

Extraordinary General Meeting of the Northam Burrows Charity Trustees held 22nd January 2025 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Northam.

Present: Cllrs Bach, Edwards, Hames, Hodson, Leather, Newman-McKie, Roscoe and Tait (Mayor).

In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO); Andrew Eastman (Honorary Alderman); Rev T Sutton; Jenny Carey Wood and Dr Eirene Williams (North Devon Coast National Landscape); nine members of the public.

Item 1 To approve the accounts to be submitted to the Charity Commission 2023-24

Cllr Leather noted the large bank balance in the Charity's current account. The Town Clerk reported that from July 2025 the Charity would be advertising for grant requests in line with Object (2) of the Charity, which stated:

"If and in so far as the income of the charity cannot be applied towards the object specified in sub-clause (1) above, the trustee may apply it for the general benefit of the inhabitants of the wards of Northam, Westward Ho! and Appledore in Devon in such charitable ways as the trustee thinks fit."

Accounts		2023-2024	
in (= sum of 1 to 4)		current	total
1	balance 01.04.23	£ 72,082.22	£ 72,082.22
2	transfers in	£ 5,992.67	£ 5,992.67
3	receipts	£ 41,758.81	£ 41,758.81
4	grants	£ -	£ -
5	total	£ 119,833.70	£ 119,833.70
out (=sum of 6 to 12)			
6	VAT	£ 34.80	£ 34.80
7	maintenance	£ -	£ -
8	admin	£ 11,723.11	£ 11,723.11
9	grants made	£ -	£ -
10	Refunds given	£ 121.60	£ 121.60
11	Petty Cash	£ 100.00	£ 100.00
12	Square Charges	£ 500.52	£ 500.52
13	total	£ 12,480.03	£ 12,480.03
overalls			
14	uncleared payments	£ -	£ -
15	outcome (= 5 minus 13 plus 14)	£ 107,353.67	£ 107,353.67
16	bank balance 31.03.24	£ 107,353.67	£ 107,353.67
17	difference	£ -	£ -

In this first year of granting, the Corporate Trustee had identified a fund of in excess of £39,000. A reserve deposit account would also be opened and £50,000 deposited.

It was **resolved** to approve the accounts as presented (copied above).

Proposed: Cllr Edwards, Seconded: Cllr Bach (majority in favour, 1 abstention).

Action points:

Submit accounts to the Charity Commission.

Identify a suitable deposit account.

Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Full Council meeting held 22nd January 2025 at 6.45pm in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Northam.

Present: Cllrs Bach, Edwards, Hames, Hodson, Leather, Newman-McKie, Singh, Roscoe and Tait (Mayor).

In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO); Andrew Eastman (Honorary Alderman); Rev T Sutton; Jenny Carey Wood and Dr Eirene Williams (North Devon Coast National Landscape); nine members of the public.

2501/535 To receive a presentation from the North Devon Coast National Landscape team.

Jenny Carey-Wood, the Manager of The North Devon Coast National Landscape (NDCNL) and team addressed the Council, accompanied by Dr Eirene Williams, the Chair of the NDCNL.

The NDCNL extends for over 70 miles from Ilfracombe in the east to Hartland in the west and covered 171 sqkm, 11% of the land was in National Trust hands. The NDCNL included the Northam Burrows. The NDCNL was one of 34 National Landscapes in England, with 66% of the population living within 30 minutes travel of one.

There is a duty of regard for National Landscapes in Planning Legislation, developments have to 'seek to further' the purpose of the National Landscapes. The NDCNL Team provide advice to Planning Authorities though are not a Statutory Consultee.

The NDCNL has a small grant fund to support organisations that plan to manage the landscape in line with the NDCNL's aims. These grants would be available to community groups, including local authorities.

The NDCNL is subject to a 5-year management plan, the draft plan for 2025 on would be consulted on in April or May 2025.

2501/536 Apologies

Cllrs Ford, Himan, Lo-Vel and Whittaker tendered their apologies, the reasons for which were approved by the Council.

2501/537 To agree the agenda as published.

It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published, though the item regarding the inclusion of NTC land as Local Green Space in the Northam Neighbourhood Plan would be taken after Public Participation.

Proposed Cllr Hames, Seconded Cllr Edwards (all in favour)

2501/538 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.

2501/539 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor announced that Cllr Hugh Brading had submitted his resignation to her in writing. The Town Clerk would inform the elections authority of the vacancy.

The Mayor announced that the press had reported that the plans to improve the buildings at North Devon hospital in Barnstaple had been delayed.

**2501/540 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of:
a. Full Town Council Meeting held on 18th December 2024**

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting. They were signed by the Chair.

Proposed: Cllr Bach, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (majority in favour, 3 abstained – not present at meeting)

b. Special Full Town Council Meeting held on 7th January 2025

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting. They were signed by the Chair.

