



NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam EX39 1BY

Acting Town Clerk: Guy Langton (CiLCA, PSLCC)

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Please scan QR code for the Council's website



Prayers will be held at 6.25pm in the Council Chamber for anyone wishing to attend.

To all members of the Council:

You are hereby summoned to attend a **SPECIAL MEETING OF NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL** on
Tuesday 25th June 2024 at 6.30pm

at The Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam for the transaction of the business listed on the agenda overleaf.

Questions by the public

There will be a period for questions by the public. In accordance with Standing Order 3, members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of any Council business at Full Council and at Committee meetings in respect of business on the agenda.

Anyone wishing to ask questions is requested to notify the Town Clerk by 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

Recording, photographs and filming

In accordance with the Council's policy on filming and recording of Local Council and Committee meetings (available to read in the Chamber) and arising from the *Local Government and Accountability Act 2014* the press or public may audio-record, photograph or film meetings, or report from the meeting using social media. As such, members of the public may be recorded or photographed during the meeting. Anyone wishing to record or photograph the meeting must notify the Town Clerk before the commencement of the meeting.

Public attendance at Council and committee meetings

As a public body, Northam Town Council understands the need for transparency and accountability. The Council will therefore seek to conduct meetings using practices and procedures set out within the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, which states:

Subject to subsection (2) below, any meeting of a body exercising public functions, being a body to which this Act applies, shall be open to the public.*

Subsection (2) states:

Where a meeting is open to the public, a body may, by resolution exclude the public from the meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings; and where such a resolution is passed, this Act shall not require the meeting to be open to the public during proceedings to which the resolution applies.

Therefore, the Council's policy is to allow public access to meetings unless the business being transacted is confidential or there are 'other special reasons' to exclude the public.

Guy Langton

Guy Langton, Acting Town Clerk

Date of issue: 19th June 2024

AGENDA

- 1 **To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)** *All apologies must be notified to the Town Council offices prior to the meeting.*
- 2 **Mayor's announcements**
- 3 **To receive any dispensations and disclosable pecuniary or other interests** *Members are reminded that all interests must be declared prior to the item being discussed.*
- 4 **To agree the agenda as published.**
- 5 **To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Annual Meeting of Northam Town Council, held on the 15th May 2024** (pages 3-16)
- 6 **To receive and adopt the minutes and resolutions of Committees and Sub-Committees** (under separate cover)
 - Human Resources: 29th May 2024
- 7 **To note the draft minutes of the Committees and Sub-Committees** (under separate cover)
 - Human Resources: 11th June 2024
- 8 **Public Participation**

We welcome Parishioners speaking or making representations, asking questions or giving evidence at the meeting of the Full Council in respect of any issue affecting the Northam Town Council area. A period of twenty minutes is allocated for this unless directed by the Chair of the meeting and a member of the public shall not speak for more than 4 minutes. A question shall not receive a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- 9 **To consider a request from a member of the public requesting to use the Appledore carpark leased to The Seagate Hotel as an outdoor cinema in August** (p17)
- 10 **To consider a partnership proposal from the Atlantic Raquet Centre** (p18)
- 11 **To receive and approve the Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023-24** (to follow)
- 12 **To consider the recommendations of the Human Resources Committee** (confidential report)

Note: Confidential matters

If any matter are to be considered in confidential session, the Council must resolve that the public and press be excluded from the meeting. (*Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s1(2)*).

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**15th May 2024 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

Present: Cllrs Bach, Brading, Bruins, Edwards, Hames, Himan, Hodson, Leather, Lo-Vel, Newman-McKie, Singh and Tait.

In attendance: Guy Langton – Acting Town Clerk.
Tina Tucker – Administration Officer.
One member of the public.

The meeting was preceded by prayers, led by Reverend Sutton

The meeting was opened by Cllr Hames as the out-going Mayor. He thanked all members and staff for their support during his term in office.

Rev Sutton left the meeting at this point (18:35)

2405/001 Election of the Mayor and signing of acceptance of Office

Cllr Hodson **nominated** Cllr Tait as Mayor of Northam Town Council. The nomination was seconded by Cllr Hames. There being no other nominations, the matter was put to a vote. The majority were in favour, with two abstentions. Cllr Tait was **duly elected Mayor of Northam Town Council** for 2024-25.

Cllr Tait signed the acceptance of Office.

2405/002 Presentation of the symbols of office:

Cllr Tait was presented with the Mayoral Chain and Gavel and took the chair.

2405/003 Election of the Deputy Mayor and signing of acceptance of Office

Cllr Hodson **nominated** Cllr Bach as Deputy Mayor of Northam Town Council. The nomination was seconded by Cllr Edwards. There being no other nominations, the matter was put to a vote. All members were in favour. Cllr Bach was **duly elected Deputy Mayor of Northam Town Council** for 2024-25.

