



## NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam EX39 1BY

Town Clerk & RFO: Guy Langton (CiLCA, PSLCC)

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Please scan QR code for the Council's website



### To all members of the Council:

You are hereby summoned to attend the **FINANCE and HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE** meeting on

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025 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 Bach (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.

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: 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025

## **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 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025 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 and approve, by resolution, the payments as listed** (p4-10)
- 9 To note the parish precept levied by Northam in comparison to other similar smaller authorities** (p11)
- 10 To consider the Council's fees and charges** (p12-13 and enclosed reports)
- 11 To receive an analysis of the gas usage at Northam Hall over winter** (p13)
- 12 To consider the draft Tennis Safeguarding Policy** (p13 and enclosed)
- 13 To consider the received quotes for work at Northam Hall** (p14-15 and enclosed)
- 14 To consider reviewing the pension arrangements for Council staff** (p15 and confidential report)

### ***To be held in confidential session:***

- 15 To consider the revised job description and person specification for the Town Clerk** (p15 and confidential attachment)
- 16 To receive and sign the payroll information sheet for submission, considering overtime claimed** (p15 and confidential report)

## Item 7 To receive an update on the actions

Action	July 2025
<b>1</b> To consider improvements to the office accommodations, to include decorating painting and the provision of a sink It was resolved to seek permission from the building owner (Torrington District Council) to install a sink for washing up.	A plumbing contractor has been contacted. An electrician is to be instructed and locations found for the storage cabinets there. RAMS have been approved by TDC. ONGOING
<b>2</b> Northam Hall works in response to the findings of the Fire Risk Assessment in December 2024	On the agenda COMPLETE
<b>3</b> Review the gas use at Northam Hall	On the agenda COMPLETE
<b>4</b> Present a list of Council fees and charges, compared (where possible) with other local providers of similar services or facilities.	On the agenda COMPLETE
<b>5</b> Re request for wayleave at Kimberley Park: Seek confirmation that the local residents have been consulted and undertake a brief consultation exercise with those residents. Prepare an in-going schedule of condition, to be included as part of any agreement. Request that Airband indemnify the Town Council for any works required to the sewer or their cable as result of future works required at the sewer or on their cable. Request wayleave payment of £500 and Place on Full Council agenda	Residents consulted – responses indicate they were not consulted until NTC did so. The Town Clerk notes there is no requirement to consult residents for this type of work. Requests made of AirBand. Included on Full Council June 2025 agenda, Airband had not responded – matter deferred to July 2025 Full Council. COMPLETE
<b>6</b> Review the document storage for Northam Town Council	The Town Clerk has contacted other smaller authorities in Devon and Cornwall. Not all have replied but the replies thus far indicate that pre-1974 Minutes are held at the Record Office.  Later minutes (post 1974) are routinely held at Council offices (where space allows), with scanned copies available to review (NTC also has scanned copies).  Fireproof cabinets are used where space and finances allow, though they are not damp-proof so stored paper would degrade over time in a more damp location (for example a garage).  Other documentation is not routinely retained beyond the required retention dates, which are often outlined in a policy, for example <a href="https://great-torringtontowncouncil.gov.uk/2020/10/02/data-retention-policy/">https://great-torringtontowncouncil.gov.uk/2020/10/02/data-retention-policy/</a> . Northam Town Council does not have such a policy. ONGOING

**Item 8 To consider the Clerk's report and approve, by resolution, the payments as listed At 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 (or according to the last available statement balance), the Council's balances were:**

Nationwide (Business 95-day saver)	£94,654.27	interest rate is 3.69%	General and Earmarked Reserves
Cambridge & Counties Bank (31-day)	£95,514.32	interest rate is 3.25%	Earmarked Reserves
Cambridge Building Society	£5,452.32	interest rate is 2.15%	Tennis Reserves
Petty Cash	£63.79		
Coop Bank (current account)	£35,296.18	no interest	Includes budgeted carry-over
Hinkley & Rugby Building Society	£220,000.00	interest rate is 1.95%	holding account for general expenditure

**Total cash in hand (SCRIBE) £ 450,980.88**

Note: the Town Clerk has arranged for a number of advanced payments of £15,000 to be transferred from the HRBS account to the main account each Monday, to ensure the Council can meet its obligations.

The bank reconciliation to be signed by the Chair is presented below.

