

AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Members of the Committee: Cllrs. Farrow (Chair), plus all serving members of the FULL Council on an ex-officio basis until further notice.

The Guildhall,
Axminster,
Devon.

23 February 2026

Dear Councillors,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Strategy & Finance Committee which will take place at the Axminster Guildhall at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 23rd February 2026 (to follow immediately after the meeting of the Planning Committee at 7pm)

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 you will be invited to speak by the Chair. Voting will also take place by show of hands and the Chair will indicate the votes have been noted.

Members and the public are reminded that remarks must be addressed through the Chair.

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 management** strategy.

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

SF26/018

To note members of this committee present:

SF26/019

To receive and, if thought fit, approve apologies for absence (and reasons therefore):

LGA 1972 S.85 (1)

SF26/020

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

SF26/021

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.

*At the FULL Council meeting held 09/02/2026, Cllr. Willey was afforded a dispensation * to discuss and vote upon matters pertaining to The Guildhall. This dispensation applies until May 2027 (unless rescinded prior to that date) and is afforded in respect of Cllr. Willey's disclosable pecuniary and personal interests as set out in the Register of Members Interests. * Localism Act 2011 (s.33).*

SF26/022

To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the minutes of the Strategy & Finance Committee meeting held 5th January 2026 and to consider any matters arising from those minutes.

SF26/023

To consider any 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 SF26/038 to 039 (incl.) as shown below].

Strategy & Finance Business to be considered:**SF26/024**

To receive an update from the RFO on forthcoming meeting with the internal auditor (to undertake the end-of-year Full Internal Audit for this authority) and to receive any feedback from members of the committee that they wished to be raised at the internal auditor meeting.

SF26/025

Committee to receive most recent Bank Reconciliation, Balance Sheet and Summary (Budget) Monitor report for Q1 to Q3 and partial Q4 (financial information) FY25-26 as per recommendation of FULL Council and the Internal Auditor.

SF26/026

To consider draft wording of Council's annual budget and precept statement for the forthcoming financial year (FY26-27). *This will ordinarily be published online and presented by the RFO on the Council's behalf at the Annual Parish Meeting in March.*

SF26/027

To consider report from RFO on previous and anticipated Cemetery income, and potential future revenue and capital expenditure (as per recommendation of the Internal Auditor).

SF26/028

To consider report from RFO on previous and anticipated Allotment income, and potential future revenue and capital expenditure (as per recommendation of the Internal Auditor).

SF26/029

To receive a report on the Town Council's current reserves (earmarked and general) and to consider any potential virements between reserve funds in light of anticipated expenditure within cost centres prior to financial year end (31st March 2026).

SF26/030

To consider the RFO statement on Council's Investments, Deposits and Reserves incl. the draft FY25-26 CIL Statement (subject to revision and finalisation by 31st March 2026)

SF26/031

To consider and review the Council's draft Internal Financial Control Review for FY26-27.

SF26/032

To consider and review the Council's revised Investment and Borrowing Strategy Policy for FY25-26 taking into account recent FULL Council resolutions to enter into a deposit agreement with Insignis Asset Management Limited (FCA registration 813442).

SF26/033

To receive a draft report on the Town Council's Asset Register as at date of agenda publication (subject to revision and amendment at year end).

Continued Overleaf

SF26/034

To note progress with the ongoing FY2025-26 Town Council risk management & assessment review and to consider Risk Management / Assessment Report (1st draft):
RFO to present report.

SF26/035

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

SF26/036

To note the date of future scheduled meetings of this committee;

27th April 2026

29th June 2026

28th September 2026

30th November 2026 (initial budget and precept review)

4th January 2027 (budget finalisation)

Additional meetings may be required if other matters of urgent business need to be considered.

SF26/037

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.

Committee business to be considered in Part Two:**SF26/038 (IC)**

To consider update report on matters pertaining to The Old Courthouse.

RFO to present report.

As this agenda item relates to commercially sensitive business, this item will be considered as a Part Two confidential matter.

SF26/039 (IC)

To receive update report on matters pertaining to Axminster Municipal Cemetery works

Clerk/RFO to present report.

As this agenda item relates to commercially sensitive business, this item will be considered as a Part Two confidential matter.

With no further business to attend to, the presiding Chair will bring the meeting to an end.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Hayward

Town Clerk

17th February 2026