Cllr Bach signed the acceptance of Office and was presented with the Deputy Mayor's chain.

2405/004 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)

Cllr Ford tendered his apologies, the reasons were noted.

2405/005 To agree the agenda as published

It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published.

Proposed Cllr Whittaker, Seconded Cllr Edwards (all in favour)

2405/006 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of Full Town Council Meeting held on 10th April 2024

It was **resolved** that to approve the minutes of the Full Council held on the 10th April 2024 as a correct record, these were signed by the Mayor.

Proposed Cllr Brading, Seconded Cllr Bach (majority in favour, 2 abstentions – not present at meeting).

2405/007 To receive any dispensations and disclosable pecuniary or other interests

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

2405/008 Public Participation

The member of the public addressed the Council on the matter of flagpoles in the community. He reported that Appledore's flagpole, which had been installed by Trinity House, was in need of significant repair, or even replacement. He further noted that Westward Ho! did not have a community flagpole. He asked the Council to consider adding these matters to an appropriate committee meeting agenda for consideration.

2405/009 To resolve that:

"Northam Town Council resolves from the date of this meeting, until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council that having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, to adopt the General Power of Competence."

It was **resolved** to adopt the General Power of Competence, noting that the Acting Town Clerk held the CiLCA qualification.

Proposed: Cllr Brading, Seconded Cllr Bach (all in favour).

2405/010 To receive reports from outgoing Committee Chairs

The Council received and noted the reports from the outgoing committee Chairs, as follows: Climate Emergency Committee, Northam Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group, Finance & Human Resources Committee, Planning, Review Committee, Town Projects & Asset Management, Westward Ho! Park and the Northam Burrows Charity Management Committee. The reports are appended to these minutes for clarity.

2405/011 To agree which members wish to receive email correspondence and which hard-copy correspondence in respect of council meetings

Cllrs Bach, Brading, Bruins, Edwards, Leather, Newman-McKie, Singh, Tait and Whittaker and requested that they be provided with paper copies of agenda packs, in addition to the emailed copies.

Cllrs Ford, Hames, Himan, Hodson and Lo-Vel would receive email only.

2405/012 To consider Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference for committees, as recommended by the Review Committee

The Council considered the membership of the Northam Burrows Charity Management Committee.

It was **resolved** that the membership of the Northam Burrows Charity Management Committee would be changed to 6 plus the Mayor, ex-officio.

Proposed: Cllr Brading, Seconded: Cllr Tait (majority in favour, four against and one abstention)

It was **resolved** to adopt the Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference with the following amendments:

Section 6.6 and 6.7 of the Scheme of delegation - the references to 'Chairman' be replaced with 'Mayor'.

Section 6.7 of the Scheme of Delegation – the figure be amended to £5,000 in line with the Council's Financial Regulations, as amended at minute 2309/334.

The resolved membership of the Northam Burrows Charity Management Committee as above.

Proposed: Cllr Bach, Seconded: Cllr Brading (all in favour)

Action point: Upload the confirmed Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference to the Council's website.

2405/013 To receive the schedule of meeting dates for 2024-25, as agreed by Full Council

It was **resolved** to accept the meeting calendar, noting it would be reviewed at the Council’s 24th July 2024 meeting, with the following amendments:

Parks & Recreation would be moved from 22nd May 2024 to 23rd May 2024 to avoid a clash with an external event.

Planning and Development to move from its 6.30pm start time on the 6th June 2024 to avoid a clash with the D-Day 80th anniversary commemorations.

The scheduled start times for meetings from the 1st August 2024 would be removed.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Newman-McKie (majority in favour, one abstention).

Action point: Upload the confirmed calendar to the Council’s website and circulate to members.

2405/014 To resolve the appointments to the Council’s standing committees

It was noted that, where the Mayor sits ex officio, they may vote once only.

The membership of the Council’s committees was **resolved** as follows:

Human Resources	Parks & Recreation	Environment & Maintenance	Finance	Review	Planning & Development
Cllr Bach	Cllr Bach	Cllr Bach	Cllr Bach	Cllr Bach	Cllr Bach
Cllr Brading	Cllr Brading	Cllr Brading	Cllr Edwards	Cllr Brading	Cllr Brading
Cllr Edwards	Cllr Edwards	Cllr Edwards	Cllr Hames	Cllr Edwards	Cllr Hames
Cllr Himan	Cllr Hames	Cllr Hames	Cllr Himan	Cllr Leather	Cllr Lo-Vel
Cllr Hodson	Cllr Whittaker	Cllr Lo-Vel	Cllr Hodson	Cllr Bruins	Cllr Newman-McKie
Cllr Leather	Cllr Newman-McKie	Cllr Bruins	Cllr Leather		
Cllr Whittaker	Cllr Bruins		Cllr Whittaker		
Cllr Tait (Mayor)	Cllr Tait (Mayor)	Cllr Tait (Mayor)	Cllr Tait (Mayor)	Cllr Tait (Mayor)	Cllr Tait (Mayor)

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

It was noted that vacancies remained on the Environment and Maintenance Committee (one seat), Planning and Development, and Review Committees (two seats on each).

