Ottery St Mary Town Council

8 Broad Street, Ottery St Mary, Devon EX11 1BZ

PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING

Full Council

Issued: Wednesday, 28 October 2026

Dear All,

Notice is hereby given of a public meeting of the **Full Council** to be held at **7:00 PM** on **Monday, 2 November 2026** at **Ottery St. Mary Town Council (8 Broad Street, Ottery St. Mary, Devon, EX11 1BZ)**. Members of the public and press are welcome to attend in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. This notice is given under paragraph 10(2) of Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972.

Kerry Kennell

Clerk to Ottery St Mary Town Council

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC/PRESS:

The law requires that public access is possible and not restricted, unless in the case of an agreed confidential session.

1. For members of the public/press that wish to speak at the meeting, under public participation, please raise your hand and wait for the Mayor to prompt you.
2. For those who have no visual access to the meeting, Members will state their name before speaking and voting.
3. The order of business may be changed by a decision of the Council and by resolution without notice.

Note: Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, any members of the public are allowed to take photographs, film and audio record the proceedings and report on all public meetings (including on social media). If you are recording the meeting, you are asked to act in a reasonable manner and not disrupt the conduct of meetings for example by using intrusive lighting, flash photography or asking people to repeat statements for the benefit of the recording. You may not make an oral commentary during the meeting. The Mayor has the power to control public recording and/or reporting so it does not disrupt the meeting

Mobile Phones, Pagers and Similar Devices – All persons attending this meeting are required to turn off Mobile Phones, Pagers and Similar Devices. The Mayor may approve an exception to this request in special circumstances

C1 26-27 Apologies for Absence

To receive and record apologies for absence. Members are reminded that the Council can only accept apologies where a valid reason is given. Local Government Act 1972, s.85(1)

C2 26-27 Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests from members in items on the agenda, and any requests for dispensations. Members are reminded of their obligations under the Localism Act 2011 s.29–34.

C3 26-27 Exclusion of Public and Press

To RESOLVE that, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s.1(2), the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

C4 26-27 Public Participation

To allow members of the public to address the Council in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders. A maximum of 3 minutes per speaker, total session 15 minutes. Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s.1 & Openness of Local Government Bodies Regs 2014; speaking via standing orders.

C5 26-27 Confirmation of Town Council Minutes of 5th October 2026 (minute refs C26/10/61-C26/10/89)

To approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and correct record. Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12 para 41.

C6 26-27 To receive Reports from the EDDC and DCC Councillors

C7 26-27 To note the Councillor Surgery will be held between 10am and 12 on 10th December at the Council Offices, 8 Broad Street

COMMITTEE REPORTS

C8 26-27 To note the Planning Committee Minutes of 19th October 2026 (minute refs P/26/10/001-P26/10/010) and 26th October 2026 (minute refs P/26/10/011-P/26/10/020)

C9 26-27 To consider (and approve if appropriate) recommendations from the Committee

C10 26-27 To note the Minutes of the Finance and Strategic Planning Committee meeting of 13th October 2026 (minute refs FSP/26/10/016-030)

C11 26-27 To note the Minutes of the Community Infrastructure Committee meeting of 19th October 2026 (minute refs CI/26/10/001-CI/26/10/021)

C12 26-27 To note the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting of 30th October 2026 (minute ref HR/26/10/09 - HR/26/10/17) *(Exempt)*

C13 26-27 To consider (and approve if appropriate) recommendations from the Committee

C14 26-27 Finance Report / Budget Monitoring

To receive a report on income and expenditure against budget. Members are reminded of their fiduciary duty under the Local Government Act 1972 s.151 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

C15 26-27 To consider current situation regarding the Skatepark and to make decisions as appropriate

C16 26-27 To receive an update regarding the outdoor structure at the Station Hub and make decisions as appropriate *(Exempt)*

COMMUNITY ISSUES

C17 26-27 To consider concerns with regards to hedgerow removal within the Parish and to make decisions as appropriate

C18 26-27 To receive an update regarding the proposal to rebuild Tipton St John Church of England Primary School

C19 26-27 To receive an update regarding the Coleridge Pre-School building and make recommendations/decisions as appropriate *(Exempt)*

C20 26-27 To discuss the River Otter and Fluxton Sewage Plan and make recommendations as appropriate

C21 26-27 To note the current situation regarding Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution

C22 26-27 To consider what action can be taken by the Town Council to enforce the 20mph zone within the town

C23 26-27 To receive an update regarding the survey for a 20mph zone outside of the town and to make decisions as appropriate

C24 26-27 To consider Feniton Parish Council Proposal to Undertake Maintenance of Grassed Area within Ottery Boundary

C25 26-27 To receive an update regarding the Night Bus survey and to make decisions as appropriate

C26 26-27 Request for a Royal Mail Post Box at King's Reach

To consider a request for the Town Council to approach Royal Mail regarding the installation of a post box within the King's Reach development, and to determine whether the Council wishes to support and formally submit such a request on behalf of local residents.

C27 26-27 To Consider Councillor Safety and seating within the Council Chamber and to approve Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

C28 26-27 Confirmation of decisions made under the scheme of delegation

Cllrs Johns, Grainger, Feasey and Stewart gave delegated authority to Please to replace the ramp to the portacabin at the Station at a cost of £878.20

C29 26-27 To approve the updated CCTV Policy and DPIA for the Ring Doorbell

C30 26-27 To approve the new Artificial Intelligence Policy

C31 26-27 To consider a response to the Fire and rescue service five-year plan consultation

C32 26-27 To consider Briefing from EDDC for Town and Parish Councils - Severe Drought in East Devon

C33 26-27 Mayor's Report

To receive announcements from the Town Mayor on civic engagements, correspondence, and matters of note since the last meeting. No decisions may be taken under this item.

C34 26-27 Clerk's Report

To receive the Clerk's report on correspondence received and matters delegated to the Clerk since the previous meeting.

C35 26-27 Correspondence Received

To note correspondence received and determine any items requiring a formal response:

1. Advance Notice - Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding Round 2026/27
2. Information from Friends of Ottery Library regarding the Library Supervisor role being removed from their staffing structure
3. Have your say on West Hill Parish Council Local Green Spaces and Valued Views Consultation

C36 26-27 To note any reports previously e-mailed by Councillors of Meetings attended

C37 26-27 Matters Raised by Members Not Otherwise on the Agenda

To receive brief updates or questions from members on matters not otherwise on the agenda. No decisions may be taken under this item. Members are reminded this is for information and signposting only; substantive matters should be referred to a future agenda.

C38 26-27 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place at 7pm on Monday 7th December 2026 at the Council Offices, 8 Broad Street, Ottery St Mary.

APPENDIX I — Public Documents

C5 26-27 Confirmation of Town Council Minutes of 5th October 2026 (minute refs C26/10/61-C26/10/89)

Full Council Meeting-Minutes (17).pdf
Full Council Meeting-Minutes.pdf

C6 26-27 To receive Reports from the EDDC and DCC Councillors

October Report from EDDC Cllr Vicky Johns.pdf

C8 26-27 To note the Planning Committee Minutes of 19th October 2026 (minute refs P/26/10/001-P26/10/010) and 26th October 2026 (minute refs P/26/10/011-P/26/10/020)

Planning Meeting-Minutes (10).pdf

C10 26-27 To note the Minutes of the Finance and Strategic Planning Committee meeting of 13th October 2026 (minute refs FSP/26/10/016-030)

Finance and Strategic Planning Committee-Minutes (8).pdf

C11 26-27 To note the Minutes of the Community Infrastructure Committee meeting of 19th October 2026 (minute refs CI/26/10/001-CI/26/10/021)

Community Infrastructure Meeting-Minutes (1).pdf

C14 26-27 Finance Report / Budget Monitoring

Bank Reconciliation CCLA September 2026.PDF
Bank Reconciliation Receipts and Payments CCLA September 2026.PDF

C24 26-27 To consider Feniton Parish Council Proposal to Undertake Maintenance of Grassed Area within Ottery Boundary

Feniton Town Council.pdf

C27 26-27 To Consider Councillor Safety and seating within the Council Chamber and to approve Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

Basic risk assessment for council meetings.pdf
Seating.pdf

C29 26-27 To approve the updated CCTV Policy and DPIA for the Ring Doorbell

Data Protection Impact Assessment - Ring doorbell.pdf
2026- CCTV Policy.pdf

C30 26-27 To approve the new Artificial Intelligence Policy

DRAFT - 2026- Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy.pdf

C31 26-27 To consider a response to the Fire and rescue service five-year plan consultation

CRMP poster Sep 2026.pdf
Consultation letter for stakeholders from CFO.pdf

C32 26-27 To consider Briefing from EDDC for Town and Parish Councils - Severe Drought in East Devon

EDDC Briefing Severe Drought.pdf

Ottery St Mary Town Council — MINUTES

Full Council — Monday, 5 October 2026

Published: Monday, 26 October 2026

Attendance

Present: Mayor Vicky Johns (Chair), Cllr Janice Aherne, Cllr Ben Feasey, Cllr Nick Sneller, Cllr Richard Grainger, Cllr Peter Faithfull, Cllr Richard Copus, Deputy Mayor Dean Stewart

Absent: Cllr Mark Hobson

Also present: Kerry Kennell — Town Clerk, Jessica Bailey — Cllr

Members of the public present: 10

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Janice Aherne: declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item C14 26-27 — To receive an update regarding the proposal to rebuild Tipton St John Church of England Primary School — Agenda item C/26/10/75 – Cllr Aherne declared an ‘affects NRI’ as a resident of Tipton St John.

C/26/10/061 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted from Cllrs Martin and Peka.

C/26/10/062 Declarations of Interest

It was **NOTED** that the Full Council meeting of 5 October 2026 was held at Tipton St John Community Hall.

Cllr Aherne declared an interest described as 'affects NRI' in agenda item C/26/10/75, as a resident of Tipton St John. No further declarations of interest or requests for dispensations were received.

