

Assistant to the Town Clerk’s Report August/September 2023

For Council Meeting 19th September 2023

1. Key Dates for all Councillors’ diaries;

Thursday 12 th October 2023	Goose Fair Lunch
Tuesday 31 st October 2023	‘Being a Good Councillor’ training N.B. this is mandatory training for all Councillors
Sunday 12 th November 2023	Remembrance Sunday Service
Sunday 19 th November 2023	Civic Service
Monday 4 th December 2023	Mayor’s Christmas Event
Monday 15 th April 2024	Mayor’s End of Term Event
Friday 26 th April 2024	Civic Ball 2024
Thursday 2 nd May 2024	Grants Presentation Evening (Grants Panel members only)

2. Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) AGM and Conference – 27th September 2023
Of the 11 Councillors who expressed an interest in attending this event at the Council Meeting on 27th July 2023, the following have confirmed their attendance and have had places booked;
Councillors A Hutton, Mrs A Johnson, U Mann, B Smith and P Squire.
Councillor Ms M Ewings will be attending as Leader of West Devon Borough Council.

3. Re-scheduling of the Council Meeting on Tuesday 30th January 2024
Due to an unforeseen clash of dates, agreement is requested to move the Meeting scheduled above to the following week, Tuesday 6th February 2024 instead.

4. Activity Log
CONFERENCE & TRAINING ACTIVITY LOG
CIVIC YEAR 2023-2024
COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE between 25th July – 18th September 2023;

DATE OF MEETING or TRAINING SESSION	SUBJECT	LOCATION	ORGANISER	COUNCILLORS BOOKED TO ATTEND
				<i>N.B. Councillors’ names in italics indicate that these were a ‘no show’</i>
Booked 5 th June 2023	Cyber Awareness Training	Virtual	SW Councils via DALC	Cllrs Ms M Ewings, A Hutton, J Irvine, T Munro, B Smith and

				P Ward Cllrs J Irvine, Mrs A Johnson, T Munro, B Smith and P Ward – completed N.B. To be completed within 3 months of booking
Booked 5 th June 2023 Cllr B Smith booked 7 th August 2023	Personal Safety Essentials	Virtual	SW Councils via DALC	Cllrs Ms M Ewings, B Smith & P Ward Cllr P Ward – completed N.B. To be completed within 3 months of booking
11 th September 2023 6.00pm – 8.00pm	Responding to Planning Applications	Virtual	DALC	Cllr P Ward, <i>Cllrs A Lewis, J Moody, P Squire</i> (the Council understands it will be re-charged for the non-attendance of these Councillors)
13 th September 2023 6.00pm – 8.00pm	Code of Conduct	Virtual	DALC	Cllr J Irvine

5. Council Chamber Bookings

Chamber bookings (not including Council Meetings), from 25th July – 18th September 2023;

- 19 non-chargeable meetings (internal meetings, or a TTC representative attending on behalf of TTC, partner organisations or Mayoral events)
- 0 chargeable meeting/training session
- 0 training sessions (non-chargeable)

6. Property Units Update

Residential – there is currently only one vacant residential property;

- 1 Market Road – as previously reported, this property is currently being used as a welfare facility during the Town Hall works period.

Commercial - there are currently no vacant commercial properties.

7. General including ongoing activities in the Admin Office

The Office continues to support the organisation across the range of Civic, administrative, financial and corporate activities.

Pay Award 2023/2024 - as previously advised, the Employer Side had made a full and final

offer to the staff side in connection with the 2023-24 pay settlement. This amounted to an award of £1,925 (pro rata as appropriate) to those posts on SCPs 2-43, and an increase of 3.88% to those posts on SCPs 44 and above. This offer was rejected by Unison. Unison members had until 4th July to vote on whether or not they were willing to take strike action. The result was that whilst sufficient numbers responded to the survey, insufficient Unison members said they would be willing to strike, therefore the possibility of strike action by that Union fell away. Negotiations with other Unions are now taking place. Further updates will be provided, when available.

8. Website & Accessibility update

Booking forms/schedules of charges for various Council activities are assessed on an ongoing basis and will be updated, where necessary, to ensure compliance with the regulations. Overall site compliance is reviewed annually. We have been advised that the current host platform service for our website is being upgraded in January, 2025. Therefore, depending upon transfer cost (which is being explored) potential options include either transfer or procurement exercise. Further updates will be submitted as they become available.

9. Legal Services

In the early part of 2024 arrangements will need to be made to either re-tender or renegotiate legal services for the Council, in view of the timeframe for current arrangements. A review of present arrangements, including with our provider, will be undertaken in the New Year to help inform next steps.

10. Lettable Properties and Energy Performance

Energy Performance Certificates (EPC's) and Display Performance Certificates (DPC's) are in certain circumstances a requirement for the letting of properties. However, the position lacks clarity regarding certain classes of Listed premises and further information is being sought prior to upcoming changes in minimum thresholds for eligible premises.

11. Civic Event – the Council is invited to endorse participation in arrangements to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the D Day landings at the request of the Pageant Master (extract reproduced below):

'As you are aware, we are organising D-Day 80 – 6th June 2024, throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man, UK Overseas Territories and at the site of the British Normandy Memorial, overlooking Gold Beach in Normandy, France, one of the five Beaches landed on 80 years ago on 6th June next year. The event is in celebration and commemoration of this important occasion and will enable communities and individuals to pay their 'tribute' to those that gave so much during this campaign to help ensure the freedom we all enjoy today, with the flames from the Beacons representing the 'light of peace' that emerged from the dreadful darkness of war all those years ago.

We feel sure you will agree with me/us when we say that individuals and communities of all sizes were deeply affected in many and various ways during WWII. So, with this in mind, we would like to encourage your Town or Parish Council to take part in D-Day 80 on 6th June next year, as we would like to achieve the lighting of at least 80 Beacons per County, within England and Wales, as part of this 80th Anniversary event. We would be extremely grateful if you would be kind enough to discuss your possible involvement with your Council members, at your earliest convenience please, with the view to ensuring we achieve the lighting of this number of Beacons in your County at 9.15pm on 6th June 2024.'

