

FULL COUNCIL

19 MAY 2026

Present:

Councillors Atkins, Bullivant, Buscombe, Clarence, Cox, Daws, Dawson, Foden, Gearon, Goodman-Bradbury, Hayes, Hook, Horner, Jackman, Keeling, MacGregor, Major (Vice-Chair), Morgan, Mullone, Nutley, Nuttall, Palethorpe, P Parker, Parrott, Peart, Purser, Rogers, Rollason, Sanders, K Smith, M Smith, Steemson (Chair), Swain, G Taylor, J Taylor, Thorne, Webster, Williams and Wrigley

Apologies:

Councillors Bradford, Farrand-Rogers, Hall, Henderson, C Parker, Radford and Ryan

Officers in Attendance:

Trish Corns, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Charlie Fisher, Democratic Services Manager and Monitoring Officer
Alex Lessware, Strategic Infrastructure and Growth Manager
Michelle Luscombe, Head of Strategy and Partnerships
Christopher Morgan, Assistant Democratic Services Officer
Kati Owen, Principal Strategy and Policy Officer (Planning Specialist)
Trevor Shaw, Senior Planning Officer
Phil Shears, Managing Director

1. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair:

- Referred to the many events attended over the year of office as Chair of the Council which included County, Devon District and Town and Parish occasions, covering the depth and breadth of the District. He had attended 12 events over the year valuing the opportunity to represent the Council, and the Vice Chair had attended 6 events on his behalf.
- Advised he had attended the funeral of Councillor Mike James, who had very sadly passed away and who would be much missed.
- Thanked all Councillors and staff for their help and support, and dedication to the residents of Teignbridge during the past year and difficult times.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL 2026/27

The Leader Councillor Keeling proposed that Councillor Steemson continue in his role and be elected Chair of the Council for a further year for the 2026/27 municipal year in recognition of Councillor Steemson's respect,

civility and control of debate during meetings. This was seconded by Councillor Bullivant.

RESOLVED

Councillor Steemson be elected Chair of the Council for the 2026/27 municipal year.

The Chair read and signed the Declaration of Office in the presence of the Managing Director.

3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL 2026/27

The Leader Councillor Keeling proposed that Cllr Major continue in his role and be elected Vice-Chair of the Council for a further year for the 2026/27 municipal year. This was seconded by the Deputy Leader Councillor Palethorpe.

RESOLVED

Cllr Major be elected Vice Chair of the Council for the 2026/27 municipal year.

The Vice Chair read and signed the Declaration of Office in the presence of the Managing Director.

4. MINUTES

It was proposed by the Leader, seconded by the Deputy Leader and

RESOLVED

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader referred to the recent very sad passing of Councillor Mike James, referring to him as a true gentleman who was well respected and known for his civility and dedication to the community. The Leader passed on the family's thanks for all who had attended the funeral.

The Managing Director gave an update on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) as advised by MLCHG follows:

- District Councils will be consulted on the Structural Change Order (SCO)

a Statutory Instrument made to implement the proposed changes for LGR on their proposals, and need to be submitted by 18 June 2026. This will include the unitary authorities being proposed, the Joint Committee to help implement the changes prior to the Shadow elections May 2027 and run from the date of the SCO until the Shadow Authorities elections in May 2027 and arrangements for the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) and Deputies.

- The SRO has normally been the Chief Executive of the County Council, who would be answerable to the Minister.
- The consultation will also agree the arrangements for the Shadow elections in May 2027 and agree the Returning Officers. Wards will have new boundaries.
- There will be a request for a split of expenditure on the implementation costs.
- The date which it takes effect and whether town and parish council elections are aligned with the unitary elections will also be part of the consultation. DALC (Devon Association of Local Councils) has requested alignment to avoid significant costs which would fall to the precepting towns and parishes, potentially exceeding their annual budget.
- An all Member briefing will be arranged when the consultation have been received for feedback from Members for the responses to the consultation which, due to timescales would be agreed with the Group Leaders following the briefing.
- There is not a consistent approach amongst Devon Districts, Torbay, Exeter and Plymouth and County regarding proposed structural changes. The response from Teignbridge would include a comment on all different proposals to ensure that Teignbridge is not disadvantaged as far as possible.
- A response on the consultation will be expected by 16 July, 2026, and a response on the SCO will be expected sometime between September and December 2026.
- 14 days after the SCO, the Joint Committee will be required to be set up which will oversee the process leading into the Shadow Authority. Officers will form the implementation team ensuring all will be in place for the first meeting of the Shadow Authority following the elections in May 2027. The Executive and Leader will be approved and officers recruited for the statutory officers of Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, followed by appointment of Directors.
- The Joint Committee will then be dissolved, the Shadow and existing authorities will work together until May 2028 when the Unitary Authority would come into effect.
- It was expected that Teignbridge Council's elections will not take place in May 2027 and that Councillor terms of office will be extended for 1 year until the Shadow Authority is effective.

