

Northam Town Council - Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 4th May 2021 at 6pm remotely using Zoom.

Present: Cllrs Chalmers (Retiring Chairman), Mrs Hodson, Miss Manley, Mrs McCarthy, Chalmers, Davis, Edwards, Hames, Laws, Leather, Newman-McKie, Sargent, Shelley and Tisdale

In Attendance: Mrs J Mills - Town Clerk
Mr G Langton – Deputy Town Clerk
Mrs P Moores - Assistant Town Clerk
Miss T Tucker – Administration Assistant
Acting Inspector E Lefort
PCSO E Rendle
3 members of the public for part of the meeting

2105/001 Address and Welcome by the retiring Town Mayor

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all the staff and fellow Councillors, especially his Deputy, for all their help during this especially difficult year.

2105/002 Annual Report from the Deputy Mayor (due to Purdah regulations)

Cllr Mrs Hodson gave the annual report which is attached to the minutes.

2105/003 Election of Town Mayor and signing of acceptance of Office

It was proposed by Cllr Chalmers and seconded by Cllr Miss Manley that Cllr Mrs Claire Hodson be elected as Town Mayor. There being no other nominations Cllr Mrs Hodson was duly elected (all in favour).

Cllr Mrs Hodson took the Chair. She will sign the acceptance of Office at a later date.

2105/004 Presentation of Past Mayor badge to Cllr Chalmers

Cllr Chalmers received the "Past Mayor" badge. Cllr Mrs Hodson thanked him for his work throughout the year.

2105/005 Presentation of the symbols of office

- **Mayoral Chain**
- **Gavel**
- **Keys to the Town Council Office**

(These will be presented when we are back to normal meetings)

Cllr Mrs Hodson thanked Members for electing her to the office of Mayor. She said she will strive to serve the community to the best of her ability. She was looking forward with excitement to meeting again with everyone under the new "normal". She reported that we will be soon be returning to face-to-face meetings. She is hoping to be able to organise several events in the community to recognise those who have contributed during the pandemic and asked Members for nominations to enable these events to take place.

2105/006 Election of Deputy Town Mayor and signing of acceptance of Office

Cllr Mrs Hodson proposed that Cllr Laws be elected as Deputy Mayor, this was seconded by Cllr Tisdale. Cllr Edwards proposed that Cllr Sargent be elected as Deputy Mayor, this was seconded by Cllr Himan. There followed a secret ballot and Cllr Laws was duly elected.

Cllr Laws thanked fellow Members for electing him as Deputy Mayor and said he is looking forward to working alongside the Mayor and fellow Members. He will sign the acceptance of Office at a later date.

2105/007

Apologies

All Members were present.

2105/008

To receive a Police report

The Mayor welcomed Acting Acting Inspector Lefort and PCSO Rendle.

Acting Inspector Lefort advised that a new Inspector would be appointed at the end of June. She advised that we can email her with any specific issues. She reported that the Police will face more demands this year.

The Mayor asked what impact the forthcoming G7 would have on local policing and Acting Inspector Lefort reported that this will be one of the biggest operations in the Force's existence. There was funding by the government to try and prevent too much knock-on effect on local business. She reported that the lack of foreign holidays will have a cumulative effect in the area and more staff was being recruited on her neighbourhood team. She was confident that they will be able to manage.

Cllr Leather thanked her for dealing with an issue that he had raised.

Cllr Laws raised the issue of problems in Westward Ho! with an influx of people gathering around the centre of Westward Ho! causing disruption, particularly between the hours of 9pm and midnight. Acting Inspector Lefort reported that she had been to Westward Ho! over the Bank Holiday weekend and was surprised to find such a lot of people on the green. She had spoken to some of them. She said that a new Police Constable will be drafted in for the summer to help deal with anti-social behaviour to form part of the primary tasking for the neighbourhood teams.

Cllr Sargent reported that he would be working with PCSO Rendle on the forthcoming Speedwatch campaign.

