

Northam Town Council – Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 29th June 2022 in the Town Hall at 6.30 pm

Present: Cllrs Laws, (Chair), Davis, Edwards, Ford, Hames, Himan, Mrs Hodson Leather, Miss Manley, Mrs McCarthy, Sargent, Tisdale and Miss Woodhouse.

In attendance: Mrs J Mills, Town Clerk, Mr G Langton – Deputy Town Clerk
County Cllr D McGeough
Rev A Vidamour

2207/

Apologies

Apologies were recorded on behalf of Cllr Newman-McKie

2207/

Chairman's Announcements

The Mayor made no announcements.

2206/172

Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that all interests must be declared prior to the item being discussed.

2206/173

To agree the agenda between Part A and Part B

It was **resolved** to agree the agenda between Part A and Part B, deferring item at minute 2206/164 to the July meeting of the Council.

Proposed: Cllr Tisdale Seconded: Cllr Davis (all in favour)

2206/174

To confirm and sign the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 25th May 2022

It was **resolved** to sign the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 25th May 2022. They were signed by the Mayor.

Proposed: Cllr, Seconded: Cllr (majority in favour, 2 abstentions – not present)

2206/175

To note and adopt the reports of minutes and resolutions contained therein from Committees and Sub-Committees (Items contained in Part B to be considered under Part B)

- Town Projects – 6th June 2022
- Planning – 26th May and 9th June 2022
- Climate Emergency – 14th June 2022
- Neighbourhood Plan – 16th June 2022
- Finance and Human Resources – 20th June 2022
- Westward Ho! Park – 21st June 2022

It was agreed to note and adopt the reports of minutes and resolutions contained therein from the majority Committees and Sub-Committees (Items contained in Part B to be considered under Part B) other than the minutes for the meeting of the Town Projects Committee on the 6th June 2022, which had not yet been confirmed by that committee.

2206/176

Action Points

The Mayor reported that a response had been received from the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, who had responded under Freedom of Information regulations. Cllr Miss Woodhouse had circulated the draft of a response to members and the County Division representative.

It was **resolved** to suspend standing orders to allow the Division member to speak.

Cllr McGeough noted his support for the paper circulated by Cllr Miss Woodhouse and had submitted it to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service.

It was resolved to re-enter standing orders.

Proposed Cllr Tisdale, Seconded Cllr Woodhouse (all in favour).

It was noted that the Council had 40 working days to reply and that consideration of a response from the Council would be included at its July 2022 meeting.

Action point: Town Clerk to include the matter on the July 2022 agenda.

The remainder of the Action Points were noted.

2206/177 To receive and consider reports from the Town Clerk

It was agreed to note the reports from the Town Clerk

2206/178 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.

As a parish resident, Cllr McGeough addressed the Council on the matter of 'No Mow May', registering his concern that the adoption of it as a policy would accelerate weed growth and cause problems with maintenance later in the growing season.

2206/179 To consider a recommendation from Town Projects and Asset Management Committee that "Northam Town Council does not proceed with registering its parks and open spaces with Fields in Trust"

The matter was deferred to the July meeting of the Council.

2206/180 To consider a request from Cllr Mrs McCarthy "That Northam Town Council start recording all Council and committee meetings and that any training needed is provided to staff on using our existing equipment installed to enable this to happen."

It was **resolved** to reinstate the recording of all Council and committee meetings with immediate effect and that any training needed is provided to staff so the Council's existing equipment may be used.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs McCarthy, Seconded Cllr Tisdale (all in favour).

2206/181 To consider the Draft Climate Action plan for adoption

Members considered the draft Climate Action Plan as presented.

It was **resolved** to adopt the Climate Action Plan.

Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded Cllr Laws (majority in favour)

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to publish the Action Plan on the Council's website.

2206/182 Request from Climate Emergency Committee that NTC write to TDC regarding the delay in installing EV Charge Points at Wilkeys Field in Westward Ho!

Members considered the request from the Climate Emergency Committee.

It was **resolved** to write to Torridge District Council to request an explanation for the delay in the installation of EV charge points at Wilkeys Field in Westward Ho!, given the existence of the infrastructure to supply these devices.

Proposed: Cllr Davis, Seconded: Cllr Hames (majority in favour).

Action point: Town Clerk to write to Torridge District Council as resolved.

