



Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday, 2 December 2025 at 18.30 at Crediton Library, Belle Parade, Crediton

Present:	Cllrs Giles Fawssett, Guy Cochran, Paul Perriman, Rachel Backhouse, Vix Frisby, Tim Stanford, Jim Cairney (part meeting) and John Downes (part meeting)
Apologies:	Cllrs Joyce Harris, Liz Brookes-Hocking, Natalia Letch and Steve Huxtable
In Attendance:	Cllr Philip Bialyk, Leader of Exeter City Council 7 members of the public 1 member of the press Tim Bland, Events & Town Centre Officer
Minute Taker:	Emma Anderson

MINUTES

2025/318 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Cllr Fawssett opened the meeting and members introduced themselves. Cllr Cairney advised he would need to leave the meeting early to attend another meeting.

2025/319 EXETER CITY COUNCIL LGR PRESENTATION

Cllr Philip Bialyk, Leader of Exeter City Council, delivered an extensive presentation on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). He outlined the government's decision to transition from a two-tier system to a single-tier unitary authority model, aiming to simplify governance, improve efficiency, and foster sustainable community development. *A copy of the presentation is included as Appendix One.*

Concerns were raised about the consultation process, with some attendees describing it as inadequate. Cllr Bialyk defended the process, citing surveys and stakeholder engagement. Questions and concerns from councillors and the public included financial viability, potential loss of local identity, and the consultation's transparency. Cllr Bialyk reiterated the proposal's benefits and opportunities for collaboration but acknowledged scepticism among attendees.

Concerns about statutory services and boundary determinations were addressed, with assurances of improved efficiency and delivery without diminishing services. Cllr Bialyk clarified that parishes would not have statutory responsibilities imposed but would explore collaborative opportunities.

Cllr Cairney left the meeting at 19.25

2025/320 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following questions were asked:

- The meeting on the 21 October, you might recall a discussion about Facebook live stream recordings and the Council resolved at that meeting to seek legal advice, regarding the retention of those live streams. Has any progress been made on that?
- Given the increasing threat of cyber terrorism and the number of recent high profile attacks on London councils, what effect does this Council think that a loss of its core IT systems would have on the operation of the Council itself? And would that actually be noticed by the public, do you think?
- Given the survey that we've just had on the precept, will the Council commit to publishing a full breakdown of the results of that survey?
- Can the town council explain why the town clock continues not to be working despite your assurance at least six weeks ago that a visit had been booked? The Deputy Clerk advised that the engineer visit did take place, but they were not able to undertake the work, therefore an alternative option is being investigated.
- Regarding the community noticeboard outside Adam's, how quickly are you working on this and when can we expect the community noticeboard to be replaced? The Chair confirmed that he was looking at repairing the noticeboard. If it cannot be repaired, the purchasing of a replacement will be included on a future agenda.
- The Town Clerk said that an invoice is still anticipated from the District Council to fund the cost this year of the paddling pool, is there any provision for the payment of this in the current budget forecast and is it going to be paid?

Cllr Downes joined the meeting at 19.44

Cllr Fawssett advised that written responses would be provided.

2025/321 APOLOGIES

Decision: It was resolved to receive and accept apologies from Cllrs Huxtable, Brookes-Hocking, Letch and Harris. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse) It was also noted that Cllr Downes provided apologies for arriving late due to another meeting.

2025/322 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

2025/322.1 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPI'S) IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

No declarations of personal interest or disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

2025/322.2 TO CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS (REQUESTS SHOULD BE MADE TO THE TOWN CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING)

There were no dispensation requests



2025/323 ORDER OF BUSINESS

There were no changes

2025/324 CHAIR'S AND CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Fawssett shared an announcement on behalf of Cllr Huxtable giving thanks to Crediton & District Lions, choirs, schools, performers and traders, councillors, and of course the Public, who all made Saturday's Christmas in Crediton event such a success.

