

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 Employment Committee

MINUTES APPROVED 20th April 2026; Part ONE version (Redacted).

Held in person on Thursday 26th March 2026 at 7.00pm.

Members present:

Cllrs. Price (Chair) (JP), Dowdeswell (MD), Farrow (JF), Hayward (AH), Leat (SL), Walden (JW) and Willey (DW).

(Meeting was quorate with seven committee members present).

Also present:

Clerk to the Council, Paul Hayward.

No members of the public in attendance.

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

Public Forum session.

No public speakers present.

Chair closed the Public Forum session at 7.01pm

Part ONE business.

EC26/015

To note members of the Employment Committee present at the meeting:

As above.

EC26/016

To receive and, if thought fit, to note the absence and to approve the reasons given for the absence: (LGA 1972 s.85(1))

Cllr. Paice had sent their apologies and reasons for absence. Noted.

It was proposed by JW, seconded by DW, that the apologies (and reasons therefore) be approved. Resolved unanimously.

EC26/017

To note members of the committee who are neither present nor have given their apologies for absence:

Cllr. Hurren was absent. Noted.

Continued overleaf.

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EC26/018

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.

No declarations of interest offered by members in relation to the business on the agenda for consideration.

EC26/019

To consider and, if thought fit, approve the minutes of the Employment Committee meeting held 2nd February 2026.

And to consider matters arising from those minutes not otherwise listed on this agenda.

It was proposed by the Chair, seconded by JF that the minutes of that meeting be approved. Resolved unanimously. There were no matters arising from these minutes.

EC26/020

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 (see below).

No other matters to be considered in Part Two session other than that already listed on the agenda under EC26/024 to 027 inclusive.

EC26/021

To consider any matters considered as urgent by the presiding Chair for discussion.
No matters raised by Chair for discussion or reference.

EC26/022

To note the date of the next scheduled meeting of the committee.

The next scheduled meeting date of the committee was noted as 20th April 2026 unless any extraordinary meetings were required before that time.

Continued overleaf.

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EC26/023

*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 JF, seconded by the Chair. Resolved unanimously.*

The Part One meeting closed and the Part One recording was stopped and a separate recording commenced for Part Two.

Part TWO business.

Business to be considered in Part Two session; matters which are considered as confidential as they relate to Council employment.

EC26/024(IC)

To consider any matters pertaining to Council employees, remuneration and Terms & Conditions of Employment which require the attention and decision of the employment committee; Clerk presented reports to committee members on the following matters:

i) Employee remuneration incl. allowances and stipends.

Members discussed a matter relating to unsociable hours attendance for alarm/CCTV activations at the Guildhall and other Town Council sites. After debate, *it was proposed by the Chair, seconded by JW, that the Clerk should be directed to obtain quotations for a remote monitoring service to negate the need for Town Council staff attendance at premises out of working hours. In light of the urgency for these contingency measures, the quotes are to be considered jointly by the Chairs of the Operations Committee and the Employment Committee, and a decision made to engage with a service provider, subject to ratification of that delegated decision by Full Council at the earliest opportunity. Resolved unanimously.*
Clerk: Please note and action accordingly

ii) Superannuation (Pension).

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Employment Committee as there was no business to be considered.

Continued overleaf.

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iii) Terms and Conditions of Employment.

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Employment Committee as there was no business to be considered.

iv) Training / Continuing Professional Development

The Clerk provided a verbal update to committee members on the progression of the CiLCA training for the Council' administrative staff. Noted.

v) Appraisals / Performance Management (PM)

Clerk provided an update to the committee on two employee PM matters;
Members considered the matters raised and gave direction to the Clerk to proceed with relevant actions.

Clerk to report back to the next committee meeting with outcomes/progress.

These minutes were redacted as they relate to the confidential employee business involving staff members.

vi) Work experience / Apprenticeships.

Council had received a request from a Chard resident seeking a work experience placement. It was unanimously agreed that this request be declined at the present time due to staffing and administrative resourcing challenges. Clerk: Please note and action accordingly.

vii) Recruitment and resourcing.

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Employment Committee as there was no business to be considered.

viii) Implications of Employment Rights Bill (effective from 1st April 2026)

The Clerk, the Chair and AH had all attended a recent employment training session on this subject, and the Clerk was receiving regular updates from the Council's retained HR consultancy on this topic with additional resources available via the HR app. Noted.

ix) Any other employment matters requiring members consideration.

None raised by Clerk or the Chair. Noted.

Continued overleaf.

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EC26/025 (IC)

To receive a report from Clerk relating to Guildhall employee matters and to resolve any actions thereafter;

This item was deferred to the Extraordinary meeting of the FULL Council to follow this meeting as there was a specific agenda item on that agenda in this respect. Noted.

EC26/026 (IC)

To consider a matter pertaining to employee occupational health.

Clerk presented a report to committee members.

It was proposed by JF, seconded by JW, that the Town Council would cover the costs of a short course of sports therapy for the employee concerned (tentative value/cost £243) to assist in their recovery from a work-related knee injury. No reimbursement to be sought from the employee. Resolved unanimously. Clerk: Please note and liaise with the employee accordingly to arrange treatment and payment to the therapy provider.

EC26/027 (IC)

To receive a summary update report on employee leave allocations and periods of leave remaining, including TOIL accrued, including a year-to-date sickness/absence report:

- a) Clerk / Proper Officer
- b) All other ATC employees

Reports were noted. JW wished to record in the minutes his thanks to Council staff for their work in restoring the cemetery chapels to full operational (and secure) status and for the replacement of the stolen cemetery plant and equipment assets within the budget value assigned. Those thanks were echoed by AH and others members. Noted.

It was recognised by committee members that the current staff team were operating at full capacity and that additional workload (both internal and external) would likely necessitate additional employee resource (via recruitment) particularly with regard to financial matters (RFO) and grounds-team capacity (GMO). A report to be brought back to this committee as soon as possible with potential recruitment options and costs. Noted.

With no further items to discuss, the Chair closed the meeting at 7.55pm.

Signed Date: 20th April 2026

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