

# 1. Part 1: Glossary of Terms

This glossary is intended to function as a guide only, to assist the reader and user in navigating and understanding terminology used in the Constitution.

Term	Definition
Abstain	When a Councillor chooses not to vote on a motion.
Access to Information	By law, the public must be given reasonable notice of matters to be discussed at a Council, Committee or Sub Committee meeting.
Access To Information Rules	The legislative framework giving public access to information held by the Council (see also Confidential and Exempt information).
Adjourn	When a meeting is briefly suspended.
Adjourned	To suspend (e.g. a meeting) with the intention to resume it later.
Advisory Groups	Informal meetings which may involve non-councillors and may, or may not, be open to the public. No decisions can be taken by such groups (see also Task Groups).
Affirmation of the Meeting	When something is agreed by general consensus of the members present.
Agenda	A document setting out the business to be considered at formal meetings of the Council and Committees. Agendas are published five clear working days before a meeting and are available for inspection before each meeting at the Council's main offices and on the Council's website.
Amendment	A Motion to either insert or alter or omit words in the resolution under discussion. A direct negative is not an amendment.
Annual Governance Statement	A public statement which reviews how well the Council has kept to its governance rules.
Annual Meeting	The annual meeting of the Council which elects the Lord Mayor, the Leader of the Council, and Committee Chairs and Councillors.
Annual Statement of Accounts	A technical publication that includes all financial statements (e.g. Income & Expenditure Account, Balance Sheet, Movement in Reserves, Cashflow) and disclosures required by law.
Articles	The basic rules governing the Council's business.
Audit and Governance Committee	A committee of councillors responsible for overseeing the Council's governance framework, risk management, financial reporting, and internal control processes.
Background Papers	Any document which has been relied upon by an Officer in the preparation of a report for one of the Council's meetings. Background papers must be retained and available for inspection for 4 years beginning with the date on which the decision was made.
Benefits	Financial support provided by the Council to eligible residents, including housing benefit and council tax reduction schemes.
Best Value	The duty imposed on the Council by the Local Government Act 1999 to secure 'continuo.' improvement in the way in

	which functions are exercised having regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness’.
Budget	The Council’s plan for allocating financial resources to deliver services and projects, including setting the Council Tax, managing reserves, and controlling capital and revenue expenditure.
Budget and Policy Framework	The plans and strategies adopted by Full Council within which the Executive must operate and sets out the Council’s key plans and strategies and agreed budget for each year.
Budget Holder	An Officer with responsibility for managing, monitoring, authorising and reporting on spend within specified council budgets.
Budget Meeting of Council	The Ordinary Meeting of the Council taking place in February/March each year which considers the Budget.
Cabinet	The Councillors who, together with the Leader, form the Executive.
Cabinet Member	Those Councillors appointed by the Leader to the Cabinet. Also called Portfolio Holders who are responsible for a Portfolio allocated to them by the Leader.
Calendar Days	All days in the month, including weekends and public holidays.
Calendar of Meetings	The timetable of Meetings for the year.
Call-In	A mechanism which allows Scrutiny to examine and challenge an Executive decision before it is implemented.
Capital Expenditure	Spending on assets such as buildings or major infrastructure where the benefits extend over more than one financial year.
Carried	When a motion is carried, it is agreed.
Casting Vote	The Chairman has a casting vote which decides the matter when votes are equally divided.
Chair	Councillor who presides over a meeting of Council, a Committee or any Sub-Committee.
Chair of Council	Lord Mayor who is elected annually.
Charging Schedule	The document published by a local authority that sets out the CIL rates for different development types or areas.
Chief Executive	The most senior officer, with overall responsibility for the management and implementation of the Council’s policies and decisions. Also known as the Head of Paid Service.
Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer)	The statutory officer responsible for ensuring proper administration of the Council’s financial affairs, as required by the Local Government Act 1972.
Clear Days	All agendas and papers for decisions in public must be available 5 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include weekends; the day agenda is published on the day of the meeting. E.g. if a meeting is taking place on a Tuesday, the agenda must be published on the Monday in the week before the meeting.
Closure Motion	When a member moves that a vote is taken immediately to decide a question under consideration, without further debate.
Code of Conduct (Member Code of Conduct / Officer Code of Conduct)	A set of rules which elected and co-opted Councillors and Officers must follow.

