NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL
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Town Clerk & RFO: Guy Langton (CiLCA, PSLCC)
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To all members of the Committee:
You are hereby summoned to attend the **FINANCE and HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE** meeting on

Wednesday 11th November 2026 at 6.30pm

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

Membership:
Cllrs Edwards, Hames, Himan (Deputy Chair), Hodson (Chair), Leather, Tait and Whittaker plus the Mayor, Cllr Newman-McKie (ex-officio).

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.

Members of the public are asked to respect the fact that this is a meeting to conduct council business and interruptions during council business are not permitted. If, in the opinion of the Chairman, the business of the meeting is disrupted in any way, the Chairman may ask the person/s causing the disruption to be quiet and if they refuse then ask them to leave. **Mobile phones must be switched off or silenced during the meeting.**

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, Town Clerk& RFO

Date of issue: 5th November 2026

Members are requested to turn off or silence their mobile phones for the duration of the meeting.

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 by 5pm on the day of the meeting.*

2 **Chair'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 consider the minutes of the Finance committee held on the 14th October 2026 as a true and correct record** (enclosed on coloured paper)

6 **Public Participation**
Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 4 minutes. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.

7 **To receive an update on the actions** (p3)

8 **To consider the Clerk's report for October 2026, the budget net position and approve, by resolution, the payments as listed** (p4-6 and under separate cover)

9 **To note the External Auditor's report for the year 2025-26** (p6-7)

10 **To receive and note the Manor Pass application, receipt and issue process and agree staff recharge for 2027 pass issue** (p7)

11 **To note the closure days for the Christmas and New Year period 2026-27** (p7-8)

To be held in confidential session *(pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960)*

12 **To receive and sign the payroll information sheet for submission, considering overtime claimed** (p8 and confidential report under separate cover)

13 **To receive an update on staffing matters** (p8 and verbal)

Item 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 by 5pm on the day of the meeting.*

Item 2 **Chair's announcements**

Item 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.

Item 4 **To agree the agenda as published.**

Item 5 **To consider the minutes of the previous Finance & HR meeting as a true and correct record** (enclosed on coloured paper)

Item 6 **Public Participation**

Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 4 minutes. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.

Item 7 **To receive an update on the actions**

Action		**Update**
1	Arrange digger training for one member of staff	Training completed. COMPLETE
2	Reference the carpark adjacent to the Seagate Hotel - Seek confirmation of the permission given for the existing constructions on the land (the patio and associated works, and the gig shed).	The District Council's Surveyor has advised that she has instructed that Council's legal team to draw up the retrospective permission documents. These had not been received at the time of writing. ONGOING
3	Prepare an outline of the process by which the Council issues Northam Burrows Manor Passes on behalf of the Northam Burrows Charity.	On the agenda COMPLETE
4	Draft a report detailing the Burrough Farm Allotment Association's account reports for a future meeting.	Provided to members by email on 19th October 2026. Hard copies will be available at the November 206 meeting, should members want them. COMPLETE
5	Town Clerk to contact the solicitor to amend the wording to clause 15.1 and note the need to amend the other lease in the future.	Solicitor instructed. COMPLETE
6	Include the cost of both the NEST and Local Government pension schemes for consideration as part of the budget for 2026/27.	To be included as budget developed. COMPLETE

Item 8 To consider the Clerk's report, the budget net position and approve, by resolution, the payments as listed

On 30th September 2026 the Council's balances were:

Account	Balance	Interest	Notes
Petty Cash	£86.51	zero	Financial Regulations expect the balance to be maintained at approximately £100
Hinkley & Rugby Building Society	£300,000	1.65%	Holding account for general expenditure and £50,000 of the General Reserve
Mayor's Charitable Fundraising	£2,812.42	1.06%	Mayor's civic dinner and other fundraising
May Fair	£5,264.11	1.06%	Funds for deposits and other spending leading up to the next May Fair
Cambridge & Counties Bank (31-day)	£99,406.50	2.72%	General Reserves
Nationwide (Business 95-day saver)	£96,806.63	3.20%	Earmarked Reserves (as per agreed budget: parks, defibrillators, LCWIP, war memorial cleaning, skate park and pavilion renovation reserve)
Cambridge Building Society	£10,792.20	1.55%	Tennis Reserves
Coop Bank (current account)	£194,152.85	zero	General expenditure

Total cash in hand (SCRIBE) £709,321.22

The bank reconciliation to be signed by the Chair is enclosed under separate cover (2026.11.11 Item 8(i)).

