

## AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

To: Cllrs. Farrow (JF) (Chair), Bridge (PB), Burrough (KB), Dowdeswell (MD), Dunsbury (RD), Hurren (WH), Keen (JK), Leat (SL), Osborn (RO), Paice (EP), Price (JP), Walden (JW), Warwick (TW) and Willey (DW).

The Guildhall,  
Axminster, Devon

7 May 2025

Dear Councillors,

You are hereby summoned to attend the ANNUAL Meeting of the FULL Town Council which will take place on Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 7.00pm. at the Guildhall, West Street, Axminster (in person).

This meeting will be recorded, and recordings will be held for one year by the Town Council. If members of the public make a representation to the meeting, they will be deemed to have consented to being audio recorded. If you wish to speak, please raise your hand and wait to be invited to speak by the Chair. Voting will normally take place by show of hands and the Chair will indicate the votes have been noted.

Members and the public are reminded that **remarks and representations must be addressed through the person chairing the meeting.**

Members are reminded:

- a) *Of their obligation to **declare the existence and nature of any personal interests** they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting and to **withdraw if it is a pecuniary one.***
- b) *That in reaching decisions they should take into consideration the Town Council's decision to reduce its carbon footprint in the light of the **climate/environment emergency.***
- c) *To ensure that their discussions include full consideration of the points set out in the Town Council's **Risk Assessment Management** policy..*

**Chair to highlight fire exits and Guildhall fire precautions.**

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

FC 25/129 AM

**To elect the Chair (Mayor) of the Town Council**

FC 25/130 AM

**Signing of declaration of Acceptance of Office by Chair (Town Mayor)**

FC 25/131 AM

**Opening remarks to Annual Meeting from the elected Chair**

FC 25/132 AM

**To elect the Vice-Chair (Deputy Mayor) of the Town Council**

***Continued Overleaf***

FC25/133 AM

**To note members of the Town Council present at this meeting**

FC25/134 AM

**To note and, if thought fit, to approve apologies for absence (and reasons thereof)**  
(LGA 1972 s.85 (1))

FC25/135 AM

**To note members of Council who are neither present nor whose absence has been approved (as above); to receive any other apologies for absence**

FC25/136 AM

**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**  
*This does not preclude the need for members to declare any additional interests that may arise during the meeting.*

FC25/137 AM

**To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the FULL Council held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025 as previously circulated to members and published online, and to consider any matters arising from the minutes of that meeting**

FC25/138 AM

**To review and note the minutes of the Committee Meetings of the FULL Council held as listed below, as previously circulated to members and published online, and to consider matters arising from those minutes**

a) Strategy & Finance Committee 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025

FC25/139 AM

**To note the decisions and recommendations of the Committee Meeting as listed above, as previously circulated to members and published online, and to consider approval by this meeting of the FULL Council.**

FC25/140 AM

**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 other than FC25/161-163(IC) incl. as shown below.**

FC25/141 AM

**To invite nominations for co-option to fill the casual vacancy that exists for the Town Council Town Ward Seat following the confirmation from EDDC Returning Officer that no petition was demanded to fill this vacancy by election (CVP4).**

FC25/142 AM

**To consider the review and, if thought fit, the re-adoption of the Town Council's Code of (Member) Conduct policy which accords with the adopted EDDC Code of Conduct Policy (as circulated to members beforehand).**

*Continued Overleaf*

FC25/143 AM

**To remind all members of the Town Council to submit (if necessary) a revised and up-to-date Register of Members Interests pro-forma to the Proper Officer for onward publication by EDDC.**

FC25/144 AM

**To consider nominations for Axminster Town Council's Hon. Footpath (P3) Warden**

FC25/145 AM

**To consider nominations for Axminster Town Council's Hon. Tree Warden.**

FC25/146 AM

**To consider and approve Councillor membership of the following Town Council committees, working parties and partner organisations:**