Committees	A formally constituted group of councillors delegated to make decisions or recommendations on particular areas of Council business (e.g. Planning Committee, Licensing Committee).
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	A charge that local authorities can levy on new developments to help fund infrastructure such as transport, schools, and community facilities needed to support growth. It applies based on the size and type of development and is governed by the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).
Confidential Information	Information given to the Council by a Government Department on terms which forbid its public disclosure or information which cannot be publicly disclosed by Court Order. (see also Exempt Information).
Constitution	The document that sets out how Exeter City Council operates, how decisions are made, and the roles of councillors, officers and committees.
Co-Optee	A person who is not elected but is appointed to serve on a Committee or Sub-Committee in a participatory capacity. Co-optees do not normally have voting rights on Committees.
Corporate Complaints Procedure	Formal process to investigate and resolve complaints.
Corporate Plan	The Council's overarching strategy setting out its priorities, objectives and vision for Exeter's future.
Council	A legal entity created by law to administer certain functions within a local area. Within this Constitution it means Exeter City Council.
Council Tax	A local tax collected by Exeter City Council to fund local services. The amount is based on property valuation bands set by the Valuation Office Agency.
Councillor	An elected member representing one of Exeter's wards, responsible for decision-making, community leadership, and representing residents' interests. Also referred to as a Member.
Debate	A discussion on an issue in which different views are put forward.
Decisions	Decision of a of relevant Council Body or Officer.
Declaration of Interest	Councillors must declare interests within 28 days from becoming a member and 28 days from becoming aware of the interest. Declarations of interest should be made at all meetings where relevant to the business on the agenda.
Deferral	When an issue is put off or postponed until a future time.
Delegated Powers	Formal authorisation for a committee, portfolio holder or officer to take an action which is the ultimate responsibility of the Council or Executive.
Deputation	A group of people appointed to take part in a formal process on behalf of a larger group or to represent the views of that group.
Deputy Chair	The person appointed to preside in the absence of the Chair.
Deputy Leader	The Councillor elected to the position of Deputy Leader of the Council.
Deputy Lord Mayor	The Deputy Lord Mayor supports the Lord Mayor and stands in when the Lord Mayor is unavailable. Unlike the

	Lord Mayor, the Deputy remains politically active during their term. The Deputy also assists in attending civic functions and supporting community events alongside the Lord Mayor.
Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)	A financial interest that must be declared by councillors under the Localism Act 2011. Councillors must not participate in decisions where they have a DPI.
Dispensation	A dispensation allows an individual Member to take part in Council business where they would otherwise not be permitted. Members must follow an agreed procedure to request a dispensation.
District	The geographical area of Exeter City Council.
Earmarked Reserves	These reserves represent monies set aside that can only be used for a specific use or purpose.
Exclusion of the Public	The public are excluded from meetings when exempt or confidential information is being considered.
Executive	The Leader and the Cabinet; responsible for carrying out almost all of the local authority's functions, implementing policies and making key decisions within the Council's approved Budget and Policy Framework.
Executive Decisions	Decisions which can be made by the Cabinet, a member or committee of the Cabinet, or an officer.
Executive Members	The Councillors in the Executive each have responsibility for areas of the Council's work allocated to them by the Leader. Each area of responsibility is known as an Executive Member portfolio and each portfolio is given a title.
Exempt Information	Information that the Council may not be required to publish because it falls within specific categories defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.
Extraordinary Meeting	A meeting of the Full Council, convened for a specific purpose.
Financial Procedure Rules	The rules and procedures which govern financial management and control within the Council.
Financial Year	The financial year for the Council is different from the calendar year or the tax year. Our financial year starts on 1 April and ends on 31 March.
Forward Plan	The plan of future key decisions. The Forward Plan must be published 28 days before the decision is made unless an urgent decision is required.
Freedom of the City	An honorary distinction awarded to individuals, military units, or organizations in recognition of their outstanding service or contributions to the city.
Full Council	A meeting that all 39 elected Councillors are entitled to attend.
General Fund	Used to pay for items of everyday expenditure such as salaries.
Group Leader	The person appointed by a Political Group to act as the leader of that group of Councillors.
Head of Paid Service	The most senior officer, with overall responsibility for the management and operation of the Council; also known as the Chief Executive.
Head of Service	An officer with responsibility for a specific service area who reports to a Director.

