

Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held 25th June 2025 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Northam.

Present: Cllrs Bell, Edwards, Hames, Himan, Hodson, Horrocks, Leather, Lo-Vel, Newman-McKie (Deputy Mayor), Singh, Tait and Whittaker. The Council had one vacant seat, in the Westward Ho! ward.

In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO); Cllr K O'Rourke (District Councillor), PC D Ciantar, Pastor T Sutton and Hon. Alderman A Eastman.

2506/126 Apologies

Cllr Bach, the Mayor, tendered his apologies, the reason for which were accepted.

2506/127 To agree the agenda as published.

It was **resolved** to defer item 15, considering all other business on the agenda as published. Proposed Cllr Leather, Seconded Cllr Tait (majority in favour)

2506/128 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.

2506/129 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor made no announcements. The Town Clerk reminded members that CrimeStoppers had invited the Council and its members to a meet and greet on 30th June 2025. An email had been circulated and members who were interested could reply directly to CrimeStoppers by Friday 27th June 2025.

2506/130 To confirm and sign the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held 28th May 2025

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes, which were signed by the Deputy Mayor.

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

2506/131 To receive and adopt the reports of minutes and resolutions contained therein from Committees and Sub-Committees

Receipt of committee minutes was deferred to the July 2025 meeting.

2506/132 Public Participation

No member of the public wished to address the Council.

2506/133 To receive a report from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

PC Ciantar reported the crime statistics for the 3 months of March to May 2025

Northam, Appledore and Orchard Hill (Beat code) areas

78 Total Crime Occurrences (some occurrences were not crimes but were recorded as crimes when reported)

- 26 Domestic/harassment/stalking (crimes involving children under 16 as perpetrators/victims as part of a family setting are recorded here)
- 2 Blackmail
- 4 Drugs
- 3 Vehicle Crime (damage/taking a vehicle without consent)
- 5 Criminal Damage
- 1 Child neglect
- 3 Violent
- 4 Sexual
- 2 Wilful obstruction of the highway
- 1 Hate Crime
- 11 Theft

- 1 Burglary
- 1 Malicious Communications
- 2 Arson
- 2 Dog dangerously out of control
- 6 Public Order/drunk and disorderly
- 2 Assault Emergency Service worker

The Council raised the deterioration of their condition of Knapp House, PC Ciantar noted increased patrols were being made at that site. Similarly, there had been increased patrols at Churchfields car park following incidents of vandalism, though since the toilets were being locked overnight, the number of reports of vandalism had reduced.

Cllr Leather asked for any further detail of the hate crime recorded, PC Ciantar clarified it was a report of ablism and it had been resolved.

Cllr Leather asked for an example of what had been reported as a crime but, on investigation, was not a crime. PC Ciantar informed the Council that such outcomes could be seen on the Police UK website.

Cllrs Singh and Leather asked why crimes that had been reported, with evidence (CCTV footage, for example) were not being followed up. PC Ciantar would look into this.

Westward Ho! (Beat Code)

40 Total Crime Occurrences (some occurrences were not crimes but were recorded as crimes when reported)

- 12 Domestic/harassment/stalking
- 2 Criminal Damage/arson (including graffiti)
- 2 Breach of restraining/non molestation order
- 3 Violent
- 7 Theft
- 1 Public order
- 4 Burglary
- 1 Public Order
- 1 Cruelty neglect to children
- 2 Sexual
- 2 Communications offence
- 1 Child neglect

The Police had secured funding to increase patrols in the area (up to 4 days per week) and hotspot patrols (which would include Knapp and Westward Ho!).

PC Ciantar reminded the Council that crime statistics and maps could be found on the Police UK website, the [Westward Ho!, Northam and Appledore, Hartland Rural | Police.uk](#). The applicable Neighbourhood Policing Area was searchable, as was percentage changes and crime report outcomes. (copies of the relevant maps are appended to these minutes).

