



## 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 the **NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL MEETING** on

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 6:30pm**

**Preceded by a presentation from Mr K Lane, Chair of the Northam Twinning Association**

**Prayers will be said at 6:25pm**

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

### Council Members:

Appledore Ward: Cllr Edwards, Cllr Hames and Cllr Tait (one vacancy).

Northam/Orchard Hill ward: Cllr Himan, Cllr Leather, Cllr Lo-Vel, Cllr Newman-McKie and Cllr Whittaker (one vacancy).

Westward Ho! ward: Cllr Bach, Cllr Hodson, Cllr Roscoe and Cllr Singh.

### 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 prior to 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, Town Clerk & RFO

Date of issue: 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025

# AGENDA

## Full Council

**Presentation from Mr K Lane, Chair of the Northam Twinning Association**

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

**2 To agree the agenda as published**

**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 Mayor's Announcements**

**5 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Full Town Council Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025 (p3 to 6)**

**6 To receive and adopt the reports of minutes and resolutions contained therein from Committees and Sub-Committees (attached under separate cover)**

- Finance 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025
- Planning and Development 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025

**7 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.*

**8 To receive a report (if any) from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary**

**9 To receive a report (if any) from the Devon County Councillor**

**10 To receive reports (if any) from Torridge District Members**

**11 To consider the action point update (p7-8)**

**12 To receive the Clerk's report (p8-11)**

**13 To note the timetable for elections in the *Northam Orchard Hill and Appledore Wards* of the Town Council (p11)**

**14 To consider nominating the Grade II listed 'Leisure Centre', the Square, Northam as an asset of community value (p12)**

**15 To note DALC's Larger Council's Forum on the topic of local government reorganisation (p12)**

**16 To consider the possible impact of local government reorganisation (p13)**

**17 To consider if, and how to make use of available Section 106 funds (p13-14)**

**18 To note a proposal from Fernbank regarding bus shelters along the 21 and 21a bus routes within the parish (p14)**

**Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Full Council meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 6.50pm in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

Present: Cllrs Bach, Edwards, Hames, Himan, Hodson, Leather, Lo-Vel and Tait (Mayor).

In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO); Cllr D McGeough (County Councillor); three members of the public.

**2502/600 Apologies**

Cllrs Ford, Newman-McKie, Roscoe, Singh and Whittaker tendered their apologies, the reasons for which were approved by the Council.

Cllr Hodson proposed that the Council did not approve Cllr Ford's reasons for absence, Cllr Himan seconded the motion. The majority voted against the proposal, the motion was therefore not passed (3 votes for, 4 votes against, 1 abstention). There was one vacancy.

**2502/601 To agree the agenda as published.**

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

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

**2502/602 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.

**2502/603 Mayor's Announcements**

The Town Clerk announced that he had been informed by Torridge District Council that sufficient signatures had been received requesting that an election be held to fill the vacancy in the Northam ward. Further details would be presented to the Council as they emerged.

**2502/604 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Full Town Council Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025**

It was **resolved** to amend minute 2401/543 to indicate that the agreement to nominate the lands at Knapp House was agreed in principle. With that amendment, the minutes were approved. They would be signed by the Chair at a later date.

Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Hames (majority in favour, 2 abstained – not present at meeting)

**2502/605 To receive and adopt the minutes and resolutions of Committees and Sub-Committees**

- Finance 4th December 2024 and 16th January 2025
- Human Resources 6th November 2024
- Planning and Development 8th January 2025
- Parks and Recreation 27th November 2024
- Environment and Maintenance 11th December 2024
- Review 14th November 2024

The minutes were received and adopted.

**2502/606 Public Participation**

One member of the public addressed the Council, reporting that the community had heard that City Councils from outside Devon were purchasing homes *en bloc* with the aim of reducing their housing waiting lists. Further she noted concerns that anyone relocating to the area from a city may struggle to adapt to the local environment and culture.

Cllrs Bach and Leather responded saying that such concerns had been voiced but that any affordable houses would only be made available to meet local need. The Local Authority had no control over who or what organisation bought open-market housing.

**2502/607 To receive a written report (if any) from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary**  
No report had been received.

**2502/608 To receive a written report (if any) from Devon County Councillor**  
Cllr McGeough opened by apologising or having missed the Council's previous two meetings due to ill health. He then provided a verbal report to the Council. He reported that the County Council would not be bringing a new primary school forward on the development to the south of Bay View Road until school place numbers were high enough, there was extra capacity in the schools serving the Parish. The County Council held the land and any funds secured to provide a school would also be retained.