C/26/10/063 Exclusion of Public and Press

It was **RESOLVED** that the following agenda items would be discussed in Confidential Session: Agenda item 12 To note the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting of 2nd October 2026 (minute ref HR/26/10/01 - HR/26/10/08) and Agenda item 15 To receive an update regarding the Coleridge Pre-School building and make recommendations/decisions as appropriate.

It was **AGREED** that these items be deferred until the end of the meeting to allow members of the public to remain in attendance for the majority of the meeting.

C/26/10/064 Public Participation

Representatives from the Sidmouth Road Development Action Group spoke in relation to application 25/2468/MOUT which has gone to appeal. The group wanted to know how the Council would be moving forward with regards to the hearing. Cllr Grainger confirmed this will be discussed by the Council. It was **NOTED** that anyone who has objected does have an opportunity to update their comments. As Chair of the Ottery St Mary Town Council Planning Committee Cllr Grainger will aim to speak at the hearing. It was asked how a property owner can get members of the Town Council or EDDC on site to view their garden to see first hand the impact that the proposed development would have. The property owner was advised to email the Clerk.

A resident highlighted the need for a 20mph speed limit through the village. This was raised when Richard Foord,

MP held a meeting in the village. The Town Council has registered interest in reducing the speed limit in the village and is waiting to hear back from DCC regarding the cost to do this. It was explained that the 20mph speed limit in the town centre was paid for by DCC but any further speed limit reductions would need to be paid for by the Town Council.

C/26/10/065 Confirmation of Town Council Minutes of 7th September 2026 (minute refs C26/09/01-C26/09/28)

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2026 (minute references C26/09/01–C26/09/28) were received. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a true and correct record, and they were duly signed by Mayor Vicky Johns in her capacity as Chair.

C/26/10/066 To receive Reports from the EDDC and DCC Councillors

No report received from EDDC Cllr Collins.

EDDC Cllr Johns sent a written report.

EDDC Cllr Faithfull reported that at the cabinet meeting EDDC had agreed to support DCC morally but not financially with their judicial review into the proposal for Local Government Reorganisation in Devon. Edenserv are now carrying out waste and recycling collection in East Devon. A boundary review for Cranbrook has taken place. Progress continues to be made on the emerging Local Plan. Cllr Faithfull also provided an update from the Housing Review Board and raised matters relating to council housing.

DCC Cllr Bailey reported that submission of the outline planning application for the new Tipton St John Primary School is expected imminently. It remains unclear what future use, if any, will be made of the existing school site once the new school is operational. Cllr Bailey also provided an update on adult social care financial assessments. Concerns have been raised regarding delays in Devon County Council completing financial assessments for individuals requiring care. The backlog has been highlighted through the Care Quality Commission's inspection of the Council's adult social care services, and has resulted in some residents receiving substantial retrospective invoices. A series of meetings is being held to better understand and address these issues. Councillors were asked to notify Cllr Bailey of any concerns raised by residents. An update was also provided on local maternity services. Maternity care has been suspended in North Devon. A vote of no confidence was made by consultants at North Devon District Hospital against the executive board responsible for the hospital during the ongoing maternity services crisis. Cllr Bailey advised that she continues to scrutinise the situation closely. There was no further update on Local Government Reorganisation.

C/26/10/067 To confirm dates for Councillor Surgeries

It was **RESOLVED** the surgeries should be held in December, March, June, September. The first surgery will be held in December at the Council Offices.

C/26/10/068 To consider applications for the Town ward Councillor vacancy and to co-opt to fill the vacancy as appropriate

Four co-option applications were considered. It was **RESOLVED** to co-opt Mark Hobson onto the Council. The Council noted their thanks to the other candidates that put themselves forward and remind the parish that there an election in May 2027.

C/26/10/069 To note the Planning Committee Minutes of 14th September 2026 (minute refs P/26/09/01-P26/09/10) and 28th September 2026 (minute refs P/26/09/11-P/26/09/20)

The minutes of 14th September 2026 and 28th September 2026 were **NOTED**.

C/26/10/070 To consider the following planning application: 26/1887/FUL — Full

The Council considered planning application 26/1887/FUL submitted by Mr Lawrence Arnold of Arnold Ramos Ltd, 1 Silver Street, Ottery St Mary, EX11 1DB, relating to the installation of a roof light automatically opening vent window on the south east elevation.

It was **RESOLVED** to support the application subject to the provision of a conservation grade roof light.

C/26/10/071 To note the Minutes of the Operations Committee Meeting of 24th September 2026 (minute refs O/26/09/01-O/26/09/19)

The minutes of the Operations Committee Meeting of 24 September 2026 (minute references O/26/09/01–O/26/09/19) were **NOTED** .

C/26/10/072 To note the Minutes of the Community Infrastructure Meeting of 28th September 2026 (minute reference CI/26/09/01-CI/26/09/22)

The minutes of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) meeting held on 28th September 2026 (minute references CI/26/09/01 to CI/26/09/22) were **NOTED**.

C/26/10/073 To note the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting of 2nd October 2026 (minute ref HR/26/10/01 - HR/26/10/08)

Under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, it was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the Council, as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

The minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 2nd October 2026 (minute references HR/26/10/01 to HR/26/10/08) were **NOTED**.

C/26/10/074 To consider concerns with regards to hedgerow removal within the Parish and to make decisions as appropriate

It was **NOTED** that there had been no further update from East Devon District Council (EDDC).

C/26/10/075 To receive an update regarding the proposal to rebuild Tipton St John Church of England Primary School

It was **NOTED** that there was no further update regarding the proposal to rebuild Tipton St John Church of England Primary School apart from that given by DCC Cllr Bailey earlier in the meeting.

C/26/10/076 To receive an update regarding the Coleridge Pre-School building and make recommendations/decisions as appropriate

Under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, it was **RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the Council, as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

An update regarding the Coleridge Pre-School building was provided by the Clerk.

C/26/10/077 To discuss the River Otter and Fluxton Sewage Plan and make recommendations as appropriate

The Council discussed that there is a plan to build more homes but there are no plans to upgrade the sewage works. It was **AGREED** that the Council should write to South West Water to highlight concerns regarding poor water quality and the lack of forward planning.

C/26/10/078 To note the current situation regarding Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution

There is no update. It was **NOTED** that whilst Local Government Reorganisation has been paused devolution and the creation of a Mayor for Devon is progressing at speed.

C/26/10/079 To receive an update regarding the Night Bus survey and to make decisions as appropriate

It was **NOTED** that the Night Bus survey had been updated and was currently being reviewed by Honiton Town Council. The survey would be circulated later in the month.

C/26/10/080 To receive an update regarding the survey for a 20mph zone outside of the town and to make decisions as appropriate

DCC Cllr Bailey will chase DCC up to come out and look at 20mph schemes outside of the town. It was **AGREED** that the Tipton St John area should be updated to include the site for the new school. It was further **AGREED** that DCC highways will be asked to consider reducing the speed limit from Combe Cross Road onto the Sidmouth Road from 40mph to 30mph.

C/26/10/081 To review and approve the updated Social Media Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the updated Social Media Policy.

C/26/10/082 Confirmation of decisions made under the scheme of delegation

It was **NOTED** that the following decisions had been made under the scheme of delegation:

• Cllrs Johns, Stewart and Feasey gave delegated authority to upgrade the broadband to the Council Offices to fibre to the premises at a cost of £945.00 plus VAT. It was **NOTED** that the monthly cost will be reduced by £12.88 plus VAT.

• Cllrs Johns, Stewart and Feasey gave delegated authority for the Tar Barrel committee to access the power supplies for the Christmas lights. It was **NOTED** this would only by qualified electricians.

• Cllrs Johns, Stewart and Grainger gave delegated authority to extend the deadline for work to be completed (in relation to the Shop Front Fund) at Edward Scissor Hounds until 31st October 2026

C/26/10/083 Finance Report / Budget Monitoring

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the September 2026 Receipts and Payments and Reconciliation reports and August 2026 CCLA report.

C/26/10/084 Mayor's Report

A written report from Mayor Vicky Johns was received.

C/26/10/085 Clerk's Report

The Clerk had nothing to report.

C/26/10/086 Correspondence Received

It was **NOTED** that an appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against the decision of the East Devon District Council to refuse to grant planning permission for the

proposed development 25/2468/MOUT.

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C/26/10/087 To note any reports previously e-mailed by Councillors of Meetings attended

There were none.

C/26/10/088 Matters Raised by Members Not Otherwise on the Agenda

There were none.

C/26/10/089 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 2nd November at 7pm at the Council Offices, 8 Broad Street, Ottery St Mary.

The meeting closed at 20:26.

Signed: _____

Mayor Vicky Johns
Chair of the Full Council

Date: _____

Ottery St Mary Town Council — MINUTES

Full Council — Monday, 7 September 2026

Published: Wednesday, 28 October 2026

Attendance

Present: Mayor Vicky Johns (Chair), Cllr Sarah Martin, Cllr Ben Feasey, Cllr Nick Sneller, Cllr Peter Faithfull, Cllr Richard Copus, Deputy Mayor Dean Stewart

Absent: Cllr Mark Hobson

Also present: Kerry Kennell — Town Clerk, Jessica Bailey — Cllr

Members of the public present: 3

C/26/09/029 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted for Cllrs Aherne, Peka and Grainger.

C/26/09/030 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Nick Sneller declared a DPI in relation to agenda item C/26/09/09 To consider (and approve if appropriate) recommendations from the Committee.

C/26/09/031 Exclusion of Public and Press

It was **RESOLVED** that the following agenda items will be discussed in Confidential session: Agenda item 26/09/09.1 that the Council submit an offer to purchase the land in front of the Council offices; Agenda item 26/09/10 and 10.1 as they relate to Human Resources; Agenda item 26/09/11.1 in relation to the quote to resurface the Winters Lane tennis courts and the subsequent decision to agree signing the Section 106 funding agreement; Agenda item 26/09/14;

*Please note the meeting order was changed: Agenda item C/26/09/16 To consider concerns with regards to hedgerow removal within the Parish and to make decisions as appropriate was brought forward to follow agenda item 6 to allow DCC Cllr Bailey to take part in the discussion; Confidential agenda items were delayed until the end of the meeting to enable the members of the public to remain present until that point. *

C/26/09/032 Public Participation

No items were raised.