The Deputy Mayor thanked PC Ciantar for attending the meeting and for his report.

2503/134

To receive a report from the Devon County Councillor

The County Councillor had submitted a written report (copied overleaf) and had apologised for not attending the meeting in person.

Since my election I have been extremely busy with training meetings as most of the council is new and we are all learning the ropes!

You will see large areas within the Northam division receiving patch repair works for the road. Bayview road has seen utility works repairing their infrastructure, towards Cornborough road end. The other end of Bayview Road will be due patching works very soon and the TTRO has been posted to social media via my Councillor Dermot McGeough page.

These works are essential to future proof the road as it has suffered from the large traffic movements of the building sites locally.

Emails for highways issues are to be sent via the DCC highways or via Guy Langton, alternatively through me as your county councillor. My Local neighbourhood highways officer is not to be contacted directly from District or Town councillors. (I am the only elected member that has access directly) We have a new system of working on Devon County council where all reports need to go through a member's portal as even us as County councillors have new ways of interacting with the council officers.

My personal views are that it creates another layer of bureaucracy which hinders the way we work cohesively. The newly elected Councillors will find this an easier way to facilitate their requests, and the portal provides this for them.

I have been given the opportunity to sit on the committee for the Devon and Severn IFCA, we had our first meeting last Thursday the 19th June. This was the full AGM meeting, I look forward to being able to raise issues and concerns from our local fishing community, commercial, socially.

I have also become the Chairman for the Schools transport appeals committee within Devon County Council, we also met this month as a new committee for our first appeal hearing.

Our next HATOC meeting for local highways meets later this month, representatives from district councils can attend and have input. But they will not be able to vote on the committee as it is only for the County councillors who are eligible to do so. (This is not a meeting for pothole issues).

Report a problem page on Devon County council's website is the avenue for all councils to report defects from Potholes, overgrown vegetation, defective road markings, request enforcement officers to attend problematic areas, lighting, and lots more.

Appledore pedestrian crossing has now had the flashing beacon lights turned on by National grid, this was promised the first week of May and was delivered as stated by me on social media, the lengthy period of time was due to the backlog from National grid, DCC paid for these works 6 months prior to the installation of the crossing. You will also see the lines were repaired by the contractor as it is still under warranty, I called these defective markings in to highways and it was rectified.

*Finally, my Locality Budget is now live and ready for community projects within Appledore, westward Ho! and Northam. I therefore ask any councillors who have residents seeking funding to apply to our localitybudgets-mailbox@devon.gov.uk
Funding is only for Northam, Westward Ho! and Appledore.*

As the county councillor it will be my decision to which project I wish to support, the locality team will conduct the correct due diligence for the applicants.

PC Ciantar and Pastor Sutton left the meeting at this point 7:10pm

2506/135

To receive reports from Torridge District Members

Torridge Council members submitted the below written reports.

Cllr O'Rourke - Appledore Ward:

I'm new to politics, but not new to representing people. Since being elected, I've been learning my craft as a councillor while drawing on years of experience working directly with individuals, businesses, and community groups.

Growing up in our family businesses gave me a strong foundation in business development and project management. That hands-on experience with people and place eventually led me into the third sector, where I've been privileged to support over 80 local projects and grassroots organisations across Torridge and North Devon—helping them to grow, fundraise, and thrive.

Since stepping into my role as District Councillor, I've focused on building relationships and understanding the challenges and opportunities facing our community. I've met residents on the doorstep—including supporting two facing urgent Section 21 housing issues—I undertook planning training, attended both my first Planning Committee and Full TDC Council meetings.

I've been actively engaging with stakeholders and residents on matters like the Richmond Dock application, which I'm keeping a close eye on. I've also invested in the Maritime Innovation Project and will be visiting the site soon to better understand how it could benefit the district.

I'm tackling concerns about street cleanliness, especially waste linked to short-term holiday lets. Though it's early days, I've started conversations with holiday letting agents and am encouraged by the strong public support for action.

