

Axminster Town Council

Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
10am – 12 noon

Mayor: Cllr Jill Farrow
Town Clerk: Paul Hayward

www.axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk



THE GUILDHALL
WEST STREET
AXMINSTER
DEVON
EX13 5NX

Tel. 01297 32088

Email: Clerk@axminstertowncouncil.gov.uk

Axminster Town Council: Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the FULL Council.

MINUTES APPROVED 13th April 2026; Part ONE version (redacted)

Held at The Guildhall on Thursday 26th March 2026 at 8.00 p.m (following the meeting of the Employment Committee that ended at 7.55pm)

Present: Cllrs. Farrow (JF) (Chair), Price (JP) (Vice-Chair), Dowdeswell (MD), Dunsbury (RD), Hayward (AH), Leat (SL), Walden (JW) and Willey (DW).

(Meeting was deemed quorate with eight members present).

Town Clerk, Paul Hayward (PH)

No members of the public were present.

Chair highlighted the building fire precautions and alerted those present to the fire exits.

i) Open Public Forum session (limited to 15 minutes or as otherwise agreed by Chair presiding).

There were no public representations.

No members of Council wished to speak in public forum.

The Chair subsequently closed the public forum session of the meeting at 7.57pm

EFC26/083

To note members of Council present:

Councillors in attendance at meeting are shown above.

EFC26/084

To note and, if thought fit, to approve apologies for absence and reasons therefore:

Apologies received from:

Cllr. Ashkettle. Reason for absence noted and accepted.

Cllr. Osborn. Reason for absence noted and accepted.

Cllr. Paice. Reason for absence noted and accepted.

Cllr. Warwick. Reason for absence noted and accepted.

The Chair proposed that absences and reasons for absence be approved.

Seconded by JW. Resolved unanimously.

Continued overleaf

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EFC26/085

To note members of committee not otherwise present and to receive any other apologies for absence:

Councillors Hurren and Norman were absent. Noted.

EFC26/086

To receive any declarations of interest from members of the committee in relation to items of business on this agenda and to note any dispensations previously afforded:

A declaration at this point does not preclude the need for members to declare any additional interests that they may become aware of during the course of this meeting.

Cllr. David Willey has been afforded a dispensation relating to the hire of the Guildhall venue (Section 33 of The Localism Act 2011) on the 9th February 2026 [Reason: that Councillors considered it appropriate to grant a dispensation for other reasons (E)]; this dispensation will remain in force until the member resigns, or until May 2027, whichever comes first. No further declarations of interest made by members present.

EFC26/087

To consider any additional matters listed on this agenda that Councillors consider should be dealt with as confidential business as per the provisions of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. [See EFC26/093(IC) and 094(IC) inclusive]

None raised at this time other than those already listed on the agenda for Part Two discussion.

EFC26/088

To further consider matters pertaining to the Town Council's Annual Risk Management Assessment (RMA) and Review, as per Council's annual governance procedure;

The Chair moved that this matter be deferred to the next extraordinary meeting to be held on Monday 30th March to give members more time to review and consider the contents of the draft RMA report. Resolved.

Continued overleaf

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EFC26/089

To consider matters pertaining to Assertion Ten (10) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Review (AGAR) for financial year 2025-2026, as per Council's annual governance procedure;

Clerk/RFO provided a verbal report to Council.

The Clerk reported on the work undertaken since the start of the month and in conjunction with NALC, DALC, the ICO, the SLCC and Breakthrough Communications.

The Clerk presented a series of draft policies for members to review and consider and advised that additional resource was being allocated to ensure Assertion Ten (10) assurance and compliance. Chair thanked Clerk and the team for hard their work in this regard and suggested that members consider the revised policy wording and compliance statements prior to the next extraordinary meeting planned for Monday 30th March. Noted.

EFC26/090

To consider any matters considered as urgent by the presiding Chair for notation only.

None

EFC26/091

To confirm the date of the next scheduled FULL meeting of the Town Council on Monday the 13th of April 2026, and other Council committee meeting dates.

- i) Extraordinary Meeting of the FULL Council – 30th March 2026 7pm (The Old Courthouse)
- ii) Employment Committee – 20th April 2026 - 7pm
- iii) Strategy & Finance Committee – 27th April 2026 - 7pm
- iv) Annual Meeting of the FULL Town Council – 18th May 2026 – 7pm start.

EFC26/092

Recommendation: that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act namely, the financial affairs or business affairs or employment affairs of the Town Council by virtue of the fact that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Proposed by the Vice-Chair. Seconded by the Chair. Resolved unanimously.

Continued overleaf

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Other Council Business to be considered (Part TWO – Confidential)

EFC26/093 (IC)

To consider an urgent matter pertaining to Town Council Employees

This matter is considered confidential due to the nature of the subject to be discussed.

EFC26/094 (IC)

To consider an urgent matter pertaining to Guildhall operational requirements

This matter is considered confidential due to the nature of the subject to be discussed.

The two agenda items were considered as one for the purpose of debate/discussion.

The minutes of this part of the meeting have been redacted as per the legislation above as they relate to the confidential employment business of the Council and its employees.

With no further business to deal with, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.15pm.

Signed Date: 13th April 2026

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This section of the minutes is left deliberately blank.