C/26/09/033 Confirmation of Town Council Minutes of 3rd August 2026 (minute refs C26/08/01-C26/08/25)

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 3 August 2026 (minute references C26/08/01–C26/08/25) were received. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a true and correct record, and they were duly signed by the Mayor.

C/26/09/034 To receive Reports from the EDDC and DCC Councillors

Reports were received from East Devon District Council (EDDC) and Devon County Council (DCC) representatives as follows.

EDDC Cllr Vicky Johns had submitted a written report. It was **NOTED** that the Government had announced earlier that day that Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) had been paused pending a review of its legality.

EDDC Cllr Peter Faithfull had nothing to report.

It was **NOTED** that EDDC Cllr Bethany Collins had not submitted a report.

DCC Cllr Jessica Bailey reported as follows:

• Mill Street had been reopened. Devon County Council (DCC) have issued National Grid with a fixed penalty notice for breaching their permit. Cllr Bailey had written to National Grid to suggest that businesses affected by the closure should be compensated, and she remained of the view that the traders impacted ought to receive compensation. Cllr Bailey had also requested that she be notified in advance of any future closures.

• Cllr Bailey had visited Sandhill Street and had requested that the road surface be inspected.

• Talewater Bridge is due to reopen by the end of the week.

• Cllr Bailey had also visited West Hill Road, which was due to be inspected later this week.

• The outline planning application for Tipton School was expected to be submitted in September. Preparatory work had been ongoing and drop-in sessions held with residents had been received very positively.

• Regarding LGR, Cllr Bailey expressed that she was glad the process had been paused, having raised concerns about West Hill and Aylesbeare not being placed within the same area as Ottery St Mary.

• Cllr Bailey has chaired the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee, which had been examining the decision to pause maternity services at North Devon Hospital, taking the role of a critical friend. The Committee was also considering matters relating to unpaid carers, dentistry, and Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections.

A member of the public asked when the Council had become aware of the proposals concerning Tipton St John School. It was **NOTED** that the Council had been informed two days before the public announcement was made.

C/26/09/035 To note the Planning Committee Minutes of 17th August 2026 (minute refs P/26/08/01-P26/08/10)

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting of 17 August 2026 (minute references P/26/08/01–P/26/08/10) were **NOTED**.

C/26/09/036 To note the Minutes of the Community Infrastructure Meeting of 17th August 2026 (minute reference CI/26/08/01-CI/26/08/22)

The minutes of the Community Infrastructure meeting held on 17 August 2026 (minute references CI/26/08/01 to CI/26/08/22) were **NOTED**.

C/26/09/037 To consider (and approve if appropriate) recommendations from the Committee

The Council considered recommendations from the Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that Devon County Council (DCC) be instructed to carry out feasability assessment at a cost of £10,000 to establish the viability and cost to install a pedestrian crossing at Broad Street.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council proceed with the Wayfinding project as detailed in the proposal.

Jess Bailey (DCC) left the meeting at 19:40.
Cllr Nick Sneller left the meeting at 19:41 for a pecuniary interest and returned at 19:45.

C/26/09/038 To note the Minutes of the Operations Committee Meeting of 20th August 2026

The minutes of the Operations Committee meeting of 20 August 2026 were **NOTED**.

C/26/09/039 To consider (and approve if appropriate) recommendations from the Committee

The Council **RESOLVED**, under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude the press and public from this item on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

The minutes of the previous confidential meeting held on 21 August 2026 were **NOTED**.

Members discussed the proposed purchase of the parking spaces, including matters relating to neighbouring residents, the condition of the associated building, and the strategic benefit of securing the spaces situated directly outside the Council offices. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that an offer be made to purchase the land situated in front of the Council offices, including the adjoining grassed area.

C/26/09/040 To note the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting of 21st August 2026 (minute ref HR/26/08/01 - HR/26/08/08)

Under s.1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the council resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting since publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted
The minutes of 21st August 2026 were **NOTED**.

C/26/09/041 To consider (and approve if appropriate) recommendations from the Committee

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk be authorised to enrol on the Community Governance training course in February 2027, at a cost of £4,000 for the first year and £4,000 for the second year. It was further **RESOLVED** that, should the Clerk voluntarily leave the Council's employment within two years of successfully completing the training, they will be required to repay a proportion of the training costs incurred by the Council, calculated on a sliding scale basis.

C/26/09/042 To note the Minutes of the Finance and Strategic Planning Committee meeting of 25th August 2026

The minutes of 25th August 2026 were **NOTED**.

C/26/09/043 To consider (and approve if appropriate) recommendations from the Committee

The Council considered recommendations from the Committee:

It was **RESOLVED** that up to £54,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding be used on the Wayfinding project.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council proceed with the quotation from Courtstall to resurface Winters Lane Tennis Courts at a cost of £38,300 plus VAT.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council instruct Sid Valley Tree Surgery to carry out the tree works at a cost of £1,500 plus VAT.

It was **RESOLVED** that, in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, Cllr Johns (Mayor) be authorised to sign the grant funding agreement with East Devon District Council (EDDC) for the Section 106 funding towards the resurfacing of Winters Lane Tennis Courts, and that Ottery St Mary Town Council agree to enter into the funding agreement.

C/26/09/044 To consider concerns with regards to hedgerow removal within the Parish and to make decisions as appropriate

It was **AGREED** to bring this item forwards to enable Cllr Bailey to partake in the agenda item. It followed Agenda item 6. The legal letter has now been sent out to the landowners of the hedge and a notice has been published. There is a time period they need to wait to hear back from the landowners. The hedgerow replacement notice details what should be replanted there. It will then be protected for a minimum of 30 years. The Clerk will circulate the report from EDDC to Councillors. Cllr Johns has been acting in her EDDC Cllr capacity.

C/26/09/045 To receive an update regarding the proposal to rebuild Tipton St John Church of England Primary School

It was **NOTED** that there was no further update on the proposal to rebuild Tipton St John Church of England Primary School beyond that already provided by DCC Cllr Bailey earlier in the meeting.

C/26/09/046 To receive an update regarding the Coleridge Pre-School building and make recommendations/decisions as appropriate

It was **NOTED** that a meeting had been held with Devon County Council (DCC) regarding the Coleridge Pre-School building, and that a further meeting was being arranged in due course.

C/26/09/047 To note the current situation regarding Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution

It was **NOTED** that the Government had placed Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution on hold whilst the Secretary of State carries out a review.

C/26/09/048 To receive an update regarding the Night Bus survey and to make decisions as appropriate

It was **NOTED** that the Clerk would be meeting with a representative from Honiton Town Council to discuss the Night Bus survey in the near future. It was anticipated that the survey would subsequently be circulated to the parishes to enable both Councils to decide whether the initiative should be included in the budget for 2027/28.

C/26/09/049 To receive an update regarding the survey for a 20mph zone outside of the town and to make decisions as appropriate

It was **NOTED** that there was no update available regarding the survey for a 20mph zone outside of the town.

C/26/09/050 To receive an update regarding the installation and costings for the Christmas Lights for 2026 and to make decisions as appropriate

The Council received an update regarding the installation and costings for the Christmas lights for 2026. A lengthy discussion followed. It was **RESOLVED** that all necessary changes to the lights should be progressed and implemented as required.

C/26/09/051 To review and approve the updated Complaints Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the updated Complaints Policy.

C/26/09/052 Confirmation of decisions made under the scheme of delegation

There were no decisions made under the scheme of delegation to confirm.

C/26/09/053 Finance Report / Budget Monitoring

The August 2026 Receipts and Payments and Reconciliation reports were **RESOLVED** as approved. The July 2026 CCLA reconciliation was also approved. It was **NOTED** that the CCLA reconciliation will always be a month in arrears due to the timing of when the statement arrives. The Council **NOTED** the budget monitoring reports for the period 1 April to 31 July 2026.

C/26/09/054 To note the AGAR Section 3 External Auditor Report

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Section 3 External Auditor Report was received and it was **NOTED**.

C/26/09/055 Mayor's Report

The Mayor's written report was received. Cllr Johns reminded all councillors that the Council is a non-political Council and urged members to adhere to the Code of Conduct at all times.

C/26/09/056 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reminded the Council that a vacancy existed which will be filled by co-option. It was **NOTED** that the deadline for applications was 2 October 2026 and that the vacancy had been advertised. Further information is available on the Council's website.

C/26/09/057 Correspondence Received

It was **AGREED** that the Council was content for its logo to be included on a poster advertising an Eco Homes open weekend taking place in Ottery St Mary and Sidmouth at the beginning of October. *Cllr Faithfull abstained.*

C/26/09/058 To note any reports previously e-mailed by Councillors of Meetings attended

There were no reports previously e-mailed by councillors of meetings attended.

C/26/09/059 Matters Raised by Members Not Otherwise on the Agenda

Cllr Sneller raised concerns regarding vehicles being left parked on the roadside. It was confirmed that an abandoned vehicle should be reported to EDDC.
It was **NOTED** that signs had been erected at the start of Strawberry Lane indicating the road was closed, had resulted in the lane a more pleasant and safer environment for pedestrians to walk through.

It was further **NOTED** that double yellow lines had been installed in Ridgeway Gardens by Devon County Council. Members were advised that parking and highway matters of this nature fall within the remit of the Devon County Council Highway and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC), and that any residents wishing to raise concerns should contact Devon County Council Highways directly.

C/26/09/060 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7pm on Monday 5th October 2026 at Tipton St John Community Hall.

The meeting closed at 20:50.

Signed: _____

Vicky Johns
Chair of the Full Council

Date: _____

October Report from EDDC Cllr Vicky Johns

14.10.26 - Full council;

The meeting started with members of the EXM20 group putting their views across with regards to why this particular area should not be accepted in the Local Plan for housing.

This meeting was difficult as so much was put forward for change including committee meetings. I was saddened to find that even though I had queried when my own meetings were reduced in number, at the cabinet meeting, without my knowledge or even a courtesy email, I did receive an apology. The same thing happened to another chair, so it does appear that lessons were not learned, so to speak.