Honorary Alderman	A title awarded to former councillors who have rendered eminent service but who no longer hold council office. Aldermen support ceremonial duties and council functions alongside roles like the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor.
Independent Member	A Councillor who is not a member of a recognised political party.
Independent Person (Audit)	An individual that is separate from and not influenced or controlled by those providing the information.
Infrastructure Funding Statement	The list (required under earlier CIL rules) of projects or types of infrastructure that the local authority intends to fund through CIL requiring contributions via S106.
Joint Arrangements	Services provided in partnership with other Councils or by or on behalf of those Councils.
Key Decision	An Executive decision which involves either a significant expenditure or savings, and/or has a significant impact on two or more wards.
Leader	The Councillor who heads the largest political group and is elected by the full Council to the position of Leader of the Council. The Leader chairs the Executive.
Licensing Committees	The Statutory Licensing and Gambling Committee and the General Purposes and Licensing Committee.
Licensing Sub-committee	Councillors trained in licensing matters appointed to hear licensing applications.
Local Choice Functions	Those functions which by law the Council can choose to be either an Executive Function or a Non-Executive Function.
Local Code of Corporate Governance	The framework through which the Council meets its commitment to good corporate governance.
Lord Mayor	The ceremonial head and representative of Exeter City Council and "first citizen." The role is non-political during the term and the role includes chairing council meetings and representing the city at official events. The Lord Mayor is elected annually from the 39 city councillors.
Meetings	Formally constituted meetings convened in accordance with the LGA 1972 with due notice, formal agenda, open to the public and with minutes taken forming the legal record of the discussion.
Members	Elected Councillors, or a person co-opted to the Council's Committees.
Members' Allowance Scheme	The scheme under which Councillors are entitled to receive allowances in respect of carrying out their duties and for fulfilling any special responsibilities allocated to them.
Minutes	Notes taken at meeting, approved at subsequent meeting as a formal written record of a meeting .
Monitoring Officer	The statutory officer responsible for ensuring the lawfulness and fairness of Council decision-making and for maintaining the ethical standards framework. The Monitoring Officer is currently the Head of Service for Legal and Democratic Services.
Motion	Formal proposal from a Councillor at a meeting to be voted on.
Move (a Motion)	A motion is moved when a formal proposal is made by a Councillor.