2025/325 TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 18 November 2025, as a correct record. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

2025/326 MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The following planning applications were discussed:

25/01503/ADVERT | Advertisement Consent for the installation of Pulse Smart Hub with integrated digital screens at 3 locations within Crediton | Pavement Adjacent to The Wellparks Farm Complex, Exeter Road (A377), Crediton EX17 3PJ; Pavement Adjacent to 32 High Street (A377), Crediton EX17 3AJ; Section of Grass Verge Adjacent to Lidl, Exhibition Road (A3072), Crediton EX17 1EP (extension requested)

Decision: It was **resolved** to recommend NO OBJECTION. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse)

25/01501/FULL | Installation of Pulse Smart Hub with integrated digital screens at 3 locations within Crediton | Pavement Adjacent to The Wellparks Farm Complex, Exeter Road (A377), Crediton EX17 3PJ; Pavement Adjacent to 32 High Street (A377), Crediton EX17 3AJ; Section of Grass Verge Adjacent to Lidl, Exhibition Road (A3072), Crediton EX17 1EP

Decision: It was **resolved** to recommend NO OBJECTION. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse)

25/01426/HOUSE | Erection of attached summer house | 4 Downes Close Crediton Devon EX17 3FP

Decision: It was **resolved** to recommend NO OBJECTION. (Proposed by Cllr Perriman)

25/01635/ADVERT | Advertisement Consent to display 3 non-illuminated sponsorship signs | Roundabout at NGR 284388 101056 Exhibition Road/Tiverton Road Crediton Devon

Decision: It was **resolved** to OBJECT on the grounds that the signs would be a distraction to road users. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse, Cllr Cochran abstained)

25/01636/ADVERT | Advertisement Consent to display 4 non-illuminated sponsorship signs | Roundabout at NGR 284544 99564 Wellparks/Joseph Locke Way Crediton Devon



Decision: It was **resolved** to OBJECT on the grounds that the signs would be a distraction to road users. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse, Cllr Cochran abstained)

Task: Submit planning comments to MDDC *@Emily Armitage*

2025/327 MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL PLANNING DECISIONS

Decision: The council **noted** the approval of several planning applications by Mid Devon District Council.

2025/328 CREDITON URBAN TASKFORCE [CUT!]

Decision: The report from [CUT!] was received and **noted**. Cllr Backhouse provided an update on recent activities, including the previous action day at the War Memorial and Union Road. She thanked Cllr Standford for joining as well as a local army cadet. Volunteers and Cllrs were encouraged to come along to the next action day on Saturday, 13 December on George Hill.

2025/329 CREDITON FOOD FESTIVAL TRADE WASTE

The report was received and discussed.

Decision: It was **resolved** to offer to pay 2/3 of the bill for trade waste, to reflect the lack of bins at the beginning of the event. (Proposed by Cllr Downes)

Task: Send a letter to MDDC trade waste requesting a proportional reduction in the invoice due to incomplete service delivery during Crediton Food Festival 2025. *@Emma Anderson*

2025/330 BUDGET VIREMENTS

Decision: The report regarding Budget Virements was received and it was **resolved** to approve the recommendations therein. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse)

2025/331 EAR MARKED RESERVES

Decision: The report regarding the allocation of Ear Marked Reserves for Old Landscore School was received and it was **resolved** to approve the recommendations therein. (Proposed by Cllr Cochran)

2025/332 S106 ALLOCATION

Decision: It was **resolved** to send the proposed letters regarding the allocation and use of S106 funding to MDDC and Mel Stride MP. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse) It was further **resolved** to request an annual meeting between town councillors and the S106 officer. (Proposed by Cllr Downes)

Task: Send letters regarding the allocation and use of S106 funding to MDDC and Mel Stride MP *@Emma Anderson*

Task: Organise an annual meeting with the S106 officer and councillors to improve transparency regarding fund allocations and usage. *@Rachel Avery*

2025/333 TOWN ENTRANCE SIGNS

The report advised there have been delays in the installation and this has been formally raised with Devon County Council, and the delays have been addressed.