- a) *Employment Committee*
- b) *Operations Committee*
- c) *Planning Committee*
- d) *Strategy & Finance Committee*
- e) *Town Council representative to Axminster Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group*
- f) *Town Council representative to Axminster Climate Action Group*
- g) *Town Council representative to Chamber of Commerce*
- h) *Town Council representative to the Axminster Twinning Association*
- i) *Town Council representative to the EDDC Arts and Culture Forum*
- j) *Town Council representative to Plastic Free Axminster*
- k) *Town Council representative to DALC.*

FC25/147 AM

**To consider planning matters:**

**a) To consider any planning applications received prior to the agenda publication and currently awaiting consideration (and decision):**

*Hyperlinks to EDDC website can be found using the blue highlighted applications references.*

1) **25/0918/VAR** – Hunthay Farm, Hunthay, Axminster, EX13 5RJ

Variation of condition 1 – alterations to existing dwelling.

(Variation to approved application of 24/1887/FUL)

**b) To ratify planning decisions made by way of delegated authority afforded to Chair of Planning Committee, Cllr. Leat, and the Council's Proper Officer.**

*Hyperlinks to EDDC website can be found using the blue highlighted applications references.*

1) **25/0767/FUL** – 5 First Avenue, Axminster, EX13 5HP

Replacement of front porch, creation of courtyard and single storey rear extension.

**Support proposed by delegated authority of the Planning Committee Chair.**

**c) To consider any planning applications received after the agenda publication and currently awaiting consideration (and decision) – published on a supplementary agenda (if applicable):**

*Hyperlinks to EDDC website can be found using the blue highlighted applications references.*

***To be advised.***

***Continued Overleaf***

FC25/147 AM

**To consider planning matters (continued):**

**d) To note planning correspondence received (if any).**

*None received as at time of agenda publication.*

**e) To note any matters relating to planning that have arisen as a result of EDDC Planning Committee or Strategic Planning Committee meetings since the last FULL meeting of Council or at future meetings of these two EDDC planning committees.**

*Application 24/0096/MFUL (BESS development at Blackpool Corner, Axminster) will be considered at the EDDC Planning Committee meeting to be held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 10am (at Blackdown House, Honiton).*

**f) To consider any other planning matters not already included above, including representations from members on such matters (eg. planning, enforcement, planning legislation, TPO's etc)**

*None received as at time of agenda publication.*

FC25/148 AM

**To consider Council's financial matters:**

a) To note the Council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) for FY2025-26 (employed role).

b) To consider payment of Chair's (Mayor's) Allowance for FY2025-26 in the context of previous budgetary decisions of this Council.

c) To note payment of Councillor Allowances for FY2025-26; *RFO to outline legislation.*

d) To consider Council's Insurance matters for the forthcoming year; *RFO to speak.*

e) To consider whether to commission a formal revaluation of Council's building assets for insurance valuation and indemnity purposes; *RFO to provide report on background.*

f) To reconfirm Council's bank signatories and to revise/amend as deemed necessary and/or appropriate; *RFO to provide report as per Strategy & Finance Committee recommendations.*

g) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve and ratify payments for April 2025.

h) To receive, and note, the Responsible Financial Officer's report and financial pack for April 2025 in the new format (also published online) and to approve the Bank Reconciliation for the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

i) Questions to the RFO on these accounts / financial reports from members.

j) To consider the FY24-25 Internal Auditor report and to approve its acceptance/adoption prior to submission to PKF Littlejohn LLP in June 2025: *RFO to represent report.*

k) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve Section ONE (Governance Statement) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR-3) for Axminster Town Council in respect of the Financial Year 2024-25 and to authorise that this be signed on behalf of the Town Council and submitted to the External Auditor.

l) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve Section TWO (Accounting Statements) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR-3) for Axminster Town Council in respect of the Financial Year 2024-25 and to authorise that this be signed on behalf of the Town Council and submitted to the External Auditor.

m) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve supplementary and supporting financial documents and reports for Axminster Town Council in respect of the Financial Year 2024-25 and to authorise that these be submitted to the External Auditor as required within the AGAR legislation.