We were also advised that planning applications would basically be going to officers to make the decisions. Cllr Howe pointed out that even though this was decided by government, officers should still communicate with ward members and take their views into consideration. There was lots of discussion on this point, and the wording was amended quite a few times. Many councillors myself included, are not happy that this decision by government, has been made as planning decisions in my opinion should be made by the elected councillors who reside in those wards and have greater local knowledge. To take it away from councillors is, in my opinion, undemocratic at best.

The meeting is recorded and I would advise people to watch it to see how much is being removed by government from local councils.

19.10.26 - Scrutiny chairs briefing;

This is an opportunity for the Chair and vice-chair of Scrutiny to listen to the reports that are being put forward in the next Scrutiny meeting, in case they have any specific questions or requests beforehand. It then gives the officers time to get the information prepared for the meeting and stops any hold ups. Sadly I am unable to chair the meeting on 29th October as I have a work commitments but the vice chair is prepared to chair it instead.

I am not political and am proud to be an Independent councillor, but I am concerned by the amount of work and cost the recent LGR proposal has cost the district council and other councils, at a time where money is short everywhere. Even though it has now been paused it hasn't stopped, so is still hanging over our heads. The way things are now being done seems very much as though most of the power is being moved away from local decision makers and being given to those who have no idea how the local area runs. This is particularly evident with regards to planning where we have a large area of outstanding natural beauty which brings tourists to the area, which our economy relies on. If everything is built on why will visitors come down? The build build mentality only works if there is the infrastructure to support it, oversubscribed schools, lack of preschool provision, lack of NHS dentists, doctors, sewage systems etc all show that more housing, even the right housing, cannot currently be supported and yet the Local Plan screams for more and more housing....

Stay safe

Vicky

Ottery St Mary Town Council — MINUTES

Planning Committee — Monday, 19 October 2026

Published: Wednesday, 21 October 2026

Attendance

Present: Cllr Richard Grainger (Chair), Cllr Sarah Martin, Cllr Richard Copus, Cllr Emily Peka, Cllr Janice Aherne, Mayor Vicky Johns, Cllr Peter Faithfull

Also present: Kerry Kennell — Town Clerk

C/26/10/038 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

C/26/10/039 Dispensations

No declarations of interest were received and no dispensations were requested or considered.

C/26/10/040 Exclusion of Public and Press

There were none.

C/26/10/041 Reports, Correspondence and Items Referred to the Committee

There were none.

C/26/10/042 To Consider the Next Steps Regarding the Appeal Made in relation to 25/2468/MOUT

The Council considered the next steps regarding the appeal relating to planning application 25/2468/MOUT.

It was **AGREED** that Cllr Aherne, Cllr Copus and Cllr Grainger would visit a Claremont Field resident on Thursday to see how they would be impacted by the proposed development.

Cllr Copus confirmed that he was happy to attend and speak at the appeal. It was **NOTED** that the views previously submitted by the Planning Committee had not changed.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would write to all statutory consultees requesting that they review and update their responses before the 30 October deadline.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would contact the Gerway Action Group to request an update regarding how they intended to respond to the appeal.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would write to Richard Foord MP to ensure he was aware of the appeal.

C/26/10/043 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 28 September 2026 were **RESOLVED** to be approved and signed by the Chair as a true and correct record.

C/26/10/044 Planning Decisions Received

There were none.

C/26/10/045 Public Participation

There was none.

C/26/10/046 Planning Applications

Please see below:

C/26/10/047 26/1886/FUL — Full

The Council considered application 26/1886/FUL submitted to East Devon District Council (EDDC) in respect of Ottery St Mary Bowls And Croquet Club, Strawberry Lane, Salston, Ottery St Mary, EX11 1RG. The application sought permission for the renovation of an existing felt flat roof, including removal of the felt and installation of insulation and a single ply membrane, resulting in an increase in height of 150mm.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council supports the application.

C/26/10/048 26/1952/FUL — Full

The Council considered application 26/1952/FUL, a full planning application for a loft conversion comprising front and rear dormer extensions, installation of rooflights, formation of a new internal staircase and associated alterations at 8 Mallocks Close, Tipton St John, EX10 0AP.

It was **NOTED** that the bedrooms within the proposed conversion should be checked to ensure they meet national minimum standards of living space. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council supports the application subject to the bedrooms meeting national minimum standards of living space. *Cllr Faithfull objected.*

C/26/10/049 26/2023/FUL — Full

The Council considered application 26/2023/FUL relating to Higher Salston Lodge, Ottery St Mary, EX11 1RQ, a full planning application for the change of external materials.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council supports the application, subject to the EDDC Conservation Officer and the Heritage Society also supporting it.

C/26/10/050 26/2024/LBC — Listed Building Consent

The Council considered application 26/2024/LBC — Listed Building Consent for a change of external materials at Higher Salston Lodge, Ottery St Mary, EX11 1RQ.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council supports the application, subject to the EDDC Conservation Officer and the Heritage Society also supporting it.

C/26/10/051 Matters Raised by Members Not Otherwise on the Agenda

Cllr Faithfull advised that the next EDDC Strategic Planning Committee meeting is on 1st December.

C/26/10/052 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next Planning Committee meeting will be at 6.30pm on Monday 26th October.

The meeting closed at 19:10.

Signed: _____

Richard Grainger
Chair of the Planning Committee

Date: _____

Ottery St Mary Town Council — MINUTES

Finance and Strategic Planning Committee — Tuesday, 13 October 2026

Published: Tuesday, 20 October 2026

Attendance

Present: Cllr Janice Aherne, Richard Grainger, Deputy Mayor Dean Stewart, Mayor Vicky Johns, Cllr Ben Feasey

Also present: Kerry Kennell — Town Clerk, Mark Hobson — Cllr

Declarations of Interest

Deputy Mayor Dean Stewart: declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 6 — Consideration of Community Grant Applications and Large Grant Applications — Trustee of the 1st Ottery St Mary Scouts

FSP/26/10/16 Apologies for Absence

All councillors were present.

Deputy Mayor Dean Stewart left the meeting at 17:11 (pecuniary interest).

FSP/26/10/17 Declarations of Interest

No other interests were declared.

FSP/26/10/18 Exclusion of Public and Press

It was **RESOLVED** that, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s.1(2), the public and press be excluded from the discussion of agenda items 6 Consideration of Community Grant Applications and Large Grant Applications and 9 Finance Report / Budget Monitoring by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

FSP/26/10/19 Public Participation

There was none.

FSP/26/10/20 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 25 August 2026, were **RESOLVED** to be a true and correct record and were duly signed by the Chair.

FSP/26/10/21 Consideration of Community Grant Applications and Large Grant Applications

Cllr Stewart left the meeting.

Under s.1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the council resolved to exclude the press and

public from the meeting since publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential

nature of the business to be transacted

Two members of the Ottery Scouts joined the meeting via Teams to discuss their grant application. It was **RESOLVED** that £1950.00 is awarded to Ottery Scouts.

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Deputy Mayor Dean Stewart returned to the meeting at 17:30.

FSP/26/10/22 To receive an update regarding the Section 106 projects and to make decisions as appropriate

The Clerk provided an update. The Ottery St Mary Cricket Club project is progressing. There is no update regarding the Ottery St Mary Football Club project.

The tennis court surface will be resurfaced later this month, as will the tree removal around the tennis courts.

The Clerk has chased EDDC regarding a licence for Land of Canaan but has not received a response.

FSP/26/10/23 To note VAT Partial Exemption Calculation 2025/26

The VAT Partial Exemption Calculation 2025/26 was **NOTED**.

FSP/26/10/24 Finance Report / Budget Monitoring

Under s.1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the council resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting since publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

The Finance report was reviewed and will be circulated to the Full Council at the November meeting. The Clerk will provide clarification on a couple of queries. It was **NOTED** that the Advertising budget will need to increase for 27/28 as the Council now pays for its monthly entry in The Ottery Gazette.

FSP/26/10/25 To review the process of data capture and baselines for strategic impacts looking at community surveys and make decisions (as appropriate)

There was a discussion regarding how this information could be captured. This will be considered further for discussion at the next meeting.

FSP/26/10/26 Review of Council Strategy and Opportunities Arising from Local Government Reorganisation and Community Asset Transfer

It was **AGREED** that Cllrs Stewart, Feasey and the Clerk will meet to review the document.

FSP/26/10/27 To receive an update from the Clerk regarding any outstanding issues and make decisions as appropriate

The Clerk provided an update regarding the office tenancies at the Council Offices.

EDDC have indicated that the Town Council will need to pay towards election fees for the May 2027 election. The Council will be charged 100% for ballot papers and 50% of any other costs such as poll cards and postal votes. In 2023 there were 6,148 electors. The estimated cost from EDDC is £1.30 per elector. This will need to be included in the budget for 27/28.

FSP/26/10/28 Correspondence Received

Correspondence was **NOTED** from The Ottery Hound regarding their shop front fund application. It was **AGREED** that they can reapply for the next scheme due to circumstances beyond their control.

FSP/26/10/29 Matters Arising

There were none.

FSP/26/10/30 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 5pm on Tuesday 10th November.

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

The meeting closed at 18:36.

Signed: _____

Deputy Mayor Dean Stewart
Chair of the Finance and Strategic Planning Committee

Date: _____

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Ottery St Mary Town Council — MINUTES

Community Infrastructure Committee — Monday, 19 October 2026

Published: Wednesday, 28 October 2026

Attendance

Present: Cllr Emily Peka, Cllr Nick Sneller, Cllr Sarah Martin (Chair), Deputy Mayor Dean Stewart, Mayor Vicky Johns, Cllr Richard Copus, Cllr Peter Faithfull (until 17:53)

Also present: Kerry Kennell — Town Clerk, Emma Grainger, John Waddingham, Joe Williams

Members of the public present: 2

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Nick Sneller: declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Item 9 — To receive an update on the Wayfinding project from LHC and make decisions as appropriate — Cllr Sneller intends to tender for the Wayfinding project.