PCSO Rendle then gave a twelve-month report on crime figures for the area and Acting Acting Inspector Lefort advised that these figures are reviewed fortnightly to examine whether or not there were trends. Also some figures are duplicated as they cover a number of offences. One offender had been responsible for many crimes.

Members were asked to ensure that crime is reported correctly, not just by an e-mail to a local Officer as this will not always record the crime. She is aware of the difficulties of getting on to the 101 phone number but encouraged looking at the website and using the chat facility. There is also a facility for advising partnership intelligence.

The Mayor thanked Acting Inspector Lefort and PCSO Rendle for their contribution to the meeting.

2105/009

Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that all interests must be declared prior to the item being discussed.

Cllr Chalmers declared an interest in item 24 as he is a Director of DALC.

The Mayor advised Members to ensure that their Register of Interests is current.

- 2105/010 To agree the agenda between Part A and Part B (Confidential Information)**
It was **resolved** to agree the agenda between Part A and Part B
Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour)
- 2105/011 To receive reports from outgoing Committee Chairmen**
It was **agreed** to note the reports which are attached to the minutes.
- 2105/012 To review Terms of Reference for committees**
This was noted.
- 2105/013 To review delegation to committees**
It was agreed to note the delegation to committees.
- 2105/014 Appointments to Town Projects and Asset Management Committee**
It was **resolved** to appoint Councillors Edwards, Hames, Himan, Laws, Leather, Mrs McCarthy and Tisdale with the Mayor (ex-officio)
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Tisdale (all in favour)
- 2105/015 Appointments to Burrows Management Committee**
It was **resolved** to appoint Councillors Chalmers, Edwards, Hames, Laws, Sargent, Shelley and Tisdale with the Mayor (ex-officio)
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Hames (all in favour)
- 2105/016 Appointments to Planning Committee**
It was **resolved** to appoint Councillors Newman-McKie, Davis, Hames, Laws, Miss Manley, Sargent, Shelley and Tisdale with the Mayor (ex-officio)
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Shelley (all in favour)
- 2105/017 Appointments to Finance and Human Resources Committee**
Applications to sit on this Committee were over-subscribed. Cllr Tisdale agreed to be placed on a reserve list, subject to the appointments of the Chair of Northam Burrows and the Chair of Town Projects
It was **resolved** to appoint Councillors Chalmers, Edwards, Hames, Himan, Laws, Leather, Sargent and Tisdale with the Mayor (ex-officio)
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour)
- 2105/018 Appointments to Review Committee**
The Mayor advised of a shortfall of applications and envisaged there would only be 2 more meetings. A further five Members put their names forward.
It was **resolved** to appoint Councillors Edwards, Laws, Leather, McCarthy and Tisdale with the Mayor (ex-officio)
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour)
- 2105/019 Appointments to Westward Ho! Park Committee**
There was a shortfall in applications. Two Members put their names forward, leaving two vacancies on the Committee.
It was **resolved** to appoint Councillors Edwards, Laws, Leather, Mrs McCarthy, Newman-McKie, Sargent and Tisdale with the Mayor (ex-officio)
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Laws (all in favour)

2105/020 Appointments to Climate Emergency Committee

There was a shortfall in applications.

It was **resolved** to appoint Councillors Chalmers, Hames, Laws, Newman McKie and Shelley with the Mayor (ex-officio)

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Shelley (all in favour)

2105/021 Appointments to Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

One Member volunteered to fill the vacancy.

It was **resolved** to appoint Councillors Chalmers, Hames Laws, Newman McKie, Sargent and Shelley.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Miss Manley (all in favour)

2105/022 To consider review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back and to consider appointments to Outside Bodies

It was **resolved** to defer this item for a review and a report back to Full Council.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Shelley (all in favour)

Action Point – Defer item and report back to Full Council

2105/023 To confirm appointment of cheque signatories

It was **resolved** to appoint the cheque signatories as listed.

