

Assistant to the Town Clerk's Report

For Council Meeting 27th May 2025

1. Key Date for all Councillors' diaries for the 2025 - 2026 Civic Year;

Sunday 19th October 2025

Civic Service 2025 (time tbc)

As previously reported, it is also anticipated that the Council will be able to help facilitate a commemoration of VJ Day on 15th August.

N.B. Dates for other key events such as the Civic Ball 2026 will be agreed with the incoming Mayor shortly. Councillors will then be notified via the ATTC Report at the next Council Meeting.

2. Activity Log
CONFERENCE & TRAINING ACTIVITY LOG
CIVIC YEAR 2025-2026
COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE up to 2nd July 2025;

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>
N/a	Introduction to Local Councils	(E-learning)	Via DALC	Cllr R Poppe
N/a	Standards in Public Life	(E-learning)	Via DALC	Cllr R Poppe
2025 – 2026 Civic Year				
2 nd June 2025 6pm – 7pm	Code of Conduct	Virtual	DALC	None
3 rd June 2025 6pm – 8pm	Chairing Local Council Meetings	Virtual	DALC	None
11 th June 2025 6pm – 7pm	Being a Good Councillor – Part 3 Local Council Meetings	Virtual	DALC	None
16 th June 2025 6pm – 8pm	Being a Good Employer	Virtual	DALC	None

18 th June 2025 6.30pm – 9.30pm	Being a Good Councillors – Short Course	The Exeter Court Hotel Kennford Exeter EX6 7UX	DALC	None
25 th June 2025 6.30pm – 8.15pm	Introduction to Planning	Virtual	DALC	None
2 nd July 2025 6pm – 7pm	Being a Good Councillor – Part 4 The Council in the Community	Virtual	DALC	None

3. Council Chamber Bookings

Chamber bookings (not including Council Meetings), from 22nd April – 27th May 2025:

- 8 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)

4. Property Units Update

Residential – there are currently two vacant residential properties:

- 1 & 2 Market Road

As previously reported, the properties were inspected by a representative from SeaMoor Lettings on 20th March and again in April. Some works were identified as requiring completion and once this has been achieved the properties will be 'let', as previously agreed by Council. We have been advised that at least one potential tenant has been identified.

Commercial –

- 12 Duke Street – Heads of Terms have been agreed on this property via the Council's Letting Agent, with the new Lease currently being drafted. Further updates will be brought forward, when available.
- 2 East End Stores – a Surrender/new Lease completed on the 9th May 2025. A new business selling ladies' and men's clothing opened on Saturday 17th May. The Council's previous tenant in this unit has moved to larger premises in the town.

Note – any further information of a more specific nature as might relate to any particular tenancies will need to be picked up under the relevant part of the next section (confidential) of the Agenda.

5. 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.

6. Website & Accessibility update

Booking forms/schedules of charges for various Council activities and other postings are assessed on an ongoing basis and will be updated, where necessary, to ensure compliance with the regulations. Overall site compliance is reviewed annually.

Following previous reports, the new website went 'live' on Wednesday 14th May, 2025.

7. Professional Services

Arrangements will be made, if necessary, to either re-tender or re-negotiate legal services for the Council. A review of present arrangements with current legal providers (Stephens Scown), and the Council's Surveyor, took place in February 2025 and various improvements have been discussed. It is also anticipated that arrangements will be identified, and agreement sought later this year, regarding the re-tender of surveyor services once extant proceedings re complete (current provider Haarer Goss (now Bruton Knowles)).

8. Lettable Properties and Energy Performance

Energy Performance Certificates (EPC's) and Display Performance Certificates (DPC's) are a requirement for the letting of properties. Previously we had lacked clarity regarding certain classes of Listed premises. Clarification has now been received and it has been confirmed that all of the Council's properties require an EPC, with works required to bring them as near as possible to the required standard, within a maximum cost per property. Where complete adherence is impossible i.e. where required changes would not be possible or acceptable for Listed Buildings, a Certificate of Exemption will be required. This represents significant work (and especially remedial cost) which is now underway for certificates. When those are in place reporting will take place on the remediation measures needed to comply with legislative requirements. It is anticipated that a material budget provision will be required to be made.

9. Staff Handbook

The Staff Handbook is currently being reviewed to ensure that various sections continue to represent current legal and other relevant standards. Model Policies have been obtained from the Council's HR Advisors (SW Councils), which are now being tailored to this Council's requirements. This will be undertaken on a modular basis, with an initial focus on those areas where most change is anticipated.

Report prepared by

Jan Smallacombe (Assistant to the Town Clerk)