Cllr Sarah Martin: declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Item 13 — To receive an update regarding the Otter River Catchment Action (ORCA) campaign — Cllr Martin works for the Environment Agency but not dealing with water quality.

C/26/10/001 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted for Cllr Johns.

Cllr Peter Faithfull arrived at 17:11.

C/26/10/002 Declarations of Interest

See above.

Cllr Emily Peka arrived at 17:02.

Procedural Motion: That the order of business be varied. Agreed by assent.

C/26/10/003 Exclusion of Public and Press

There were none.

It was **AGREED** that Agenda item CI/26/10/013 To receive an update regarding the Otter River Catchment Action (ORCA) campaign and Agenda item CI/26/10/018 To consider request for the Council to support an Emergency Briefing being held at the Parish Church in November would be brought forward to follow agenda item CI/26/10/005.

C/26/10/004 Public Participation

There was none.

C/26/10/005 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair, Cllr Sarah Martin, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 (LGA), Schedule 12, paragraph 41.

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

C/26/10/006 Visit Ottery

It was **NOTED** that there was no update to report on Visit Ottery.

C/26/10/007 To receive an update regarding the Transport Study next steps and make recommendations

It was **NOTED** that the Council is awaiting an update from Devon County Council (DCC) regarding the request made for a feasibility study on a crossing in Broad Street.

C/26/10/008 To review available grants and progress applications if suitable for committee projects

It was **NOTED** that the available grants had been received and noted by the Council.

C/26/10/009 To receive an update on the Wayfinding project from LHC and make decisions as appropriate

Cllr Sneller left the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the project brief and instruct LHC to proceed within the agreed timescales. *Cllr Faithfull abstained*.

Cllr Sneller joined the meeting.

Cllr Nick Sneller left the meeting at 17:38 for a pecuniary interest and returned at 17:39.

C/26/10/010 To consider next steps to update the Neighbourhood Plan and make recommendations as appropriate

Cllr Sarah Martin presented an 18-month programme to advance the new Neighbourhood Plan.

The first step identified was the establishment of a steering group. It was **AGREED** that any member of the community wishing to be involved should contact the Clerk. Cllr Sarah Martin will set a date for the first steering group meeting, which will then be advertised to the community along with an explanation of the process. The meeting will be held at The Institute. It was **NOTED** that the Steering Group cannot take an anti-development position; its role is to positively influence and shape future development within the parish, ensuring that local views are reflected and that any growth is appropriate, sustainable, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and community facilities.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk will seek three quotes from consultants to assist with the review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Mayor Vicky Johns arrived at 17:50.

C/26/10/011 To receive an update regarding Coach Friendly Town status

It was **NOTED** that the Clerk had chased Devon County Council (DCC) regarding the signage.

C/26/10/012 To receive an update from the Emergency Plan Working Group

Cllr Peter Faithfull advised that a meeting of the Emergency Plan Working Group would be taking place on 4th November in Tipton St John. It was **NOTED** that Cllr Peter Faithfull had attended sessions at the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) Conference on Road Wardens and Snow Wardens, at which flooding and other emergency issues had been discussed. Mayor Vicky Johns advised that East Devon District Council (EDDC) councillors would be able to attend Emergency Plan sessions, and that she had requested that these sessions be opened up to Town and Parish Councillors as well.

Cllr Peter Faithfull left the meeting at 17:53 (attending another meeting.).

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

C/26/10/013 To receive an update regarding the Otter River Catchment Action (ORCA) campaign

Chris Bulman of the Otter Valley Association (OVA) attended and addressed the Council, providing an update on the ORCA (Otter River Catchment Action) campaign and the ongoing programme to monitor and improve the quality of the River Otter.

It was **NOTED** that the OVA is currently working with Richard Foord MP, the Environment Agency and South West Water (SWW) to address water quality issues in the catchment. Mr Bulman advised that when it rains, untreated sewage is discharged into the River Otter, and that the OVA's primary goal is to work with SWW and the Environment Agency to resolve this. The OVA's current focus is approximately 80% on improving the SWW situation, with the remaining 20% to be directed towards agricultural sources once progress has been made.

It was **NOTED** that Honiton Town Council is objecting to any planning application until SWW can demonstrate sufficient capacity to deal with increased demand, and that the OVA has similarly objected to a proposed development at Gerway for 140 houses, on the grounds that the existing infrastructure cannot support increased development. Mr Bulman indicated that an infrastructure-first approach is needed.

It was **NOTED** that E. coli testing is currently taking place at both ends of Budleigh beach and that results are being analysed. The OVA hopes to have a web application in place for the river in the coming year, providing a clear representation of E. coli and phosphate levels.

Mr Bulman thanked the Council for its grant support and confirmed that written updates would be provided going forward.

C/26/10/014 To receive an update regarding the EV charges at the Station Hub

It was **NOTED** that Joe Williams advised that Devon County Council (DCC) are working to install 3,000 electric vehicle charge points across Devon, and that a response from DCC is awaited. The Clerk and Mayor Vicky Johns are continuing to chase East Devon District Council (EDDC) regarding electric vehicle charging points at the Land of Canaan.

C/26/10/015 To consider an overarching strategy for the paths within the parish

It was **NOTED** that the Clerk is seeking to arrange a meeting with Jon Boyd from Devon County Council (DCC). The Clerk will chase DCC Public Rights of Way regarding the reopening of the Tipton St John footpath.

C/26/10/016 To receive an update regarding Footpath 46 and other footpaths in parish

No update was available on Footpath 46 or other footpaths in the parish. It was **NOTED** that a proposed footpath to Otter Nurseries had previously been parked due to the excessive cost of the strip of land required to create the path.

C/26/10/017 To receive an update regarding the Ottery Gate to Plate event

There is no update.

C/26/10/018 To consider request for the Council to support an Emergency Briefing being held at the Parish Church in November

Samuel Harris addressed the Committee on behalf of Ottery Climate Action, a group formed following a previous People's Emergency Briefing. It was **NOTED** that the speaker enjoys cycling on Devon's country lanes but feels unsafe as a pedestrian within a mile of the town centre, including on pavements. The focus of the group's concerns was on journey-making from A to B, with specific reference to the route to Joshua's/Otter Garden Centre and Slade Road/Cold Harbour. It was further **NOTED** that many people choose to travel by car due to their perception of roads and pavements being unsafe, and that Ottery Climate Action has now become associated with the Ottery Vale Association (OVA).

The Committee was informed that two showings of the People's Emergency Briefing are planned for 20 November, and that the group is actively engaged in advertising the event. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council supports and

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

publicises the event through printing of their publicity material.

C/26/10/019 Correspondence Received

It was **NOTED** that no correspondence had been received.

C/26/10/020 Matters Raised by Members Not Otherwise on the Agenda

There were no matters raised by members not otherwise on the agenda.

C/26/10/021 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 5pm on Monday 16th November 2026.

The meeting closed at 18:00.

Signed: _____

Cllr Sarah Martin
Chair of the Community Infrastructure Committee

Date: _____

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 30/09/2026
for Cashbook 7 - CCLA

Bank Statement Account Name (s)	Statement Date	Page	Balances
CCLA	30/09/2026		491,975.85
			491,975.85

Unpresented Payments (Minus)	Amount	
	0.00	
		0.00
		491,975.85

Unpresented Receipts (Plus)		
	0.00	
		0.00
		491,975.85
	Balance per Cash Book is :-	**491,975.85**
	Difference is :-	**0.00**

Signatory 1:

Name ..... Signed ..... Date .....

Signatory 2:

Name ..... Signed ..... Date .....

Bank Reconciliation up to 30/09/2026 for Cashbook No 7 - CCLA

Date	Cheque/Ref	Amnt Paid	Amnt Banked	Stat Amnt	Difference	Cleared	Payee Name or Description
02/09/2026			926.61	926.61		R	Receipt(s) Banked
08/09/2026	Transfer		100,000.00	100,000.00		R	Receipt(s) Banked
10/09/2026	Transfer		100,000.00	100,000.00		R	Receipt(s) Banked
		0.00	200,926.61				

Signatory 1:

Name .....Signed .....Date .....

Signatory 2:

Name .....Signed .....Date .....

Good afternoon Kerry

I hope you are well.

Feniton Parish Council is exploring the possibility of taking on the maintenance of the grassed area at the entrance to Feniton, which until recently was ‘unofficially’ maintained by the adjacent property owners and has now reverted to Devon County Council.

We have discussed this matter with Devon County Council who have advised that they are unable to transfer the associated grass-cutting funding directly to Feniton Parish Council because the land lies just outside our parish boundary.

However, as the area forms a key gateway into Feniton and is of particular importance to the village, residents have expressed concerns that it is not cut frequently enough by Devon County Council to maintain an attractive appearance. The Council is therefore keen to undertake its ongoing maintenance.

We therefore wondered whether Ottery Town Council would be willing to enter into an arrangement with Feniton Parish Council that would enable us to carry out the grass cutting, with any associated funding from Devon County Council being passed on via your Council.

As a neighbouring authority, we would be grateful if your Council would consider supporting this proposal, which we hope provides a practical solution to ensure the area continues to be maintained to a good standard, recognising its importance as a prominent entrance to Feniton.

We would be happy to discuss the details further and work together to reach a mutually agreeable arrangement.