He noted that there were many roadworks in the Parish. The works on Golf Links Road had taken longer than expected. The next meeting of the Council's HATOC committee would consider the no waiting plans at Westward Ho! In Appledore, the pedestrian crossing at the school had been completed but the line painting had not been to the required standard and the contractor would return to repaint the lines. National Grid had yet to connect the lights on the crossing.

**2502/609 To receive reports (if any) from Torridge District Members**

Cllr Leather reported that at that Council's last Community and Resources (C&R) committee he had proposed that Bone Hill car park be brought into alignment with other car parks in the area and be free to use from Saturday afternoon to Monday morning. This proposal had been approved by the committee and would be taken forward. Further, the new car park payment machines would be able to take card, cash and app-based payments.

Cllr Lo-Vel noted that as many parking machines as possible would be powered by solar PV panels and that the procurement process did not take account of environmental impact, which would now be included on Project Initiation Forms.

*Cllr McGeough left the meeting at this point (19:30)*

**2502/610 To consider the action point update**

The action points were noted as follows:

<p><b>10<sup>th</sup> April 2024</b> <b>Request for a free car parking day at Churchfields for the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the RNLI Appledore station.</b> (minute 2404/907)</p>	<p>The Town Clerk therefore asked if the Council could have a free day of parking at Churchfields in Appledore for the event. At the time of writing, Sean Kearney was consulting internally at TDC and a response was awaited. ONGOING</p>
<p><b>20<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b> <b>Re-engage with Surfers Against Sewage Plastic Free Campaigns</b> (minutes 2407/192 and 2411/416)</p>	<p>The Town Clerk, Community Engagement Officer, Cllrs Bach, Hames and Lo-Vel all attended the meetings arranged for the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024. The Northam Burrows Rangers both apologised in advance. The meeting was positive, with both the Council and SAS agreeing to share information so the Plastic Free Communities could restart. Prior to the meeting, the Town Clerk spoke to Mr Cross, who had been very supportive in the past and had arranged to speak again and plan for 2025 in the new year. ONGOING</p>
<p><b>20<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b> (minute 2411/413)</p>	<p>Drop kerbs: Action point: Town Clerk to contact the relevant Devon County Council officer. ONGOING</p>
<p><b>20<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b> (minute 2411/418)</p>	<p>Town Clerk to prepare a report into the costs of the three options for future work at the pavilion. This work has been overtaken by urgent work required at Northam Hall. ONGOING</p>

<b>18<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b> (minute 2412/494)	Prepare a lease for the rental of Blue Light Hall and pass the matter to the Finance committee. ONGOING
<b>18<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b> (minute 2412/498)	Request an exemption from parking charges at Windmill Lane on weekdays for Northam TC members. Request made, response awaited. ONGOING
<b>18<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b> (minute 2412/499)	Ask the member of the public planning a podcast project to draft a letter requesting bench sponsors contact them. ONGOING
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025</b> (minute 2501/543)	Draft an ACV form for Knapp woodland and green space. On the agenda. COMPLETE
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025</b> (minute 2501/551)	An email was drafted asking the Head of Legal Services at TDC for their opinion of the 1978 minute indicating the land was owned by Northam Town Council and responded saying that a transfer of ownership form, signed by both parties, would be required to identify ownership. ONGOING

## 2502/611 Clerk's report – Finance Committee January 2025

**On 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025 (the last available statement balance), the Council's balances were:**

Nationwide (Business 95 day saver)	£93,166.35	current interest rate is 3.9%
Cambridge & Counties Bank (31 day)	£93,884.82	current interest rate is 3.55%
Cambridge Building Society	£5,024.40	current interest rate is 2.4%
Petty Cash	£94.29	
Coop Bank (current account)	£245,134.80	
<b>Total cash in hand</b>	<b>£437,304.66</b>	

### Payments

The Council made 1081 payments in January 2025, totalling £38,799.24 (exVAT). A full list of these was presented to the Finance Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025. There were 34 payments of £100 or more (exVAT). These were reported to the Finance Committee in January 2025 and may be found in those minutes.

### Receipts:

In January 2025, the Council received 47 payments, totalling £7,923.73. There was a £15.00 refund for an overcharged May Fair brochure advert.

