

AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

To: Cllrs. Farrow (JF) (Chair), Price (JP) (Vice-Chair), Ashkettle (JA), Bridge (PB), Dowdeswell (MD), Dunsbury (RD), Hayward (AH), Hurren (WH), Leat (SL), Norman (LN), Osborn (RO), Paice (EP), Walden (JW), Warwick (TW) and Willey (DW).

The Guildhall,
Axminster, Devon

3rd February 2026

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend an ORDINARY Meeting of the FULL Town Council which will take place on **Monday, 9th February 2026 at 7.00pm** at the Guildhall, West Street, Axminster.

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 Chair of 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.*

The Chair to highlight fire exits and Guildhall fire precautions for those present.

i) Speaker from Axminster Carnival Committee (Chair) to make a representation to the Town Council.

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

FC26/024

To note those members present:

FC26/025

To note and, if thought fit, to approve apologies for absence (and reasons thereof):

(LGA 1972 s.85 (1))

FC26/026

To note the members of Council who are neither present nor whose absence has been approved (as above); and, to note any other apologies for absence received:

Continued Overleaf

FC26/027

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.

i) To consider a request for a dispensation for Cllr. David Willey relating to the hire of the Guildhall venue (Section 33 of The Localism Act 2011) [Reason: that Councillors consider it appropriate to grant a dispensation for other reasons (E)]

FC26/028

To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the FULL Council held on Monday 12th January 2026 as previously circulated to members and published online:

FC26/029

To consider any matters arising from the minutes of that meeting:

FC26/030

To consider and review the draft minutes of the following meetings of committees of the Town Council as listed below (as previously circulated to members and published online):

i) Operations Committee – 25th January 2026
ii) Employment Committee – 2nd February 2026

FC26/031

To note any specific recommendations arising from those committee meetings and to consider whether the Council wishes to approve their adoption.

FC26/032

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 FC26/053 to 054(IC) inclusive)

FC26/033

To consider Council's financial matters:

a) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve and ratify payments for January 2025.
b) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the Bank Reconciliation for January 2025; this document to be counter-signed by a member of Council in conjunction with bank statements.
c) To receive, and note, Responsible Financial Officer's report and financial pack for January 2025 in the approved format (also published online) incorporating the Q4 forecast (to March 2026).
d) Questions to the RFO on these accounts / financial reports from members.
e) To consider whether the Town Council wishes to renew its membership of The Blackdown Hills Parish Network for 2026 (annual charge – suggested £25 contribution for a parish council)

Continued Overleaf

FC26/034

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) 26/0055/FUL – 10 First Avenue, Axminster, EX13 5EX

Proposed two storey side extension on the north elevation and replacement porch.

2) 26/0057/FUL – Kennack, Horslears, Axminster, EX13 5JX

Proposed single storey rear extension, rear decking and first floor side extension.

3) 26/0059/FUL – Contay, Chard Road, Axminster, EX13 5ED

Proposed single storey extension on SE elevation with dormer window.

4) 26/0020/CPE – Chubbs Storeroom, Castle Street, Axminster, EX13 5NP

Applications for a certificate of lawfulness confirming lawful use of building as Class E.

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 in consultation with the members of the Council's Committee.

None to be considered at time of agenda publication.

c) To consider any tree related planning applications received prior to the agenda publication and currently awaiting consideration (and decision):

None to be considered at time of agenda publication.

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

e) To consider any planning correspondence received:

To note Planning Appeal against refusal for 80MW BESS installation at Newlands Farm, Crewkerne Road, Axminster, EX13 5SF (24/2650/MFUL)

Appeal representations to be submitted by 24th February 2026, with planning appeal inquiry to be held in May 2026.

To note decision by DCC to withdraw the planning application for roundabout sponsorship in light of Town Council's planning consultee representations and existing agreements for use of the roundabout as a Town amenity.

FC26/035

To note any recent correspondence from DALC and NALC.

To consider nominations from the Town Council to attend the Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on Friday 8th May 2026 (nominations are drawn from the hat at DALC, and 3 winning pairs of tickets are allocated for the DALC area).

FC26/036

To consider matters pertaining to Axminster Emergency Planning protocol and policy.