Kind regards

Julie

Julie Trower - Clerk for Feniton Parish Council

Email clerk@feniton-pc.gov.uk

Website www.feniton-pc.gov.uk

Tel No 07598 045242

Risk Assessment

Hazard	Persons at Risk	Existing Controls	Likelihood	Severity	Risk Rating	Further Controls Required
Slips, trips and falls	Councillors, officers, members of the public	Regular inspections undertaken; walkways and exits kept clear; good housekeeping maintained; electrical cables secured	2	2	4 (Low)	Pre-meeting inspection of venue
Fire or emergency evacuation	Councillors, officers, members of the public	Fire alarm system maintained; fire exits clearly identified; escape routes kept clear; venue evacuation procedures in place	1	5	5 (Medium)	Mayor/Chair and Clerk familiar with evacuation arrangements; assembly point identified before each meeting
Medical emergency	Councillors, officers, members of the public	Emergency services can be contacted immediately; first aid provision available	2	4	8 (Medium)	Mobile phone available; venue address readily accessible
Aggressive, abusive or disruptive behaviour	Councillors, officers, members of the public	Meetings managed in accordance with Standing Orders; Mayor/Chair responsible for maintaining order	3	4	12 (High)	Warning issued where appropriate; meeting adjourned if disruption continues
Violence, threats or intimidation	Councillors, officers, members of the public	Code of Conduct applies; meeting management procedures in place	2	5	10 (High)	Immediate adjournment where safety concerns arise; police contacted where appropriate

Inadequate room layout reducing awareness of attendees	Councillors and officers	Seating planned before commencement of meeting	2	3	6 (Medium)	Where reasonably practicable, arrange seating so councillors, particularly the Mayor/Chair and Clerk, have a clear view of those attending
Overcrowding of venue	Councillors, officers, members of the public	Capacity monitored; exits kept clear	2	4	8 (Medium)	Consider larger venue if significant attendance anticipated
Contentious or high-profile agenda items leading to disorder	Councillors, officers, members of the public	Public participation managed by the Mayor/Chair; Standing Orders followed	3	4	12 (High)	Consider larger venue, additional staffing if required, and police notification where intelligence suggests heightened tensions
Unauthorised access to restricted areas	Councillors, officers, members of the public	Offices and restricted areas secured	2	3	6 (Medium)	Monitor access during meetings
Electrical equipment	Councillors, officers, members of the public	Equipment maintained and visually checked before use	2	3	6 (Medium)	Remove defective equipment from service
Lone working before or after meetings	Officers	Lone working procedures in place	2	3	6 (Medium)	Officer to advise a colleague or councillor when locking up if working alone

Data protection breach	Councillors and officers	Confidential papers controlled and securely stored	2	3	6 (Medium)	Electronic records only shared once members of the public have left the meeting.

Operational Controls

Area	Control Measures
Meeting Recordings	Council recording equipment should be tested prior to the meeting. Recordings should be retained in accordance with the Council's retention policy. Following any significant incident, recordings, minutes and contemporaneous notes should be retained as potential evidence.
Public Recording	Members of the public may record, photograph, film, blog, tweet or otherwise report proceedings of public meetings provided this does not disrupt the meeting.

Emergency Contingency Arrangements

Disorder, Threats or Security Incident

Step	Action
1	Mayor/Chair issues a warning where appropriate.
2	If disruption continues, the Mayor/Chair may adjourn or suspend the meeting.
3	Councillors, officers and members of the public should move to a place of safety if required.
4	Where there is an immediate threat to personal safety, violence, intimidation, criminal damage or other criminal behaviour, Devon & Cornwall Police should be contacted.
5	The meeting should only reconvene when it is safe to do so.
6	Any recordings, notes and other evidence should be retained.

Building Evacuation Procedure

Step	Action

1	Mayor/Chair immediately suspends the meeting.
2	All attendees leave via the nearest safe exit.
3	Attendees proceed to the designated assembly point.
4	Emergency services are contacted if required.
5	No person re-enters the building until authorised to do so.
6	The meeting only reconvenes once the venue has been declared safe.

Additional Controls for High-Risk or Contentious Meetings

Consideration	Control
Venue Capacity	Use a larger venue where attendance is expected to be significant.
Seating Arrangements	Provide clearly separated public and member seating areas where possible.
Emergency Access	Ensure all exits remain unobstructed.
Meeting Management	Brief the Mayor/Chair and Clerk on meeting management procedures.
Emergency Services	Identify a contact point for emergency services.
Police Liaison	Inform Devon & Cornwall Police in advance where there is a genuine concern regarding disorder, intimidation or threats to safety.

Residual Risk Assessment

Item	Details
Overall Residual Risk	Medium
Conditions	Venue inspected before each meeting; councillors have a clear view of attendees wherever reasonably practicable; Mayor/Chair familiar with powers to suspend or adjourn meetings; evacuation procedures understood; appropriate action taken where behaviour presents a safety risk.

Signed	_____
Position	_____
Date	_____

Report from the Clerk:

I attended the DALC Security and Safety Awareness Presentation. It was a free session run by the Police to provide safety information to Councillors and Officers. It was an interesting hour and was very informative. It did highlight that our current room layout in the Chamber is not what is recommended by the Police. They do not feel that any councillors (or staff) should have their back to the public. Their recommendation is that where this happens the room is immediately rearranged. A councillor from Tiverton explained that someone with mental health issues had become fixated on him and he was the subject of their anger and frustration. He had been in a Council meeting and the individual had become very aggressive - the Police were called and it was dealt with but what was highlighted was that councillor did not know who was behind him until it was too late. Had the individual had a weapon it could have been very different outcome. They suggested that we should have a risk assessment for our meetings and have contingency plans in an emergency. They also suggesting recording meetings for evidence of any wrongdoing should be considered.

Data Protection Impact Assessment – Ring Doorbell

Version	Author	Details	Dates created	Date approved & ref
1	Laura Dickinson	Created and adopted	September 2026	

Processing

System: Ring doorbell camera

Location: Main entrance to Council Offices at 8 Broad Street, Ottery St Mary

Personal data collected:

- Video images of visitors and persons approaching the premises
- Date and time of recordings
- Potential audio recordings if enabled. This is not routinely used and will only be enabled where there is a specific safeguarding, security or operational need.

Who may be recorded: anyone approaching the Council offices. This may include but not be limited to:

- Members of the public
- Contractors
- Delivery drivers
- Councillors
- Staff
- Visitors to the Council

The purpose

The Ring doorbell is used to support the security, safety and lawful operation of Council premises, including the prevention and investigation of incidents, protection of Council property, monitoring of access to buildings, and assisting with the investigation of complaints, concerns or suspected misconduct.

A Ring doorbell has been added to the building primarily as an aid for staff when answering the door. Staff are based in an office on the first floor and as such are unable to see who is at the door. Who is visiting impacts what the staff member needs to bring with them when answering the door.

As a secondary benefit, there have been incidents involving members of the public at or near the premises which indicated a legitimate need for a way to retain recordings in order to investigate incidents and protect staff, Councillors, public and property.

Lawful basis

The processing of personal data through the Ring doorbell is undertaken in the exercise of the Council's legitimate functions and interests in maintaining the security, safety and lawful operation of its premises, staff, Councillors, visitors and assets.

Risks

Risk	**Who is affected?**
Individuals are unaware they are being recorded	Visitors
Footage is viewed without authority	All recorded persons
Camera captures more than necessary	Visitors/neighbours
Audio recording is used inappropriately	Visitors
Footage is retained longer than necessary	All recorded persons

Record Controls

Risk	**Control Measure**
Lack of transparency	CCTV/Ring signage displayed.
Unauthorised access	Restricted account access to authorised personnel only.
Excessive monitoring	Access only when necessary and proportionate.
Audio privacy concerns	Audio not routinely monitored or enabled.
Excessive retention	Footage retained in accordance with the CCTV Policy and automatically deleted after 180 days

	unless required for an investigation or legal purpose.
Inappropriate disclosure	Requests handled in accordance with the Council's data protection procedures.
Camera captures more than necessary	The camera is positioned to monitor the Council entrance and immediate approach to the building. Due to the layout of the site, it may also capture individuals using the adjoining access route.

Residual Risk and Decision

The Council considers the use of the Ring doorbell to be necessary and proportionate for the purposes identified. Appropriate safeguards have been implemented to minimize impacts on privacy. The residual risk to individuals is considered low and acceptable.

OTTERY ST MARY TOWN COUNCIL
CCTV POLICY

Version	Author	Details	Dates created	Date approved & ref
1	Christine McIntyre	Created and adopted	July 2020	06/07/2020 Ref 20/7/30
2	Christine McIntyre	Reviewed and adopted	February 2022	07/02/2022 Ref 22/08/28
3	Laura Dickinson	Reviewed	September 2026	

1. Introduction

1.1 Ottery St Mary Town Council (the Council) uses closed circuit television (CCTV) footage to reduce crime and monitor the properties listed in the Schedule at the end of the Policy, in order to provide a safe and secure environment for members of the public and staff and to prevent loss or damage to property.

1.2 The systems comprise a number of fixed cameras and a Ring Doorbell.

1.3 The systems do not have sound recording capability, except for the Ring Doorbell camera at the Council Offices, which forms part of the organisation's CCTV system.

1.4 The CCTV systems are owned and operated by the Council.

1.5 The CCTV systems are monitored by Council staff as necessary.

1.6 The CCTV scheme is registered with the Information Commissioner under the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018. This Policy outlines the Council's use of the CCTV scheme and how it complies with the Act and GDPR.

1.7 All authorised employees are aware of the restrictions in relation to access to, and disclosure of, recorded footage.

2. Statement of Intent

2.1 The Council complies with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) CCTV Code of Practice to ensure it is used responsibly and safeguards both trust and confidence in its

continued use. The Code of Practice is published on the ICO's website.

2.2 The Council will ensure that there are prominent signs placed within the controlled areas.

2.3 It is not possible to guarantee that the CCTV systems will cover or detect every single incident taking place in the areas of coverage.

3. Siting the Cameras

3.1 The CCTV cameras are sited so they only capture footage relevant to the purposes for which they are installed, and care has been taken to ensure that reasonable privacy expectations are not violated. The Council has ensured that the location of equipment has been carefully considered to ensure that footage captured comply with the Data Protection Act.

3.2 The Council has made every effort to position the cameras so that their coverage is restricted to the premises and immediate surrounding outdoor areas.

4. Audio Recording

4.1 The Ring Doorbell has the capability to capture audio. Audio monitoring is not routinely enabled and will only be used where there is a justified operational need and in accordance with data protection requirements.