### Tennis courts:

The gross volume of sales since 1st January 2024 is £5,495. After fees, the Council has received £5,114.45. The LTA expect the Council to earmark approximately £3,600 per year for 15 years (index linked) to meet the costs of court maintenance and refurbishment. The Council is £1,514.45 over the target, in this extended year (1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 25). At the 31<sup>st</sup> March, a payment will be made to the Council's Cambridge Building Society account, where this earmark is held.

### Petty Cash:

On 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025, the Council held £76.90 in petty cash.

### Council IT contract:

Following an increase by Microsoft, the Council's monthly bill to the IT service provider will increase to £327.20 (exVAT). A £10 increase per month.

### Council precept request:

The Town Clerk had submitted the precept requirement to Torrridge District Council, that being £644,337. The District Council has acknowledged receipt.

**Annual account returns for 2023-24 for the charities for which the Council is corporate trustee**

The accounts for 2023-24 for the two Charities for which the Council was Corporate Trustee (Northam Burrows Charity [charity number 1198021] and Mrs Anderson’s Bequest for a Recreation Ground [charity number 300746]) had been filed by 31.01.2025 as required and could be viewed on the Charities’ pages of the Charity Commission’s website.

**2502/612 To consider a recommendation from the Environment & Maintenance Committee**  
At its meeting in February 2025, the Environment & Maintenance Committee reviewed the Council’s grass cutting contract with Devon County Council and recommended that it be entered into again for 2025-26, making 4 cuts in the year.

**2502/613 To consider a recommendation from the Finance Committee**  
The Committee recommended that the Council:  
i. Replace the whole set of maintenance equipment with electric models and purchase sufficient batteries and chargers, and  
ii. That the committee resolves to purchase a petrol powered ‘two-wheel tractor’ and three attachments – a weed ripper, a brush and collector set and a rotary mower, and  
iii. That the committee resolve to replace the DFSK with a new ORCA, equipped with a cage tipper body and a towbar.  
iv. That in all cases, the Council seek to reduce the cost by effective negotiation and offering the Council’s current equipment and truck in part-exchange.  
v. That the spending (approximately £59,000) be allocated to the cost centres for replacing a Truck and larger Council machinery (combined total of £43,250 in 2025-26), with any shortfall being identified from the Council’s end of year carry-forward or earmarked reserves.

It was **resolved** to proceed with the recommendations as proposed.  
Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Leather (majority in favour, 2 abstentions)  
**Action point: proceed with the orders.**

**2502/614 To note that the Council’s tennis facility has been awarded Devon Lawn Tennis Association’s Park Venue of the Year for 2024**  
The Council noted the award, the Mayor thanked all involved in the project and operation of the courts.

**2502/615 To consider the draft Asset of Community Value nomination form for land at Knapp**  
It was resolved to submit the application to nominate the land to be an asset of community value.  
Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded: Cllr Leather (all in favour)  
**Action point: submit the application.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:05pm.

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

**Item 6 To receive and adopt the reports of minutes and resolutions contained therein from Committees and Sub-Committees** (*attached under separate cover*)

- Finance 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025
- Planning and Development 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025

**Item 7 Public Participation**

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*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.*

**Item 8 To receive a report (if any) from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary**

**Item 9 To receive a report (if any) from the Devon County Councillor**

**Item 10 To receive reports (if any) from the Torridge District Members**

**Item 11 Action points**

<p><b>10<sup>th</sup> April 2024</b>  <b>Request for a free car parking day at Churchfields for the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the RNLI Appledore station.</b>          (minute 2404/907)</p>	<p>The Town Clerk therefore asked if the Council could have a free day of parking at Churchfields in Appledore for the event. At the time of writing, Sean Kearney was consulting internally at TDC and a response was awaited.          ONGOING</p>
<p><b>20<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b>  <b>Re-engage with Surfers Against Sewage Plastic Free Campaigns</b>          (minutes 2407/192 and 2411/416)</p>	<p>The Town Clerk, Community Engagement Officer, Cllrs Bach, Hames and Lo-Vel all attended the meetings arranged for the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024. The Northam Burrows Rangers both apologised in advance. The meeting was positive, with both the Council and SAS agreeing to share information so the Plastic Free Communities could restart. Prior to the meeting, the Town Clerk spoke to Mr Cross, who had been very supportive in the past and had arranged to speak again and plan for 2025 in the new year.          ONGOING</p>
<p><b>20<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b>          (minute 2411/413)</p>	<p>Drop kerbs. Quotations received and relevant Devon County Council officer contacted. <span style="float: right;">ONGOING</span></p>

