

Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Full Council meeting held 27th August 2025 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Northam.

Present: Cllrs Bach (Mayor), Bell, Edwards, Hames, Himan, Hodson, Horrocks, Leather, Lo-Vel, Newman-McKie (Deputy Mayor), Sawyer, Singh, Tait and Whittaker.

In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO), Rev Jules Harris and Hon Alderman Andrew Eastman.
One member of the public.

The Mayor invited Rev Harris to address the Council with news of the fundraising to repair the roof at St Margaret's Church, Northa,. Rev Harris announced that sufficient funds has been raised and that, surveys permitting, work would commence in October 2025.

2508/265 Apologies

Cllr D McGeough (County Councillor), Cllr K O'Rourke (District Councillor) and Sgt Clark (Devon & Cornwall Police) submitted their apologies.

2508/266 To agree the agenda as published.

It was **resolved** to considering business on the agenda as published.

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

Cllr Singh entered at this point (6:35pm)

2508/267 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.

2508/268 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor made the following announcements:

1. Pillar boxes in Northam and Appledore were being adapted to take parcels. The work was expected to be completed and the boxes back in use by the end of September 2025
2. Cllr McGeough had agreed to fund a replacement finger post at the Golf Links Rd end of Westbourne Terrace. The Town Clerk was asked to contact the County Council and progress the project.

Action point: Contact the County Councillor and progress project.

3. Residents had reported that three lamp columns in Westward Ho! Park were not working.
4. Residents had continued to raise concerns regarding speeding in Golf Links Road. The Town Clerk and Police-Councillor Advocate were asked to seek advice on re-establishing the Speedwatch initiative locally and progress the project to install a Speed Indicator Device along Golf Links Rd.
Action point: Contact the Neighbourhood Policing team for advice regarding Speedwatch and progress the project to replace fixed Speed Indicator Devices.
5. Sir Geoffrey Cox MP has held a surgery in Westward Ho!, at which the Mayor had raised concerns regarding the increases and changes to Stagecoach bus fares locally and asked for his assistance in the matter.
6. The Mayor's Charity Dinner would be held on the 13th February 2026, at the Pier House. Members were asked to save the date, more details would be circulated in due course.
7. Cllr Tait reminded the Council that there would be a beacon lighting at Appledore on the 2nd September 2025 to commemorate the 8th anniversary of the end of the second world war.

2508/269 To confirm and sign the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held 23rd July 2025

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

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

2508/270 To receive and adopt the reports of minutes and resolutions contained therein from Committees and Sub-Committees

- Finance 9th July 2025
- Planning and Development 10th and 31st July 2025
- Environment and Maintenance 18th June 2025

The above listed minutes were received and adopted.

2508/271 Public Participation

Hon Alderman Eastman reported that the community expressed its thanks to Northam Town Council for supporting the recent 'Proms' event in Appledore.

2508/272 To receive a report from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

The Constabulary did not send a representative but sent the below update, which was read by the Town Clerk:

Sgt Clark had been engaging recently with Cllr Hames regarding speeding in Wooda road and discussed a short term and long-term initiative the Police had in mind to help there. He had been speaking with the Mayor about licensing issues in the area and how the summer night bus may be funded to start from Westward Ho! in the future to take people away from there late at night to hopefully stop anti-social behaviour occurring with large groups of people still around at night after the late licences premises have closed. At the start of the summer period, I organised for some extra resources (that were available at that time – the Neighbourhood Support Team based in Exeter) however resourcing police units across the whole of North Devon since then during the high demand period with visitors to the area has been quite tricky, so the Neighbourhood Team were not able to get any more on top of the normal work for the remainder of the summer holidays, for which the Team apologised. The Neighbourhood Team supported the Appledore carnival recently and had a great time engaging with the public.

2508/273 To receive a report from the Devon County Councillor

The County Councillor submitted the written report appended to these minutes.

Cllr Tait read out a communication she had received from a resident of Irsha Street, noting their concerns should the County Council seek to remove all parking along that street.

Cllr Bell reported that cyclists and drivers were going the wrong way down Irsha Street from both entrances and considered signage could be improved. The Town Clerk was asked to raise the matter with DCC Highways.

Action point: Raise the matter with the County Council.

2508/274 To receive reports from Torridge District Members

Torridge Council members submitted the appended written reports.

Cllr Leather read out a letter he and others had recently received from Peter Evans MBE, secretary of Bideford Blues FC describing the Club's plans for the Ground at Sandymere (purchase further maintenance machinery and a store for that machinery and improve flood lighting) and its intention to seek a S106 contribution to support their project.

2508/275 To receive an update regarding Local Government Reorganisation

The Leader and Chief Executive of Torridge District Council held a series of communication events in July and August 2025. The Mayor and Town Clerk attended an event on the 7th August, from 5.30pm at Caddsdow Business Support Centre, Bideford.