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

<b>A</b>	<b>Bank Reconciliation at 30/06/2025</b>			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2025			327,410.06
	<b>ADD</b> Receipts 01/04/2025 - 30/06/2025			356,565.31
	<b>SUBTRACT</b> Payments 01/04/2025 - 30/06/2025			683,975.37
				232,994.49
	<b>Cash in Hand 30/06/2025</b> (per Cash Book)			<b>450,980.88</b>
<b>B</b>	Cash in hand per Bank Statements			
	Petty Cash	30/06/2025	63.79	
	Stripe (Tennis bookings)	30/06/2025	0.00	
	Hinckley & Rugby Building Society	30/06/2025	220,000.00	
	Cambridge and Counties Bank	30/06/2025	95,514.32	
	Nationwide 95 day account	30/06/2025	94,654.27	
	Cambridge Building Society (Tenni	30/06/2025	5,452.32	
	Northam Town Council	30/06/2025	35,296.18	
				<b>450,980.88</b>
	Less unrepresented payments			
				450,980.88
	Plus unrepresented receipts			
	<b>Adjusted Bank Balance</b>			<b>450,980.88</b>
	<b>A = B Checks out OK</b>			

**Payments In June 2025 the council made 37 payments of £100 or more totalling £68,413.80**

Voucher	Date	Net	VAT	Total	Description
371	19.06.2025	£30,148.51	£0.00	£30,148.51	Payroll
316	06.06.2025	£7,286.55	£1,457.31	£8,743.86	Plants
346	13.06.2025	£5,585.63	£0.00	£5,585.63	HMRC PAYE
351	17.06.2025	£4,213.85	£0.00	£4,213.85	PWLB
315	06.06.2025	£3,646.80	£0.00	£3,646.80	Insurance
360	19.06.2025	£3,632.25	£726.45	£4,358.70	Fire Alarm System
390	26.06.2025	£2,076.55	£0.00	£2,076.55	Pensions
374	23.06.2025	£1,721.21	£0.00	£1,721.21	PWLB
361	19.06.2025	£1,263.98	£252.80	£1,516.78	Access Control System
366	19.06.2025	£1,200.00	£0.00	£1,200.00	Civic Function
314	06.06.2025	£932.40	£186.48	£1,118.88	Refreshments
313	06.06.2025	£550.00	£0.00	£550.00	Youth Services
363	19.06.2025	£510.00	£0.00	£510.00	Signs
294	03.06.2025	£455.00	£91.00	£546.00	Cleaning CPT
279	02.06.2025	£427.60	£0.00	£427.60	Room rental
312	06.06.2025	£400.00	£0.00	£400.00	Cleaning Northam Hall
369	19.06.2025	£395.00	£79.00	£474.00	Audit Services
281	03.06.2025	£345.00	£0.00	£345.00	Vehicle Tax
342	12.06.2025	£300.00	£60.00	£360.00	Refreshments
295	03.06.2025	£284.70	£56.94	£341.64	IT contract
311	06.06.2025	£275.50	£0.00	£275.50	Insurance
334	11.06.2025	£265.30	£53.06	£318.36	Playground Repairs
367	19.06.2025	£250.00	£0.00	£250.00	Hall Hire
310	06.06.2025	£227.61	£45.52	£273.13	Stationery
359	19.06.2025	£202.33	£40.47	£242.80	PPE & Workwear
365	19.06.2025	£200.00	£40.00	£240.00	Advertisement
357	19.06.2025	£198.64	£39.73	£238.37	Disposal Waste Materials
325	09.06.2025	£194.00	£0.00	£194.00	Mobile Phone - IR
340	13.06.2025	£178.62	£35.73	£214.35	Fuel
319	08.06.2025	£167.73	£33.55	£201.28	Wifi N Hall
389	26.06.2025	£147.00	£29.40	£176.40	Water Bottle Filler Valve
356	19.06.2025	£142.48	£28.50	£170.98	Disposal Waste Materials
362	19.06.2025	£130.00	£26.00	£156.00	Alarm maintenance
283	02.06.2025	£116.40	£0.00	£116.40	Refreshments
370	19.06.2025	£114.58	£22.92	£137.50	Microwave
348	16.06.2025	£114.58	£22.92	£137.50	Northam Hall
349	16.06.2025	£114.00	£0.00	£114.00	Water bill

