

**Administration Office Report**

For Council Meeting 24<sup>th</sup> March 2026

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

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Civic Ball\*

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Mayor's End of Term Event

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Grants Presentation Evening

\*please respond to your invitation by the deadline of Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026, if you have not already done so.

Future Civic Service dates – for your information

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2026

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2027

2. Ice Cream Pitch Tender

As advised in the last report, a Tender was issued in January to cover the 2026 – 2028 Licence for the Ice Cream Pitch on Bedford Square.

Two Tenders were received by the deadline of Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2026, with the successful Tenderer being Willy's Ices, the current Licensee, for the period of 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September each year, from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2028.

3. Property Units Update – there are currently no vacant residential properties.

Commercial properties –

2 East End Stores

Officers agreed that if a replacement tenant could be found, that the existing tenant in the unit above would be allowed to Assign the current Lease.

Whilst some enquiries have been received, no new tenant has yet been identified.

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.

4. 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. Recruitment to vacant posts is in hand.

5. 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.

6. Professional Services

It is anticipated that, subject to capacity, arrangements will be identified, and agreement sought later this financial year, regarding the re-tender of surveyor services once extant matters are wholly complete (current provider Bruton Knowles).

7. Lettable Properties and Energy Performance

Energy Performance Certificates (EPC's) and Display Performance Certificates (DPC's) are a requirement for the letting of properties. Valid EPCs have now been commissioned on the majority of Council-owned properties, with any outstanding being undertaken within the next couple of months. Where works are required to reach the required standard, the General Manager will be reviewing such works. Where it is not possible to reach the minimum standard i.e. due to the Listing of a property, then an Exemption Certificate will be applied for.

8. Staff Handbook

We are awaiting updated Model Policies from the Council's HR Advisors (SW Councils), which will take into account the upcoming Employment Rights Act. These are anticipated late March/early April and they will then be tailored to this Council's requirements, and will form an updated Staff Handbook.

9. Office Recruitment

- Interviews were held for the Financial Administrator vacancy, an offer was made but declined in favor of other employment. The role will be re-advertised in April, 2026.
- Temporary candidates are currently being reviewed to fill the gap of the Financial Administrator whilst the recruitment process continues.
- Letters of engagement have been sent to 2 new casual members of staff for the Town Hall and Pannier Market.

10. Activity Log

CONFERENCE & TRAINING ACTIVITY LOG  
CIVIC YEAR 2025-2026 COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE

**N.B.** Should you wish to attend any of the training sessions detailed below, please contact the Office & Finance Manager who will book training places for Councillors.

DATE OF MEETING or TRAINING SESSION	SUBJECT	LOCATION	ORGAN ISER	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				
23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2026	Developing Action Plans and Strategies for Town and Parish Councils	Virtual – 10am to 12 noon	DALC	None
25 <sup>th</sup> March 2026	Being a Good Councillor 4 – The Council in the Community	Virtual – 6pm to 7pm	DALC	None
21 <sup>st</sup> April 2026	Getting Started with AI in your Council	Virtual – 11am to 12.30 noon	DALC	None
27 <sup>th</sup> April 2026	Being a Good Councillor 1 – Roles and Responsibilities	Virtual – 6pm to 7pm	DALC	None
29 <sup>th</sup> April 2026	Introduction to planning	Virtual – 6.30pm to 20.15pm	DALC	None
11 <sup>th</sup> May 2026	Chairing Local Council Meetings	Virtual – 6pm to 8pm	DALC	None

#### 11. Council Chamber Bookings

Chamber bookings (not including Council Meetings), from 17<sup>th</sup> February – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026:

- 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)

Report prepared by  
Jan Smallcombe (Assistant to the Town Clerk) and Adele Cassidy (Office & Finance Manager)