Tennis courts: The gross volume of sales in September 2026 was £238.94 after fees.

1st April to 31st October	Received (net)	Change	Payments (net)
2026	£4,710.00	-17.45%	£3,935.86, including £285.93 of Stripe transaction fees
2025	£5,675.00	+11.08%	N/A
2024 (1st year)	£4,765.61	N/A	N/A

Tennis-related payments in 2024 and 2025 are not available (inconsistent descriptions and cost codes).

Payments:

In October 2026, the council made 137 payments, totalling £45,966.93 (ex VAT) (2026.11.11 Item 8(ii) enclosed). There were 3 payments of £100 or more totalling £44,652.55 (ex VAT) (2026.11.11 Item 8(iii) enclosed).

Recommendation: The payments are approved as listed.

Petty Cash: The council spent £35.11 of petty cash in October 2026.

Petty Cash **26-27** **Northam TC Petty Cash** **Clerk's Report**

Details				Income			Expenditure						Balance at start of FY
Date	Trans action	Description	Ref	Petty Cash Withdrawal	-	Total in	VAT	Events	Refreshments	Maint enance	Admin	Total out	£ 73.76
30.09.27	60	Refreshments	PC26-27.57			0.00			1.39			1.39	55.23
2.10.26	61	Dishwasher tabs, rinse aid, salt, air freshener	PC26-27.58			0.00					18.60	18.60	36.63
5.10.26	62	Paper plates and trays	PC26-27.59			0.00					5.75	5.75	30.88
5.10.26	63	Cash withdrawal		65.00		65.00						0.00	95.88
5.10.26	64	Refreshments	PC26-27.60			0.00			1.39			1.39	94.49
5.10.26	65	Refreshments	PC26-27.61			0.00			2.35			2.35	92.14
5.10.26	66	Refreshments	PC26-27.62			0.00			1.89			1.89	90.25
20.10.26	67	Refreshments	PC26-27.63			0.00			1.99			1.99	88.26
27.10.26	68	Refreshments	PC26-27.68			0.00			1.75			1.75	86.51
Number of transactions	68			280.00		280.00	18.55	1.00	121.69	99.67	26.34	267.25	86.51

Receipts: In October 2026, the council had 148 receipts (2026.11.11 Item 8(iv), enclosed), totalling £5,127.44 (ex VAT) including:

- £2,536.65 for the hire of Northam Hall (110 receipts)
- £60 for Christmas Fair stalls (5 stalls)
- £493.90 for allotment tenancies (23 plots)
- £1,000 Locality Budget grant from DCC for the Westward Ho! Night Bus service
- £2,569.34 VAT returned.

Item 9 To note the External Auditor's Report 2025-26

(See enclosed papers: 2026.11.11 Item 9(i), 2026.11.11 Item 9(ii) and 2026.11.11 Item 9(iii)).

The External Auditor (EA) has made three comments on the 2025-26 AGAR submitted by the council:

i. An error was found in the council's asset register, where the figure for filing cabinets had been incorrectly stated as zero.
   a. The EA commented that: *The smaller authority has confirmed that it owns fixed assets but that the recognition policy for those assets is to value them all at £Nil. This policy does not give a reader of the Accounting Statements the ability to draw any meaning from the Box 9 figures stated on the AGAR or to recognise any changes in those assets year to year. The Practitioners' Guide (the Guide) states that smaller authorities 'need to apply a reasonable approach to asset valuation which is consistent from year to year'. Under this range of possible approaches, all assets are expected to carry some value, no matter how small. In particular, the Guide states that where assets are gifted at zero cost to the authority, they should be recorded at a nominal value of £1. Further, certain assets have been recorded at incorrect values in section 2, box 9 of the AGAR. The smaller authority should therefore reconsider the valuation policy for all fixed assets and draw up a policy to be approved by the authority and recorded in both the authority's minutes and in the asset register.*

      When submitting the 2026/27 AGAR, the smaller authority should ensure that the 2025/26 comparative figure in Box 9 is restated for consistency and comparability.