5. Recording Parameters

5.1 The Library has a CCTV system comprising of five fixed cameras. These cover external areas only.

5.2 The Station Hub has a CCTV system comprising of seven cameras. These cover both internal and external areas.

5.3 The Council Offices has a CCTV system comprising of a Ring Doorbell. This records footage as and when movement with a bio-heat source passes through the designated trigger zone. Recording will continue while there is movement. It will then stop as the heat source leaves the designated zone.

6. Covert Monitoring

6.1 The CCTV systems will not be used to undertake any covert monitoring.

7. Storage and Retention of CCTV Footage

7.1 Recorded data is either held on an SD card and/or hard drive and the data will be retained for no longer than is necessary. Whilst retained, the integrity of the recordings will be maintained to ensure their evidential value and to protect the rights of people whose footage have been recorded.

7.2 All retained data will be stored securely.

7.3 Recorded data from CCTV at the Station Hub and The Library is held for approximately 14 calendar days. Data obtained through the Ring Doorbell is held for up to 180 days as per the average subscription package.

8. Access to CCTV Footage

8.1 Access to recorded footage will be restricted to those staff authorised to view them, and will not be made more widely available unless required under the premise of Section 10.

8.2 Access to live or recorded footage will be restricted to authorised personnel and will only take place where it is necessary for the management, security, safety or lawful operation of Council premises, assets and services, or for the investigation of incidents, concerns, complaints or suspected breaches of policies, procedures or legal obligations. Access will be limited to that which is necessary and proportionate for the purpose identified.

9. Subject Access Requests

9.1 Under the Data Protection Act individuals have the right to access CCTV footage relating to them.

9.2 All Subject Access Requests should be made in writing to the Town Clerk. Individuals submitting Subject Access Requests must provide sufficient information to identify them as the subject of the information and to locate the information on the systems, ie the date and time.

9.3 The Council will respond to requests within 28 calendar days of receipt.

9.4 Appendix 1 provides full details on how to submit a Subject Access Request to the Council.

10. Access to and Disclosure of Footage to Third Parties

10.1 There will be no disclosure of recorded data to third parties other than to the Police.

10.2 Requests should be made in writing to the Town Clerk.

11. Complaints

11.1 Complaints and enquiries about the operation of the CCTV systems should in the first instance be directed to the Town Clerk.

12. Planned Instalments

12.1 The Town Council has a planned instalment of CCTV at the PlayZone on Strawberry Lane during 2026/27. The number of cameras to be situated has yet to be confirmed.

13. Further Information

Further information on CCTV and its use is available from the following:
• CCTV Code of Practice (Information Commissioner's Office)
• Data Protection Act 2018
• General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

THE SCHEDULE

1. **The Library, Silver Street, Ottery St Mary, EX11 1DB**
2. **The Station Hub, Mill Street, Ottery St Mary, EX11 1AH**
3. **The Council Offices, 8 Broad Street, Ottery St Mary, EX11 1BZ**

Appendix 1

Subject Access Request – CCTV Footage			
Date of recording:			
Time of Recording:			
Location of Recording:			
Full name and address of subject:			
Telephone No:		**Email address:**	
Full description of subject's clothing at time of recording, visual appearance etc	*(A recent photograph may be necessary to assist with identification)*		
Reason for requesting access to CCTV footage			
Signature of subject (if under 18 years of age signature of parent or guardian)	…… (*You will be required to provide evidence of your identity eg driving licence, passport etc. If you are applying on behalf of a person under 18 years of age you will also be required to provide evidence that you are the parental guardian of the subject.)*		

Please submit your completed form to:

The Town Clerk, The Council Offices, 8 Broad Street, Ottery St Mary, Devon, EX11 1BZ or email to clerk@otterystmary-tc.gov.uk

OTTERY ST MARY TOWN COUNCIL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY

Version	Author	Details	Dates created	Date approved & ref
1	Laura Dickinson	Created	October 2026	

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council is committed to delivering the best possible services to its residents and embracing innovation. It recognises the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance efficiency, productivity, creativity and informed decision-making across its operations. This policy has been written to provide a clear and responsible framework for the use of AI, ensuring that it complements the Council's existing information governance and security policies while upholding its legal and ethical obligations.

1.2 This policy provides a clear framework for the safe, effective and ethical use of AI within the Council. It sets out the guidelines to enable employees, councillors and others covered by this policy to responsibly harness the benefits of AI while mitigating associated risks. By following this policy, all persons covered will understand the principles for using AI lawfully and ethically, protecting data, and remaining accountable for outcomes. In addition, those covered by this policy will be expected to follow appropriate review processes to identify and address inaccuracies, bias and other risks associated with AI use.

1.3 At the date of adoption, the Council's approved AI-enabled systems include Microsoft Copilot, Gov.Meetings and NORA. This list is indicative only and may be amended without requiring a formal amendment to this policy. Users must not use unapproved AI systems for Council business without prior approval from the Town Clerk or other authorised officer.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all information processed by the Council or its representatives. This includes all Council employees, elected members, contractors, volunteers, and third parties working for or on behalf of the Council.

2.2 This policy applies to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in connection with Council business and the handling of Council information. It covers standalone AI systems, applications and tools, as well as AI features and functionality incorporated within software, platforms and services used by the Council. The policy applies regardless of whether AI is

accessed through Council-owned devices or approved personal devices used for Council business.

3. Definitions

3.1 Artificial Intelligence (AI): Technology that performs tasks which would normally require human intelligence, such as generating content, analysing information, recognising patterns, making recommendations or supporting decision-making. AI may be used as a standalone tool or incorporated into other software and systems used by the Council.

3.2 Generative AI: A type of Artificial Intelligence that can create new content in response to user prompts, including text, images, audio, video, summaries and other materials. Examples include AI tools used to assist with drafting documents, emails, reports and communications.

3.3 Automated Decision-Making AI: A type of Artificial Intelligence that makes or significantly influences decisions, recommendations or assessments with limited or no human involvement. This may include systems used to rank, score, categorise or recommend outcomes relating to individuals, applications, services or business processes.

4. Principles

4.1 The Council is committed to using AI in a responsible, lawful and transparent manner. Any use of AI must support the Council's values, duties and objectives and comply with relevant legislation, including data protection and equality requirements.

4.2 AI may be used to support research, administration, communication, analysis and other Council activities where it provides a clear benefit. The Council encourages innovation and the responsible use of technology to improve efficiency and service delivery.

4.3 AI must be used with appropriate human oversight. Responsibility for decisions, actions and published content remains with the employee, councillor or other individual using the AI system and must not be delegated to AI.

4.4 Information entered into, or generated by, AI systems must be handled securely and in accordance with the Council's data protection, information governance and cybersecurity requirements.

4.5 AI-generated content must be reviewed and verified before it is relied upon or published. Users must take reasonable steps to ensure information is accurate, appropriate and free from bias or other errors.

4.6 The Council will seek to ensure that AI is used fairly, ethically and transparently, and that its use does not unlawfully discriminate against, disadvantage or exclude any individual or group.

5. Acceptable Use of AI

5.1 The Council recognises that AI can support the delivery of services, improve efficiency and enhance productivity. Employees, councillors and others covered by this policy may

use approved AI tools and functionality for legitimate Council purposes, provided such use complies with this policy and all other relevant Council policies and procedures.

5.2 Examples of acceptable use include, but are not limited to:

- Drafting correspondence, reports, policies and other documents;
- Summarising information, documents, legislation or meeting notes;
- Improving the clarity, readability or presentation of written content;
- Assisting with research and information gathering;
- Supporting the preparation of communications, newsletters, website content and social media content;
- Assisting with administrative tasks and workflow management;
- Producing meeting transcripts, notes or summaries;
- Analysing information to support officers and councillors in carrying out their duties.

5.3 AI may be used to support and inform decision-making processes where appropriate. However, AI outputs must be treated as advisory only and must not replace professional judgement, officer recommendations, member consideration or formal Council decision-making processes.

5.4 Users must review and verify AI-generated content before it is used, shared, published or relied upon in the course of Council business. Responsibility for the accuracy, appropriateness and legality of any content remains with the individual using the AI system.

6. Restricted and Prohibited Use

6.1 The use of AI must not compromise the Council's legal, regulatory, ethical or operational responsibilities. Users must ensure that AI is used appropriately and within the limitations set out in this policy.

6.2 Confidential, sensitive or personal information must not be entered into public or unapproved AI systems where doing so would breach data protection legislation, confidentiality obligations or Council policies.

6.3 AI must not be used as the sole basis for decisions affecting individuals, including but not limited to:

- Recruitment and employment matters;
- Grant applications;
- Procurement processes;
- Complaints or enforcement matters;
- Access to Council services;
- Any matter involving the exercise of statutory powers or duties.

6.4 AI-generated content must not be presented as verified fact without appropriate review and verification. Users must not knowingly rely upon or distribute information that they know, or reasonably suspect, to be inaccurate, misleading or incomplete.

6.5 AI must not be used to generate content that is unlawful, discriminatory, offensive, misleading, defamatory or otherwise inconsistent with the Council's values, policies or legal obligations.

6.6 Users must not seek to bypass Council policies, security controls, approval processes or professional standards through the use of AI.

7. Data Protection and Information Security

7.1 The use of AI must comply with all applicable legislation, including UK data protection legislation, and with the Council's information governance, confidentiality and cybersecurity requirements.

7.2 Users must consider the nature and sensitivity of information before entering it into any AI system. Personal data, special category data, confidential information or commercially sensitive information must only be processed using approved AI tools and in accordance with Council policies and procedures.

7.3 Information entered into AI systems should be limited to that which is necessary for the task being undertaken. Where possible, information should be anonymised or redacted before being used with AI tools.

7.4 Users must not enter confidential or personal information into public AI tools where doing so could result in unauthorised access, disclosure, retention or use of that information.

7.5 Any actual or suspected data breach, information security incident or inappropriate use of AI must be reported in accordance with the Council's existing reporting procedures.

7.6 Where the Council proposes to introduce a new AI system or functionality or significantly change how AI is used within Council activities, appropriate assessments and approvals must be completed before implementation.