<b>20<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b> (minute 2411/418)	Town Clerk to prepare a report into the costs of the three options for future work at the pavilion. This work has been overtaken by urgent work required at Northam Hall. ONGOING
<b>18<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b> (minute 2412/494)	Prepare a lease for the rental of Blue Light Hall and pass the matter to the Finance committee. ONGOING
<b>18<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b> (minute 2412/498)	Request an exemption from parking charges at Windmill Lane on weekdays for Northam TC members. Request made, response awaited. ONGOING
<b>18<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b> (minute 2412/499)	Ask the member of the public planning a podcast project to draft a letter requesting bench sponsors contact them. ONGOING
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025</b> (minute 2501/551)	An email was drafted asking the Head of Legal Services at TDC for their opinion of the 1978 minute indicating the land was owned by Northam Town Council and responded saying that a transfer of ownership form, signed by both parties, would be required to identify ownership. ONGOING
<b>19<sup>th</sup> February 2025</b> (minute 2502/613)	<p>i. Replace the whole set of maintenance equipment with electric models and purchase sufficient batteries and chargers, and QUOTATION RECEIVED AND BEING REVIEWED</p> <p>ii. That the committee resolves to purchase a petrol powered ‘two-wheel tractor’ and three attachments – a weed ripper, a brush and collector set and a rotary mower, and ORDER PLACED</p> <p>iii. That the committee resolve to replace the DFSK with a new ORCA, equipped with a cage tipper body and a towbar. ORDER PLACED</p> <p>iv. That in all cases, the Council seek to reduce the cost by effective negotiation and offering the Council’s current equipment and truck in part-exchange. ONGOING</p> <p>v. That the spending (approximately £59,000) be allocated to the cost centres for replacing a Truck and larger Council machinery (combined total of £43,250 in 2025-26), with any shortfall being identified from the Council’s end of year carry-forward or earmarked reserves. ONGOING</p>
<b>19<sup>th</sup> February 2025</b> (Minute 2502/615)	Submit an application for the land at Knapp House to be an asset of community value. Application submitted. Response from the District Council expected by 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2025. COMPLETE



## Item 12 To receive the Clerk's report

### Clerk's report – Finance Committee January 2025

**At 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025 (or according to the last available statement balance), the Council's balances were:**

Nationwide (Business 95 day saver) Reserves	£93,474.76	interest rate is 3.9%	General and Earmarked Reserves
Cambridge & Counties Bank (31 day)	£94,430.95	interest rate is 3.55%	Earmarked Reserves
Cambridge Building Society	£5,027.04	interest rate is 2.2%	Tennis Reserves
Petty Cash	£50.15		
Coop Bank (current account) over	£173,913.50	no interest	Includes budgeted carry-over
Hinkley & Rugby Building Society general (account not yet open)	£0.00	interest rate is 2.2%	holding account for expenditure
<b>Total cash in hand</b>	<b>£366,896.40</b>		

### Payments

The Council made 124 payments in January 2025, totalling £41,116.43 (exVAT), including a £32.05 refund for unused event refreshments and a VAT refund of £7,058.89. There were 45 payments of £100 or more (exVAT):

- £25,287.88 in payroll and associated costs
- £6,962.34 as a deposit against a new Truck for the Council
- £1,689.80 to print the May Fair 2025 booklets
- £1,090.81 direct debit for monthly insurance payment
- £969.30 monthly charge for the Council's general insurance
- £967.50 as deposit (25%) for a pump track as resolved at the Parks & Rec committee and in the Council's budget
- £805.00 for external play park inspections
- £796.31 for 2 May Poles (covered by a grant from the County Councillor)
- £633.57 for gas to heat Northam Hall in December
- £1,616.92 for materials to complete agreed footpath works, comprising multiple payments:
  - £605.00, £249.44, £287.04, £329.15, £152.96 and £146.29
- £540.45 for repairs to vehicle to pass MOT (HY16UOL)
- £455.00 to clean the CP Toilet
- £443.23 to service council mowing equipment
- £428.49 monthly room rental at the Town Hall
- £400.00 to clean Northam Hall in December
- £365.00 to maintain the Maintenance team's skills
- £315.65 on refreshments for the Mayor's Ceilidh and other events
- £312.10 monthly IT contract
- £307.80 staff travel expenses
- £275.00 First Aid/Medical cover for May Fair

