

## AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

To: Cllrs. Farrow (JF) (Chair), Price (JP) (Vice-Chair), Ashkettle (JA), 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

7<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend the Annual Meeting of the FULL Town Council which will take place on **Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> May 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 Presiding Chair to highlight fire exits and Guildhall fire precautions for those present.***

**FC26/164 AM**

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

**FC26/165 AM**

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

**FC26/166 AM**

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

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

**FC26/167 AM**

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

**FC26/168 AM**

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

*Continued Overleaf*

**FC26/169 AM**

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

**FC26/170 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**

**FC26/171 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.**

To note that a dispensation for Cllr. David Willey [relating to the hire of the Guildhall venue] (Section 33 of The Localism Act 2011) was afforded to that Councillor at the Full meeting of the Town Council on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026. [Reason: that Councillors consider it appropriate to grant a dispensation for other reasons (Reason E)]

**FC26/172a) AM**

**To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the FULL Council held on Monday 13th April 2026 as previously circulated to members and published online,**

**FC26/172b) AM**

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

**FC26/173 AM**

**To review and note the minutes of the Committee Meetings of the Town Council held as listed below, as previously circulated to members and published online**

- a) Employment Committee 20th April 2026*
- b) Strategy & Finance Committee 27th April 2026*

**FC26/174 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 or adoption by this Annual Meeting of the FULL Council, namely:**

- i) To approve & adopt the substantive (draft) Action Plan 2026-28 (SF26/046) – 27/04/2026
- ii) To approve & adopt the substantive (draft) Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy (SF26/051) – 27/04/2026
- iii) To approve & adopt the substantive (draft) Dispensations Policy (SF26/052) – 27/04/2026
- iv) To approve & adopt the substantive (draft) Statement on Confidential Business (wording) (SF26/053) – 27/04/2026
- v) To approve & adopt the substantive revised Strategy & Finance Committee Terms of Reference (SF26/054) – 27/04/2026

*Continued Overleaf*

**FC26/175 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 **FC26/203-204 AM (IC) incl. as shown below.**

**FC26/176 AM**

To consider nominations for co-option to fill the casual vacancy that exists for the Town Council Town Ward Seat.

**FC26/177 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. *This is only necessary if there have been material changes to the Register of Members Interests since the last submission.*

**FC26/178 AM**

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

**FC26/179 AM**

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

**FC26/180 AM**

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

- a) **Employment Committee** (currently 9 members)
- b) **Operations Committee** (currently all members by default)
- c) **Planning Committee** (currently all members by default)
- d) **Strategy & Finance Committee** (currently all members by default)
- e) **Town Council; Chair of the Axminster Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**
- f) **Town Council; Chair of the Axminster Climate Action Group**
- g) **Town Council representative(s) to Chamber of Commerce**
- h) **Town Council representative(s) to the 'Light Up Axminster' Group**
- i) **Town Council representative(s) to the 'Axminster Carnival Association'**
- j) **Town Council representative to the 'Axminster Twinning Association'**
- k) **Town Council representative to DALC/NALC**
- l) **Town Council representative to the 'Plastic Free Axminster' Group**
- m) **Town Council representative(s) to the EDDC Arts and Culture Forum**

**FC26/181 AM**

To note report from ROSPA Play Safety (Annual Playground Inspection for Jubilee Field) and to consider authorising the works recommended within the report to equipment thereon; *to further approve payment of invoice for inspection services provided.*

**FC26/182 AM**

To receive a report on Defamation from the RFO (Legal Topic Note 30 refers) and for members to note receipt and to confirm compliance for the forthcoming year.

*Continued Overleaf*

**FC26/183 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 2027.

**FC26/184 AM**

To seek acknowledgement from all members that they have received training resources from the Clerk in relation to ongoing Cybersecurity threats and risks to the Town Council and that they will undertake training as required / recommended on a six-monthly rolling basis to mitigate such risks as far as possible.

**FC26/185 AM**

To agree format for proposed Councillor Training session with Devon Association of Local Councils and to confirm approval of proposed costs / charges for said training event.

**FC26/186 AM**

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.*

**FC26/187 AM**

To consider any matters pertaining to Axminster's Emergency Planning protocol and policy (and Working Party deliberations and activity).

- i) To receive update from Clerk on grant-funding opportunities available.*

**FC26/188 AM**

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); *Clerk to provide any updates received from higher-tier authorities.*

**FC26/189 AM**

To consider any matters pertaining to potential future asset and/or service provision transfers that could affect the Town Council's financial or operational functions as a result of the ongoing LGR process, and to discuss Council's aims, objectives and aspirations in that regard; *Clerk to provide outline report to members.*

**FC26/190 AM**

To receive update on matters pertaining to litter bin provision at Axminster Railway Station in relation to recent correspondence received from business operators at the station and from railway staff: *Town Clerk to provide an update report to members for their consideration.*

*Continued Overleaf*

## FC26/191 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.

- i) [26/0712/FUL](#) Lower Westwater Farm, Axminster, EX13 7JD  
Extension to existing earth lined slurry lagoon.