The Chair announced that outside organisation appointment will be updated to reflect any changes to Committee Chairs, to be agreed later in this meeting, and the recent Executive Member changes.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor P Parker declared a pecuniary interest in Minute 12 below by virtue of his interest in land identified in the 2020-40 Local Plan. He left the meeting room while the item was dealt with, and took no part in the debate or vote.

7. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Chair advised that the following sections of the Constitution had been reviewed and agreed by the Constitution Review Working Group - a cross-party group and referred from the group to Council for adoption.

a) Revision of Section 4 - Procedural Rules F_PR

Consideration was given to the updated Section 4 of the Constitution - Procedure Rules.

It was noted that paragraphs 4.11.4 and 4.11.5 were duplications and would be amended.

It was proposed by Councillor Palethorpe, seconded by Councillor J Taylor and

RESOLVED

- a) The changes to Section 4 of the Constitution be approved.
- b) Authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make minor amendments before updating the Constitution.

b) Revision Section 8b - Overview and Scrutiny Call in Procedure F_PR

Consideration was given to the revised Section 8(b), the Overview and Scrutiny call in procedure.

It was proposed by Councillor Palethorpe, seconded by Councillor Keeling and unanimously,

RESOLVED

- a) The changes to Section 8(b) of the Constitution be approved.
- b) Authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make minor amendments before updating the Constitution.

c) Revision Section 10b - Member Officer Protocol F_PR

Consideration was given to a revised Section 10(b), the Member - Officer protocol.

It was proposed by Councillor Keeling and seconded by Councillor Sanders and,

RESOLVED

- a) The changes to Section 10(b) of the Constitution be approved.
- b) Authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make minor amendments before updating the Constitution.

8. COMMITTEE SEAT ALLOCATIONS

The Chair referred to:

- The agenda report which set out the committee seat allocation and nominations from Group Leaders for committee membership, including Chairs and Vice Chair.
- Since the publication of the agenda in relation to the Local Plan Working group, Cllr Hall had been nominated by the Conservative Group Leader to the vacant Conservative seat, and Cllr Paul Parker had been nominated by the Independent Group Leader to the vacant Independent seat.
- In accordance with Section 4 of the constitution paragraph 4.3.1(h) Council today would appoint committee membership including Chairs and Vice Chairs of committees.

It was proposed by the Leader, seconded by the Deputy Leader and unanimously,

RESOLVED

1. Approve the Committee seat allocations as set out in the Appendix.
2. Give effect to the appointment of individual members as proposed by the Group Leaders.
3. Asks Group Leaders to advise the Democratic Services Manager of any changes required within 24 hours of the change occurring.

9. AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2025/2026

Councillor Morgan as Chair of the Audit Committee presented the report, adding that the addition of the independent person to the committee membership was welcomed.

It was proposed by Councillor Purser, seconded by the Leader and,

RESOLVED

The report be received.

10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2025/2026

Councillor Bullivant as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee presented the report highlighting:

- The support of dedicated officers who provide an essential resource and over the last year have been invaluable in the Committee being able to deliver the work programme listed in the annual report, and extended thanks of all committee members to officers.
- The restructuring of the committee to reflect the observations and recommendations of the Auditors and others were implemented at the start of the year and thanking the Administration for accepting the Auditors report and agreeing to implement the relevant proposals.
- By working across party boundaries, in the interests of residents and good governance we are able to present the achievements detailed in the report.
- Regular meetings with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Audit Committee to look at issues to clarify areas of responsibility and provide a greater focus on relevant material issues.
- The Committee would like to take its work into the communities, and we were able to do this to carry out the Call In process relating to Teignmouth Lido which demonstrated how beneficial this approach is.
- O&S work schedules are established not only to support Executive decision making but also to look at issues of concern identified by members through the due process, contacting Democratic Services for an item to be considered for inclusion in the work programme.