- £250.00 as Float for Mayor’s Ceilidh
- £250.00 as grant for Appledore Crafters (2024-25)
- £248.00 for Fire extinguishers at Northam Hall and Pavilion
- £240.00 to PEAR Technology (mapping software provider)
- £195.00 to replace damaged hanging baskets
- £188.99 on fuel for vehicles and equipment
- £150.00 training administrative staff team
- £140.81 electricity at the Pavilion
- £140.00 training Fire Wardens
- £136.28 to TDC for buildings insurance recharge (Town Hall)
- £134.14 fencing at Anchor Park (steps)
- £125.00 stationery
- £119.98 hand wash water heater (Northam Hall, arising from FRA)
- £114.00 water bill (Northam Hall)
- £108.32 110v hammer drill
- £105.32 electricity works at Northam Hall (arising from FRA)
- £100.00 to hire St Mary’s Hall for the Mayor’s Ceilidh

**Receipts:**

In February 2025, the Council received 68 payments, totalling £5,665.26.

**Tennis courts:**

The gross volume of sales since 1st January 2024 is £5,610. After fees, the Council has received £5,222.11. The LTA expect the Council to earmark approximately £3,600 per year for 15 years (index linked) to meet the costs of court maintenance and refurbishment. The Council is £1,622.11 over the target, in this extended year (1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 25). After the 31<sup>st</sup> March, a payment will be made to the Council’s Cambridge Building Society account, where this earmark is held.

**Petty Cash:** The draft Financial Regulations for 2025-26 expect that petty cash is held at £100 or thereabouts in the account, £50 was withdrawn on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024 to maintain that level.

Petty Cash		2024-25	Name:	Northam TC Petty Cash														
Details					Income			Expenditure						Balance at start of FY				
Date	Transaction	Description	Ref	Scribe No	Petty Cash Withdrawal	Carry forward	Total in	VAT	Events	Milk etc	Maintenance	Office expenses	Total out	£	136.47	Reconciliation balance		
2.1.25	107	Milk	PC24-25.94				0.00			1.35			1.35		92.94			
6.2.25	108	Milk	PC24-25.95				0.00			1.70			1.70		91.24			
8.1.25	109	Milk and coffee	PC24-25.96				0.00			4.55			4.55		86.69			
15.1.25	110	Milk	PC24-25.97				0.00			1.89			1.89		84.80			
20.1.25	111	Milk	PC24-25.98				0.00			1.35			1.35		83.45			
23.1.25	112	Milk	PC24-25.99				0.00			1.35			1.35		82.10			
20.1.25	113	Twine	PC24-25.100				0.00	0.58			2.92		3.50		78.60	£	78.60	
30.1.25	114	Milk	PC24-25.101				0.00			1.70			1.70		76.90	£	76.90	
Number of transactions	114	TOTALS			660.00		660.00	28.56	310.97	141.42	106.07	132.55	719.57		-59.57	Difference between receipts and payments		
budgetted figures (12 month)					-		-	-	-	-	-	-						
variance (to date)					660.00		660.00	-	-310.97	-141.42	-	106.07	-	132.55				
													Variance		£ 136.47	76.90		

### Mayor's Ceilidh (21.02.25)

The event, held in St Mary's Hall, Appledore was a success, with 74 tickets sold at £10 each. The Council provided refreshments that were sold to those attending the event. The account for the event is below, with the proviso that at the time of writing, the Council had not received all the revenue from ticket sales.

For information, the cost of staffing the event has been included, though the sum has not taken that away from the bottom line.