Municipal Year	The period between the Annual Meetings of the Council, which are usually held in May.
Officer	A paid employee of the Council, working under the direction of elected members to deliver services and implement policy.
Opposition Group(s)	This Political Group(s) who have a minority in terms of the number of Councillors who form that Political Group when compared to the total number of elected Councillors.
Ordinary Meeting	Council Meetings held in accordance with a programme of meetings decided by the Council.
Outside Bodies	Organisations with whom the Council works in partnership, appoints councillors to but over whom the Council has no direct control.
Petitions	A formal written request appealing to the Council in respect of a particular cause or question.
Planning Obligation	Another term for S106 agreements, requiring developers to mitigate the specific impact of their developments.
Point of Order	A question raised to clarify whether the procedural rules are being adhered to.
Political Balance	The rules for the allocation of seats are set out in Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government Regulations 1990.
Political Group	Two or more Councillors who notify the Head of Paid Service that they have formed a group.
Portfolio	The responsibilities or roles allocated to a Cabinet Member by the Leader.
Portfolio Holder	An Executive member with responsibility for a specific area of Council business, such as Housing, Climate or Finance.
Precept	A proportion of Council Tax which is paid to other authorities such as the County Council and Police.
Procedural Motions	Motions that can be moved without notice.
Procedure Rules	Rules governing how the Council operates and how decisions are taken.
Proper Officer	A senior officer of the Council who is given a set of responsibilities by statute.
Protocols	Codes of Practice which set out how various elements of the Council are expected to interact with each other
Prudential Borrowing Limits	The maximum amount of borrowing that the Council can enter into at any one point in time during the year.
Public Questions	Written questions submitted by the public to Council
Quasi-Judicial	A process of decision-making which is similar to a court of law, in that each party with an interest in the matter under consideration has an opportunity to make their case, following which a decision on the facts and representations is made.
Quorum	The minimum number of people who have to be present before a meeting can take place.
Recommendations	May be moved on notice at a particular meeting (often contained within a report to that meeting).
Recorded Vote	A vote in which the names of those voting for and against are recorded
Register of Interests	The record of all interests declared by Councillors.

Regulatory Committees	The Committees of the Council that are charged with regulatory functions, such as Planning and Licensing Committee.
Relevant Officer	A person designated as being responsible for a particular function or range of functions. This can be the Chief Executive, S151 Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer.
Reports	Written items prepared by officers for consideration by Councillors.
Resolution	A motion/decision agreed by a meeting is subsequently referred to as a resolution.
Returning Officer	The person who is responsible for arranging and overseeing the election process and who formally announces the results.
Right of Reply	The mover of a motion has a right to reply at the close of debate on a motion or amendment.
Risk Management	The process by which the Council identifies, evaluates, and manages potential risks to achieving its objectives.
Rules of Debate	These set out how meetings of the Council, the Executive, the Scrutiny Commission, other Committees and other bodies will be conducted.
S.151 Officer	The statutory officer responsible for ensuring proper administration of the Council's financial affairs and Chief Finance Officer.
Scheme of Delegation	Sets out which committee, Councillor or officer is responsible for particular functions of the Council.
Scrutiny	Scrutiny is a role fulfilled by all Councillors who are not Members of the Executive. It is a statutory function under the Local Government Act 2000.
Second	When a motion is endorsed by another member, it is 'seconded' and can then be voted upon.
Secretary of State	The head of a major government department.
Section 106 Agreement (S106)	A legal agreement between a developer and the local authority, negotiated as part of a planning permission, to secure site-specific mitigation measures and developer contributions such as affordable housing or open spaces.
Special Urgency	A procedure which must be followed when an Executive/ Key Decision needs to be taken urgently.
Stakeholder	A person or group that may be affected by a matter.
Statutory	Required by law.
Statutory Officers	The Council is required by law to appoint Officers in certain key roles. The Statutory Officers are the Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer.
Strategic Directors	The officers in charge of the Council Directorates.
Strategic Management Board (SMB)	The Council's senior management team, comprising the Chief Executive and Directors, responsible for corporate leadership and coordination.
Sub-Committee	A formal decision-making body with functions referred or delegated to it by a Committee.
Substantive Motion	The term used to refer to a motion which has been amended by agreement of the meeting.
Substitute Member	Named Councillors appointed as Substitutes to attend a meeting, when the ordinary Members are not able to attend
Summons	Formal notification of a meeting setting out the agenda for business it is proposed will be considered at the meeting.

Task and Finish Groups and Working Parties	Informal meetings which may involve non-Councillors and may, or may not, be open to the public. No decisions can be taken by such groups.
Tendering	The making of an offer by a contractor to carry out work.
Terms of Reference	The description of what a committee, sub-committee or panel may concern itself with.
Treasury Management Strategy	The way in which the Council manages its cash, borrowing, lending and investments, and associated risks.
Virement	Moving budget funds from one area of expenditure to another within a financial year.
Ward	A defined geographical area of Exeter represented by three elected councillors.