



## **NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

**Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam EX39 1BY**

Acting Town Clerk: Guy Langton (CiLCA, PSLCC)

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### **To all members of the Council:**

You are hereby summoned to attend the **PARKS and RECREATION COMMITTEE** meeting on

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 at 6:30pm**

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

### **Membership:**

Cllrs Jeremy Bell, Barry Edwards, Peter Hames, Claire Hodson, Sam Newman-McKie, Niki Tait, Jane Whittaker Plus the Mayor, Cllr Louis 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: 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025

## AGENDA

- 1 **To elect a Chair for the committee**
- 2 **To elect a Deputy Chair for the committee**
- 3 **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.*
- 4 **Chair's announcements**
- 5 **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.*
- 6 **To agree the agenda as published.**
- 7 **To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025 (p3-p6)**
- 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 actions (p7)**
- 8 **Westward Ho! Park (p8)**
  - a. To note wear to the surface of the play area and repairs undertaken.
  - b. To note the plans and costings for the proposed installation of a Multi-Use Games-Area (MUGA) at the disused fourth tennis court in Westward Ho!
  - c. To consider making a formal request for Section 106 funding to Torridge District Council.
  - d. To receive an update from FOTWHOP and the volunteer gardeners at Westward Ho! Park.
  - e. Proposal from Member of the Public – Padel Court Conversion at Westward Ho! Park
- 9 **Anchor Park (p10)**
  - a. To note that the Maintenance Team planted *Prunus Kanzan* (Cherry Trees) in April and that the trees have established well.
  - b. To receive an update on the progress of wildflower planting at Anchor Park.
- 10 **Lords Meadow (p10)**
  - a. To note the hire and temporary installation of a 'Bow Tie' pumptrack from 11<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> August 2025.
  - b. To note plans to reinstate the grassed area in front of the old goal position at Lords Meadow.
- 11 **Ridgeway Drive Play Area (p10)**
  - a. To note maintenance plans for the roundabout.

**Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Parks and Recreation committee meeting held  
26<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

Present: Cllrs Bach, Edwards, Hames, Newman-McKie, Whittaker (Chair), and the Mayor, Cllr Niki Tait (ex-officio).

In attendance: Ian Rawle – Parks & Buildings Manager.  
Barbara Potts and Brian Russell – Volunteer Gardeners (Westward Ho! Park).  
Christine Hutchins – Friends of Westward Ho! Park (FOTWHOP).

**2503/682 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)**

All elected members were present.

**2503/683 Chair's Announcements**

There were none.

**2503/684 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.

**2503/685 To agree the agenda as published**

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

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

**2503/686 Recreation Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

It was **resolved** that to approve the minutes as a true and correct record, which were signed by the Chair.

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

**2503/687 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.*

There were no members of the public present other than volunteer gardeners and Christine Hutchins FOTWHOP, who would be invited to contribute at the relevant time.

**2503/688 To receive an update on actions**

The Action table is presented overleaf.

Action		November 2024	January 2025	March 2025
1	Replacement of the ball fencing at Lords Meadow, a substantial sum has been included in the budget for work required at Lords Meadow for next year.	The damp weather has caused some issues. The contractor is being reminded the work needs completing. ONGOING	The damp weather has caused some issues. The contractor is being reminded the work needs completing. ONGOING	The contractor will undertake the works in April 25. Date TBC ONGOING
2	To consult the community on the use of outdoor gym.		INCOMPLETE	The committee has decided to remove the gym equipment due to safety concerns regarding its current condition COMPLETE
3	Churchfields Skate Park – paint and ‘graffiti’.	The Parks & Recreation Manager has been in discussion with a graffiti artist ONGOING		This committee agreed it would remain as painted now until it is next refurbished. COMPLETE
4	Tennis Court gate – quality of work	The matter has been raised with the LTA directly and the Surveying Firm overseeing the work. The gate installer has advised the Surveyor that the replacement parts will be installed. No date for the work has yet been advised. ONGOING		The work has been completed by the installer. The condition will continue to be monitored. COMPLETE
5	Reinstall sign bee friendly planting at Anchor Park	The sign has not yet been reinstated. The Council is advised to wait until the new work is undertaken to establish wildflower swathes at the Park. ONGOING		The work has been completed by the Maintenance Team. COMPLETE
6	Actions arising from Play Inspection Reports			On the agenda ONGOING
7	Schedule Play Inspection Reports for 2025-26			Scheduled for January/February 2026 COMPLETE

**2503/689 To receive an update on the actions arising from the annual play inspection reports**

It was acknowledged and confirmed that the works and repairs outlined in the Playpark Action Plan would commence this week.