	Float	Takings	Tickets (£10)
Card/BACS	£ -	£ 205.50	£ 330.00
Charges	£ -	-£ 3.63	£ -
£20	£ -	£ 360.00	£ 320.00
£10	£ 100.00	£ 330.00	£ 90.00
£5	£ 95.00	£ 5.00	£ -
£2	£ 16.00	£ 2.00	£ -
£1	£ 20.00	£ 4.00	£ -
50p	£ 19.00	£ 1.00	£ -
20p	£ -	£ -	£ -
10p	£ -	£ -	£ -
5p	£ -	£ -	£ -
2p	£ -	£ -	£ -
1p	£ -	£ -	£ -
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 250.00</b>	<b>£ 903.87</b>	<b>£ 740.00</b>
<b>Grand total of cashbox</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>1,643.87</b>
Float		£	250.00
Cost to Council of refreshments sold		£	100.05
Hall rental		£	100.00
<b>Total costs</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>450.05</b>
<b>To the Charity</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>1,193.82</b>
Staff 1	4hrs equivalent	£	96.88
Staff 2	7.5hrs equivalent	£	101.03

### Item 13 To note the timetable for elections in the *Northam Orchard Hill and Appledore Wards of the Town Council*

The District Council, having received the requisite number of requests for an election to be held, has informed this Council that elections to fill the vacancies in the Northam Orchard Hill and Appledore wards on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

Should the elections be contested (have more than one candidate), and in recognition of the District Council also having a vacancy in the Appledore Ward, which is being elected at the same time, the Council will be charged a portion of the costs incurred, made up of staff and postage costs, printing costs and polling station hire.

Publication of Notice of Election	Thursday 13 March 2025
Receipt of Nominations	4:00 pm Friday 21 March 2025
Withdrawal of Candidate	4:00 pm Friday 21 March 2025
Appointment of Election Agents	4:00 pm Friday 21 March 2025
Publication of Notice of Election Agents	4:00 pm Friday 21 March 2025
Publication of Statements of Persons Nominated	4:00 pm Monday 24 March 2025
Last Date for Registration	Tuesday 1 April 2025
Receipt of Postal Vote Applications	5:00 pm Wednesday 2 April 2025
Last day for Voter Authority Certificates	5:00 pm Wednesday 9 April 2025
Publication of Notice of Poll	Wednesday 9 April 2025
Receipt of Proxy Vote Applications	5:00 pm Wednesday 9 April 2025
Appointment of Poll and Count Agents	Thursday 10 April 2025
First Day to Issue Replacement Lost Postal Ballot Papers	Friday 11 April 2025
Last Day to Issue Replacement Spoilt or Lost Postal Ballot Papers	5:00 pm Thursday 17 April 2025
Receipt of Emergency Proxy Vote Applications	5:00 pm Thursday 17 April 2025
Day of Poll	7:00 am to 10:00 pm Thursday 17 April 2025
Declaration of Candidates Expenses	Thursday 15 May 2025

**Item 14 To consider nominating the Grade II listed ‘Leisure Centre’, the Square, Northam as an asset of community value**

In accordance with the Localism Act (2011) the Council has the right to request a building is included on the District Council’s list as an Asset of Community Value (ACV), following Torrington District Council terminating their lease.

An ACV is a building or piece of land whose main use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, either currently or in the recent past with a realistic prospect of future community use. Common examples are pubs, community/children centres, libraries, allotments, village shops, open spaces, theatres, civic halls, heritage sites, and football grounds. A community group, town council, can nominate an asset to the local authority. Listed Assets of Community Value stay on the local authority's list for up to five years.



The Localism Act 2011 allows community groups to nominate land or buildings as ACVs, giving them a greater chance to protect places of local interest from development or to bid to purchase them if the owner decides to sell.

If a building or land is listed as an ACV, and the owner decides to sell, the local authority must notify community groups, and the community has a period to express an interest in bidding to purchase it, this is known as the Community Right to Bid. The owner is under no obligation to sell the asset, and they can sell it to whomever they choose, at whatever price they choose. Community groups bidding on an asset do not have a right of first refusal.

The officers have approached the groups that were using the building, finding that in the last two years, it has been used by groups of up to 70 (see below) and was used by the Town Council during the May Fair in 2024. The Council has approached the building owner requesting the same usage for the May Fair in 2025.

- Monday Night – Bingo, average 50 people
- Tuesday – Saturday Coffee Morning, up to 25 people
- Tuesday and Friday Night – Bridge Club, average 35 people
- Wednesday afternoon – Friendship Club, average 40 people
- Wednesday Night – Bingo, average 70 people
- Saturday afternoon – Bingo, average 70 people
- Sunday night – AA Group, average 30 people.