**Recommendation: The above and below listed payments are approved.**

**All Payments** In June 2025, the Council made 131 payments, totalling £70,182.42 detailed below.

Voucher	Date	Net	Vat	Total	Description
278	02.06.2025	£62.79	£0.00	£62.79	Stripe fees
279	02.06.2025	£427.60	£0.00	£427.60	Room rental
281	03.06.2025	£345.00	£0.00	£345.00	Vehicle Tax
282	02.06.2025	£0.18	£0.00	£0.18	Square fees
283	02.06.2025	£116.40	£0.00	£116.40	Refreshments
284	02.06.2025	£36.65	£7.33	£43.98	Equipment
285	02.06.2025	£31.98	£0.60	£32.58	Refreshments
286	02.06.2025	£60.12	£12.03	£72.15	Signs
287	02.06.2025	£24.17	£4.83	£29.00	Equipment
288	02.06.2025	£6.79	£0.91	£7.70	Supplies
289	02.06.2025	£4.17	£0.83	£5.00	Mobile Phone - IR
290	02.06.2025	£4.17	£0.83	£5.00	Mobile Phone - CW
291	03.06.2025	£1.19	£0.00	£1.19	Square fees
292	03.06.2025	£2.28	£0.00	£2.28	Square fees
293	03.06.2025	£94.88	£18.98	£113.86	Copier Charges
294	03.06.2025	£455.00	£91.00	£546.00	Cleaning CPT
295	03.06.2025	£284.70	£56.94	£341.64	IT contract
296	03.06.2025	£50.00	£0.00	£50.00	Photos
297	03.06.2025	£28.17	£5.63	£33.80	Contra Roberts Cleaning
298	03.06.2025	£22.52	£0.00	£22.52	Expenses
299	03.06.2025	£16.67	£3.33	£20.00	Mobile Phone - DC
300	04.06.2025	£1.81	£0.00	£1.81	Square fees
301	04.06.2025	£0.16	£0.00	£0.16	Square fees
302	04.06.2025	£11.66	£2.33	£13.99	Photos
303	04.06.2025	£1.31	£0.27	£1.58	Equipment
304	05.06.2025	£16.03	£3.21	£19.24	Photo Frame
305	04.06.2025	£30.00	£6.00	£36.00	Keys
306	06.06.2025	£58.57	£11.71	£70.28	Telephone system
307	06.06.2025	£46.80	£0.00	£46.80	Expenses
308	06.06.2025	£44.48	£8.90	£53.38	PPE & Workwear
309	06.06.2025	£61.90	£12.38	£74.28	Fixings
310	06.06.2025	£227.61	£45.52	£273.13	Stationery
311	06.06.2025	£275.50	£0.00	£275.50	Insurance
312	06.06.2025	£400.00	£0.00	£400.00	Cleaning Northam Hall
313	06.06.2025	£550.00	£0.00	£550.00	Youth Services
314	06.06.2025	£932.40	£186.48	£1,118.88	Refreshments
315	06.06.2025	£3,646.80	£0.00	£3,646.80	Insurance
316	06.06.2025	£7,286.55	£1,457.31	£8,743.86	Plants
317	06.06.2025	£9.58	£1.92	£11.50	Mayor's Cadet
318	06.06.2025	£24.25	£4.85	£29.10	Fixings
319	08.06.2025	£167.73	£33.55	£201.28	Wifi N Hall
320	10.06.2025	£43.36	£2.17	£45.53	Electricity - Pavilion

