



## NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam EX39 1BY

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### To all members of the Council:

You are hereby summoned to attend a **MEETING OF REVIEW COMMITTEE** on Wednesday

**18<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 6.30pm**

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

Membership: Cllr Edwards, Cllr Hodson, Cllr Horrocks, Cllr Newman-McKie, Cllr Tait and Cllr Bach (ex-officio). Two vacancies.

### 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.

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)*).

*Guy Langton*

Guy Langton, Town Clerk & RFO

Date of issue: 12<sup>th</sup> September 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 one hour prior to the start 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 confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Review Committee meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024 (p3-5)**
- 6 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.*
- 7 To consider the action point update (p6)**
- 8 To receive the packs of policies and consider the policy review cycle (p9-10)**
- 9 To consider the document retention policy (p10 and enclosed)**
- 10 To consider how to review the Northam Town Council Vision Statement & Strategic Plan 2023-2027 (enclosed)**

## REVIEW COMMITTEE

**2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

Present: Cllrs Bach (Mayor), Edwards, Horrocks, Newman-McKie (Chair) and Tait.

In attendance: Cllr Bell (non-committee member), Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO), one member of the public.

**2507/143 To elect a Chair for the committee.**

Cllr Bach proposed that Cllr Newman-McKie Chair the committee, this was seconded by Cllr Tait. There were no other nominations. The committee was unanimously in favour and Cllr Newman-McKie was duly elected Chair of the Review Committee

**2507/144 To elect a Vice Chair for the committee.**

Cllr Edwards proposed that Cllr Tait be Vice-Chair of the committee, this was seconded by Cllr Horrocks. There were no other nominations. The committee was unanimously in favour and Cllr Tait was duly elected Vice-Chair of the Review Committee

**2507/145 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)**

Cllr Hodson tendered her apologies. The committee had two 2 vacant seats.

**2507/146 Chair's announcements**

The Chair made no announcements.

**2507/147 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.

**2507/148 To agree the agenda as published.**

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

Proposed Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Tait (all in favour)

**2507/149 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Review Committee meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

It was **resolved** that to approve the minutes of that meeting of the Review Committee as a correct record, they were signed by the Chair.

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

**2507/150 Public Participation**

The member of the public was not present at this point in the meeting.

**2507/151 To consider the action point update**

The action points were noted as presented below.

Item	November 2024	July 2025
1. Emergency planning Review the named persons and contact details Review the locations	The Town Clerk has contacted the Emergency Planning project manager from Devon Communities who emphasised the nature of the role of the Town Council in preparing for emergencies. The reviews have not yet been undertaken. ONGOING	
2. Procurement Policy	The matter was deferred to this meeting. ON THE AGENDA.	The policy has been approved by the Full Council COMPLETE
3. Protocol following the Death of the Sovereign, Senior National Figure or Local Holder of High Office. Review the protocol.	The review has not yet been carried out. INCOMPLETE	

*A member of the public entered the meeting at this point (6:40pm)*

**2507/152 To note the Council's policies and consider the implementation of a review cycle**

It was **resolved** to print the Council's policies and circulate to committee members in hard copy, along with a list of those policies (and policies to be drafted), which would be prioritised by members for receipt at the next meeting of this committee.

Proposed: Cllr Newman-McKie, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour).

**Action points:**

1. Prepare a cover list of policies for members to prioritise.
2. Print and bind the Council's policies and circulate to committee members.

**2507/153 To consider a more frequent meeting cycle**

It was **resolved** to add two further meetings to the calendar for 2025-26, one in the autumn/winter and one in the winter/spring to enable the committee to consider more policies that the quarterly meeting cycle would allow.

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

**Action point: add the dates and publish a revised calendar.**

**2507/154 To how to review the Northam Town Council Vision Statement & Strategic Plan 2023-2027**

It was agreed that the action plan underpinning the Vision Statement would be reviewed by the Town Clerk and an updated paper presented to the next meeting of this committee.

**Action point: Review and revise the action plan as appropriate to bring up to date.**

**2507/155 To consider updated Standing Orders**

The draft was reviewed in detail, the committee noted that Standing Orders in bold type were aligned to statute and therefore could not be removed or changed. A number of amendments and clarifications were made, the substantive ones are listed below.

Standing Order	Original text	Amended text
1 (g)	An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chair of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chair.	An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting.
3 (c)	<b>The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice</b> OR [The minimum three clear days' public notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting].	<b>The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice</b>
3 (i)	[A person shall stand when requesting to speak and when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)] OR [A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]. The chair of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.	A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The chair of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
3 (x)	A meeting shall not exceed a period of ( n ) hours.	A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2½ hours unless so resolved by the meeting. A resolution shall then be sought at each subsequent hour.
4 (v)	may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer ( 2 ) days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;	Standing order deleted.