Should any members wish to be considered for membership of these committees, they would inform the Acting Town Clerk.

Action point: Update the membership on the Council’s website.

2405/015 As Corporate Trustee of the Northam Burrows Charity, to resolve appointment to the Northam Burrows Charity Management Committee

It was noted that, where the Mayor sits ex officio, they may vote once only.

The membership of the Northam Burrows Charity Management committee was **resolved** as follows:

Cllrs Bach, Bruins, Edwards, Hames, Leather and Whittaker, with Cllr Tait as the Mayor (ex-officio).

Proposed: Cllr Whittaker, Seconded: Cllr Brading (all in favour)

2405/016 To resolve Council appointments to the external and other bodies

The membership of the Northam Burrows Charity Management committee was confirmed as follows:

Blue Lights Hall:	Cllr Edwards
Taw-Torridge Estuary Forum:	Cllr Hames
Bideford Archive Management Committee:	Cllrs Himan and Whittaker
Northam Leisure Centre:	Cllr Hodson
Northam Community Centre:	Cllr Brading

- 2405/017 To appoint a Police Advocate**
No members expressed an interest at the meeting. Should any members wish to be considered for membership of these committees, they would inform the Acting Town Clerk.
- 2405/018 To review the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies**
It was noted that DALC and NALC provided a number of training opportunities and events that members may be interested in.
It was **resolved** to subscribe to DALC (including NALC) for the year 2024-25 at the cost of £1,752.
Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour)
It was resolved to meet the cost of the Acting Town Clerk's subscription to SLCC for the year 2024-25, estimated to be in the region of £325.
Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour)
It was noted that the renewal date was 31st August 2024.
Action point: membership of other external bodies would be put to the Finance Committee as the annual renewals arise.
- 2405/019 To consider a review of Standing Orders to the Review Committee**
[NALC Model Standing Orders were updated in 2022. NTC last comprehensively reviewed its Standing Orders in 2021.](#) Northam Town Council's published Standing Orders are available on its [website](#).
It was **resolved** to delegate the review of the Standing Orders to the Review Committee.
Proposed Cllr Whittaker, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour)
- 2405/020 To consider delegating the review of Financial Regulations to the Review Committee**
[NALC Model Financial Regulations were updated on 7th May 2024.](#) Northam Town Council's published Financial Regulations are available on its [website](#).
It was **resolved** to delegate the review of the Financial Regulations to the Finance Committee.
Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Himan (all in favour)
- 2405/021 To confirm appointment of cheque signatories**
The cheque signatories were confirmed as:
The Mayor, Members of the Finance Committee and Acting Town Clerk.
The signing authority was confirmed as two Finance Committee Members with Acting Town Clerk.
- 2405/022 To note the Council has a contract with WorkNest for HR, Health and Safety and training support** (it was agreed in July 2022 to renew for 3 years, until June 2025)
The Council's contract with WorkNest was noted.
- 2405/023 To note Northam Town Council policies.**
It was noted that all Council policies could be found on its website at [Policies - Northam Town Council](#).
- 2405/024 To review Councillor Allowances**
It was **resolved** to increase the Councillors' allowances for 2024-25 in line with the increase applied at Torridge District Council, which was 2.3%. This would increase the before stoppages allowance to £1,023 per member.
Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Bach (majority in favour, one against and one abstention)

2405/025 To review inventory of land and assets and office equipment and receive a report on Asset Management

It was **resolved** to accept the revised asset list, which is appended to these minutes for clarity.

Proposed: Cllr Edwards, Seconded: Cllr Brading (majority in favour, one abstention)

2405/026 To consider taking part in the NALC Local Council Award Scheme

It was **resolved** to defer the consideration of this matter until 2025.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Brading (majority in favour, two abstention)

2405/027 To consider arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks

It was **resolved** to instruct the AJG Gallagher to provide the Council’s insurance for a three-year period 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27, for the price of £908.10 per month for 36 months (£10,929.65 (inc. IPT) per annum, the total price would be £32,788.80), the clarity and accuracy being considered to assist with budgeting.