321	10.06.2025	£58.34	£2.92	£61.26	Gas Account
322	09.06.2025	£4.63	£0.93	£5.56	Mobile Phone
323	09.06.2025	£7.00	£0.00	£7.00	Land charges search
324	09.06.2025	£26.09	£0.00	£26.09	Insurance
325	09.06.2025	£194.00	£0.00	£194.00	Mobile Phone - IR
326	10.06.2025	£0.58	£0.00	£0.58	Square fees
327	10.06.2025	£5.00	£1.00	£6.00	Mobile Phone - IR
328	10.06.2025	£34.33	£6.87	£41.20	Cleaning Northam Hall
329	11.06.2025	£50.54	£2.53	£53.07	Electricity Account
330	11.06.2025	£4.17	£0.83	£5.00	Mobile Phone - TT
331	11.06.2025	£28.14	£5.63	£33.77	Equipment
332	11.06.2025	£41.67	£8.33	£50.00	Photo Frame
333	11.06.2025	£83.33	£16.67	£100.00	Book Token
334	11.06.2025	£265.30	£53.06	£318.36	Playground Repairs
335	11.06.2025	£87.25	£5.50	£92.75	Expenses
336	11.06.2025	£9.90	£0.00	£9.90	Expenses
337	11.06.2025	£1.09	£0.00	£1.09	Square fees
338	11.06.2025	£1.19	£0.00	£1.19	Square fees
339	11.06.2025	£1.19	£0.00	£1.19	Square fees
340	13.06.2025	£178.62	£35.73	£214.35	Fuel
341	12.06.2025	£3.20	£0.00	£3.20	Postages
342	12.06.2025	£300.00	£60.00	£360.00	Refreshments
343	13.06.2025	£33.25	£6.65	£39.90	Refreshments
344	13.06.2025	£41.99	£7.41	£49.40	Miscellaneous
345	13.06.2025	£20.00	£0.00	£20.00	Photos
346	13.06.2025	£5,585.63	£0.00	£5,585.63	HMRC PAYE
347	16.06.2025	£6.07	£1.22	£7.29	Dishwasher Tablets/Cleaner
348	16.06.2025	£114.58	£22.92	£137.50	Northam Hall
349	16.06.2025	£114.00	£0.00	£114.00	Water bill
350	16.06.2025	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	Repayment
351	17.06.2025	£4,213.85	£0.00	£4,213.85	PWLB
352	17.06.2025	-£195.00	-£39.00	-£234.00	Refreshments
353	18.06.2025	£13.33	£2.67	£16.00	Weedkiller
354	19.06.2025	£19.47	£3.89	£23.36	Internet
355	19.06.2025	£59.34	£11.87	£71.21	Rental & Maintenance Charge
356	19.06.2025	£142.48	£28.50	£170.98	Disposal Waste Materials
357	19.06.2025	£198.64	£39.73	£238.37	Disposal Waste Materials
358	19.06.2025	£68.38	£13.68	£82.06	Disposal Waste Materials
359	19.06.2025	£202.33	£40.47	£242.80	PPE & Workwear
360	19.06.2025	£3,632.25	£726.45	£4,358.70	Fire Alarm System
361	19.06.2025	£1,263.98	£252.80	£1,516.78	Access Control System
362	19.06.2025	£130.00	£26.00	£156.00	Alarm maintenance
363	19.06.2025	£510.00	£0.00	£510.00	Signs
364	19.06.2025	£20.95	£4.19	£25.14	Equipment
365	19.06.2025	£200.00	£40.00	£240.00	Advertisement

366	19.06.2025	£1,200.00	£0.00	£1,200.00	Civic Function
367	19.06.2025	£250.00	£0.00	£250.00	Hall Hire
368	19.06.2025	£13.29	£0.00	£13.29	Expenses
369	19.06.2025	£395.00	£79.00	£474.00	Audit Services
370	19.06.2025	£114.58	£22.92	£137.50	Microwave
371	19.06.2025	£30,148.51	£0.00	£30,148.51	Payroll
372	19.06.2025	£0.16	£0.00	£0.16	Square fees
373	20.06.2025	£35.87	£7.17	£43.04	Bench sponsorship
374	23.06.2025	£1,721.21	£0.00	£1,721.21	PWLB
375	20.06.2025	£54.00	£10.80	£64.80	Name Tent Cards
376	20.06.2025	£38.32	£7.66	£45.98	Fixings
377	24.06.2025	£6.25	£1.25	£7.50	Mobile Phone
378	23.06.2025	£77.69	£15.54	£93.23	Stationery
379	24.06.2025	£38.13	£7.63	£45.76	Stationery
380	23.06.2025	£4.17	£0.83	£5.00	Mobile Phone - GL
381	24.06.2025	£2.46	£0.00	£2.46	Square fees
382	25.06.2025	£1.50	£0.00	£1.50	Square fees
383	25.06.2025	£1.19	£0.00	£1.19	Square fees
384	25.06.2025	£41.25	£8.25	£49.50	Keys
385	26.06.2025	£7.56	£1.51	£9.07	PPE & Workwear
386	26.06.2025	£12.96	£2.59	£15.55	PPE & Workwear
387	26.06.2025	£14.17	£2.83	£17.00	Equipment
388	26.06.2025	£17.15	£3.43	£20.58	Oil
389	26.06.2025	£147.00	£29.40	£176.40	Water Bottle Filler Valve
390	26.06.2025	£2,076.55	£0.00	£2,076.55	Pensions
391	27.06.2025	£4.17	£0.83	£5.00	Mobile Phone - RG
392	26.06.2025	£3.68	£0.00	£3.68	Square fees
393	27.06.2025	£12.67	£2.54	£15.21	Stationery
394	27.06.2025	£1.19	£0.00	£1.19	Square fees
396	30.06.2025	£1.19	£0.00	£1.19	Square fees
397	30.06.2025	£4.17	£0.83	£5.00	Mobile Phone - TA
398	30.06.2025	£4.17	£0.83	£5.00	Mobile Phone - JL
399	30.06.2025	£4.16	£0.83	£4.99	Stationery
411	05.06.2025	£6.63	£1.33	£7.96	Equipment
412	01.06.2025	£1.20	£0.00	£1.20	Refreshments
413	01.06.2025	£0.99	£0.00	£0.99	Refreshments
414	02.06.2025	£1.39	£0.00	£1.39	Refreshments
415	03.06.2025	£1.39	£0.00	£1.39	Refreshments
416	03.06.2025	£6.75	£1.37	£8.12	Cleaning
417	09.06.2025	£1.39	£0.00	£1.39	Refreshments
418	11.06.2025	£7.07	£1.42	£8.49	Flags
419	13.06.2025	£1.39	£0.00	£1.39	Refreshments
420	17.06.2025	£4.99	£1.00	£5.99	Plant food
421	24.06.2025	£1.85	£0.00	£1.85	Refreshments