8. Accuracy and Verification

8.1 AI systems can produce inaccurate, incomplete, outdated or misleading information. Users must exercise judgement and critically assess all AI-generated content before relying upon, sharing or publishing it.

8.2 AI-generated content must be reviewed for accuracy, relevance, appropriateness and consistency with Council policies, procedures and legal obligations.

8.3 Where AI is used to assist with research, summaries, reports, correspondence or other Council documents, users must take reasonable steps to verify factual information, references, quotations, legislation, guidance and other material upon which decisions or actions may be based.

8.4 Particular care must be taken when using AI-generated information in relation to legal, financial, regulatory, employment, planning, cemetery administration or other matters where inaccuracies could result in harm, financial loss, reputational damage or non-compliance with legal obligations.

8.5 The use of AI does not remove or reduce individual responsibility for the accuracy of information. Responsibility for any content used, shared or published by the Council remains with the employee, councillor or other individual relying upon that information.

9. Human Oversight, Accountability and Decision-Making

9.1 The Council recognises that AI can assist with research, analysis, administration and the preparation of information. However, AI is intended to support human judgement and must not replace it.

9.2 Appropriate human oversight must be maintained whenever AI is used in connection with Council business. Users remain responsible for reviewing, considering and approving any information, recommendations or content produced with the assistance of AI.

9.3 Responsibility for decisions made by or on behalf of the Council remains with the relevant employee, councillor, committee or delegated decision-maker. The use of AI does not remove or reduce individual accountability for decisions, actions or outcomes.

9.4 AI-generated outputs, recommendations or assessments must be treated as advisory and must not be relied upon as the sole basis for decisions, particularly where those decisions may affect individuals, Council services, finances, assets or statutory responsibilities.

9.5 The Council will not permit AI systems to make decisions on behalf of the Council without appropriate human involvement, oversight and authority.

10. Governance

10.1 The Council will ensure that the use of AI is subject to appropriate oversight and governance arrangements. Any use of AI must be consistent with the Council's policies, procedures, legal obligations and values.

10.2 The Town Clerk shall be responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and providing guidance where required on the appropriate use of AI within Council activities.

10.3 Users are responsible for complying with its requirements and for seeking advice where they are unsure whether a particular use of AI is appropriate.

10.4 Any proposal to introduce a new AI system, enhanced AI functionality, or to significantly change the way AI is used within Council activities must be considered and approved through the Council's existing governance arrangements before implementation.
10.5 Where appropriate, the Council will consider legal, financial, operational, information governance, equality and reputational risks before adopting new AI systems or functionality.

10.5 Any records, documents or information generated through the use of AI that form part of Council business shall be retained, managed and disposed of in accordance with the Council's records management and retention policies.

10.6 Users must consider copyright, intellectual property and licensing requirements when using AI systems, AI-generated content should not be assumed to be free from copyright restrictions and must be reviewed before publication or wider distribution.

11. Ethical Use

11.1 The Council is committed to the ethical, responsible and transparent use of AI. AI must be used in a manner that supports the Council's values, maintains public trust and complies with applicable legislation, policies and professional standards.

11.2 When using AI, users must consider the potential impact of AI-generated outputs on individuals, communities and Council decision-making. AI should be used in a way that promotes fairness, inclusivity and equal treatment.

11.3 AI must not be used to generate content that is unlawful, discriminatory, misleading, offensive, defamatory or otherwise inconsistent with the Council's values and responsibilities.

11.4 Users should be mindful that AI systems may reflect biases present in the data on which they have been trained. Where appropriate, AI-generated content should be reviewed to identify and address potential bias, inaccuracies or unintended consequences.

11.5 AI should be used as a tool to support human judgement and professional expertise. The Council will not use AI in a manner that removes appropriate human involvement from decisions where ethical, legal or professional discretion is required.

11.6 Where there is uncertainty about the ethical implications of a proposed use of AI, guidance should be sought through the Council's existing management and governance arrangements before proceeding.

12. Training and Awareness

12.1 The Council is committed to supporting employees, councillors and others covered by this policy in the responsible and effective use of AI.

12.2 Those covered by this policy should familiarise themselves with the requirements of this policy and any other relevant Council policies relating to data protection, information governance, cybersecurity and acceptable use of technology.

12.3 Where appropriate, the Council may provide training, guidance or other resources to support the safe and effective use of AI and to promote awareness of the opportunities and risks associated with its use.

12.4 Users are encouraged to seek guidance where they are uncertain about the appropriate use of AI or the suitability of a particular AI tool or application for Council purposes.

12.5 The Council will seek to maintain awareness of developments in AI technology and associated legal, regulatory and ethical considerations to ensure its approach remains proportionate and up to date.

13. Monitoring and Review

13.1 The Council will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and may take appropriate action where misuse of AI is identified.

13.2 Users are encouraged to report any concerns regarding the use of AI, including issues relating to accuracy, data protection, information security, bias, or inappropriate use.

13.3 The Council will periodically review its use of AI and associated governance arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate, proportionate and aligned with the Council's operational needs, legal obligations and strategic objectives.

13.4 This policy will be reviewed every year, or sooner where required by legislative, regulatory, technological or operational changes.

DEVON & SOMERSET
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Tell us what you think

Read our draft five-year plan and tell us if we have covered all the risks you see in your local area.

Fill in the survey before **9am** on **Monday 4 January**.

Please scan the QR code or go to: **www.dsfire.gov.uk/about-us/CRMP-2027** to complete the online survey.

Questions?

Join our online question and answer sessions on:

Monday 16 November 10 – 11am

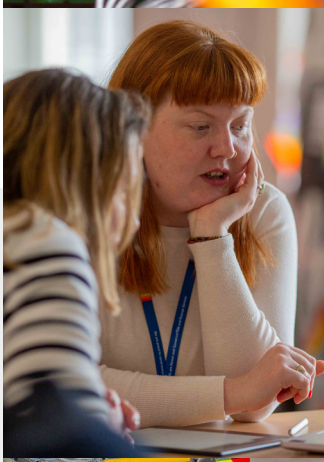
Monday 23 November 2 – 3pm

Thursday 3 December 11 – 12 noon

More dates and alternative times may be added depending on demand.

If you need the survey or draft plan in an alternative format, please call **01392 261287** or email **crmp@dsfire.gov.uk**




Service Headquarters
The Knowle
Clyst St George
Exeter
Devon
EX3 0NW

Sent by email

Date: 6 October 2026
Contact: Consultation and Engagement team
Telephone: 01392 261287
Email: crmp@dsfire.gov.uk
Website: www.dsfire.gov.uk

Dear Partner,

REFERENCE: CONSULTATION ON HOW WE ASSESS AND MANAGE RISK IN OUR COMMUNITIES

I hope you are well. I am writing to seek your opinion on our five-year strategic plan for Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, our draft Community Risk Management Plan.

This plan is a strategic review of the risks that we might face now and in the future. It also considers what actions we need to put in place to mitigate these risks to our communities.

Earlier in the year, we undertook an engagement exercise where we heard from more than 1,000 people as to the risks that they feel we ought to consider and also invited their views as to the role of the fire and rescue service and our focus moving forward. We have incorporated the feedback into our draft plan.

We plan to continue to put people at the centre of our prevention, protection, response and community resilience work, tailoring our services for those most at risk. In developing this plan, we have also considered new and future risks that could affect our services, communities and staff.

Please let us know your views on our draft Community Risk Management Plan, which will run from April 2027 until 2032.

You can let us know your views by filling in the online survey, found on our website, which will remain open until 9am on Monday 4 January 2027. If you or colleagues would prefer to respond in another format or have a further conversation about the

draft plan, please get in touch through the consultation and engagement team. I would be most grateful if you could arrange for this to be completed, please.

We want to hear from a range of people across Devon and Somerset to make sure we're aligning our future plans with the risks in the communities we serve, so please share across your networks.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in helping us continue to provide a fire and rescue service which is focused on preventing incidents from happening but also one able to respond effectively to emergencies when required.

Kind regards,



Gavin Ellis PGDip, MBA
Chief Fire Officer

Severe drought in East Devon

Briefing for town and parish councils | October 2026

Current situation

The Environment Agency has declared a severe drought across parts of Devon and Cornwall, including East Devon. Exceptionally dry weather and the hottest summer on record have placed significant pressure on water resources, with some reservoirs at critically low levels. Recent rainfall has helped, but has not been enough to secure a sustained recovery.

As of 26/10/26, Wimbleball Reservoir was reported to be at 14% capacity. It remains uncertain how quickly water resources will recover or whether further restrictions will be needed. Recent rainfall is very welcome but the EA have stated we need at least 120% of our usual rainfall to replenish supplies.

Emergency planners are using a reasonable worst-case scenario to support preparedness. This is a planning assumption, not a forecast.

What South West Water is doing

South West Water says its priority is to maintain safe supplies to homes, hospitals, schools and businesses while reducing demand. Measures outlined include:

- A hosepipe ban is in place.
- Transferring around three million litres of water a day from areas under less pressure to those most affected.
- Recruiting around 40 additional leakage technicians and repairing an average of 440 leaks each week.
- Supporting more than 250 household leak repairs and carrying out almost 800 household water-efficiency audits.
- Working with 85 high-volume business users to reduce consumption.
- Exploring operational changes, water transfers, and treatment-capacity improvements, subject to regulatory approval.

South West Water has also applied for a Non-Essential Use Ban, which would extend restrictions to certain commercial activities. Government approval had not been granted at the time of writing.

What town and parish councils can do

- Share consistent, factual updates from South West Water, the Environment Agency and Devon emergency planning partners.
- Encourage residents, community organisations and local businesses to reduce water use wherever possible.
- Use council websites, newsletters and social media to signpost people to the latest official advice.
- Be alert to residents who may need additional support if the situation worsens, and share emerging local concerns through established council contacts.

Key message to share

East Devon is experiencing severe drought conditions. Please use water carefully and follow the latest advice and restrictions from South West Water. There is no major incident declaration, but agencies are preparing prudently in case the situation deteriorates.

Official information

- South West Water: severe drought
- South West Water: saving water
- South West Water: Non-Essential Use Ban information