**2503/690 Westward Ho! Park**

- a. To receive an update from the Chair of FOTWHOP and a representative of the volunteer gardeners at Westward Ho! (verbal)  
The Chair of FOTWHOP gave a Financial update and discussion for the possibility of a Fund-raising event, involving a Hog Roast and Barbecue to link with the event at the tennis courts in May half-term. It was noted NTC Insurance would cover the event.  
**Action point: Discuss with The Town Clerk and Community Engagement Officer and prepare a risk assessment.**  
  
The Chair of FOTWHOP requested the scattering of ashes in the Sensory Garden at Westward Ho! Park.  
**Action point: raise with Town Clerk. Further discussion required with The Town Clerk regarding the feasibility of this.**  
  
Barbara Potts gave an update on recruiting volunteers and the challenges in recruiting.  
**Action point: Further discussion required with The Town Clerk and Community Engagement Officer to explore opportunities to promote volunteering.**
- b. **Barbara Potts** requested the Council consider installing of CCTV at Westward Ho! Park in response to a recent increase in vandalism within the park.  
**Action point: Further discussion required with The Town Clerk on the costings of installation and location.**
- c. To receive an update on plans for the Pavilion building (verbal)  
**It was noted that the officers planned to install Picture boards in windows of the Pavillion Building in Westward Ho!**  
**Action point: Costing and design would be considered by the Finance Committee in due course.**  
**It was noted that future plans for the Pavillion Building at Westward Ho! Park would be resumed after the completion of works at Northam Hall.**  
**Action point: All funding avenues would be explored in due course.**
- d. To receive update on tennis plans for summer 2025 as agreed at Finance Committee (confidential report attached)  
**This was noted.**
- e. To consider a project to install a MUGA on the space left by the 4<sup>th</sup> court, referred from Full Council (March 2025) (to follow)  
**It was discussed that there are potential plans to install a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) on the western side of the tennis courts. The proposed area would be designed for use in football, basketball, and netball.**

**2503/691 Anchor Park**

a. To receive an update on works at Anchor Park

i. Planting update (verbal)

**It was noted that two wildflower areas had been sown, along with hazel, rowan, and beech hedging planted along the new fencing.**

ii. Fencing installation (verbal)

**It was noted that new post and rail fencing had been installed by the Maintenance Team.**

**2503/692 Wren Close**

a. To receive an update on works undertaken (verbal)

**The Parks and Buildings Manager provided an update on the removal of the tree at Wren Close and the planting of an additional five trees at Burrough Farm to compensate for the loss.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:01pm.

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

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

<b>Action</b>		<b>January 2025</b>	<b>March 2025</b>	<b>April 2025</b>
<b>1</b>	Replacement of the ball fencing at Lords Meadow, a substantial sum has been included in the budget for work required at Lords Meadow for next year.	The damp weather has caused some issues. The contractor is being reminded the work needs completing. ONGOING	The contractor will undertake the works in April 25. Date TBC	The contractor has completed the works. Complete
<b>2</b>	To consult the community on the use of outdoor gym.		INCOMPLETE	The committee has decided to remove the gym equipment due to safety concerns regarding its current condition. COMPLETE
<b>3</b>	Churchfields Skate Park – paint and ‘graffiti’.	The Parks & Recreation Manager has been in discussion with a graffiti artist ONGOING		This committee agreed it would remain as painted now until it is next refurbished. COMPLETE
<b>4</b>	Tennis Court gate – quality of work	The matter has been raised with the LTA directly and the Surveying Firm overseeing the work. The gate installer has advised the Surveyor that the replacement parts will be installed. No date for the work has yet been advised. ONGOING		The work has been completed by the installer. The condition will continue to be monitored. COMPLETE
<b>5</b>	Reinstall sign bee friendly planting at Anchor Park	The sign has not yet been reinstated. The Council is advised to wait until the new work is undertaken to establish wildflower swathes at the Park. ONGOING		The work has been completed by the Maintenance Team. COMPLETE
<b>6</b>	Actions arising from Play Inspection Reports			On the agenda. ONGOING
<b>7</b>	Schedule Play Inspection Reports for 2025-26			Scheduled for January/February 2026 COMPLETE

## 8 Westward Ho! Park

- a. To note wear to the surface of the play area and repairs undertaken.
- b. To note the plans and costings for the proposed installation of a Multi-Use Games-Area (MUGA) at the disused fourth tennis court in Westward Ho!
- c. To consider making a formal request for Section 106 funding to Torridge District Council.