Proposed: Cllr Edwards, Seconded: Cllr Hames (majority in favour, 1 against, 2 abstained – not present at meeting)

2501/541 To receive and adopt the minutes and resolutions of Committees and Sub-Committees

- Planning & Development 21st November and 12th December 2024
- The minutes were received and adopted.

2501/542 Public Participation

Three members of the public addressed the Council, all noting their support for the identified Local Green Spaces to be included in the Northam Neighbourhood Plan. All three also requested that the Council nominate the land around Knapp House as an Asset of Community Value.

2501/543 To consider the inclusion of NTC land as Local Green Space in the Northam Neighbourhood Plan

It was **resolved** to agree that 'Blackies' (Torridge Rd, Appledore), Anchor Park (Richmond Road, Appledore), Westward Ho! Park (Avon Lane, Westward Ho!) and Burrough Farm (Churchill Way, Northam) would be included in the Northam Neighbourhood Plan.

Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour)

It was **agreed** that the form to nominate the lands surrounding Knapp House as an Asset of Community Value to ratify at the next meeting of the Council.

Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour)

Action point: Draft the ACV nomination form.

2501/544 To receive a written report (if any) from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

The Town Clerk received a report, which is copied below.

Crime Figures Report 1/12/24 – 31/12/24.

In that time frame there has been 26 crimes, which can be broken down as follows.

3 Vehicle Crime.	3 Harassment
2 Theft.	1 Burglary
12 Assaults	3 Criminal Damage.
2 Fraud	

In the same time frame, 1/12/23 – 31/12/23 there were 39 crimes.

This is a link to our website and allows you to see the locations of crime and ASB in your area by month. Click on Crime Map and zoom in to see more detail.

<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/area/your-area/devon-cornwall/north--west-devon/westward-ho-northam--appledore-hartland-rural/about-us/top-reported-crimes-in-this-area>

Cllr Hames noted concerns with ongoing issues at Knapp House and the vandalism at Churchfield Public Conveniences.

Cllr Roscoe noted that youth provision could have a positive impact on anti-social behaviour.

Eight members of the public left the meeting at this point (7:25pm)

2501/545 To receive a written report (if any) from Devon County Councillor

The Town Clerk had not received a report from Cllr McGeough in advance of the meeting.

2501/546

To receive reports (if any) from Torridge District Members

Cllr Bach:

*Re: District Councillors Report for NTC Meeting - 22nd January 2025**Cllr Niki Tait our Mayor has requested that District Members submit written reports in advance of our next full council meeting as above.**My report is therefore as follows, which can be shared in advance of our meeting.**Other than this Government's Impending reorganisation of Local Government and Devolution I have nothing substantive to report, which may be a similar response from other TDC members. Therefore, I can do no better, other than to attach below, the recent statement from the Leader of TDC Cllr Ken James, showing Torridge's position on this, which was supported by the majority of the members present at the Extraordinary Meeting held on the 9th January 2025.**Please accept this as my written report for our meeting next week and click on the link below to see the statement. Please click on the following link:-**<https://torridge.gov.uk/article/22095/JOINT-STATEMENT-Devon-District-Councils-Update-on-devolution-and-local-government-reform>*

Cllr Hodson:

*The Roads Policing team demonstrates their commitment to road users in Devon & Cornwall. Chief Constable James Vaughan QPM MSt (Cantab) joined officers from the Roads Policing Team this week to discuss initiatives put in place to reduce road injuries and deaths on the roads across the force area. These initiatives underpin a proactive approach by the police to prevent accidents caused by motorists who take risks on the roads.**One of the initiatives is an operation known as Op Limit, a national month-long initiative aimed at warning drivers about the consequences of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The police work in partnership with communities and encourage people to report suspected drink or drug drivers to the police.**As part of December 2024 Op Limit campaign, Devon and Cornwall Police arrested 284 people on suspicion of drink or drug driving.**Of the 178 people arrested on suspicion of drink driving, 79% were male and most offenders were aged between 17 and 45.**On Christmas day, 11 people were arrested on suspicion of drink driving (7 males and 4 females) and 1 male was arrested after testing positive for cocaine at the roadside.**On New Years Eve and into the early hours of New Years Day, 7 people were arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence of drink or drugs.**For the full article please see the Devon & Cornwall Police website.**Cllr Hodson also reported that she had been involved in discussions with officers at Torridge District Council regarding S106 allocations and their availability and hoped to arrange a meeting between Northam TC members and officers and officers at TDC in due course.***Action point: Town Clerk to liaise with Cllr Hodson to arrange that meeting.**

Cllr Lo-Vel:

*An extraordinary full council meeting on 9th January at TDC, held to discuss the implication of the Government's while paper on Devolution. These are far reaching and complicated. Although the Council were not required to make a formal response at this stage a letter was agreed. Whether it will make any difference to what is proposed is yet to be seen. I find it very difficult to see where Torridge will fit into these far-reaching proposals and it is hard to see at the moment how these proposals will improve democracy, accountability or public engagement in decision making in our large, predominantly rural areas. The Council did ask that the elections scheduled for 2025 should go ahead.**At the Internal Scrutiny meeting positive reports were delivered regarding the Asset management plan from Harvey Gardener and the Economic Review and Estuary Review from Chris Fuller.**I tried to help a constituent with a query about housing and was dismayed to hear from Torridge that Devon Home Choice is currently taking about four weeks to respond to emails - I imagine even longer if people like the people I was trying to help do not have internet or an email address and required a postal response. I have heard from another constituent that it is not possible to log on to the site. I will be looking into this on my return from holiday.*

2501/547 To consider the action point update

The action points were noted as follows:

10th April 2024 Request for a free car parking day at Churchfields for the 200th Anniversary of the RNLI Appledore station. (minute 2404/907)	The Town Clerk therefore asked if the Council could have a free day of parking at Churchfields in Appledore for the event. At the time of writing, Sean Kearney was consulting internally at TDC and a response was awaited. ONGOING
20th November 2024 Re-engage with Surfers Against Sewage Plastic Free Campaigns (minutes 2407/192 and 2411/416)	The Town Clerk, Community Engagement Officer, Cllrs Bach, Hames and Lo-Vel all attended the meetings arranged for the 27 th November 2024. The Northam Burrows Rangers both apologised in advance. The meeting was positive, with both the Council and SAS agreeing to share information so the Plastic Free Communities could restart. Prior to the meeting, the Town Clerk spoke to Mr Cross, who had been very supportive in the past and had arranged to speak again and plan for 2025 in the new year. ONGOING
20th November 2024 (minute 2411/413)	Drop kerbs Action point: Town Clerk to contact the relevant Devon County Council officer. ONGOING
20th November 2024 (minute 2411/418)	Town Clerk to prepare a report into the costs of the three options for future work at the pavilion. This work has been overtaken by urgent work required at Northam Hall. ONGOING
20th November 2024 (minute 2411/419)	The protocol for the wearing of civic regalia has been drafted and published on the Council's website. COMPLETE
18th December 2024 (minute 2412/493)	Amended meeting dates were circulated to members COMPLETE
18th December 2024 (minute 2412/494)	Prepare a lease for the rental of Blue Light Hall and pass the matter to the Finance committee. ONGOING
18th December 2024 (minute 2412/498)	Request an exemption from parking charges at Windmill Lane on weekdays for Northam TC members. Request made, response awaited. ONGOING
18th December 2024 (minute 2412/499)	Ask the member of the public planning a podcast project to draft a letter requesting bench sponsors contact them. ONGOING

Rev Sutton left at this point 19:45

2501/548 To receive the Clerk's report

At 31st December 2024, the Council's balances were:

Nationwide (Business 95-day saver)	£93,166.35	current interest rate is 3.9%
Cambridge & Counties Bank (31 day)	£93,884.82	current interest rate is 3.55%
Cambridge Building Society	£5,024.40	current interest rate is 2.4%
Petty Cash	£94.29	
Coop Bank (current account)	£245,134.80	
Total cash in hand	£437,304.66	

Payments

The Council made 241 payments in November/December, totalling £97,091.37 (exVAT). A full list was presented to the Finance Committee in January 2025.

The Council's accounting software requires VAT refunded is recorded as a negative payment rather than a receipt (the reasoning being that it is a return of payments made). In November 2024, the Council received a VAT refund of £4,474.26.

Receipts:

In November / December 2024, the Council received 101 payments, totalling £6,351.12, including interest paid into the Council's deposit accounts (£1,386.69); payment from TDC for the hire of the Council's Tower and staff (£312.50); and the annual fee to use Burrough Farm from Northam Lions FC (£120). Payments received in respect of Council services provided for the community was £4,204.37, detailed below, which included rent payable on the Council's carpark adjacent to the Seagate Hotel in Appledore. There was a £40.44 refund for their cancelled Hall bookings.

Tennis courts:

The gross volume of sales since 1st January 2024 is £5,470. After fees, the Council has received £5,091.45. 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. The Council is £1,491.45 over the target, in this extended year (1st January 2024 to 31st March 25). After the 31st March 2025, a payment will be made to the Council's Cambridge Building Society account, where this earmark is held.#

Northam Town Council Precept 2025-26

An increase of 4.35% applied to the Council's precept request, meant a notional Band D property would provide £4.63 more into the Council's budget. The Town Council's portion of the Council Tax would therefore rise to £110.99, for a notional Band D property. The effect on each band is shown in the table. The precept for 2025-26 was confirmed as **£644,337**.