A moment that really highlighted our community spirit came last Wednesday and Thursday, when a first then second bomb was discovered in Bidna Yard. I visited Appledore Community Hall, where police and TDC's community safety team worked swiftly to evacuate residents safely. I want to extend heartfelt thanks to everyone involved, especially Appledore Hall and committee for opening so quickly and ensuring facilities were available. I'm also grateful to local businesses—particularly Johns—for generously providing tea, coffee, and milk. There wasn't much for me to do except keep the teapot full and keep the residents and holiday maker's company

Looking ahead, I'll be holding quarterly open surgeries to give residents regular opportunities to share their views, and I'll continue to work closely with local groups and partners. I also have a small councillor's grant available to support community projects—please do get in touch if you know a group that could benefit.

As your District Councillor, I will be bringing updates from TDC, and I'm always here to offer support, advice, or just a listening ear. I warmly invite fellow councillors and community members to contact me anytime—whether for a formal matter or an informal chat.

One of my key priorities moving forward is to work with both Northam Town Council and the wider community to help deliver the Northam Neighbourhood Plan. I believe this plan holds the shared vision of our area, and I'm committed to ensuring local voices shape how we grow and change.

Finally, I want to extend my congratulations to the newly elected Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and fellow Councillors, and thank everyone for the warm welcome I've received so far. I'm excited to serve and ready to work.

Cllr Whittaker - Northam ward:

Good evening everyone, there really isn't too much to report on since the last NTC Full Council Meeting. I've attended a Senior Management Team meeting and will be doing so again this coming Friday.

I went to my first Crematorium Committee Meeting recently, which interestingly was actually held in the smaller chapel at the Barnstaple Crem.

On Monday evening TDC's latest Full Council took place. It was not a particularly long agenda with the main business being as follows. The purchase or not of 3 new electric vans to replace the diesel ones which had worked hard over the past 8 years. None of them though had heavy mileage so after a discussion it was agreed not to change them for the time being. We received an update on the Council's Financial Procedure Rules - Procurement Thresholds which had previously been considered in depth by the Audit and Governance Committee who recommended approval.

The Rural England Prosperity Fund Investment Plan was reported on by the Economic Development Manager. Torridge received £298.539 with a fairly tight timescale to deliver against. Play Area upgrades for Hartland and Winkleigh will take place, 3 Playzones will be delivered in Bideford, Great Torrington and Holsworthy, the Bideford Tide Fountain will be reinstated and there will be Wayfinding and Public Realm improvements in Bideford.

This morning I joined several other Cllr colleagues at a Hardship Meeting where we discussed a request to write off the remainder of the Business Rate payments for a small local business which said that they were struggling. We felt that more information was required before a decision could be made, so it will be reconsidered again when the additional information has been received.

Cllr Bach - Westward Ho! Ward:

The only matter I have to report, is that following the TDC Standards meeting last week, I raised again that the Standards Committee still doesn't have any Parish Representatives, obviously made worse after Hugh Brading resigned.

Cllr Hames - Appledore Ward:

Regarding the three electric vans to replace diesel ones used by the Environmental Health department, the decision to replace the eight-year-old vehicles and other Council vehicles had been made in February by Councillors when the budget was agreed, but last Monday at Full Council they voted against the additional capital expenditure needed to purchase the proposed EV van replacements. I voted in favour of purchasing the electric vans on carbon emission grounds and for reasons of lower running and maintenance costs.

I proposed at Full Council last Monday that Councillors support the concerns of over 30 wildlife groups and others regarding the Government's proposals about wildlife in part three of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill. The concerns are that the proposals will considerably weaken protection of nature, including on the most important sites in the country. My proposal was defeated.

Members attending a briefing on three Government planning documents which are out for consultation - on Build Out, Site Thresholds and Planning Committees. One of the issues of concern for members was the proposal to apparently weaken the ten per cent biodiversity net gain requirement on development sites where fewer than 49 houses are proposed.