Reassurance was provided that DCC has now sent the order to the contractors, and the town council will be kept updated.

Decision: The report was **noted**.

Task: Follow up on the town entrance signs to confirm order status and installation timeline. *@Emma Anderson*

2025/334 REDLANDS BUS STOP

Cllr Downes provided the following update:

- Tesco are responsible for upgrading the road before Devon County Council (DCC) adopts it. Tesco say a dropped kerb/hard standing is not in their plan and they will not provide it. DCC has said it is not in the approved plan and is now too late to add - despite no confirmed start date.
- There is a risk Tesco will upgrade the road without providing any bus stop infrastructure, after which the road could be closed for up to 12 weeks for additional works later.
- Emails have been sent to Tesco's project manager and the senior County highways officer, stressing the need to incorporate the bus stop works during the main road upgrade.

Members agreed the issue is especially urgent because many elderly, disabled and vulnerable residents use the stop to access the doctors' surgery, often having to stand in the rain or step into the road to board buses. Councillors expressed strong frustration that the situation has continued unresolved for so long.

Decision: It was **resolved** to send letters to Tesco and Devon County Council expressing concerns about the lack of provision for a bus shelter at Redlands. (Proposed by Cllr Backhouse)

Task: Send letters to Tesco and Devon County Council expressing serious concerns about the lack of provision for a bus shelter at Redlands and urging them to include it in their plans. *@Rachel Avery*

2025/335 FOX HUNT

Decision: It was **resolved** to approve the following statement:

Crediton Town Council supports Tiverton Town Council's stance on fox hunting and recognises the call for greater scrutiny of hunt-related gatherings. We will continue to listen to residents, monitor developments, and reflect community values.

(Proposed by Cllr Backhouse, Cllr Cochran abstained)

2025/336 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was **noted** that the date of the next meeting would be Tuesday, 16 December 2025. Meeting closed at 20.40.

2025/337 REPORTS PACK

Signed

Dated

Appendix One



LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

Putting people first in Exeter and Devon

Council Leader Cllr Philip Bialyk
Crediton Parish Council | 2 December 2025

What is Local Government Reorganisation or “LGR”?

LGR is the process of changing how local councils are organised and what they are responsible for

The Government plans to replace the current two-tier system of district and county councils with fewer single tier unitary councils that deliver all local services and can cover counties, towns, or cities

The aim is to simplify local government and make structures more sustainable

This is a mandatory process, as stipulated by the Government.

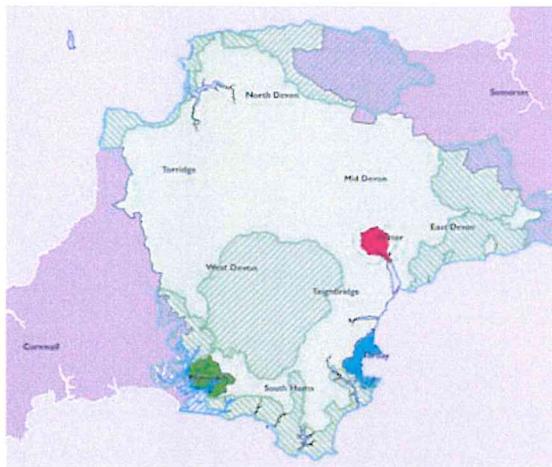
Timeline and next steps

ECC Key dates:

- 17 November – Council Agenda (Published)
- 18 November – Executive Agenda (Published)
- 25 November – Extraordinary Council Meeting
- 26 November – Executive Meeting
- 28 November – Final proposal submitted**



Our Baseline Four Unitary Proposal



New Unitary Council for Exeter (Red)

Plymouth Unitary (Dark Green)