   Town Clerk's recommended action: The figure for the asset register will therefore be restated in the 2026/27 annual return.

ii. The Internal Auditor's (IA's) appointment was not formally minuted.
   a. The EA commented that: *Section 1, Assertion 6 has been incorrectly completed. Information received from the smaller authority confirms that it did not formally minute the appointment of the internal auditor upon appointment or subsequently.*

   Town Clerk's recommended action: The IA's appointment is formal minuted at the appropriate time.

iii. The Council is not compliant with Assertion 10:
   a. *The smaller authority has confirmed that it has not complied with the governance Assertion in Section 1, Box 10, but it has provided the appointed auditor with an adequate explanation for non-compliance and details of the actions necessary to address weaknesses identified.*
   b. Town Clerk's response: The council undertook an effectiveness check, intended to demonstrate how it has met the requirements of each assertion. While the council did have authority-owned domain names, it had not undertaken a check of the accessibility of its website since 2018, had not adopted an accessibility statement, a privacy statement, not aligned the information published in line with v3 of the ico's scheme, nor an IT policy.

Town Clerk's recommended action: The council continue to undertake the necessary actions:

1. **Adopt an IT Policy (draft presented to Review Committee in September 2026 and being revised before second reading by that committee)**
2. **Adopted an Accessibility Statement (not started)**
3. **Adopt a Privacy Statement (not started)**
4. **Adopt a publication Scheme aligned with the ico's scheme – adopted by Full Council on 30th Sept 2026 (minute 2609/341)**
5. **Undertake an accessibility check of its website (cost £200 approx.)**
6. **Review Website provision (possibly change provider)**

Recommendation: Complete the Town Clerk's recommended actions as listed.

Item 10 To receive and note the Manor Pass application, receipt and issue process and agree staff recharge for 2027 pass issue

The process has been outlined in text and as a series of actions, as presented in the attached paper 2026.11.11 Item 10. It is noted that the landowner proposes to start charging for access to the Burrows by car on Friday, 26th March 2027.

In July 2026 (minute 2607/155) it was agreed to charge the Northam Burrows Charity £7,689 (ex VAT) for the staff hours required to administer Manor Passes. It was also agreed that the amount charged would increase in line with the annual increment paid to staff.

In 2027, the cost will therefore be increased by 4.9%, made up of the average spinal column point rise (1.6%) plus Cost of Living (3.3% for 2026/27).

4.9% of £7,689 is £376.76.

The 2027 charge is therefore recommended to be £8,065.76 plus £1,613.15 VAT, a total of £9,678.91

Recommendation: The Committee confirm the 2027 staff recharge as £8,065.76 ex. VAT (£9,678.91 inc. VAT).

Item 11 To note the closure days for the Christmas and New Year period 2026-27

Custom and practice is that Northam Town Council is closed for all but essential work and emergency cover from 1pm on Christmas Eve to the first working day after the New Year statutory holiday.

During this period, the council's website is updated to give a contact phone number for the period of closure, as is the council's telephone message. A rota of staff to be in work to undertake essential maintenance tasks (such as battery changes for the 12v lights on Appledore Quay) and for emergency cover has been drawn up. Hours attended will be recorded as extra hours on timesheets and TOIL will be taken or overtime paid as appropriate.

This year, Christmas falls on a Friday, meaning the following Monday is the statutory holiday for Boxing Day. New Year's Day is also a Friday. The Christmas/New Year staffing this year would be as presented overleaf.

Monday 21st December	Tuesday 22nd December	Wednesday 23rd December	Thursday 24th December	Friday 25th December
Staffed as normal (8am to 4pm)	Staffed as normal (8am to 4pm)	Staffed as normal (8am to 4pm)	Staffed as a normal 'Friday' (8am to 1pm)	Closed
Monday 28th December	**Tuesday 29th December**	**Wednesday 30th December**	**Thursday 31st December**	**Friday 1st January**
Closed	Essential and emergency Cover only	Essential and emergency Cover only	Essential and emergency Cover only	Closed
Monday 4th January	**Tuesday 5th January**	**Wednesday 6th January**	**Thursday 7th January**	**Friday 8th January**
Staffed as normal (8am to 4pm)	Staffed as normal (8am to 4pm)	Staffed as normal (8am to 4pm)	Staffed as normal (8am to 4pm)	Staffed as normal (8am to 1pm)

Recommendation: The council closes for all but essential work and emergencies from 1pm on Thursday 24th December to 8am Monday 4th January.

To be held in confidential session

Pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (subsection 2), members of the public and press shall be excluded from the meeting to enable the Council to consider the following confidential matters.

Item 12 **To receive and sign the payroll information sheet for submission, considering overtime claimed** (confidential report enclosed)

Recommendation: The Committee confirm the payroll submission.

Item 13 **To receive an update on staffing matters**
Verbal update from the clerk of the meeting.