This represented an increase of £76,505 over the precept of £567,832 applied in 2024-25. In the same period, the Town Council had seen an increase in the tax base of 466.66, up from 5,338.76 in 2024-25 to 5,805.42 in 2025-26. The tax base increased significantly more than normal (between 150 and 180). The larger increase is due, in the most part, to the application of a 100% premium (additional levy) on those properties defined as second homes on the Council Tax register. It was noted that should second homes become main residences or holiday let businesses, the tax base increase would reduce (or even decrease) in the future, necessitating greater rises in the precept to maintain the Council's budget.

Band	Ratio	Ratio as %	Previous Year 2024-25 NTC	Annual increase 2025-26 NTC	estimated 2025-26 NTC bill	
					annual	monthly (12)
A	6/9	67%	£ 71.26	£ 3.10	£ 74.36	£ 6.20
B	7/9	78%	£ 82.96	£ 3.61	£ 86.57	£ 7.21
C	8/9	89%	£ 94.66	£ 4.12	£ 98.78	£ 8.23
D	9/9	100%	£ 106.36	£ 4.63	£ 110.99	£ 9.25
E	11/9	122%	£ 129.76	£ 5.65	£ 135.41	£ 11.28
F	13/9	144%	£ 153.16	£ 6.67	£ 159.82	£ 13.32
G	15/9	167%	£ 177.62	£ 7.73	£ 185.35	£ 15.45
H	18/9	200%	£ 212.72	£ 9.26	£ 221.98	£ 18.50

It was **resolved** to continue to hold the grants presentation evening and the Annual Electors Meeting on the same date in 2025 (20th March 2025).

Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Hodson (majority in favour)

Action point: Refer the plans for future Annual Electors Meetings to the Review Committee.

2501/548 To note the completion of the registration of Land at Wren Close

The completion of registration was noted. The title information had been published on the Council's website.

2501/549 To receive an update on the progress of the May Fair working Group

The Working Group had agreed the running order for the May Fair 2025 as presented below. The estimated cost is £7,300, with an estimated income of £2,800. The net cost is estimated to be £4,500.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Arena / Marquee / Rectory forecourt</i>	<i>All day</i>
10:00	Parade	Exmoor Zoo
10:15 - 10:30	Opening and Crowning	Freshspring train rides
10:30 - 11:00	Maypole Dance	Facepainting
11:00 - 11:15	Fancy Dress - judging	Bouncy castle
11:15 - 11:45	Swing-time dancers (30 mins) Bubble-ologist (30 mins)	Roundabout
11:45 - 12:15	Morris Dancers (20 mins)	Classic cars
12:15 - 12:45	Punch and Judy	Motorcycles
12:45 - 13:30	Appledore Band	Food vans
13:30 - 14:00	Morris Dancers (20 mins)	Stalls
14:00 - 14:30	Swing-time dancers (30 mins) Bubble-ologist (30 mins)	Military vehicles
14:30 - 15:00	Punch and Judy	

Action point: Progress with plans for the May Fair 2025.

2501/550 To receive an update on the progress of works to complete the identified actions at Northam Hall

The Parks & Buildings Manager had identified the actions that could be carried out by the Council's staff and those that required external contractor involvement. The Finance Committee would be considering the estimated costs at future meetings.

It was **resolved** to exclude members of the press and public from the discussion of the next item in pursuance of Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, subsection (2).

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

2501/551 To consider the basis of ongoing management of Windmill Lane allotment site

The Town Clerk reported that in researching the minutes of the Town Council and of the District Council for the years 1977 and 1978, to establish when it had been agreed that this Council would administer the Windmill Lane (Northam) allotment site, at the request of an officer at the District Council he found a minute of that Council's Environmental and Leisure Services Committee on 8th March 1978 that indicated the administration of the allotment site had been passed to this Council because of their title over the land (copied below)

"the Secretary and Solicitor reported that no money had been included in the budget for allotments at Northam for 1978/79 as they were the responsibility of the Northam Town Council. The committee therefore gave consideration to future arrangements concerning the allotments and in respect of the costs already incurred by this council.

Resolved:

(a) That arrangements be made, subject to the agreement by the Northam Town Council, for this Council to take over the administration of the Northam allotments and for the ownership to be transferred to this Council.

(b) That in the event of the Town Council not accepting these arrangements the administration no longer undertaken by this Council.

(c) That no action be taken concerning the costs already incurred."

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The Town Clerk reported that the District Council had applied for title of the land parcel in October 2005 and been successful in reviewing it to include the allotment garden in September 2024.

It was **resolved** to send a copy of the minute to the Head of Legal and Governance at the District Council for her view on the implications of the minute.

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

Action point: draft the communication.

It was **resolved** to readmit members of the press and public from the discussion of the next item in pursuance of Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, subsection (2).

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

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:55pm.

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