Proposed: Cllr Brading, Seconded Cllr Lo-Vel (all in favour)

Action point: Instruct AJG Gallagher and set up the direct debit.

The Council’s general insurance would next be renewed in May 2027.

It was **resolved** to ratify the Acting Town Clerk’s action to instruct James Hallam to provide the Council’s fleet insurance policy for the year 14th May 2024 to 13th May 2025 at the confirmed premium of £2,168.60 (inc. IPT).

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

It was **resolved** to ratify the Acting Town Clerk’s action to instruct AJG Gallagher to provide the Council’s engineering insurance policy for the year 28th May 2024 to 27th May 2025 at the confirmed premium of £487.25 (inc. IPT).

Proposed: Cllr Brading, Seconded: Cllr Bruins (all in favour).

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7:55pm.

Signed.....Dated.....

Committee Chair's report: Climate Emergency Committee

Over the year the Climate Emergency Committee has continued with its work of implementing the Council's Climate Emergency Plan. Following the recommendations in a survey commissioned from 361 Energy the Committee recommended the purchase of a battery powered replacement fiat bed vehicle for the maintenance staff and this was delivered in August. Powered partly by solar energy generated from panels on the roof of Northam Hall the vehicle has proved very useful and popular with the staff. Following another recommendation the Council purchased battery powered strimmers. The vehicle and equipment contribute significantly to reducing the Council's carbon emissions.

Looking at the Council's procurement and investment policies the Committee successfully recommended that the impact on climate and the environment should govern what is purchased and what funds the Council invests in.

Realising that adaptation and resilience as well as mitigation is vital in facing the effects of climate change the Committee has urged that adaptation policies are incorporated in the Council's Emergency Plan and a pack of suggested adaptation measures is awaited from Torridge District Council.

Increasing biodiversity is another provision of the Climate Emergency Plan and the Committee has overseen wild flower planting in selected verges and in the Council's open spaces as well as tree planting. Hedge laying has also been carried out in Anchor Park, Appledore, aimed at improving wildlife habitat. The Committee successfully recommended the Council join the West Country Buzz Project's Bumble Bee Pledge which involves pursuing bee friendly planting. Members of the Committee also joined children at Appledore School to plant a hedge in the School grounds. The hedge plants were funded from a grant applied for by our Deputy Clerk.

There was more engagement with schools when members of the Committee and the Deputy Clerk gave a presentation to Bideford College Sixth Form students on what the Council is doing to reduce carbon emissions and increase biodiversity. The presentation was followed by a lively debate and a decision to form a student action group.

Further pursuing the aim of engaging with the community the Committee produced a poster based on a map of the parish and highlighting the challenges of climate change locally. The poster has been displayed at sites in the parish.

A decision has been taken to incorporate all matters to do with the climate emergency in to a new Council committee structure so that these inform all Council decisions. My thanks go to the members of the now disbanded Climate Emergency Committee for their invaluable contributions.

Cllr Hames (07.05.2024)

Report of the Chair of Finance and Human Resources 2023/2024

A new Finance and Human Resources Committee held its inaugural meeting on the 21st June 2023. To ensure that all the newly elected councillors had a full understanding of their role within this Committee the Internal Auditor was invited to attend the next meeting to explain the audit process which would ensure that there was a robust system of governance for the monitoring of the public funding of the Council's budget.

Mindful of the financial pressures being experienced within our community the annual review of fees and charges, for allotments, the Boat park, the Gig Club, Northam Lions Football Club and Northam Hall, concluded that there would not be an increase for 2022/23,

During the financial year, investment in the solar installation at Northam Hall had halved the electricity bills for the premises with June and July recording nil kwh usage.

The Finance Committee monitors and approves expenditure, at six weekly intervals, ensuring that the Council's buildings, parks and open spaces, and vehicle fleet are maintained and where necessary replaced or upgraded.

Opportunities for funding have successfully been achieved with £80,000 granted from the Lawn Tennis Association for the refurbishment of the Westward Ho! Park Tennis Courts. A further grant from DLUHC (Department for Levelling up Housing and Communities) provided £25,000 for the installation of a "Changing Places" specialist toilet facility. This was matched funded by an appeal on a "Just Giving" site and a top up from Northam Town Councils project fund.

Each year the Council invites local charitable organisations to apply to the Council for grants to enable the delivery of a specific project or to maintain the running costs of their organisations. These grant applications are adjudicated by the finance committee in November and are awarded at the Annual Electors and Grants evening in the following April. This year grants totalling £17,190 were awarded with the recipients giving a brief synopsis of how the money would be spent.

