix 1 - List of meetings 2026- 2027

Meetings in **orange** are not open to the public and the public can be asked to leave other meetings on specified grounds.

2026															
2027															
Meeting	Day	Time	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Annual Council	Wed	6.00pm	13												12
Council	Wed	6.00pm			15			14		9		24		14	
Cabinet	Wed	6.00pm		3	1		2	7	4	2	6	3	3	7	5
Scrutiny Committee	Thu	6.00pm		4	2		3	1	5	3	28		4	1	
Overview & Scrutiny Committees joint meetings	Wed	10.00am								2	13				
Overview Committee	Thu	6.00pm	28		16		24		26			4	25		
Strategic Planning Committee	Tue	10.00am	5		14		22		17		5		2		4
Planning Committee	Tue	10.00am	12	9	7	4	1	6	3	8	26	23	23	20	
Audit & Governance Committee	Thu	2.30pm			23		17		19		28		18		
Housing Review Board	Thu	10.00am			30				12		21?			29	
Licensing & Enforcement Committee	Wed	10.00am			22				18			10		7	
Standards Committee	Thu	10.00am			2			1			21			8	
Personnel Committee	Tue	10.00am		30			29			3			30		
LATCo Shareholder Committee	Wed	5.30pm		17			9		18		20		24		
Asset Management Forum	Mon	9.30am		15			28			14			1		
Budget Setting and Capital Allocations Panel	Thurs	9.30am		tbc			tbc			tbc			tbc		
Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group	Tues	10.00am		16			8			1			16		
Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum	Tue	6.30pm		23			15				12			27	
Recycling & Waste Partnership Board	Wed	10.00am			22			21			27			21	

Arts & Culture Forum	Wed	10.00am		17					25					
Cranbrook Placemaking Group	Mon	9.30am		8		3		5		7		1		12
STRATA Joint Executive Committee dates tbc	Wed	2.30pm												
STRATA Joint Scrutiny Committee dates tbc	Wed	2.30pm												

Public holidays May 2026 – May 2027

Monday 4 May 2026	Early May bank holiday
Monday 25 May 2026	Spring bank holiday
Monday 31 August 2026	Summer bank holiday
Friday 25 December 2026	Christmas Day
Monday 28 December 2026	Boxing Day (substitute day)
Friday 1 January 2027	New Year's Day
Friday 26 March 2027	Good Friday
Monday 29 March 2027	Easter Monday
Monday 3 May 2027	Early May bank holiday