The following was described at the meeting:

- Central Government was seeking ‘unitary authority’ proposals by November 2025.
- The Government would assess each, announcing their proposals for future Unitary Authorities in April 2026.
- The Government would consult on those proposals in summer 2026.
- The shadow authorities would be elected in May 2027, at the same time as the Town Council elections in Northam.
- The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) are anticipating the new Unitary Authorities would be operating from 2028.

The TDC website ([Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution | Torridge District Council](#)) stated on the 27th August 2025 that:

“As requested by Government, a joint outline proposal (known as an interim plan) has been submitted on behalf of all the Devon District Councils, except Exeter. The proposal has also been included as one of several options submitted by both Torbay Council and Devon County Council.

We want to make sure that any future reorganisation meets the needs of our communities in Torridge and across the whole of Devon.

Known as the 1-4-5 plan, it proposes:

- *Retaining Plymouth unitary authority.*
- *A unitary including East, Mid, North Devon, Torridge and Exeter.*
- *A unitary combining the South Hams, Teignbridge and West Devon areas with Torbay*

Multiple other proposals have also been submitted to Government by Plymouth, Exeter, Devon County and Torbay.

All councils across Devon are now working towards refining the possible options for the future of local government and final proposals will be submitted to Government in November 2025.”

Rev Harris left the meeting at this point (7:05pm)

2508/276 To consider the action point update

The action points were received as below.

2507/201 Adoption of Red Telephone Kiosk – Appledore Quay	The matter is on the agenda for ratification. The adoption request has been completed by the Town Clerk.
2507/212 Request for wayleave across Northam Town Council owned land	The wayleave agreement was signed and returned. No date for the commencement of the work has been received by the Town Clerk.
2507/212 Notify Torridge District Council of this Council’s intention to submit a bid for the ‘Leisure Centre’, Northam Square	Notification made to TDC. A group of Councillors and Officers have visited the building. A surveyor has been instructed and a date for valuation and structural survey is awaited.

2508/277 To receive the Clerk's report

It was noted that on 25th July 2025 (according to the last available statement balance), the Council's balances were:

Nationwide (Business 95-day saver)	£94,939.01	interest rate is 3.69%	General and Earmarked Reserves
Cambridge & Counties Bank (31-day)	£95,514.32	interest rate is 3.25%	Earmarked Reserves
Cambridge Building Society	£5,452.32	interest rate is 2.15%	Tennis Reserves
Petty Cash	£78.51		
Coop Bank (current account)	£57,864.31	no interest	
Hinkley & Rugby Building Society	£174,770.00	interest rate is 1.95%	holding account for general expenditure
Total cash in hand (SCRIBE)		£ 428,658.79	

Note: the Town Clerk has arranged for a number of advanced payments of £12,500 to be transferred from the HRBS account to the main account each Monday, to ensure the Council can meet its obligations.

The main bank account was reconciled to **25/07/25** (No statement available to 31/07/25 until after agenda is due out). Payments/Receipts detailed to 25/07/25. (Unrepresented pymt/receipt transactions **27/07/25**).

Payments

The Council made 114 payments in July 2025, totalling £79,554.33 (exVAT). A full list of these was presented. There were 22 payments of £100 or more (exVAT), presented below.

Payment 490 is £0.00 as this was processed in error. Customer paid invoice 1655 twice and a refund was issued for overpayment of £60.00. Full details on Scribe.

Voucher	Date	Net	VAT	Total	Description
474	18.07.2025	£18,800.00	£0.00	£18,800.00	Salaries
460	15.07.2025	£9,572.54	£0.00	£9,572.54	HMRC PAYE
484	22.07.2025	£5,230.00	£0.00	£5,230.00	Donation
470	11.07.2025	£585.64	£117.13	£702.77	Council Machinery & Equipment
488	22.07.2025	£575.53	£0.00	£575.53	Salaries
407	01.07.2025	£455.00	£91.00	£546.00	Cleaning CPT
395	01.07.2025	£430.70	£0.00	£430.70	Room rental
430	08.07.2025	£415.00	£0.00	£415.00	Membership Fee
401	01.07.2025	£400.00	£0.00	£400.00	Cleaning Northam Hall
459	15.07.2025	£325.00	£0.00	£325.00	Honours Boards
455	15.07.2025	£296.87	£59.37	£356.24	Fuel
439	08.07.2025	£284.70	£56.94	£341.64	IT contract
404	01.07.2025	£222.90	£44.58	£267.48	Payroll
501	24.07.2025	£199.99	£40.00	£239.99	Sink
423	03.07.2025	£186.01	£0.00	£186.01	Photocopier lease
438	08.07.2025	£137.86	£6.89	£144.75	Festoon & Festive Lighting
472	18.07.2025	£133.32	£26.66	£159.98	Fire Door Retainer

467	14.07.2025	£124.80	£0.00	£124.80	Training
444	08.07.2025	£120.45	£24.09	£144.54	Mower Repair
429	08.07.2025	£119.57	£23.91	£143.48	Wifi N Hall
454	15.07.2025	£114.00	£0.00	£114.00	Water bill
496	23.07.2025	£105.00	£21.00	£126.00	Training

Receipts:

In June 2025, the Council received 32 payments, totalling £18,594.00, including a VAT refund of £14,461.27.