A contractor has provided estimates (exVAT) for a MUGA (in a design as previously shared with the committee) as follows:

MUGA with tarmac surface	£83,530, OR
MUGA with padded astro surface	£95,094

Officers are inclined towards the tarmac surface, for ease of maintenance. The S106 fund includes a line for ongoing maintenance costs. Tarmac tennis courts cost approx. £1,400 a year to maintain (per court). The Officers also recommend applying for a maintenance fund of £14,000, to cover the estimated cost of 10 years' maintenance.

There is an identified budget for Park improvements this year of £15,000, plus a sum of £7,500 to build reserves. It would not be prudent to use the entire fund to provide a base for this project, therefore the Officers recommend that £12,500 of the budget is assigned to the MUGA project.

MUGA (tarmac)	£83,530
Less NTC budget	-£12,500
S106 request for MUGA	£71,030
S106 request for Maintenance (10yrs)	£14,000
<b>Total request</b>	<b>£85,030</b>

A project of this cost would need to be put out to tender, is subject to the requirements in s. 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the 1972 Act") and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the 2015 Regulations"). These legal requirements are summarised in the table below.

Contract value (inclusive of VAT)	Legal requirements		
	The council's standing orders required by s.135 of the 1972 Act (and financial regulations)	The Contracts Finder/ find a tender website and other light-touch rules in the 2015 Regulations	Complex requirements in the 2015 Regulations
Low-value contracts (in England only, this means up to £30,000).	✓		
<b>All contracts over £30,000, including VAT, but below the threshold (England only).</b>	✓	✓	



Public service or supply contract over £214,904 or public works contract over £5,372,609	✓		✓
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The requirement for councils in England and Wales to have standing orders with respect to procuring and entering into contracts is set out in s.135 of the 1972 Act. This advice note provides (A) an explanation of councils' responsibilities under the 1972 Act (England and Wales), (B) an explanation of the bodies and contracts which are subject to the 2015 Regulations (England and Wales), (C) an explanation of the contracts finder/find a tender provisions and other light-touch requirements for procuring and awarding contracts covered by the 2015 Regulations which are valued over £30,000 (England only) and (D) an overview of the complex requirements for procuring contracts covered by the 2015 Regulations which are valued over £214,904 for a public supply or public service contract or £5,372,609 for a public works contract (England and Wales).

**Recommendation: The committee resolves to formally approach Torridge District Council for the funding and prepare the tender documentation.**

d. To receive an update from FOTWHOP and the volunteer gardeners at Westward Ho! Park.

f. Proposal from Member of the Public – Padel Court Conversion at Westward Ho! Park

Referred from the Finance committee (14.5.25):

To consider a proposal submitted a resident of Westward Ho!, regarding the potential conversion of 1 or 2 refurbished tennis courts at Westward Ho! Park into padel courts.

They propose a partnership whereby the padel courts would be fully funded and managed independently, with no financial cost to Northam Town Council. The proposal outlines community benefits including increased sport participation, year-round usage, and public access via the LTA booking platform. A revenue share or rental arrangement is suggested, with all maintenance and operations handled by the proposer.

The Council is asked to consider:

- Whether it wishes to explore this proposal further
- The potential for a presentation from the proposer at a future meeting
- Any initial comments on feasibility, location suitability, and public access

The officers note that the Council refurbished the tennis courts with a large grant from the Lawn Tennis Association, which was accompanied by a 15-year agreement. That agreement would need to be altered to convert a court into a padel court. This has not been investigated further by the officers, awaiting the decision of this committee.

## **9 Anchor Park**

- a. To note that the Maintenance Team planted *Prunus Kanzan* (Cherry Trees) in April and that the trees have established well.
- b. To receive an update on the progress of wildflower planting at Anchor Park.

## **10 Lords Meadow**

- a. To note the hire and temporary installation of a 'Bow Tie' pumptrack from 11th to 19<sup>th</sup> August 2025.
- b. To note plans to reinstate the grassed area in front of the old goal position at Lords Meadow.

## **11 Ridgeway Drive Play Area**

- a. To note maintenance plans for the roundabout.