***Continued Overleaf***

n) To note the provisional dates for the publication of the Notice Period for the Exercise of Public Rights for the previous financial period FY24-25:

*Dates proposed: Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025 to Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025 inclusive.*

o) To review schedule of Council's automated payments (standing orders and direct debits) and to approve their continued use and mandate authority.

p) To review and, if thought fit, to approve the adoption of the Town Council's Strategic Policy for Investments and Borrowings.

*(This document was recommended for adoption by Strategy & Finance Committee in Feb. 2025)*

q) To review and, if thought fit, to approve the adoption of the Town Council's Internal Financial Control Review Policy.

*(This document was recommended for adoption by Strategy & Finance Committee in Feb. 2025)*

r) To consider any virements between previously allocated reserve funds considered necessary or appropriate by members.

s) To formally ratify approval of the Council's Risk Management Assessment Review for 2025-26

*(This document has been recommended for approval by the Strategy & Finance Committee in Feb. 2025)*

t) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the Asset Register Figure as at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and to note the revaluation of the Town Council's primary building/land assets as per the recommendation of the Internal Auditor in accordance with JPAG guidance (2024 version).

#### **Other Council Business to be considered:**

FC25/149 AM

**To note the result of the Devon County Council election on 1<sup>st</sup> May and to consider how the Town Council wishes to approach future co-operation with that authority in liaison with the elected Division member.**

FC25/150 AM

**To seek agreement from all members that they consent to the delivery of agenda summons and associated documents by the Clerk via email for the forthcoming council year ie until the date of the next Annual Meeting in 2026.**

FC25/151 AM

**To consider and, if thought fit, to resolve that Axminster Town Council will abide by the requirements of the Transparency Code Regulations 2015 and will publish all relevant information at the financial year end in accordance with the requirements of that legislation.**

FC25/152 AM

**To approve the adoption of the Town Council's revised Standing Orders.**

*(as per version considered and recommended for approval by Strategy & Finance Committee meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025)*

FC25/153 AM

**To approve the adoption of the Town Council's revised Financial Regulations.**

*(as per version considered and recommended for approval by Strategy & Finance Committee meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025)*

***Continued Overleaf***

FC25/154 AM

**To consider whether the Town Council wishes to co-operate with other organisations in the town to promote and facilitate a safeguarding scheme similar to the national 'Ask For Angela' initiative.**

FC25/155 AM

**To receive a report from Cllr. Price on the outcome of the recent East Devon District Council Arts and Culture Forum meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025.**

FC25/156 AM

**To note that a road closure (TTRO 2561763) will be in force on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2025 (Bank Holiday) to support the Axminster Gate to Plate event between 7am and 7pm and will affect; Silver Street & Church Street.**

FC25/157 AM

**To consider any matters considered as urgent by the presiding Chair and to receive any announcements from the Chair of the Council / Clerk to the Council.**

FC25/158 AM

**To confirm the date of the next scheduled Ordinary FULL meeting of the Town Council - 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025.**

FC25/159 AM

**To confirm the date of the next scheduled ANNUAL meeting of the Town Council - 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026.**

FC25/160 AM

***It is proposed that under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, (as amended by the Local Government Act 1972 the public, (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.***

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

FC25/161(IC) AM

**To consider matters pertaining to the Old Courthouse complex**

*This agenda item is being conducted in Part Two (closed session) due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.*

FC25/162(IC) AM

**To consider matters pertaining to the licensing of the Town Council's intellectual property rights.**

*This agenda item is being conducted in Part Two (closed session) due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.*

FC25/163(IC) AM

**To consider matters pertaining to the Axminster Guildhall and building/staff security.**

*This agenda item is being conducted in Part Two (closed session) due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.*

***Continued Overleaf***

With no further business to be considered, the Chair will close the meeting.

*Paul Hayward*

TOWN CLERK

7<sup>th</sup> May 2025

***Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, members of the public are now allowed to take photographs, film and audio record the proceedings and report on all public meetings***

***No prior notification is needed but it would be helpful if you could let the Chair, or Clerk, know that you plan to film or record so that the necessary arrangements can be made to provide reasonable facilities for you to report on meetings.***

***This permission does not extend to parts of meetings which are not open to the public. You should take all recording and photography equipment with you if a public meeting moves into a session which is not open to the public***

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