The Finance and Human resources Committee have worked diligently to ensure that funding and procurement of services achieves the best possible value for money and that whenever possible local contractors and businesses are appointed. My thanks go to my fellow councillors in enabling Northam Town Council to progress into 2024/25 with a healthy budget to service the delivery of the projects within the Strategic Vision Plan

Cllr. Claire Hodson
Chair of Finance and Human Resources
11.5.24

Committee Chair's report: Northam Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group

The Northam Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group continued to work on finalising the Plan, the bulk of the detailed work being done by a Working Group of myself, Councillor Hodson and Nick Arnold, who had been co-opted on to the Advisory Group.

The extensive comments from the public consultation were considered and the policies in the draft Plan were then revised accordingly by the Working Group and the suggested revisions put to the Advisory Group for approval. Considerable work was done in preparing appendices and the required supplementary documents(e.g. a record of the public consultation process) and clearer maps were produced and new illustrations. A wildlife survey of Northam parish was also commissioned from Devon Biodiversity Records.

Currently the process of final editing of the draft is occurring prior to sending the document to a designer and then a proof reader. The draft Plan will then go to a pre-submission consultation prior to being sent to Torrington District Council and then to an independent examiner. Once any issues raised at those stages are dealt with the Plan will go to referendum.'

Our thanks go in particular to Nick Arnold for his invaluable input and to Guy Langton the Acting Clerk.

Cllr Hames (07.05.2024)

Committee Chair Report - Planning & Development

Northam Town Council Planning & Development Committee is constituted from elected members of Northam Town Council and acts in accordance with the Councils “Terms of Reference” under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Currently, the committee comprises seven elected members and has convened approximately seventeen times between May 2023 and May 2024, to consider approximately 110 applications, referred to us by Torridge District Council, within the Parish of Northam,... which includes Appledore, Northam and Westward Ho!

The committee when deciding such applications takes into consideration all relevant planning matters, representations from local residents, statutory consultees and other relevant parties and organisations as the case may be, as set out in the Councils Terms of Reference as above, Sections 1 to 8 inclusive. Where appropriate members of the public, applicants and other relevant organisations and agencies, are allowed to attend meetings and make representations.

In addition to planning applications the committee considers and comments on the allocation of Section 106 contributions from developers, street naming, highway and tree issues, along with such matters as set out in the terms of reference above Section 8 (a to h).

Since my election to the planning committee in May 2023, I have attended a number of additional learning and awareness courses relating to both Town & Country Planning Law and Development, attending other NTC and TDC committees covering climate change, external scrutiny, both in person and online, along with distant learning course organised by The Local Government Association. (LGA). I ensure that I continue with my CPD – Continuing Professional Development training relating to both planning and other matters relating to my position as an duly elected Councillor for both Torridge District and Northam Town Councils.

I take this opportunity of thanking my colleagues and all the members of the Northam Town Council Planning Committee, the Acting Town Clerk and officers of the council during my term as Chair of this Committee.

Cllr Louis C Bach JP
Chair Northam Town Council
Planning & Development Committee (May 2023 – May 2024)

Report of the Review Committee 23/24

The first meeting of this Committee took place in November 2023 to consider the workload of servicing the large number of Committee meetings and the additional pressure of a growing number of projects to be progressed. It was determined that meetings should be scheduled on a 6 weekly cycle with the exception of Planning which would be held every three weeks. This would form part of a major restructure planed review with consideration of how other similar sized Parish Councils operated to be presented at the AGM in 2024.

Despite four meetings of the Review Committee being convened January -April 2024 little progress has been made with the review of policies and these will need to be agendered after the AGM in May 2024. Progress was achieved with the recommendation to Finance and HR and Full Council that a review of staffing should be undertaken by our employment specialists Worknest, This would facilitate the assessment of the requirements of competencies and skills related to the recruitment of vacancies in the administrative team and future proofing the adequacy of the maintenance workforce.

The new Committee structure was agreed for presentation at the AGM and terms of reference and schemes of delegation were also recommended for approval.

The need for continued review of policies and procedures will need to be prioritised at an early stage following the staffing review and the implementation of the new Committee structure.

I am confident that this Committee has the capacity to complete the tasks identified during 23/24 and that the governance of the Council will be robust and transparent.

It has not been a straightforward set of issues to consider so I thank all those who have persevered and contributed to the debate.

Cllr Claire Hodson
Chair of Review Committee
11.5.24

Committee Chair report: Town Projects and Asset Management Committee

Firstly I would like to thank all the maintenance team for all their hard work throughout the year keeping the town looking so nice.