Councillor J Taylor spoke to this item and the report regarding the work of Overview and Scrutiny on single sex spaces, highlighting there was more work to do on this topic in her opinion.

It was proposed by Councillor Bullivant, seconded by the Leader Councillor Keeling and,

RESOLVED

The report be received.

11. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2025/2026

Councillor Bullivant as Chair of the Governance Committee presented the report highlighting:

- The committee was created to provide a focus on issues highlighted in the comments and views made some 18 months by the auditors and external advisers following a period of member disagreement over council processes and procedures.
- It has addressed most of the issues raised as concerns by members, auditor's and external advisors. and continues to examine any issues raised in a framework of cross-party meetings and discussions and

- proposed amendments or recommendations to full council.
- When overseeing complaints appropriate resources are applied to establish independently verified opinions and decisions made accordingly.
- The number of complaints and resolutions are given in the report and show the result of the supporting officers and independent people to resolve any issues in a timely manner. The Committee's thanks go to them for their unbiased input.
- The Committee will continue the work of the Constitution working group and thanks go to the CfGS for chairing the group.
- The work programme is in the report and members are requested to make any recommendations for inclusion of issues to the Democratic Services.

It was proposed by Councillor Bullivant, seconded by the Leader Councillor Keeling and

RESOLVED

The report be received.

12. **ADOPTION OF THE LOCAL PLAN 2020-2040**

Councillor P Parker declared a pecuniary interest in accordance with Minute 6 above and left the meeting, taking no part in the debate or voting on this item.

The Executive Member for Planning, Councillor Taylor presented the agenda report, which provided the Local Plan Inspectors' Final Report on the Examination of the Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040, and sought approval to amend the Local Plan according to the Main Modifications (as appended to the Inspectors' Report), and adopt the Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-2040 (Appendix 5).

The report set out the process in achieving the compilation of the Local Plan 2020-40 which included work by and agreement to the Plan by the cross-party member working group. The Plan would form the basis for consideration of planning applications, with more robust existing policies and further robust policies added.

Staff were thanked for the work in completing the Plan and it was noted that a third of all District Councils had an up to date Local Plan.

It was proposed by Councillor G Taylor that the recommendation as set out on the agenda report be approved with a further recommendation: *to delegate authority to the Director of Place to make minor amendments to the Local Plan and associated documents, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Building Control.*

The proposal was seconded by the Leader Councillor Keeling.

RESOLVED

1. Note the content of the Inspectors' Final Local Plan Report (Appendix 1).
2. Amend the Local Plan 2020-2040 in accordance with the further modifications requested in the Inspectors Report.
3. Adopt the Local Plan 2020-2040 to use as the basis for decision-making on planning applications in Teignbridge (outside of the Dartmoor National Park).
4. Delegate authority to the Director of Place to make minor amendments to the Local Plan and associated documents, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Building Control.

13. ADOPTION OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY CHARGING SCHEDULE

The Executive Member for Planning presented the report which sought approval to adopt the appended Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule and set out the process including consultation leading to the revised schedule.

The charging schedule set out how the levy would be charged on new developments in the area and serves to supplement the new Teignbridge Local Plan 2020-40, taking account of policies and viability assessment evidence prepared for the plan. It would complement the current system of Section 106 planning obligations with rates expressed as pounds (£) per square metre.

It was proposed by Councillor G Taylor, seconded by the Leader Councillor Keeling and,

RESOLVED

- (1) Adopt the Teignbridge Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule as modified by the Examiner's Report to come into effect and replace the 2014 CIL Charging Schedule from 1 June 2026.
- (2) Delegate authority to the Director of Place to correct any minor errors in the charging schedule which come to light within six months of its approval.

14. MEMBER CONDUCT REVIEW REPORT

The Chair referred to the agenda report covering the recent history of member relations at the Council, written independently of the Council, by Wilkin Chapman Rollits, Hoey Ainscough Associates and Fortis Therapy and Training, and was the result of Statutory Recommendations from the Council's External Auditors, agreed at Full Council on 25 February 2025.