Regarding other planning issues I can report that the application for houses at Bloody Corner has been refused.

Cllr Hodson (Westward Ho! ward) reported at the meeting that Torridge Planning department had circulated an email describing and link to a Planning dashboard that provided information on build-out rates, affordable housing numbers for the District, searchable to a parish or individual development level.

The Combined County Authority (CCA) had expressed concern that the Growth Plan for Devon neglected northern Devon. Torridge District Council had registered its disappointment at the lack of detail and the Chair of the CCA had requested the report be redrafted, being minded to not recommend it for adoption if significant changes had not been made.

Finally, she requested that members pass their views and comments to her in advance of Adult Health Scrutiny Committee she would be attending on the 14th July 2025.

Cllr Lo-Vel (Northam Ward) reported at the meeting that the circulated Planning Dashboard was a welcome, detailed resource. The Crematorium Committee, of which she was a member, were hoping to instal solar PV on its roof before any affect of Local Government Reorganisation could occur. Finally, she noted he concerns with the changes to Biodiversity Net Gain and the introduction of a 'medium development' of 10-49 dwellings being considered by central government in its planning reforms.

Cllrs Hodson and Whittaker added that regarding the vehicle replacement at Torridge District Council, the current fleet was on good usable condition and was therefore retained.

Cllr Hodson noted that the planned planning reform to introduce a 'medium' sized site (10-49 dwellings) was incongruous, developments of that size were relatively large in more rural areas and thus would still need full consideration.

The Deputy Mayor thanked members for their reports and their work on the community's behalf.

2506/136

To receive an update regarding Local Government Reorganisation

The following was copied from Devon Association of Local Council's 'Knowledge Bank' regarding Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution.

On 20th May, the Board of Directors approved the DALC Position Statement on LGR for May 2025 based on the pen portraits submitted to us by member councils.

DALC LGR Position Statement May 2025

Some of what you need to know about towns and parishes in the face of Local Government Reorganisation.

Over the last couple of months DALC has engaged with its members to find out their views and concerns regarding LGR. As part of this, councils were invited to send in pen portraits of their councils and communities. The information gained has contributed to this paper.

1 All towns and parishes:

- * care passionately about their communities*
- * know their communities inside and out*
- * are proud of their communities and their identities*
- * prioritise the needs of their communities*

2 Local council finance and functions

Altogether, Devon local councils precept for £25,000,000 approx. to enable them to carry out their functions and invest in their communities. This is local delivery that

contributes to the resilience, well-being and quality of life for residents across the county.

All towns and parishes:

- * **make decisions** on behalf of their communities
- * **consult and represent** the views of their residents to other authorities
- * **provide localised decision making** accountable to their electorate
- * **inform** residents about matters that do or could affect them
- * **identify and deliver appropriate services** according to local need
- * **keep their public areas** and streets clean and tidy
- * **maintain property** that they own
- * **work in partnership** with other organisations in their communities
- * **lead on national and local celebrations** that develop community relationships and strengthen cohesion e.g. the Jubilee, the Coronation, VE Day, May Fairs, Beating the Bounds, etc.
- * **grant fund** community groups and organisations

This is the baseline picture. All parishes carry out these functions. Many do much more, including some or all of these: housing provision, buying, developing and managing community buildings and facilities such as cinemas and museums; land management; delivering regular community events, providing youth services; preparing Emergency Plans and Neighbourhood Plans

3 Local councils' principal concerns are:

- * **The condition of local roads** – the degraded surfaces; the speed of traffic; the unsuitability of local roads for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders
 - * **Their unheard voice** in planning matters
 - * **The lack of housing supply** including choice and availability for local people
 - * **The reduction of services** from other authorities, e.g. public transport, public toilets, verge cutting
 - * **The difficulties of co-operative working** with other authorities
 - * **The lack of seriousness** with which the work of towns and parishes is regarded
- These concerns are shared across the county by large and small parishes.