(Mayor, Members of the Finance and Human Resources Committee, Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk) (two Finance and Human Resources Committee Members with The Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk)

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Chalmers (all in favour)

Action Point – Advise bank of change of signatories.

2105/024 To consider review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The Standing Orders were reviewed during the year 2020-21 and accepted at Full Council

It was **agreed** to note.

Cllr Edwards gave his apologies and left the meeting briefly.

2105/025 To review Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies

- DALC/NALC
- Open Spaces Society
- Taw Torridge Estuary Forum
- Community Council of Devon and Devon Playing Fields Association (now joint)
- SLCC (including ILCM)
- CPRE
- Freedom of Information Commissioner
- Revive and Thrive

(These were reviewed following the last Annual Meeting and it was recommended to go ahead with renewing all the memberships for 2021-22)

It was **resolved** to renew the memberships for 2021-22 as listed.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Miss Manley (all in favour)

Action Point – Proceed with renewals for 2020-2021

- 2105/026 To consider renewal of the Ellis Whittam contract**
(it was agreed at the 2019 meeting to renew for 3 years renewal options will be sought prior to 2022 renewals)
Members noted this.
- 2105/027 To review Council's complaints procedure**
It was **resolved** to accept the Council's Complaints procedure following review.
Proposed Cllr Tisdale, Seconded: Cllr Mrs Hodson (all in favour)
- 2105/028 To review the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998**
It was **resolved** to defer this item to the first meeting of the Review Committee.
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Davis (all in favour)
Action Point – defer item to first meeting of the Review Committee
- 2105/029 To review the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media**
It was **resolved** to adopt the above policy.
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Laws (all in favour)
- 2105/030 To consider a review of policies**
It was **resolved** to defer the Environmental Policy and Recruitment and Selection Policy to the first meeting of the Review committee and also the Safeguarding Protocol.
Proposed; Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded; Cllr Hames (all in favour)
It was further **resolved** to adopt the policies reviewed in February 2021 and April 2021.
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Miss Manley (all in favour)
- Cllr Edwards re-joined the meeting.
- 2105/031 To review Councillor Allowances**
It was **resolved** to keep the Councillor Allowances as existing.
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Tisdale (majority in favour, 1 abstention)
- 2105/032 To review inventory of land and assets and office equipment and receive a report on Asset Management (herewith)**
The inventory and report were noted and Members requested a re-valuation of Northam Hall which is already being arranged in conjunction with renewal of our insurance policy.
Members also requested a report to go to the Finance and HR Committee on the generator.
Action Point – re-valuation of Northam Hall and report on generator
- 2105/033 To receive a schedule of meeting dates for 2021-2022 (herewith)**
It was **resolved** to approve the face-to-face meeting report subject to any new relaxations.
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Laws (10 in favour, 4 against)

It was further **resolved** to investigate the cost of installing Wi-Fi at Northam Hall and report back to Town Projects.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Mrs McCarthy (11 in favour, 3 against)

It was further **resolved** to accept the draft calendar subject to amending the meeting on 18th May and the proviso that further alterations may be required when Torridge District Council produce their agreed calendar.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour)

Action Points – Investigate the cost of installing Wi-Fi at Northam Hall and report back to Town Projects. Accept draft calendar after amending meeting on 18th May and subsequent alterations when TDC produce agreed calendar.

DRAFT

During Zoom meetings Members are requested to confirm that they are alone during Part B

All members confirmed this.

2105/034 To **resolve:** that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it involves the likely disclosure of confidential information:
It was **resolved** that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it involves the likely disclosure of confidential information:
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Edwards all in favour)

2105/035 **To review and confirm arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks** *Last year accepted the Royal and Sun Alliance policy on a three-year contract however, they are discontinuing this service. We will present options at Full Council.*
It was agreed to note that cover is valid until 31st May.

2105/036 **To resolve to readmit members of the press and public**
It was **resolved** to readmit members of the press and public
Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour)

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30 pm

Signed.....Date.....