Unfortunately it came as a shock to all that the Appledore Skate Park had to be closed for safety reasons right in the middle of the school summer holidays but this was repaired as quickly as was possible. This did highlight the need for a total review of all the Northam Town Council assets and a costed schedule of maintenance, repairs and replacement. This has been a massive undertaking and we thank our Acting Town Clerk for all his hard work to ensure this type of problem does not reoccur. With such a substantial asset base to look after it has been resolved to restructure the Town Projects and Asset Management Committee and separate Westward Ho! Park Committee into the Environment and Maintenance Committee and the Parks and Recreation Committees.

A revamp of play equipment is about to take place at Anchor Park. This has unfortunately been delayed due to the awful weather over the winter. Hedge laying has been carried out, aimed at improving wildlife habitat.

Lords Meadow will have ball fencing replaced this financial year, redesigned so the goal posts can be regularly moved to prevent the grass being destroyed. The Zip wire will also be replaced, with quotes to be considered at the first meeting of the new cycle. A public consultation will be taking place to see whether the outside gym equipment should be repaired / replaced, or is not required going forward. The Footpath survey, led by Cllr Hames is now complete and resurfacing and maintenance scheduled where necessary. Cllr Hames has shown the Maintenance Team the issues and repair will be scheduled.

The Transfer of ownership of Blackies to Northam is now complete, with land title held in the office, the same goes for the play area and green space at Wren Close.

Hedge planting at Burrough farm is now underway with one side already completed, the remainder to be completed in the autumn.

Cllr Niki Tait.
14/05/2024

Report of Westward Ho! Park Committee 2023/2024

It is important to note at the outset of this report the sad news that Pam and Stewart Makeig-Jones passed away within weeks of each other in the early months of this year. These truly remarkable volunteers for the Park had travelled through the entire journey from the campaign to save the Park, the continuous fund raising, the membership of FOTWHOP (friends of Westward Ho Park) and had been ever present figures in the Park and at Council Meetings. We will miss them both but they have left a legacy of the joy of volunteering and we will all commit to continuing to make the Park a haven of beauty.

The Park Committee have predominantly focussed on the plans and negotiations with the Lawn Tennis Association to fund the renovation and refencing of the Tennis Courts. The opportunity to access £80,000 of grant funding has enabled the Town Council to proceed with this work at a much earlier date than anticipated. The refurbishment is now complete with full access for those with dependency on wheelchairs or mobility scooters. The decision to levy a membership fee was deliberated at length and a £35 fee for an entire household for a year was finally agreed. This will enable a sinking fund for repairs and replacement to be established which will provide future Councillors with the means to finance any necessary works.

The second major project to install a “Changing Places” specialist toilet, changing table, hoist and shower is currently in development with a completion date in early June. Funding for this was provided by DLUHC (Department for Levelling up for Homes and Communities) and The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.. Matched funding had to be raised and a Just Giving page was opened raising . Northam Town Council agreed to fund the outstanding balance from the Projects fund. This facility will not only provide a service for Park users but for the entire resort of Westward Ho!. The next challenge for the Park will be to consider an options appraisal report regarding the future of the Pavilion. All recommendations will require careful scrutiny and the potential for grant funding will continue to be explored.

FOTWHOP continues to support the funding of the Parks projects and running costs with the volunteers offering their time and skill keeping everything shipshape. A special thanks to the Chair of FOTWHOP who continues to run the 200 Lottery Club which provides a regular income to the Park funds. Thank you to all the Committee members who have attended and debated, sometimes at length, the challenges of continuing to finance the future plans for the Park.

Cllr. Claire Hodson
Chair of Westward Ho! Park Committee

The Northam Burrows Charity Management Committee

Report to the Annual General Meeting of Northam Town Council 2023/24

This Committee had a slow start to arranging its first meeting in the current Council's first year. It was in fact not held until September of 2023. One reason I'm sure was that this particular Management Committee does not fall within the recognised cycle of Committee Meetings. The other probably was that in the first four months or so of a new Council there is so much to do.

The September meeting saw the Officers of the Charity voted in and as some members were new to the role of Councillor an understanding of the background to the creation of the Charity was felt essential. So, in order to achieve this a large amount of background papers were circulated.

Then Manor Passes were discussed, as were the following, the current financial situation, the opportunity to give grants, a meeting to bring the users of the Burrows up to date and in time a report taken back to a Full Council Meeting as that represents the Charity's Corporate Trustee. Subsequent meetings were held in November 2023 January and February 2024.

In addition a well-attended Forum Meeting of the users of the Burrows met towards the end of February, with representatives from Torridge District Council, The Royal North Devon Golf Club, The Taw and Torridge Estuary along with a range of interested people representing the Graziers. S W Water was invited but was unable to attend. They did though indicate that they would try to do so in future. After the Forum meeting the allocation of the numbers of sheep and horses for the coming year was discussed and agreed.