4 (vi)	[shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chair of the standing committee] OR [shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chair at the first meeting of the committee] and where possible appoint a different chair for each committee;	shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chair at the first meeting of the committee and where possible appoint a different chair for each committee; any member sits on a committee ex-officio should not be appointed Chair of a committee or sub-committee
4 (xii)	A committee or sub-committee (but not a Finance Committee) may include persons who are not elected councillors, often known as co-opted committee members -but they have no voting rights (except on wholly – advisory committees under the LGHA 1989 S13). All non-elected members of a committee, sub-committee, advisory or working group will be supplied with current Standing Orders on their appointment.	Standing order deleted.
5 (j)(ii)	Except in an election year when nominations shall be made at the first meeting of the Council, nominations shall be given in writing and signed by a Proposer and Seconder and delivered together with confirmation of the Nominee of willingness to stand, and shall be delivered not later than ten working days before the date of the Annual Town Council Meeting at the office of the Town Clerk to enable inclusion on the Agenda.	Standing order deleted.

It was **resolved** to extend the meeting by 30 minutes.

Proposed: Cllr Horrocks, Seconded: Cllr Tait (all in favour) (8:59pm)

5 (k)	At every meeting other than the Annual Meeting of the Council the first business shall be to appoint a Chair if the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor are absent: Order of Business	At every meeting of the Full Council other than the Annual Meeting of the Council the business shall include: Revised order of business to reflect resolution and current practice.
13 (g)	Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered [by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required] OR [at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required].	Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required.
14 (a) to (c)	Removed	Replaced, according to statutory changes to: <b>a Upon notification by the Principal Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.</b>
15 (xv)	refer a planning application received by the Council to the [Chair or in their absence the Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council] OR [Chair or in their absence Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the ( ) Committee] within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of [the Council] OR [( ) committee];	refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chair or in their absence Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Planning & Development Committee within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Planning & Development committee;
18 (a) to (g)		Replaced, according to statutory and recommended model changes to: a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial

		<p>Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;</li> <li>ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;</li> <li>iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;</li> <li>iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and</li> <li>v. whether contracts with an estimated value below £60,000 or due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.</li> </ul> <p>b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.</p> <p>c. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;</li> <li>ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;</li> <li>iii. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;</li> <li>iv. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;</li> <li>v. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.</li> </ul> <p>d. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.</p> <p><b>e. Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Government from time to time, the Council must consider whether the contract is subject to the requirements of the current procurement legislation and, if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. Nationally available procurement guidance contains further details.</b></p>
19 (a) to (i)	a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of [Council] OR [the ( Finance & Human Resources ) committee] OR [the ( ) sub-committee] is subject to standing order 11.	a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of the Finance & Human Resources committee is subject to standing order 11.