**Receipts:** In June 2025, the Council received 50 payments, totalling £7,115.44 detailed below.

Voucher	Date	Net	Description
153	30.06.2025	£254.54	Bank Interest
150	30.06.2025	£1,386.00	Grass cutting
149	30.06.2025	£72.50	Hall Hire
148	30.06.2025	£25.00	Hall Hire
147	30.06.2025	£45.00	Hall Hire
146	30.06.2025	£47.50	Hall Hire
145	30.06.2025	£60.00	Hall Hire
141	27.06.2025	£47.50	Hall Hire
140	27.06.2025	£350.00	Equipment
139	26.06.2025	£210.00	Equipment
138	25.06.2025	£47.50	Hall Hire
137	25.06.2025	£60.00	Hall Hire
136	26.06.2025	£47.50	Hall Hire
135	26.06.2025	£20.00	Hall Hire
134	25.06.2025	£18.75	Hall Hire
133	24.06.2025	£98.25	Hall Hire
132	20.06.2025	£48.75	Hall Hire
131	19.06.2025	£6.25	Hall Hire
130	19.06.2025	£262.50	Rent for Car Park
129	16.06.2025	£254.40	Repayment
128	16.06.2025	£126.25	Hall Hire
127	16.06.2025	£50.00	Hall Hire
126	13.06.2025	£75.00	Hall Hire
125	11.06.2025	£47.50	Hall Hire
124	11.06.2025	£47.50	Hall Hire
123	11.06.2025	£51.67	Boat park permit
122	12.06.2025	£100.00	Hall Hire
121	12.06.2025	£150.00	Equipment
120	10.06.2025	£33.23	Photos
119	05.06.2025	£25.00	Hall Hire
118	05.06.2025	£25.00	Hall Hire
117	06.06.2025	£56.25	Hall Hire
116	06.06.2025	£40.00	Hall Hire
115	01.06.2025	£295.72	Bank Interest
114	04.06.2025	£25.00	Hall Hire
113	04.06.2025	£50.00	Hall Hire
112	04.06.2025	£90.00	Hall Hire
111	04.06.2025	£112.50	Hall Hire
110	05.06.2025	£75.00	Hall Hire
109	04.06.2025	£6.25	Hall Hire
108	04.06.2025	£72.50	Hall Hire
107	04.06.2025	£110.00	Hall Hire

106	04.06.2025	£130.00	Hall Hire
			Bench
105	04.06.2025	£450.00	sponsorship
104	03.06.2025	£91.25	Hall Hire
103	03.06.2025	£47.50	Hall Hire
101	02.06.2025	£10.00	Refreshments
100	03.06.2025	£75.00	Hall Hire
99	02.06.2025	£80.00	Hall Hire
98	02.06.2025	£1,205.38	Tennis Receipts

### Tennis courts:

The gross volume of sales in June 2025 was £725.00. After fees, the Council has received £686.01. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025, the Council has received £2,997.18 in tennis court fees.

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.

### Petty Cash:

A screen shot of the petty cash cashbook is presented to the below showing the items on which the Council has spent petty cash in June 2025.

The financial regulations seek to maintain a balance of £100 in Petty Cash.

Petty Cash		2025-26	Name:	Northam TC Petty Cash											
Details					Income			Expenditure						Balance at start of FY	
Date	Trans action	Description	Ref	Scribe No	Petty Cash Withdrawal	Carry forward	Total in	VAT	Events	Refresh ments	Maint enance	Office expenses	Total out	£	13.45
1.6.25	19	Refreshments	PC25-26.17				0.00			1.20			1.20		102.75
1.6.25	20	Refreshments	PC25-26.18				0.00			0.99			0.99		101.76
1.6.25	21	Refreshments	PC25-26.19				0.00			1.39			1.39		100.37
3.6.25	22	Refreshments	PC25-26.20				0.00			1.39			1.39		98.98
4.6.25	23	Cleaning	PC25-26.21				0.00	1.37	6.75				8.12		90.86
9.6.25	24	Refreshments	PC25-26.22				0.00			1.39			1.39		89.47
11.6.25	25	Flags (Town Hall)	PC25-26.25				0.00	1.42	7.07				8.49		80.98
13.6.25	26	Refreshments	PC25-26.26				0.00			1.39			1.39		79.59
17.6.25	27	Refreshments	PC25-26.27				0.00	1.00			4.99		5.99		73.60
24.6.25	28	Refreshments	PC25-26.28				0.00			1.85			1.85		71.75
5.6.25	29	Maintenance Equipment	PC25-26.29				0.00	1.33			6.63		7.96		63.79