An all Member briefing was delivered in January 2026 by representatives of the authors of the report covering the initial findings and the proposed recommendations.

The Chair asked Members to focus on the future and the improvements listed in the report. He recognised that Members would have their view on the report but added that what was important was how Councillors moved forward from here. All group leaders had agreed with the improvements referred to in the report. Teignbridge would no longer exist following local government reorganisation and how the term of office would end would be the legacy of the District Council.

The Monitoring Officer and Managing Director supported the principles of the report and the comments of the Chair. Some of the recommendations within the report had already been actioned and it was hoped that all Members would agree in pledging to be civil, open, accountable.

It was proposed by the Leader Councillor Keeling and seconded by the Deputy Leader Councillor Paethorpe that the report and recommendations 1-6 and 8 be received and accepted.

During the debate comments included: the report be referred to the Governance Committee to have an input on the recommendations; there was factual inaccuracies within the report and it should be referred back to the authors; there were meaningful omissions; it was not an independent balanced view; Members were not consulted on the report prior to publication; the recommendations were not a problem but the content of the report was imbalanced; it was uncomfortable reading for all but all should work together and move forward.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor P Parker and seconded by Councillor MacGregor that the report be noted and referred to the Governance Committee for consideration of the recommendations.

The amendment was voted on and LOST by 10 votes for, 25 against and 2 abstentions.

The original proposal as set out above was voted on and was CARRIED by 25 votes for, 10 against and 3 abstentions.

RESOLVED

The report and recommendations 1-6 and 8 be received and accepted as follows:

1. All members treat each other, Council staff and the public with politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech and in the written word, whilst respecting the right of members to express, debate and challenge political views freely within the law.

2. All members pledge personally to:-
 - listen and respect differing views
Actively listen to others and acknowledge differing political, professional or personal perspectives. Express disagreement constructively and without dismissiveness.
 - respect the rights of all councillors to carry out their roles and the roles of officers
Uphold the legitimate roles, responsibilities and democratic mandates of all councillors, irrespective of political affiliation or position, and refrain from any conduct that undermines another councillor's ability to discharge their duties. This includes respecting the authority of the chair, engaging appropriately with officers in line with respective roles, and supporting a culture where poor behaviour is constructively and appropriately challenged.
 - hold themselves and fellow councillors to account
Take responsibility for own conduct and decisions and raise concerns about behaviour or actions that fall below agreed standards in an appropriate, proportionate and professional manner.
 - be open
Communicate honestly and transparently, sharing information where appropriate and providing clear reasons for decisions, constraints or changes.
 - be civil
Treat others with courtesy, respect and professionalism at all times, including during disagreement or challenge, and avoid language or behaviour.
3. The Monitoring Officer report to the Governance Committee on the adoption by the Council of the Local Government Association's Debate Not Hate campaign and in particular the Ending Abuse in Public Life Council Self-Assessment toolkit as a means of creating a culture of safety and respect for members within and without the Council Chamber.

Rationale for the above resolutions: for councillors collectively and individually to commit to high standards of conduct and for the Council as an organisation to take steps to support and protect members from abusive behaviour.

4. The Monitoring Officer and Head of Paid Service report jointly to the Governance Committee on a revised member – officer protocol to include clear guidance on:-
 - Members' rights to accessing Council information;
 - Member visits to officer working areas

Rationale: to provide clarity on expected standards of conduct by councillors towards staff, staff conduct towards councillors and the rights of councillors to obtain and scrutinise Council information.

5. The Council identify with the Local Government Association what support it might offer to strengthen the capacity of the Executive.

6. The Council provide further training and assistance to strengthen the capacity and capability of the Overview and Scrutiny process.

Rationale for the above 2 resolutions: to assist the Council in achieving strong governance through clear Executive leadership which is subject to effective scrutiny.

8. There be a comprehensive training programme for all members to be reviewed annually and rolled out for all new members. This would include training on the code of conduct, the different role of members and officers, effective decision-making, chairing skills and understanding the constitution.

Rationale: to cement recognition of good governance in the Council where debate and decision making is "hard on the issue, soft on the person".

CLLR R STEEMSON
Chair