4 Local council aspirations for their communities include:

- * **Taking on and managing more assets** locally for efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability.
- * **Engaging** even more closely with their communities
- * **Communicating** even more effectively with their residents
- * **Delivering neglected services** their communities want such as youth provision
- * **Combatting** rural isolation
- * **Initiating and collaborating** with measures to support health and well-being, safer communities and sustainability
- * **Developing partnerships** to retain and reinforce town centres
- * **Addressing the climate and ecological emergency** by changing practices, developing projects and collaborating with community groups

5 Local councils aspire to achieve with other authorities in the local government sector both now and in the future:

- * an effective working relationship
 - * to be taken seriously
 - * to have their views invited and listened to
 - * to be seen as capable and valued partners
-

** to operate on principles of cooperation, dialogue and respect*

** the recognition of their community's unique identity*

6 Local councils and Local Government Reorganisation

Many councils are willing to take on assets and provide local services to their communities which might otherwise be lost under LGR.

Some smaller parishes currently rely on delivery for some services from their district and the county council. If these arrangements are going to change under a new unitary authority, they need to know.

Some district councils have started to engage with town councils on asset transfer. However, our sector cannot be regarded as a handy drop off point for loss-making assets and services.

The sector needs to know what statutory services any new unitary will provide under any proposal and what that will look like in practice.

The sector needs to know what the vision is for town and parish engagement under any unitary proposal.

The town and parish sector must be included in the discussions on arrangements for future engagement, cooperation and collaboration with any proposed unitary.

LGR is an opportunity to deliver effective localism, with Devon's communities determining the services they need and a locally accountable and accessible body to deliver them. DALC supports the establishment of new parish councils in areas which are currently unparished, and can offer advice on this process.

DALC will not support any specific proposal for LGR unless it is clearly the view of towns and parishes in our membership but it will use the evidence coming from members and continue to work with members to identify the extent to which any proposals meet the aspirations of towns and parishes to play an effective as opposed to side-lined role in local government.

We prefer to see proposals that set out clearly the way in which towns and parishes will not only be included in discussions but also be seen as a crucial conduit for conveying community messages to unitary and public sector delivery structures on services provision and design and to be actively used to convey messages back to the community. This implies a need for appropriate mechanisms to be built into any network or partnership proposals. For example, there could be clear consultation and involvement methods resourced with simple accessible structures, in which the local council sector is seen as the natural partner in innovation, initiation and monitoring of services to communities and be engaged with the unitary as a key partner in achieving them.

Cllr Hames reported that he had attended a meeting on 10th June 2025 as Green Group Leader at which the bewildering array of possible arrangements for devolution were presented. The proposal would need to be put to central government in November 2025. The group of which he was a member would meet in July to continue its discussions.

2506/137 To consider the action point update

The action points were received as below.

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 2411/418)	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
22nd January 2025 (minute 2501/551)	An email was drafted asking the Head of Legal Services at TDC for their opinion of the 1978 minute indicating the land was owned by Northam Town Council and responded saying that a transfer of ownership form, signed by both parties, would be required to identify ownership. The Town Clerk has heard from the Land Registry that the allotment part was removed from the land title a year after it was registered by TDC, in 2006. There being no recorded reason or evidence stating why, the allotment part was re-included in 2024. ONGOING

Hon. Alderman Eastman entered at this point (7:40pm)

2506/138 To receive the Clerk's report

At 30th May 2025 (or according to the last available statement balance), the Council's balances were:

Nationwide (Business 95-day saver)	£94,358.55	3.69%	General and Earmarked Reserves
Cambridge & Counties Bank (31-day)	£94,982.97	3.25%	Earmarked Reserves
Cambridge Building Society	£5,452.32	2.15%	Tennis Reserves
Petty Cash	£103.95		
Coop Bank (current account)	£117,391.51	no interest	
Hinkley & Rugby Building Society	£205,000.00	1.95%	

Total cash in hand (SCRIBE) £517,289.30

Note: the maximum daily payment from the Coop Bank is £100,000 (made by phone call). The balance of the resolved £250,000 transfer will be made by the date of this meeting, as two payments of £25,000 each (maximum by BACS).

Payments

The Council made 144 payments in May 2025, totalling £64,490.12 (exVAT). A full list of these is presented on the following pages. There were 72 payments of £100 or more (exVAT). These are presented overleaf. The committee approved the payments made by resolution.

Net	Description	Net	Description
£15,429.38	Salaries	£400.00	Grant
£6,332.00	Fencing – Lords Meadow	£350.00	Grant
£5,468.49	HMRC PAYE	£320.47	Equipment
£2,354.62	Northam Hall	£300.00	Grant
£2,193.60	Vehicle insurance	£300.00	Grant
£2,076.55	Pensions	£300.00	Grant
£1,981.46	DALC Membership Fee	£300.00	Grant
£1,000.00	Grant	£300.00	Grant
£969.28	Insurance (general – monthly payment)	£295.95	Insurance
£750.00	Grant	£284.70	IT contract
£750.00	Grant	£255.30	Marquee (3mx3m)
£750.00	Grant	£250.00	Grant
£750.00	Grant	£250.00	Grant
£750.00	Grant	£250.00	Grant
£750.00	Grant	£250.00	Grant
£750.00	Grant	£250.00	Grant
£750.00	Grant	£240.27	Gas Account (Northam Hall)
£750.00	Grant	£205.75	Fuel
£738.75	Grant	£204.40	Payroll Admin
£618.00	Grant	£200.00	Advertisement - recruitment
£520.07	Insurance (Engineering)	£175.09	Van Hire – move planters
£500.00	Grant	£175.00	Asbestos Survey
£500.00	Grant	£143.85	Membership Fee Rural Services Network
£500.00	Grant	£140.00	Toilet Hire (tennis)
£500.00	Grant	£131.10	Topsoil
£500.00	Grant	£129.90	Subscriptions (Zoom)
£500.00	Grant	£125.10	Expenses (GL – travel)
£500.00	Grant	£125.00	Entertainment (Tennis)
£500.00	Grant	£125.00	Entertainment (Mayor's Introduction)
£500.00	Grant	£120.00	Training (CW – ILCA)
£500.00	Grant	£114.00	Water bill (Northam Hall)
£500.00	Grant	£104.49	Equipment
£500.00	Grant		
£500.00	Grant		
£500.00	Grant		
£500.00	Grant		
£500.00	Grant		
£455.00	Cleaning CPT		
£427.60	Room rental		

Receipts: In May 2025, the Council received 37 payments, totalling £3,869.60.

Tennis courts: The gross volume of sales in May 2025 was £1,405. After fees, the Council has received £1,280.80. Since 1st April 2025, the Council has received £2,050.01 in tennis court fees.

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.

Petty Cash: A screen shot of the petty cash cashbook is presented to the below showing the items on which the Council has spent petty cash in May 2025.

The financial regulations seek to maintain a balance of £100 in Petty Cash.

Petty Cash			2025-26	Name:	Northam TC Petty Cash										
Details					Income			Expenditure						Balance at start of FY	
Date	Trans action	Description	Ref	Scribe No	Petty Cash Withdrawal	Carry forward	Total in	VAT	Events	Refresh ments	Maint enance	Office expenses	Total out	£	13.45
1.5.25	10	Cash withdrawal	-	-	80.00		80.00						0.00		127.30
3.5.25	11	May King/Queen	PC25-26.9				0.00	0.25	1.24				1.49		125.81
6.5.25	12	Refreshments	PC25-26.10				0.00			1.39			1.39		124.42
7.5.25	13	Refreshments	PC25-26.11				0.00			1.49			1.49		122.93
12.5.25	14	Refreshments	PC25-26.12				0.00			1.39			1.39		121.54
19.5.25	15	Refreshments	PC25-26.13				0.00			1.39			1.39		120.15
21.5.25	16	Diesel	PC25-26.14				0.00	1.47			7.35		8.82		111.33
22.5.25	17	Plant food	PC25-26.15				0.00	1.00			4.99		5.99		105.34
22.5.25	18	Refreshments	PC25-26.16				0.00				1.39		1.39		103.95

