

**Minutes of the Northam Town Annual Electors' Meeting
20th March 2025 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

Present: Cllrs Bach, Edwards, Hames, Himan, Hodson, Leather, Lo-Vel, Tait (Mayor – in the chair) and Whittaker.

In attendance: Guy Langton – Deputy Town Clerk
Tina Tucker – Community Engagement and Administrative Officer
Corinne Williams – Finance Assistant and General Administrator
Members of the public

24-25/001 Apologies

Cllrs Lo-Vel, Newman-McKie, Roscoe and Singh gave their apologies.

24-25/002 To confirm the Minutes of the Annual Electors Meeting held on 17th April 2024

It was resolved to confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting as a correct record.

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

23-24/003 To receive the following report:

Northam Town Council Mayor's Report

The report was read out by the Mayor. A copy is attached to these minutes.

23-24/004 To discuss matters raised by Parishioners

1. Cllr Whittaker addressed the meeting thanking all those that had signed her petition regarding parking charges at Bone Hill car park and noted that following resolutions at the District Council, from 1st April 2025, the charges would be removed for Saturday afternoons and all day on Sundays.

No response was required.

2. Mr Keith Lane, the Chair of the Twinning Committee thanked the Council for rehanging the Twinning decorations after the Chamber had been redecorated and commented that it was the 50th anniversary of the Town's Twinning in 2026.

No response was required.

There being no further matters raised, the meeting closed at 6:10pm and was followed by the Grant Presentations (at 6:30pm)

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

Chair's initials

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ANNUAL ELECTORS MEETING – Mayor’s Report

I would like to thank all the electorate for bearing with us over the last year or so. Having lost two of our members of office staff, including our Town Clerk last year, we have undertaken a complete staffing review, leading to a new team structure. This includes the well-deserved promotion of our previous Deputy Town Clerk, Guy Langton, the employment of both a Parks and Maintenance Manager, Ian Rawle, in charge of our maintenance team, and a new financial assistant, Corrine Williams. The employment of a financial assistant has given us the opportunity to revamp our financial reporting systems and these are now much clearer, more understandable and therefore more transparent.

After twelve years with us, one of our maintenance staff, Ivan Heuze, is about to retire and we thank him for all his service and wish him a very healthy and happy future. We will soon be advertising that role, should anyone wish to apply.

The internal procedures and committee structures have also been completely reviewed and updated.

Much work has gone on in the parks and outside space which has resulted, amongst other things in the new, totally revamped Westward Ho! tennis courts winning the Devon Lawn Tennis Association Community Venue of the Year for 2024 and have been put forward for the national LTA award in the same category. Congratulations to all involved. Last year’s successful summer tennis camps will be repeated and work with the Atlantic Racket Centre will extend to evening beginners’ sessions in June/July.

A cycle pump track will be rented this summer situated in Lords Meadow designed to improve a rider's bike handling technique. The track will be 42m long with a pinched centre oval shape to maximise the number of ‘banked turns’ available. All ages can use it and there will be a demonstration session as part of our hire. There will also be a new zip wire and basket swing installed.

In line with the council’s commitment to addressing climate change, as well as efficiency, worn-out maintenance equipment is being replaced with electric-powered models and a second electric truck.

The next big project being undertaken is the modernisation of Northam Hall which requires considerable work.

There are two current vacancies for council – one for Northam Ward and one for Appledore but if you would like to stand you must have your nomination in by 4.00 tomorrow afternoon, Friday 21 March, so get to Riverbank House tomorrow morning first thing to collect the forms. The election will be on the 17 April.

One of the benefits of being a Mayor is we have the opportunity to raise money for a charity of our choice; in my case Appledore RNLI, in its bicentenary year. It was the first lifeboat station anywhere to receive an RNLI commissioned lifeboat and 200 years of volunteers have kept the lifeboats manned ever since. Thank you to all those who helped with, and came to, the fundraising Ceilidh in February raising in excess of £1000, and I invite all of you to our Dinner and Dance, complete with Fundraising Auction, which will be held on Friday 25 April, at the Durrant. Private tables of 8-10 friends and colleagues can be booked, as can individual tickets at £45 per head. It’s a chance to dress up in your finery and enjoy a great evening. Just ask us for the details.

Chair’s initials

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