<p>b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior employee shall notify the Chair (Mayor) of the Council or the Vice-Chair (Deputy Mayor) of the Council of any absence occasioned by illness or urgency and that person shall report such absence to the Finance &amp; Human Resources Committee at its next meeting.</p> <p>c The Town Clerk is employed by the Council and answers to the Council as a whole; no one Councillor can act as the Line Manager of either the Town Clerk or other employees.</p> <p>d For annual appraisals the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and the Chair of Finance &amp; Human Resources Committee will appraise the Town Clerk. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, the Chair of Finance &amp; Human Resources and the Town Clerk will complete the annual appraisal of the Deputy Town Clerk. The Town Clerk and Chair of Finance and HR will appraise all other staff. Full Council should then be advised whether the appraisal was satisfactory or not and the appraisal filed on the employee's personal record. Any updates on staff requirements following the appraisals will be reported to Finance &amp; Human Resources Committee. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior employee (or other employees) shall contact the Chair of the Finance &amp; Human Resources Committee or in his/her absence, the Vice- Chair of the Finance &amp; Human Resources Committee in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Finance &amp; Human Resources committee.</p> <p>d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance and disciplinary matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Town Clerk relates to the Chair or Vice- Chair of the Finance and Human Resources committee this shall be communicated to another member of the Finance and Human Resources committee which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.</p> <p>e Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.</p> <p>f In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).</p> <p>g Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 19(f) and (g) above shall be provided only to (post holder) and/or the Chair of the Council.</p> <p>h Generally passwords for computer access will be stored in the safe in a sealed envelope, and in an emergency the safe and envelope can be opened only in the presence of two Councillors.</p>	<p>b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior employee shall notify the Chair (Mayor) of the Council or the Vice-Chair (Deputy Mayor) of the Council of any absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Finance &amp; Human Resources Committee at its next meeting.</p> <p>c The Town Clerk is an employee of the Council. For day-to-day matters, the Town Clerk's line manager is defined in the job description. No single Councillor acts as the Line Manager of either the Town Clerk or other employees.</p> <p>d For annual appraisals:</p> <p>i. The Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and the Chair of Finance &amp; Human Resources Committee will appraise the Town Clerk.</p> <p>ii. The Mayor or Deputy Mayor, the Chair of Finance &amp; Human Resources and the Town Clerk will complete the annual appraisal of the Deputy Town Clerk.</p> <p>iii. The Town Clerk or line manager and Chair of Finance &amp; Human Resources will appraise all other staff.</p> <p>e The Finance &amp; Human Resources committee should then be advised whether the appraisal was satisfactory or not and the appraisal filed on the employee's personal record. Any updates on staff requirements following the appraisals will be reported to Finance &amp; Human Resources Committee.</p> <p>f Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Town Clerk shall contact the Chair of the Finance &amp; Human Resources Committee or in their absence, the Vice-Chair of the Finance &amp; Human Resources Committee in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Finance &amp; Human Resources committee.</p> <p>g Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, other Council employees shall contact their line manager in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Finance &amp; Human Resources committee.</p> <p>h Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance and disciplinary matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Town Clerk relates to the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Finance and Human Resources committee this shall be communicated to another member of the Finance and Human Resources committee which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.</p> <p>i Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.</p> <p>j In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have</p>
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		<p>access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).</p> <p>k Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 19(f) and (g) above shall be provided only to (post holder) and/or the Chair of the Council.</p> <p>l Passwords for computer and telephone access will be stored in the safe in a sealed envelope, and in an emergency the safe and envelope can be opened only in the presence of two Councillors.</p>
21 (a)	a The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer. The Council may appoint a Data Protection / GDPR Officer who is also responsible for compliance with GDPR legislation.	a The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
25 (a)	a. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall: i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.	<p>a. Unless expressly instructed by a resolution of the Council, a committee or sub-committee, no councillor shall</p> <p>i. Formally or professionally inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or</p> <p>ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.</p>
27 (a)	a Northam Town Council has adopted the Torridge District Council scheme for remuneration, with regard to future increases (resolved at Full Council March 2017) but reserves the right to decline any future increases.	a Northam Town Council has adopted the Torridge District Council scheme for remuneration, with regard to future increases (resolved at Full Council March 2017) but reserves the right to not apply any future increases.

It was **resolved** to recommend the Standing Orders, as amended, to Full Council.  
Proposed: Cllr Tait, Seconded: Cllr Horrocks (all in favour)

**Action point: Amend as agreed and include on a future Full Council agenda.**

**2507/156 To note updates to the Emergency Plan**

The committee noted the amended Emergency Plan, which would be reviewed in more detail later in the year.

**Action point: Include other Halls across the Parish as appropriate and amend typographical errors.**

**2507/157 To consider updating the Community Champions documentation**

It was **resolved** to amend the Community Champions documentations as detailed overleaf.  
Proposed: Cllr Tait, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour)

**Action point: Present the revised documentation to Full Council for adoption in due course, in readiness for the 2025-26 nomination year.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.25pm.

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



**Item 7 To consider the action point update**

<b>Item</b>	<b>September 2025</b>
1. Emergency planning	The Town Clerk has contacted the Emergency Planning project manager from Devon Communities who emphasised the nature of the role of the Town Council in preparing for emergencies. The contact details and locations included in the Emergency Plan had been reviewed and published on the Council's website at <a href="#">Emergency Plan - Northam Town Council</a> The Town Clerk is attending a seminar in October presented by the Devon Community Resilience Forum and will apply any changes advised after that. ONGOING
2. Protocol following the Death of the Sovereign, Senior National Figure or Local Holder of High Office. Review the protocol.	The review has not yet been carried out. INCOMPLETE
3. Revise the Community Champions form for 2025-26 nomination year.	The nomination form has been revised. The Town Clerk has since briefly reviewed the process for conferring the title Honorary Alderman and considers that the two processes would benefit from being reviewed together. ONGOING
4. Amend Standing Orders	The standing orders had been amended, they were presented to Full Council and adopted in July 2025.
5. Prepare: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a prioritised list of policies to review</li> <li>• full set of policies for committee members</li> </ul>	On the agenda.

**Item 8 To receive the packs of policies and consider the policy review cycle (to follow)**

**Item 9 To consider the document retention policy (enclosed)**

**Item 10 To how to review the Northam Town Council Vision Statement & Strategic Plan 2023-2027 (to follow)**