

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 6 May 2026

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.30 pm

194 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting from Cabinet held on 1 April 2026 were agreed.

195 Declarations of interest

Min 199: Cllr Nick Hookway declared an ANRI as a Devon County Councillor and Exmouth Town Councillor.

Min 199: Cllr Steve Gazzard declared an ANRI as an Exmouth Town Councillor.

Min 206: Cllr Steve Gazzard declared an ANRI as an Exmouth Town Councillor.

196 Public speaking

There were no public speakers.

197 Matters of urgency

There were none.

198 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There were two confidential items recorded at minutes 210 and 211.

199 Minutes of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held on 17 March 2026

Members noted the minutes of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held on 17 March 2026.

200 Minutes of Overview Committee 26 March 2026

Members noted the minutes of Overview Committee held on 26 March 2026.

201 Minutes of Scrutiny Committee held on 2 April 2026

Members noted the minutes of Scrutiny Committee held on 2 April 2026.

202 Minutes of the meeting of Community Grant Panel held on 15 April 2026

Members noted the minutes and recommendation of Community Grant Panel held on 15 April 2026.

Minute 16 - Community Grant Funding Awards 2025/26

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

Make the following change to the Community Grant Fund policy:

That applications which meet the policy criteria, but Members are unable to approve due to funding limits, can be rolled over to the next grant window.

203 Minutes of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 22 April 2026

Members noted the minutes of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 22 April 2026.

204 Economic Development Strategy - Year 3 Priorities

Good progress had been made against the Economic Development Strategy's (EDS) five policy areas since the last update to Cabinet in April 2025. The Strategy made a clear commitment to keeping track of progress and reviewing the policy priorities on an annual basis. Officers had undertaken this review and proposed changes to the EDS priorities for the third year of the Strategy. The report provided an update on the current composition of the Economic Development team as it adjusted to the new funding landscape.

The Portfolio Holder for Assets and Economy wished to thank Tom Winters and his team for their hard work, saying that despite financial challenges the news was positive.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

1. Notes the progress made in the latest six-months of the 2024-29 Economic Development Strategy.
2. Endorse the proposed amendments to the EDS priorities for the third year of the Strategy and note the indicative workplan for July'25 - July'26

REASON:

The Economic Development Strategy committed officers to producing an 'annual report' to measure the progress made against each of the policy priorities. The purpose of this was to keep members aware and engaged. Tracking and, where necessary, updating policy priorities ensures that the EDS remained relevant and avoided becoming outdated.

205 Local Government Reorganisation: Implementation Planning

The report updated Cabinet on implementation planning for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the move away from the current two-tier county/district arrangements. Following the publication of the English Devolution White Paper (December 2024), Devon councils submitted proposals for unitary local government (November 2025) and subsequently responded to MHCLG's consultation on the five structural options (March 2026). A Secretary of State decision was expected in respect of the preferred option during July 2026.

To enable implementation to proceed based on this decision, Parliament would be asked to approve a Structural Changes Order (SCO). The SCO must set key legal foundations including a vesting day, creation of unitary areas and councils, abolition and winding-up

of predecessor authorities, transitional vehicles and arrangements for future elections. Current Councils would be invited to submit views on the SCO.

The report explained the role of a Section 24 Direction, which was likely shortly after an SCO comes into force. This would restrict significant transactions without consent, including land disposals over £100,000, capital contracts over £1 million, revenue contracts over £100,000, and major reserve decisions. Consent was typically delegated to the Shadow Executive/new council arrangements, often supported by general consents to enable business as usual.

Transition is planned through to vesting day in April 2028, with phases culminating in inaugural elections (May 2027) and operation of a Shadow Council. Preparatory work was currently being progressed, focusing on consistent data collection and housekeeping activities, while building internal capacity and participating in joint governance forums.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

1. Note the current position in relation to proposals for Local Government Reorganisation
2. Delegates continuing authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Council, Corporate and External Engagement to provide input to the development of the Structural Change Order in conjunction with the other District and Borough Councils, and to make such arrangements that are necessary so as to support successful transition through to Vesting Day.
3. Receives a further report once the Secretary of State's decision is known.

REASON:

To ensure that Cabinet was aware of the current position in relation to Local Government Reorganisation. To support implementation planning and a successful transition to future Council structures.

206 **Playpark Renewal 2026 - Contract above £100k**

The report sought delegated authority to award the 2026 Playpark Renewals contract to a supplier successfully procured via the EDDC electronic procurement service, with a value of over £100k.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

Grant delegated authority to the Assistant Director of StreetScene 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 are met.

207 **Crisis and Resilience Fund 2026/27**

The report highlighted the good position EDDC was in to deliver the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CaRF). The need now was to focus on developing the policy to allow to build on the work already undertaken to date, which was why delegated authority was being sought. The new CaRF policy aligned with the Devon Districts approach of test and learn. Whilst the policy was being developed, EDDC would make use of its cost-of-living hardship funds to continue to support households in financial difficulty. This

included support for those low-income households struggling to afford heating oil making sure no households are negatively affected.

Members thanked Sharon Church and her team for their hard work in getting the grants out to the people who needed it the most. The Deputy Leader highlighted that EDDC were chosen by the DWP as one of the 10 Local Authorities across England and Wales to undertake research into how Housing Support Fund was delivered locally to help inform the Government's CaRF scheme.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

Grant delegated authority to the Assistant Director for Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service to design, implement and update a policy for the Crisis and Resilience Fund, that aligns with the Devon District Council Approach and DWP guidance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities.

REASON:

As this was a new fund the recommendation was being made to avoid any further delay in delivery of the scheme. Taking this agile approach would allow the council to adapt its approach when required, through the learning with the voluntary sector, enabling to achieve the best possible outcomes for residents.

208 **New Towns Programme Consultation Response**

The report summarised the Government consultation on the New Towns Programme. The proposals did not include Marcombe within the shortlisted sites and this was a topic covered extensively in the proposed responses including the weight that seemed to have been given to a high level Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) that had been carried out for the programme. The report presented brief responses to the questions raised by the consultation on behalf of EDDC for Members to consider for submission as the Council's response to the consultation.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

Note the content of the consultation and agree the responses to each consultation question included in this report for submission as the Council's response.

REASON:

To ensure that members were aware of the consultation and had the opportunity to comment on the proposals.

209 **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 on the agenda, is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing this item in private session (Part B).

210 **Clyst Meadows Country Park, Broadclyst - Purchase of Additional Land**

The recommendations as set out in the exempt report were agreed.

211 **Cranbox Modular Space Delivery in Cranbrook Town Centre**

The recommendations as set out in the exempt 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
R Jefferies	Portfolio Holder Environment - Nature & Climate

Cabinet apologies:

T Olive	Portfolio Holder Place, Infrastructure & Strategic Planning
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Also present (for some or all the meeting)

Councillor Ian Barlow
Councillor Kevin Blakey
Councillor Kim Bloxham
Councillor Roy Collins
Councillor Peter Faithfull
Councillor Steve Gazzard
Councillor Mike Goodman

Also present:

Officers:

Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer
Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Leisure
Sharon Church, Benefits Manager
Simon Davey, Director of Finance
Libby Jarrett, Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Access, Fraud & Compliance
Tom Winters, Interim Economic Development Manager
Andrew Wood, Director of Place
Naomi Harnett, Corporate Lead (Interim) – Major Projects & Programmes
Paul Osborne, Green Infrastructure Project Officer
Frances Wadsley, Project Manager, Planning, Growth, Development & Prosperity

Chair

Date: