

Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Full Council meeting held 7th January 2025 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Northam.

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

In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO).

One member of the public (Mr A Eastman, Honourary Alderman).

2501/501 Apologies

Cllrs Ford, Newman-McKie, Whittaker and Singh tendered their apologies, the reasons for which were approved by the Council.

Cllr Roscoe was absent.

2501/502 To agree the agenda as published.

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

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

2501/503 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.

2501/504 Mayor's Announcements

The Town Clerk reported that arising from the Fire Risk Assessment carried out at Northam Hall and subsequent report, which required significant immediate work, and the cancelling of the final tranche of the Community Ownership Fund by central government, the actions relating to the pavilion had been put on hold.

The Town Clerk had received the title deeds to the play area adjacent open space at Wren Close, Northam, which had been uploaded to the Council's website at the appropriate page.

The Helmstedt Twinning Committee had contacted the Council, asking if five young people (aged 13 to 16) could be identified to attend a sporting/cultural exchange in late July 2025.

2501/505 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.

The member of the public did not wish to address the meeting.

2501/506 To consider the Grants to be made to local organisations as recommended by the Finance Committee

It was **resolved** to accept the recommendations of the Finance Committee and provide grants, to be paid to the recipients in April 2025, as presented overleaf, at a total grant cost of £20,606.75.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour).

Grant No	Grant 2024/2025	Applicant	Grant Request 2025/26	Grant Recommendation by Finance Committee	Difference	Proposed by
1	N/A	Bideford Music Club	£300.00	£300.00		CH
2	£500.00	Citizens Advice Torridge North Mid and West Devon	£750.00	£500.00	£250.00	CL
3	N/A	Appledore Baptist Church	£500.00	£500.00		NT
4	£430.00	Bideford and District Community Archive	£350.00	£350.00		CH
5	£250.00	Bideford Keyboard and Organ Club	£500.00	£250.00	£250.00	PH
6	£250.00	Appledore Music Festival	£300.00	£250.00	£50.00	CL
7	N/A	Torridge Walk and Talk	£500.00	£500.00		CL
8	N/A	Westward Ho! Residents Association	£350.00	£250.00	£100.00	CL
9	£100.00	Steamship Freshspring Trust	£600.00	£300.00	£300.00	NT
10	N/A	Libraries Unlimited, Northam Library	£1,035.20	£500.00	£535.20	PH
11	N/A	North Devon Museum Trust	£500.00	£400.00	£100.00	NT
12	N/A	1st Edgehill and Torridge Scout Group	£750.00	£500.00	£250.00	LB
13	£250.00	Northam Twinning Association	£300.00	£300.00		CL
14	£250.00	Appledore Band	£750.00	£750.00		CH
15	£1,750.00	Bideford Blues and Appledore Junior football Club	£750.00	£750.00		NT
16	N/A	Poppins, Parent and Toddler Group	£750.00	£500.00	£250.00	PH
17	£750.00	TTVS (Memory Café)	£750.00	£750.00		CL
18	£339.00	St Mary's Church Hall	£618.00	£618.00		CH
19	£720.00	Bideford, littleham and Westward Ho! Cricket Club	£738.75	£738.75		CL
20	£1,000.00	North Devon Records Office	£1,000.00	£1,000.00		CL
21	£750.00	West quay Fundraisers	£750.00	£750.00		NT
22	£750.00	Appledore Hall Trust	£750.00	£750.00		PH
23	N/A	Appledore Maritime Heritage Trust	£500.00	£250.00	£250.00	CL
24	£500.00	Appledore Village Association	£750.00	£500.00	£250.00	CH
25	£750.00	Westward HO! Men's Shed	£750.00	£750.00		CH
26	N/A	Westward Ho! Community Association	£750.00	£750.00		CH
27	£550.00	Tarka Child Contact Centre	£300.00	£300.00		NT
28	£750.00	Friends of Northam School	£750.00	£750.00		CH
29	£250.00	The Appledore Singers	£750.00	£300.00	£450.00	CL
30	N/A	The Appledore Pirates	£750.00	£0.00	£750.00	PH
31	application denied	Torridge Amateur Swimming Club	£500.00	£500.00		CL
32	£ 600.00	Torridge Pilot Gig Club	£600.00	£500.00	£100.00	PH
33	£ 500.00	20 (Bideford) Squadron Air Corps	£750.00	£500.00	£250.00	CL
34	£ 500.00	Torridge Elite Majorettes	£750.00	£500.00	£250.00	LB
35	£ 500.00	Northam Methodist Church	£750.00	£500.00	£250.00	JW
36	£ 750.00	Westward Ho! Snooker Hall	£750.00	£500.00	£250.00	NT
37	£ 750.00	Appledore Football Club	£750.00	£500.00	£250.00	CH
38	N/A	Ilfracombe and district community transport association	£500.00	£500.00		NT
39	£ 750.00	Appledore School PTFA	£1,000.00	£750.00	£250.00	NT
		Arrived late				
40	£ 300.00	Appledore Maritime Players	£500.00	£250.00	£250.00	NT
41	N/A	North Devon Surf Therapy	£750.00	£500.00	£250.00	CL
Total	£ 15,539.00		£ 26,491.95	£ 20,606.75	£5,885.20	78%
Comparison to previous year		Grants provided 2024-25		£ 18,900.00		109%

2501/507 To consider the draft Budget for 2025-26

The Council considered the detail of the budget and precept recommended by the Finance Committee.

Cllr Himan proposed and Cllr Leather seconded the recommended increase of 4.35% be applied to the Council's precept request, meaning 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.

Cllr Bach counter-proposed that, in light of the significant likely costs of the works at Northam Hall a precept rise of 5.16% would be more appropriate increasing a notional Band D property by £5.49 per year. This was seconded by Cllr Edwards.

The Council voted on the proposals in order and it was **resolved** to apply an increase of 4.35% to the Council's precept request, meaning 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.

Proposed: Cllr Himan, Seconded: Cllr Leather (majority in favour).

With the majority in favour of the first proposal, the motion was carried.

2501/508 To confirm the precept to be requested for 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 below.

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

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.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7:25pm.

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