2506/139

To consider the draft Financial Risk Assessment for the Council (2025-26)

It was resolved to approve and adopt the Financial Risk Assessment as presented.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Whittaker (majority in favour).

Action points:

Publish the Financial Risk Register on the Council's website.

Report findings of research into how other similar bodies store their paper records to the Finance & HR committee when available.

2506/140

To consider the nominations for NTC community champions awards

The matter was deferred.

2506/141

To receive and approve the Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024-25

The Town Clerk noted that the figures for 2023-24 have had to be restated. This is because of errors in the recording of items within the Scribe cashbook system.

Variances, or differences, of more than 15% (if over £200) year must be explained as part of the annual return. In 2024-25, there is one such explanation required, at line 3 (Council receipts), overleaf:

IN	2023-24	2024-25	RESTATED	2025-26	Variances	
balances	£ 294,543	£ 244,411	£ 244,411	£ 317,631		
1 carried	£ 294,543	£ 244,410	£ 244,411	£ 317,631	n/a	
2 precept	£ 393,800	£ 525,770	£ 525,770	£ 567,832	42062.00	8%
3 receipts	£ 115,230	£ 175,744	£ 175,461	£ 97,787	-77674.14	-44%
TOTAL	£ 803,573	£ 945,924	£ 945,642	£ 983,250		
OUT						
4 salary	£ 235,692	£ 273,683	£ 273,683	£ 305,123	31440.40	11%
5 loan repayments	£ 17,429	£ 17,120	£ 16,833	£ 16,811	-21.79	0%
6 payments	£ 306,041	£ 337,495	£ 337,495	£ 326,035	-11460.31	-3%
TOTAL	£ 559,162	£ 628,298	£ 628,011	£ 647,969		
	£ 244,411	£ 317,626	£ 317,631	£ 335,281		
	rounded to	Explanation for restatement				
	£ 244,410	Line 1	Rounding error			
		Line 2	No error			
		Line 3	Incorrectly recorded POS transaction charges			
		Line 4	No error			
		Line 5	Incorrectly recorded VAT on PWLB			
		Line 6	No error			

On 22.12.2023, the Council received a grant of £80,000 from the LTA towards the refurbishment of its tennis facility. Removing this large grant from the figures, the difference is £2,326.06. The adjusted variance is therefore 2.44%.

Similarly, an explanation must be provided of any difference between Box 7 (Balances Carried Forward) and Box 8 (Total Cash and Short-Term Investments) of the AGAR form. The Council's cashbook shows a difference of £7,870.20. This is explained by the recoverable VAT, which also equals £7,870.20 but would not be received until the claim is submitted at the end of the quarter. The claim has been submitted and reimbursement received.

The Town Clerk read out the Annual Governance Statements (Section 1), which were responded to by the Council, which **resolved** to submit the responses as recorded. Proposed: Cllr Newman-McKie, Seconded: Cllr Tait (all in favour)

It was **resolved** to submit the figures in Section 2 as presented.

Proposed: Cllr Newman-McKie, Seconded: Cllr Hodson (majority in favour)

Action point: Submit the AGAR.

2506/142 To consider the request for wayleave across Northam Town Council owned land

The organisation requesting wayleave had not responded to the Council's request.

It was resolved to defer consideration until the July meeting of the Council.

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

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:10pm.

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