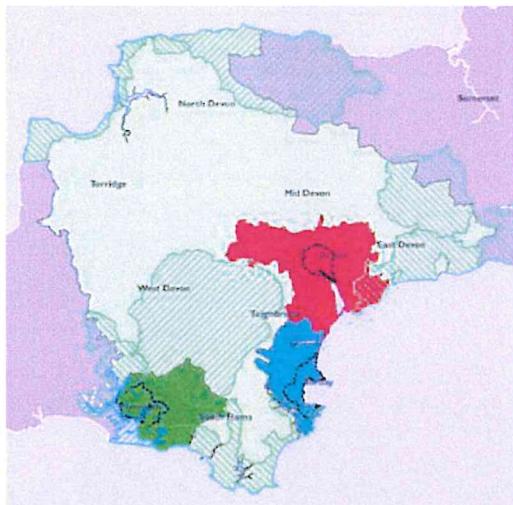
Torbay Unitary (Blue)

Devon Coast and Countryside Unitary (Light Green)

National Park and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Green hatch)

Requirement under the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to base a proposal on district council building blocks.

Our Modified Four Unitary Proposal



- New Unitary Council for Exeter and surrounding area (Red)
- Expanded Plymouth Unitary (Dark Green)
- Expanded Torbay Unitary (Blue)
- Devon Coast and Countryside Unitary (Light Green)
- National Park and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Green hatch)

Modification of our Baseline Proposal, based on whole districts, in accordance with Section 2 of the Local Government and Local Involvement in Health Act 2007.

ONE EXETER
ONE COUNCIL • ONE TEAM



Rationale for modification

- Meets the Government's six criteria more effectively because it better aligns with the functional economic geographies of Devon
- provides a balanced single-tier of local government for Devon
- responds to the feedback from our extensive stakeholder engagement work
- better reflects how people live their lives
- embraces a highly valued sense of place and community cohesiveness.

How our proposal delivers

- **Rooted in place and delivering** better outcomes – focussed on distinct places and able to better manage resources, attract investment and deliver value for money
- **Based on real places and economies** – functional geographies that support growth and accountability
- **Built on fair, sustainable finances** – based on a fair and balanced tax base to support financial resilience and aligned governance
- **Wrapped around communities** – giving them a real voice in decisions through local forums and stronger democratic representation
- **Protects our environment** – from our coasts to cities, towns and villages, to our countryside
- **Providing simpler, smarter, public services that work better for people** – reducing duplication and complexity, delivering better decision making and improved customer experiences
- **Practical, phased and ready to deliver** – ensuring a logical flow into effective new authorities, with shared strategic need and value placed on working together.

How do we meet the criteria?

Community Engagement & Neighbourhood Empowerment

Proposes Local Area Neighbourhood Committees, strengthens relationships with Parish and Town Councils and unlocks potential for greater powers

Supports Devolution

Aligns with devolution models to enable strategic coordination

Collaboration and Responsiveness

Data sharing and joint efforts among councils, working closely with Plymouth and Torbay

Single Tier of Local Government

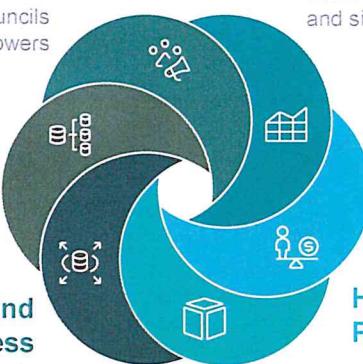
Replaces 11 councils with 4 unitary authorities to remove duplication and simplify accountability

Right Size and Financial Resilience

Better balance of populations: 233k–456k per authority, all four are financially sustainable with payback within 3 years

High Quality & Sustainable Public Services

Tailors services to meet urban and rural needs, focusing on prevention. New models for Adults and Childrens Services