**Item 9 To note the parish precept levied by Northam in comparison to other similar smaller authorities**

Annually, the government publishes spreadsheets comparing parish and local authority precepts across the country (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-council-tax>). Members may be interested in comparing the various Town and Parish precepts for similar smaller authorities in Torridge, North, West, and Mid Devon. For ease of reading, the table has been filtered to show only the larger communities (with a tax base of over 1,000) and has been ordered by Band D equivalence.

Parish Name	Local Authority	Amount precepted on billing authority (£) 2025-26 [note 1]	Tax base for precept purposes 2025-26 [note 1]	Band D council tax (£) 2025-26 [note 1]
Tavistock	West Devon	1,088,850	4,895.56	222.42
Okehampton Town	West Devon	457,313	2,277.41	200.80
Barnstaple	North Devon	1,617,958	7,208.88	224.44
Crediton	Mid Devon	510,750	2,794.90	182.74
Holsworthy	Torridge	212,800	1,090.64	195.11
Cullompton	Mid Devon	553,617	3,730.29	148.41
Great Torrington	Torridge	257,931	1,830.09	140.94
Ilfracombe	North Devon	529,056	3,873.29	136.59
Bideford	Torridge	757,387	5,580.88	135.71
Northam	Torridge	644,337	5,805.22	110.99
Georgeham	North Devon	98,561	1,039.89	94.78
South Molton	North Devon	200,000	2,173.72	92.01
Combe Martin	North Devon	102,000	1,035.31	98.52
Uffculme	Mid Devon	103,836	1,177.62	88.17
Braunton	North Devon	337,332	3,317.62	101.68
Bere Ferrers	West Devon	85,572	1,100.78	77.74
Tiverton	Mid Devon	578,032	7,436.74	77.73
Fremington	North Devon	317,220	4,674.62	67.86
Willand	Mid Devon	78,418	1,219.34	64.31
Mortehoe	North Devon	90,000	1,216.22	74.00
Buckland Monachorum	West Devon	70,393	1,730.78	40.67
Tawstock	North Devon	27,311	1,241.36	22.00

## Item 10 To consider the Council's fees and charges

Please also see the enclosed report and A3 table. The Council's fees and charges have been collated and presented in a report to this committee for consideration. The Council provides the following services:

- Northam Hall (a community hall)
- Appledore Boat Park (The Quay)
- Gig Boat storage (The Quay and car park)
- Pitch rental to Northam Lions (Burrough Farm)
- Allotments at Burrough Farm
- Allotments at Windmill Lane
- Car park adjacent to the Seagate
- Memorial benches

**Comparable services offered by others:** There are comparable services for boat parking, allotment and community hall provision.

- Boat parking: there is a secure boat park on the outskirts of Appledore. The cost is significantly higher and the location secure. Given the secure location and higher cost, the service offered is not like-for-like.
- Allotments: there are allotment providers at Marshford/Knapp and one at St Mary's church. There is no contact for Marshford/Knapp, so the annual fees are unknown. At St Mary's are charged at £20 per year.
- Community Halls – see the attached. The Officers preparing the report and table considered that the most appropriate comparison was by cost per person per hour (if the Hall was fully occupied). The enclosed A3 table includes that information. There are variances in how each Hall charges that make like-for-like comparison more complex than it would first appear.
  - NTC has six different charging types for Northam Hall. Each could helpfully be reviewed:
    - Regular users – must currently book and pay for all 52/53 occurrences of their weekly booking each year. Fewer bookings do not automatically count as 'regular', though the Council has historically applied this rate to some monthly bookings. Consistency is required and the minimum number of weeks/months should be reviewed.
    - Casual users – pay a higher rate than those that use the Hall more regularly, with a reduction for multiple-hour bookings – the Council agreed that for bookings of four hours and 8 hours, the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> hour would be discounted but the other hours remain the original cost, meaning hours 5, 6 & 7 are more than hour 4 and hours 9, 10, 11 and 12 are more than hour 8 (see right). Children's parties make up a significant number of the multiple-hour bookings.
    - Commercial bookings – profit making organisations, for example 'Teak Garden Furniture' and 'Oriental Rug' sales are charged double the casual user rate, the last such booking was a 'Gold Valuer'. Those providing classes on a self-employed basis (e.g. yoga, Zumba, kickboxing) are charged regular or casual user rates as appropriate.
    - Weddings are booked for a whole day and the following morning. The Council receives one or two such bookings a year.