#### 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.

- i) [26/0654/FUL](#) Unit A, Musbury Road, Axminster  
Change of use from B2 (industrial) to E(d) Indoor Sport & recreation for use as Padel Tennis and wellness centre  
Proposal: Support with conditions relating to noise-mitigation measures.
- ii) [26/0701/FUL](#) 11 First Avenue, Axminster, EX13 5EX  
Retrospective application for retention of detached outbuilding in rear garden.  
Proposal: Support with conditions relating to prohibition of any commercial use.
- iii) [26/0730/FUL](#) Little Cloakham, Cloakham, Axminster, EX13 5RP  
Installation of 20 no. low/ground level solar panels.  
Proposal: Support.
- iv) [26/0734/FUL](#) Devoncrest, Charmouth Road, Axminster, EX13 5SZ  
Conversion of garage into annexe (with new dormers) for family/friend use only.  
Proposal: Support with conditions relating to prohibition of any commercial use.

#### 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.

**None at time of agenda publication.**

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

#### 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.

#### f) To consider any other planning matters not already included above, including representations from members on such matters (eg. planning decisions, enforcement, planning legislation, Tree Protection Orders etc)

To note the refusal of planning application [25/2355/FUL](#) (Challenge, Green Lane, Axminster) for the stationing of a mobile home for use as a accommodation, and for the change of use from agricultural to garden (residential curtilage).

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**FC26/192 AM**

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

- a) To note the Council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) for FY2026-27 (employed role).**
- b) To consider payment of Chair's (Mayor's) Allowance for FY2026-27 in the context of previous budgetary decisions of this Council.**
- c) To note payment of Councillor Allowances for FY2026-27; RFO to outline legislation.**
- d) To consider Council's Insurance matters/arrangements for the forthcoming year; RFO to update.**
- e) To consider whether the Town Council wishes to extend its Insurance Coverage to include specific CyberSecurity Indemnity coverage; RFO to provide report and data/costs.**
- 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 2026.**
- h) To receive, and note, the Responsible Financial Officer's report and financial pack for April 2026 and to approve the Bank Reconciliation for the 30th April 2026.**
- i) Questions to the RFO on these accounts / financial reports from members.**
- j) To consider the FY25-26 Internal Auditor report and the recommendations made therein and to approve its acceptance & adoption prior to submission to PKF Littlejohn LLP in, or before, June 2026: 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 2025-26 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 2025-26 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 2025-26 and to authorise that these be submitted to the External Auditor as required within the AGAR legislation.**
- n) To note the provisional dates for the publication of the Notice Period for the Exercise of Public Rights for the previous financial period FY25-26:  
Dates proposed: Wednesday 3rd June 2026 to Tuesday 14th July 2026 inclusive.**

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**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 consider any virements between previously allocated reserve funds considered necessary or appropriate by members.**

**q) To consider and, if thought fit, to approve the Community Infrastructure Levy statement as at 31/03/2026 for statutory submission to EDDC.**

**r) 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.**

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

#### **FC26/193 AM**

**To consider the wording of the draft/revised Policy documents listed below and, if thought fit, to approve and adopt those policies:**

- a) Delegation Policy (draft)
- b) Biodiversity Policy (draft)
- c) Enquiries & Complaints Policy (revised)
- d) Risk Management Policy (revised)

#### **FC26/194 AM**

**To note an EDDC (alcohol) Licensing Application for Beerworks, Warehouse 2, Unit 10, Weycroft Avenue, Axminster; to consider whether to submit any formal comments in respect of that application.**

#### **FC26/195 AM**

**To note receipt of correspondence from Axminster Heritage Centre seeking feedback on the relationship between their organisation and the Town Council and to discuss how that relationship can be improved in the future, in terms of liaison and grant-funding.**

#### **FC26/196 AM**

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

#### **FC26/197 AM**

**To receive a report from Town Council's nominated representative on the outcome of the recent Devon Rail Forum meeting held in April.**

#### **FC26/198 AM**

**To receive a report from Town Council's nominated representative on the outcome of the recent East Devon District Council Arts and Culture Forum meeting held 29th April 2026.**

#### **FC26/199 AM**

**To note that a road closure (TTRO 2667551) will be in force on Monday 25th May 2026 (Bank Holiday) to support the Axminster Gate to Plate event between 7am and 7pm and will affect Silver Street & Church Street.**

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**FC26/200 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.

**FC26/201 AM**

To confirm the date of the next scheduled Ordinary FULL meeting of the Town Council - 8th June 2026.

**FC26/202 AM**

**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 and Section 1 (ss.2 and 3a) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 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) – See FC26/175 (AM)**

**FC26/203 AM (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.*

**FC26/204 AM (IC)**

To consider matters pertaining to the Jubilee Field recreation area and adjoining curtilage.

*This matter is considered commercially sensitive and confidential due to the subject to be discussed and the involvement of a 3<sup>rd</sup> party landowner.*

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

*Paul Hayward*

**TOWN CLERK**

**7<sup>th</sup> May 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*

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