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- 2206/183 Request from Climate Emergency Committee that NTC consider adopting a 'No Mow May' policy from 2023 cutting season, as promoted by Devon CC and North Devon DC**
Members considered the request from the Climate Emergency Committee, discussing the benefits and effects of adopting such a policy. The Council was reminded that it had entered into a contract with Devon County Council to maintain the highway verges to agreed standards, for example to ensure visibility at junctions and that it had been agreed to manage some areas for wildlife in line with the Country's Life on the Verge policy.
Cllr Hames proposed and Cllr Davis seconded a motion to consider the adoption of a 'No Mow May' policy from the 2023 cutting season. There were 4 votes for the proposal, 5 against and one abstention. The motion failed.
- 2206/184 To ratify a decision made at the last Full Council meeting that "we proceed with tree planting in Golf Links Rd subject to receipt of approval from Devon County Council"**
It was **resolved** to ratify the decision to proceed subject to the approval of Devon County Council and ensuring that any planting would not adversely affect services running under the land, for example mains water and drainage, gas, electricity and telecoms.
Proposed: Cllr Tisdale, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour).
Action point: Town Clerk to write to the member of the public who initiated the project with an update.
Action point: Officers to contact the relevant service providers to establish the services running under the land and Devon County Council to seek agreement for the trees.
- 2206/185 To consider the independent Fire Risk Assessment recommendations**
Members considered the independent Fire Risk Assessment recommendations and their implications.
It was **resolved** to undertake the actions within the remit of the Council and to send Torridge District Council, the building owners, a copy of the report highlighting the actions it included.
Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Tisdale (all in favour).
Action point: Officers to undertake the actions within Northam Town Council's remit and send the report to relevant officers at Torridge District Council.
- 2206/186 Correspondence: Open Spaces Society**
It was reported that the Bideford Bay Surf Lifesaving club, a grant recipient, had written to the Council expressing its thanks, the card was held in the office.
- 2206/187 Street Matters: All street matters forwarded by e-mail**
Councillors noted that the road surfaces in Appledore were in a poor state of repair and had not received attention and that refuse was being placed in the street in unprotected bags which were being torn open by birds and animals, leading to issues with litter in the streets.
- 2206/188 To receive a Police/Councillor Advocate Report**
Cllr Sargent reported that he would be attending a seminar on the subject of serious crime in the coming weeks and would report the detail back to the next meeting of the Council.
He further reported that the Council's SpeedWatch initiative continued, with a session confirmed for Golf Links Road week commencing 4th July 2022. He

expressed his hope that other locations could be added in the future, the process for identifying locations having been streamlined by the constabulary.

In response to member's requests for specific locations, Cllr Sargent agreed to review them.

In response to member's requests, Cllr Sargent offered to investigate the cost of vehicle activated speed indicator devices and report back to a future meeting of the Council.

2206/189 Summary Report from County Councillor

The County Councillor addressed the Council providing updates on plans for white-lining the area's roads. He noted too the poor state of repair of the roads in Appledore and other parts of the Town area. He further noted the extent of weed growth along some parts of the highway, noting that residents had taken it upon themselves in some places to clear the weeds close to their properties.

He reported that he had funded various projects from his locality budget, including Appledore School, the Westward Ho! Men's Shed and Appledore Community Hall. He reminded the Council that he planned to fund work at Westward Ho! Park, should the Council submit the request for funding.

Action point: Town Clerk to submit the request for funding.

2206/190 Summary Report from a District Member

Cllr Hames reported that Torridge District Council continued to research the provision of its own stock of affordable housing and the purchase of emergency housing units to meet local needs. He further reported that Torridge District Council had adopted its revised Carbon Plan at a recent meeting of its Full Council.

Cllr Leather reported that the Inspector had dismissed the appeal against the refusal of permission to develop 39 dwellings on land a Bloody Corner. He further reported that Torridge District Council was ranked second in the country for recycling rates, which had improved for the last five years. Cllr Leather agreed to bring issues with refuse in the Town area to the attention of the relevant Officers at Torridge.

Part B

- 2206/176** **To resolve: that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting.**
It was **resolved** that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting
Proposed: Cllr Laws, Seconded: Cllr Tisdale (all in favour)
- 2206/177** **To note and adopt the reports of minutes and resolutions contained therein from Committees and Sub-Committees (Items contained in Part B to be considered under Part B)**
Finance and Human Resources – 20th June 2022
It was agreed to note this item and adopt the report.
- 2206/178** **To resolve to readmit members of the press and public**
It was **resolved** to readmit members of the press and public
Proposed: Cllr Tisdale, Seconded: Cllr Mrs McCarthy (all in favour)

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.20pm

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