The Committee has worked to establish a means of allocating grants including developing a form and agreeing the process of decision making. It's continued to lobby TDC for an increase in the 1500 Manor Passes it currently receives. To date there's been no success, but we intend to continue lobbying as the number provided cannot take into account of the land used for the Cafe and the increased size of the Burrows Centre. Another means of securing more Passes could be to purchase additional numbers, but as TDC will not reduce the cost of each purchase from £60 each this would be a huge expense. This year they saw the entire number allocated in three days. Many local people queued for hours on the first day which was unfortunately cold and wet even though their request would have been dealt with on the same day if put through the Council's letter box. The Committee members held a 'wash up' informally to look at how this process could be improved. One proposal made was that information about the distribution of the 2025 Passes would be advertised on the Burrows in several places as well as using the current methods. All the Passes were posted first class to ensure that they were received before the charges began at several of the Burrows gates.

The Representatives of the Graziers made several suggestions at their Forum Meeting, one of which has recently been resolved. The Burrow's Lead Ranger has just last week reinstated a ditch crossing which Graziers requested being repaired for safety reasons. Other work needed to make some areas better for all Burrows users was talked about and will be undertaken when time and capacity permits. There is one more priority though, the side gate adjacent to the main Burrows access road should be prioritised as the next job to be tackled. The horses can congregate in that area which has become very boggy and unpleasant to use.

The Charity holds considerable funds at present, which the Committee members feel need to be invested in improving the health and well-being of the Burrows in any way appropriate to its many users. The majority of the Committee felt that this should be the main area of the Charity's investment strategy before considering the needs of other local projects.

Cllr. Jane Whittaker, Committee Chair 2023/24

INVENTORY OF LAND ASSETS AND OFFICE EQUIPMENT			
Year Ended 31st March 2024			
Community		2022-23	2023-2024
Noticeboards		£ 2,000	
	Northam - Fore St		£ 500
	Appledore - The Quay		£ 500
	Westward Ho! - car park		£ 500
	Northam - Hanson Park		£ 500
	Windmill Lane allotments		£ 262
	Westward Ho! Park		£ 323
Seats - 71 in total (various constructions)		£ 20,000	£ 21,412
The Council has 34 parish benches for which it has inherited maintenance rights from TDC.			
In addition:			
4 benches on Westward Ho! Green and 19 in Westward Ho! Park.			
10 benches and picnic tables at Burrough Farm.			
1 each in Lords Meadow, Appletree Gardens, Ridgeway Drive and Wren Close.			
Bone Hill Flagpole		£ 8,000	£ 8,000
Bus Shelters		£ 34,922	£ 34,922
Christmas trees and lights		£ 10,000	£ 11,207
Town Charter		£ 5,000	£ 5,000
Name plates ('Welcome to...' signs)		£ 30,000	£ 30,000
Honours Boards (insured under contents)		£ 2,080	£ 2,080
Vases, paintings, gavel, stand (insured under contents)		£ 1,025	£ 1,025
Mayoral pictures (insured under contents)		£ 3,120	£ 3,120
Northam Hall		£ 170,197	£ 170,197
War Memorial - Northam		£ 20,358	£ 20,358
War Memorial - Appledore		£ 20,358	£ 20,358
water fountain (by Northam War Memorial)		£ 3,000	£ 3,000
hanging baskets and planters		£ 12,398	£ 12,398
play equipment and fencing and play surfaces		£ 163,000	£ 177,000
Westward Ho! Play area (installed 2021)			£ 120,000
Westward Ho! Tennis Courts (rennovated 2024)			£ 115,000
Westward Ho! Pavilion (acquired 2020)	£203,986 insured value in	£ -	£ 1
- including Changing Place	2023-24.		
	Nominal value included.		
Car Park adjoining Seagate Hotel (surface)		£ 20,602	£ 20,602
Civic regalia		£ 18,000	£ 18,000
Bunting		£ 2,000	£ 2,000
Festoon and Christmas Lighting		£ 60,867	£ 60,827
		£ 606,926	£ 859,092
Equipment			
Solar at Northam Hall		£ 10,000	£ 10,000
Chairs/tables at Northam Hall		£ 13,676	£ 13,676
Equipment Northam Hall		£ 16,040	£ 16,040
Filing cabinets		£ 1,394	£ 1,394
Desks and chairs		£ 1,392	£ 1,392
Computers and printers		£ 5,504	£ 5,504
Office equipment (inc Comb binder, laminator, POS system and sundry items)		£ 230	£ 450
Phones and system		£ 800	£ 800
Shredder		£ 163	£ 163
Kettle/cups		£ 31	£ 31
Franking Machine (leased)		£ 750	£ 750
mobile phones		£ 1,000	£ 250
outdoor gym equipment Lords Meadow plus fencing		£ 19,050	£ 19,050
cctv Northam Hall		£ 1,000	£ 1,000
Garden Machinery (shown separately on ins schedule)		£ 58,000	£ 58,000
Generator		£ 1,250	£ 1,250
Photocopier (leased but Insurance cover required)	£ 10,882		
Council vehicles		£ 35,418	
	Ford Transit ('18 purchase)		£ 21,418
	DFSK (HY16) ('06 purchase)		£ 13,450
	ORCA EV ('23 purchase)		£ 28,217
	Repaired in 2023-24	£ 1,000	£ -
<i>note DFSK (WA11) - sold in 2023-24</i>			
Loan to Appledore Hall			
radar gun		£ 202	£ 202
beacon		£ 500	£ 500
Laptop (TC)			£ 1,150
Laptop (DTC)		£ 2,300	£ 1,150
		£ 169,700	£ 195,837
Total assets insured		£ 776,626	£ 1,054,929
Land owned by NTC (nominal figures only)			
Anchor Park			£ 1
'Blackies'			£ 1
Blue Lights Hall			£ 1
Car Park adjoining Seagate Hotel			£ 1
Lords Meadow			£ 1
Small grass area in JH Taylor Drive for maintenance purposes			£ -
Appletree Gardens			£ 1
Burrough Farm			£ 1
Wren Close play area and green space			£ 1
Ridgeway Drive			£ 1
Westward Ho! Park	included play equipment	£ 210,000	£ 1
	in 22-23		
Full total		£ 986,626	£ 1,054,939
	year to year variance		7%