Hour	cost of hour		running total		hourly equivalent	
1	£	12.50	£	12.50	£	12.50
2	£	12.50	£	25.00	£	12.50
3	£	12.50	£	37.50	£	12.50
4	£	10.00	£	47.50	£	11.88
5	£	12.50	£	60.00	£	12.00
6	£	12.50	£	72.50	£	12.08
7	£	12.50	£	85.00	£	12.14
8	£	7.00	£	92.00	£	11.50
9	£	12.50	£	104.50	£	11.61
10	£	12.50	£	117.00	£	11.70
11	£	12.50	£	129.50	£	11.77
12	£	12.50	£	142.00	£	11.83

The charges for Northam Hall are not significantly different when viewed in comparison to other halls of a similar advertised capacity (per person per hour advertised capacity).

The enclosed report advises when each service charge was last reviewed.

#### Recommendations:

1. The committee consider the charges as reported and consider if they are sufficient, with any changes being presented in a revised scheme of charges at a future meeting of this committee.
2. The committee agree to review a draft charging scheme specific to Northam Hall.
3. Any changes would take effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

#### Item 11 To receive an analysis of the gas usage at Northam Hall over winter

The data for the past two years is presented below. As can be seen, there is no direct correlation between hours booked and gas used.

The Officers note that as a community building, the VAT applied to utilities is at the reduced rate of 5%. However, should the utility use exceed defined de minimis levels<sup>1</sup>, then the standard 20% rate is applied. This artificially inflates the cost of gas used.

Northam Hall - Gas Usage/Costs & Booking Hours Comparison							
2023/24	Units	Cost	Hours at Hall	2024/25	Units	Cost	Hours at Hall
				May-24	110 (29/04/24-28/05/24)	£378.57	115
				Jun-24	15 (28/05/24-26/06/24)	£145.13	154.75
				Jul-24	16 (26/06/24-30/07/24)	£35.88	139.5
Aug-23	3 (27/07/23-29/08/23)	n/a	116.75	Aug-24	5 (30/07/24-30/08/24)	£40.24	123.5
Sep-23	28 (29/08/23-24/09/23)	n/a	149	Sep-24	60 (30/08/24-26/09/24)	£25.61	123
Oct-23	157 (24/09/23-28/10/23)	£74.88	145.75	Oct-24	172 (26/09/24-28/10/24)	£86.86	169
Nov-23	268 (27/10/23-26/11/23)	£202.69	161	Nov-24	319 (28/10/24-26/11/24)	£217.43	180
Dec-23	542 (26/11/23-28/12/23)	£327.46	146.5	Dec-24	1024 (26/11/24-27/01/25)	£383.71	170
Jan-24	562 (28/12/23-25/01/24)	£781.84	141.5	Jan-25	2 months as no Dec bill	£724.54	149.5
Feb-24	424 (25/01/24-28/02/24)	£803.76	142.5	Feb-25	515 (27/01/25-24/02/25)	£760.29	159
Mar-24	329 (28/02/24-29/04/24) 2	£504.40	169.75	Mar-25	629 (24/02/25-28/04/25) 2	£745.39	185.5
Apr-24	months as no March bill	£484.45	171.5	Apr-25	months as no March bill		
Direct Month Comparison for Month's Where Data Available							
Month	Units used 23/24	Units used 24/25	Hours 23/24	Hours 24/25			
August	3	5	116.75	123.5			
September	28	60	149	123			
October	157	172	145.75	169			
November	268	319	161	180			
December/January	1104	1024	288	319.5			
February	424	515	142.5	159			

#### Item 12 To consider the draft Tennis Safeguarding Policy

The LTA require the Council, as a Park Courts operator, to have a Safeguarding Policy. They provide a template, which Officers have adapted/edited and is enclosed.

To finalise before presentation to Full Council for adoption, the Council needs to identify at least one person to deputise for the Safeguarding Officer. This person does not have to be an employee, though for consistency of coverage (albeit Monday to Friday, it may be best for at least one to be an employee of the Council.