ONE EXETER
ONE COUNCIL • ONE TEAM

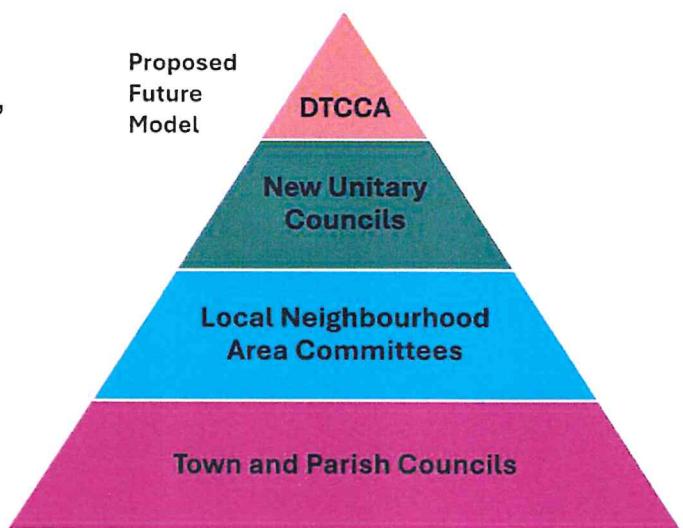


How are Town and Parish Councils affected?

- This is not a merger or takeover – all 11 Councils in Devon will be replaced by a smaller number of unitary councils
- Town and Parish Councils are not changing and will continue to serve their communities as they have always done
- There is opportunity for the new unitaries to strengthen relationships with Town and Parish Councils and work together in new ways
- LGR and Devolution deals could unlock greater powers for Town and Parish Councils to have more influence over outcomes for residents.

Neighbourhood Area Committees (NACs)

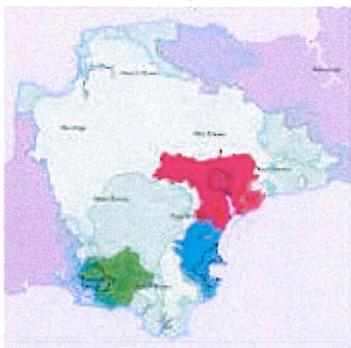
- In unparished areas, NACs will link communities with new unitary councils, tackling democratic deficit
- Where Town and Parish Councils exist, NACs will not replace or duplicate their work or remove assets/powers
- NACs will collaborate with Town and Parish Councils under new governance arrangements.



Options appraisals

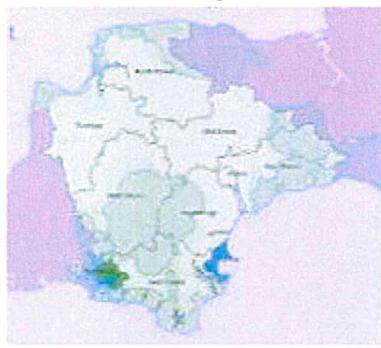
Option One

Our (modified) proposal
Four Unitary Councils



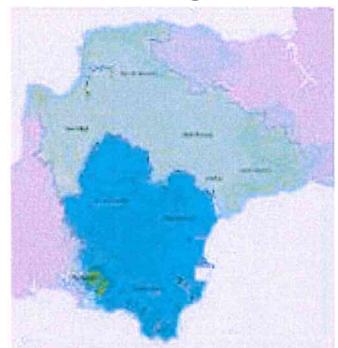
Option Two

'New Devon'
Three Unitary Councils



Option Three

'1-4-5'
Three Unitary Councils



Final proposal criteria

- Single tier of local government for the area
- Right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity & withstand financial shocks
- Prioritise the delivery of high quality & sustainable public services to citizens
- Councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs & is informed by local views.
- Must support devolution
- Enable stronger community to engagement & deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood.

Summary of ECC final Proposal

- Legally compliant
- Meets Government's six criteria
- Aligns with ECC's six principles
- Reflects input from members and feedback from engagement
- Demonstrates how it can deliver for the whole of Devon.