Continued Overleaf

FC26/037

To consider matters pertaining to:

- a) Axminster Chamber of Commerce; *Cllr Dowdeswell / Cllr. Hayward to present report.*
- b) Plastic Free Axminster; *Cllr Osborn to present report.*
- c) Axminster Climate Action Group; *Cllr Walden to present report.*
- d) Light Up Axminster; *Cllr Dowdeswell to present report.*
- e) Axminster Carnival Committee; *Cllr Dowdeswell to present report.*

FC26/038

To consider any updates pertaining to Local Government reorganisation and devolution; in particular, the issues relating to Devon County (and the relationship between the County Council, the Unitary Councils, the District Councils and the smaller local authorities – town and parish councils); to further consider how such changes will affect the delivery and affordability of Town Council services and amenities:

- i) To receive report from Clerk / District Councillors / County Councillor.
- ii) To consider whether the Town Council wishes to create a LGR Working Party/Group.
- iii) To consider whether the Town Council wishes to tentatively convene a FULL Council meeting in August to consider any matters pertaining to LGR that may arise over the summer session.

FC26/039

To note the scheduled date for the Annual Parish Meeting on 2nd March 2026.

- i) To consider and agree upon the theme of this parish meeting.
- ii) To consider and agree upon the scope (and costs) of advertising for the event.
- iii) To consider whether a further public meeting should be held later in the year to provide information and updates to residents.

FC26/040

To consider whether the Town Council wishes to undertake a Councillor Skills Assessment / Training Need assessment exercise to ensure that it is fully utilising the skills, experience and expertise of its elected/co-opted membership.

FC26/041

To consider any revisions necessary or appropriate to the extant Committee Membership matrix.

FC26/042

To note the recent news regarding the potential closure of Charmouth Fire Station and to consider the impact of that potential closure on the Axminster Community and local First Responder Service.

FC26/043

To consider matters pertaining to the DCC Community Road Warden Scheme and to determine whether this Town Council should be a participant in that scheme.

FC26/044

To note the recent announcement of funding for the 2028 UK “Town of Culture” competition and to decide whether Axminster should make a submission or application.

Continued Overleaf

FC26/045

To note the ongoing EDDC (draft) Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (PPOSS) consultation and to decide whether a formal, corporate response/reply should be submitted by the deadline date of 27th February 2026.

FC26/046

To note the recent EA consultation event on The River Axe Restoration Feasibility Study (Stakeholder Participation) and to determine whether the Council wishes to submit initial comments on the options proposals contained in the draft report. *This exercise is being undertaken by Jacobs on behalf of the Environment Agency.*

FC26/047

To consider whether the Town Council should provide suitable and compliant IT devices for serving members to meet the requirement of Assertion 10 and to comply with sector “good practice”

FC26/048

To consider whether to replace the Town Flag (flown at The Guildhall and damaged in recent storm events) and (if so) to agree upon design and construction.

FC26/049

To note any updates/information from the RFO pertaining to ongoing sale of The Old Courthouse buildings in Church Street.

FC26/050

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

i) To receive correspondence from Honiton Town Council, and Chard Town Council, regarding forthcoming civic events.

FC26/051

To confirm the date of the next scheduled FULL meeting of the Town Council on Monday the 9th of March 2026, and other Council committee meetings.

- i) Strategy & Finance Committee – 23rd February 2026 - 7pm**
- ii) Annual Parish Meeting – 2nd March 2026 – 7pm**
- iii) Operations Committee – 23rd March 2026 – 7pm**

FC26/052

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.

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

Continued Overleaf

FC26/053 (IC)

To consider matters pertaining to The Old Courthouse and to note any correspondence received, and to receive update from Clerk on any confidential or commercially sensitive issues arising since last FULL Council meeting.

This matter is considered commercially sensitive and confidential due to the subject to be discussed.

FC26/054 (IC)

To further consider any matters pertaining to The Town Cemetery buildings and associated plant, equipment and materials (associated with the recent theft event in OCT 2025).

This matter is considered commercially sensitive and confidential due to the subject to be discussed.

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

Paul Hayward

*Town Clerk
3rd February 2026*

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.