The Town Clerk and Parks & Buildings Manager have both agreed to be named, DBS checked and undertake the required training.

#### Recommendations:

1. The committee consider the highlighted section of the Policy, adopting them or agreement amendments as appropriate.
2. The committee nominate at least one person to be identified and trained as deputy Safeguarding Officer.

<sup>1</sup> [Fuel and power \(VAT Notice 701/19\) - GOV.UK](#)

**Item 13 To consider the received quote for work at Northam Hall** (p? and enclosed)  
The Parks & Buildings Manager has contacted a number of local, regional and national organisations requesting like-for-like quotations for the works to the Hall ceiling. Only one has returned with a complete quote for the works as instructed, the formal quotations are attached but to summarise:

**Quotation 7063/1**

*New suspended ceiling in Main Hall, Stage Area and Stage Lobby £10,225.00 (exVat)*

*Optional alternative sloping ceiling in position shown on site additional £2487 (exVat)*

The Officers strongly recommend that the sloping ceiling option is taken. A flat ceiling would be very low (only centimetres above the stage opening), would make the Hall feel ‘squashed’ and would stop the hall being able to accommodate a bouncy castle of any sort – the mainstay of the regular children’s parties that book the Hall at the weekends.

**Sub-total cost £12,712**

**Quotation 7063/2**

*Install new lighting as per quote £5427.00 (exVat)*

*PC Sum for brackets to lower existing stage lights £500.00 (exVat)*

*These are both required.*

**Sub-total cost £5,927**

**Quotation 7063/3 (Optional extras):**

*Recycled plastic insulation in Main Hall and Stage Area £6749.00 (exVat)*

*Part recycled sheep wool in Main Hall and Stage Area £5118.00 (exVat)*

We recommend the cheaper option, which in this case is sheep wool.

**Sub-total cost £5,118 to £6,749**

**Grand total £23,757 to £25,388 (exVAT)**

In preparation for this work, the 2025-26 budget included:

£3,000 for larger projects at the Hall;

£2,500 for maintenance (of which approx. £1,900 has been spent), and

carried a £30,000 earmarked reserve forward (currently in the Cambridge & County Bank).

There is still one reasonably significant cost, a shutter on the kitchen window but that is expected to be under £1,000. The work at the Hall that arose from the Fire Risk Assessment is then virtually complete, door seals, small items and snagging to go.

The Town Clerk notes that:

The Council’s Procurement Policy (December 2024) states at paragraph 3.4 that:

*The Public Contracts Regulations (2015) Section 110, as amended, sets a public procurement threshold of £30,000 (inclusive of VAT). Above this threshold, opportunities must be published on the Government Contracts Finder platform<sup>2</sup>. For tenders above £214,904 (including VAT), the Government Find a Tender platform<sup>3</sup>, which replaced the EU platform on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021.*

The Figures quoted are around that threshold value. However, the Council’s policy has been overtaken by changes to national law. The UK Procurement Act 2023, which includes new procurement thresholds, came into force on February 24, 2025. The lower thresholds have now been removed, relying on Council’s local Regulations and Policies to guide decision making (members are referred to the revised standing orders considered by Review Committee at its July meeting)<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/find-tender>

<sup>4</sup> revised Standing Order 18 (a)(x) states (a) *The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following: (x). whether contracts with an estimated value below [60,000] or due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.*

The Council's adopted Financial Regulations, at para 5.8, state that, under £30,000 (incVAT):  
*For contracts greater than £5,000 excluding VAT the Clerk and/or the council officers shall seek at least three fixed-price quotes (priced descriptions of the proposed supply).*

**Recommendation:** That the committee consider if, in the light of its adopted Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Procurement Policy and the changes to national procurement guidelines and the revised Standing Orders it is in a position to instruct make a decision or if it needs to receive further quotations/estimates.

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**Item 14            To consider reviewing the pension arrangements for Council staff**

It has been brought to the Town Clerk's attention that some possible applicants for recently advertised roles were discouraged from applying because the Council did not offer the Peninsula pension scheme (LGPS).

A straw poll was carried out of nine similar smaller authorities locally. At the time of writing, all those responding offered the Peninsula pension scheme (LGPS) to some or all of their staff.

**Recommendation:** The committee resolve to undertake a review of the impacts for the Council, its budget and its staff.

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*To be held in confidential session:*

**Item 15            To consider the revised job description and person specification for the Town Clerk**

The Town Clerk & RFO's job description and person specification has been reviewed, the revised document is enclosed for consideration.

**Item 16            To receive and sign the payroll information sheet for submission, considering overtime claimed**

**Recommendation:** The information sheet is signed and submitted.

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