Item 9 To consider a request from a member of the public requesting to use the Appledore carpark leased to the Seagate Hotel as an outdoor cinema in August.

Copy of the email requesting permission to hold outdoor cinema events in the Council's carpark in Appledore.

*From: Anne Tattersall
Sent: Monday, May 6, 2024 4:43 PM
To: Cllr Jane Whittaker
Subject: Potential fundraising events in Appledore*

Hello Jane

further to my conversation (before we were cut off!). I'm writing to ask if you could forward a motion to Northam Town Council on my behalf for the following charity events in aid of Appledore RNLI, Appledore Pirates and North Devon Against Domestic Abuse. This is the potential proposal To run 4 outdoor cinema screenings at 9.30pm to 11pm every Saturday during August at the Carpark in the Seagate hotel. Tickets will be £5 each and all money in its entirety will go to the above three charities.

I will take full responsibility, together with the managers of the Seagate who have agreed to provide all cinematic equipment

It would be a wonderful gesture if your Council would agree to this proposal and I would greatly appreciate your support.

Anne Tattersall

Item 10 To consider a partnership proposal from the Atlantic Raquet Centre.



ARC is a local charity set-up with the aim of making racquet sport and fitness affordable, welcoming and accessible to the people of Torrington. We are thrilled to see high quality Tennis courts re-opened in Westward Ho! and are very keen to help support Northam Town Council in growing Tennis and getting more local people of all ages playing the sport.

We would like to form a partnership with Northam Town Council and would like to offer the following support to get our partnership off the ground:

Activator Support - ARC could help get this started by sending some of our own trained session activator volunteers to initially run some social mix-in adult Tennis sessions in Westward Ho!. Our volunteers are fully trained and DBS checked. Once the sessions are established we could look to recruit activators from the group of regular participants.



Kids Holiday Tennis Camps - ARC could run some Kids Holiday Tennis camps on the Westward Ho! courts during the school summer holidays as a way of getting local children using the courts. These could be half-day or whole day and would be run by our trained LTA coaches. Various payment options could be discussed, including NTC paying ARC to run the sessions, ARC paying NTC for the courts, or a hybrid model in which NTC subsidises sessions for children.

Court Opening Event— ARC could help plan and deliver the opening event. We could organise a schools festival for local primary age children on the courts followed by a series of taster sessions and activities. We would do this free of charge.



Regular weekly coaching on the courts - Once the social mix-in sessions are established ARC could look to offer regular weekly evening or weekend coaching on the courts for both children and adults. Again payment options can be discussed as per the kids holiday camps above.

On-going advice and support around all things Tennis— We are your local Tennis experts and have extensive knowledge around maintaining & managing Tennis courts and growing the game. We also have much expertise in using ClubSpark and working closely with the LTA at both a local and national level. We would be more than happy to provide informal advice and support to NTC at any time free of charge.



Tom Vinall
General Manager, LTA Accredited+ Level 4 Senior Club Coach
Atlantic Racquet Centre | 07799796315 | tom@atlanticracquetcentre.co.uk