**Recommendation: The Council resolves to nominate the building colloquially referred to as the ‘Leisure Centre’ as an asset of community value**

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**Item 15 To note DALC’s Larger Council’s Forum on the topic of local government reorganisation**

Further to DALC’s e-bulletin #11, DALC has arranged a Larger Councils Forum (a virtual meeting) for 1st April, 2pm – 3.30pm so that DALC can provide an update to member Councils on what we know about local government reorganisation in Devon at that point.

You will need to register in advance to attend the meeting, please contact the Town Clerk if you wish to attend.

## **Item 16 To consider the possible impact of local government reorganisation**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024, the government published its [English Devolution White Paper](#). This policy document made little or no mention of the parish/town council sector. However Torrridge District Council's most recent [public statement](#), made alongside other district, borough and unitary councils in Devon said:

*"We are united in our belief that the interests of the nearly 1 million people of Devon and Torbay will not best be served by a single 'mega' Council covering the entirety of this area. As districts, we have therefore reached initial agreement to work towards the formation of two new Councils that combine our existing areas as follows;*

- *A Unitary combining the South Hams, Teignbridge and West Devon areas with Torbay*
- *A Unitary including East, Mid and North Devon alongside Torrridge District and the City of Exeter"*

From the experience in other areas where a three-tier system of local democracy (e.g. county/district/parish councils) has been replaced with a two-tier (e.g. unitary/parish councils) the smaller authorities (parish and town councils) have been required or expected to take over responsibility for providing certain local facilities as the higher tiers merge.

Northam Town Council currently provides facilities that some larger parish and town councils do not, e.g. bus shelters, play areas, tennis courts, a skate park, recreation spaces and parks, community buildings, in addition to allotments, war memorials and public seating. This has provided this Council's staff team with the experience to understand what is required when providing facilities beyond the basic remit of a parish council.

Nevertheless, it would be prudent for this Council to be prepared for what may be expected of it in the future, as a result of the reorganisation process, or as a part of the normal review of assets at the District Council. For example, might Torrridge District Council provide a list of assets and services that it holds and provides in the parish of Northam? To have access to this information would allow this Council and its officers to prepare outline plans, should the landscape of service and facility provision change.

**Recommendation: The Council request that the leader and Chief Executive of Torrridge District Council meet representatives of this Town Council to discuss the possible effects of the changes to local government in the County**

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## **Item 17 To consider if, and how to make use of available Section 106 funds**

In a recent circular to parish and town clerks, Torrridge District Council has advised that there is a fund for a multi-use games area or playing pitches in the Westward Ho! ward of £182,786. Similarly, funds are available for public art in the same ward (£97,843).

This [contribution](#) arises from planning proposal [1/1084/2015/OUTM](#) (145 dwellings on land off Cornborough Road).

The Town Clerk and Cllr Bach recently discussed the possible use of this fund to provide a MUGA on the space previously occupied by the 4<sup>th</sup> tennis court at Westward Ho! Park. It has been confirmed that this would be an appropriate project to access the funds. The next stage would be to seek estimates for the cost of such facility. The officers expect that the project would be above the threshold for a formal tender process to be required.

**Recommendation: commence the background work for this project and delegate its oversight to the Parks & Recreation Committee.**

Regarding the public art fund available, £66k contribution to providing public art on in the vicinity of the Land or otherwise enhancing the environment. This [contribution](#) arises from planning proposal [1/0251/2013/FULM](#) (132 dwellings on land off Buckleigh Road).

Public art procurement is similar to other community facility development. The specialist nature of the work and output requires more specialist involvement at an earlier stage.

**Recommendation: Ward members and the Town Clerk arrange a meeting with the relevant officer and member(s) at Torridge District Council, together with other interested parties (for example the Burton at Bideford) to explore how this fund may be used.**

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**Item 18      To note a proposal from Fernbank regarding bus shelters along the 21 and 21a bus routes within the parish and consider how to proceed**

Fernbank, working with Devon County Council, are in the early stages of proposing the installation of new Living Roof bus shelters ones in return for an extension to the existing agreement with this Council, to 2045.

The shelters under consideration are:

- Three along Golf Links Road (outside new development), adjacent to Aysha Gardens & adjacent to the Co-op (should this be a Northam TC asset).
- Haywood Road opposite Durrant Hotel
- Opposite Hanson Park against the wall

The shelters in Appledore would not be included, nor would the wooden shelter opposite the war memorial in Northam, nor the stone shelter outside Torridge Pool.

**Recommendation: Delegate oversight of this to the Environment & Maintenance Committee.**

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