Tennis courts:

The gross volume of sales in July 2025 was £1320.00. After fees, the Council has received £1244.93. Since 1st April 2025, the Council has received £4240.00 in tennis court fees and there has been a total of 917 court bookings. 330 were by non-members, and 586 by annual pass holders, meaning £1,650 has been received from bookings by non-members since 1st April. 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. In the first year, the Council received £5,452.

Tennis summer camps: at the time of writing, ARC had received bookings as follows (there are 30 spaces):

<u>29th July</u>	<u>5th August</u>	<u>12th August</u>	<u>19th August</u>	<u>26th August</u>
29 bookings	28 bookings	28 bookings	29 bookings	26 bookings

In 2024, the cost of subsidising the tennis camps was £2,000, which was raised from District Councillor grants.

It was **resolved** to meet the £2,000 cost of subsidising the summer camps from the tennis court receipts, supplemented by TDC and DCC, should they wish to contribute from their grant funds.

Petty Cash:

A screen shot of the petty cash cashbook is presented to the below showing the items on which the on 21st July 2025, the Council held £71.51 in petty cash. The financial regulations seek to maintain a balance of £100 in Petty Cash.

The Mayor noted the Council's thanks to the Finance Assistant for preparing the report in the Town Clerk's absence.

2508/278**To ratify the Council's decision to adopt the Red Telephone Kiosk adjacent to the Seagate Hotel, Appledore Quay**

Cllr Edwards reported that he had contacted BT, copying in the constituency MP, to register his concerns regarding the proposed removal.

Cllr Newman-McKie noted that the Planning & Development Committee had considered the removal and made representations on the Council's behalf objecting to the removal of that and a second kiosk in Appledore.

It was **resolved** to write to BT to request that the telephony is not removed from the kiosk located adjacent to the Seagate Hotel, Appledore.

Proposed: Cllr Edwards, Seconded: Cllr Tait (majority in favour).

Action points:

Write to BT to express the Council's concerns that the telephony in the kiosk adjacent to the Seagate Hotel was scheduled for removal.

Circulate the evidence of the Council being consulted to the members.

2508/279 To consider offering to assist with the renovation of the mast/flagpole attached to the Trinity House buoy store

It was noted that the flagpole was on the Trinity House Buoy Store, a Grade II listed structure¹ and was in a poor state of repair. The Council noted that the landowner may have duties as owner of a listed structure and should be asked to repair/renovate the flagpole in the first instance. It was further noted the District Council could be asked to require the owner to maintain their listed asset.

Action points:

Contact the landowner.

Contact the District Council Conservation Officer

2508/280 To consider a quote for the installation of CCTV monitoring at Westward Ho! Park

It was **resolved** to accept the quote to install 3 CCTV cameras, with hard drive 1 month recording and monitor (estimated cost £1,600 exVAT) and further repair the three lamp columns in the park to ensure sufficient light for the cameras to operate in low natural light conditions..

Proposed: Cllr Singh, Seconded: Cllr Bach (majority in favour)

Action points:

Instruct the relevant contractors.

2508/281 To consider a grant request from Life Education Wessex & Thames Valley (LEW&TV)

It was **resolved** to not approve a grant for this project at Appledore School at this time.

Proposed: Cllr Bell, Seconded: Cllr Horrocks (majority in favour)

Action point: advise the organisation making the request.

2508/282 To receive an update on the progress of the Northam Neighbourhood Plan

It was noted that:

- The Northam Neighbourhood Plan had successfully completed the Regulation 15 checks.
- The District Council had commenced the statutory (Regulation 16) public consultation exercise, running from 13th August to 16:45 on the 26th September 2025. Representations were sought from local bodies and residents.
- Posters and leaflets were to be put up around the area advertising the consultation, which had also been published on the Council's website and Facebook pages, advising how those representations may be made.
- The District Council were also seeking an independent external examiner to review the Plan, which could not commence before the consultation had been completed and representations received.

All members were asked to distribute leaflets in their areas. The leaflets could be collected from the Council Offices.

¹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1223677?section=official-list-entry>

It was **resolved** that, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (subsection 2), members of the public and press would be excluded from the meeting at this point to enable the Council to consider the following confidential matters.

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

Hon Alderman Eastman and the member of the public left the meeting at this point (8:22pm)

2508/283 To consider the lease of the football pitch at Burrough Farm by Northam Lions FC

It was noted that the Burrough Farm Pitch was registered as a Field in Trust with the National Playing Fields Association as a King George V Playing Field and thus should always be accessible to the public.

It was **resolved** to arrange a meeting with the Chairman and others from Northam Lions FC to discuss matters related to their occupancy of the land at Burrough Farm and the detail of the management agreement that described that occupancy.

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

The following members of the Council volunteered to attend the meeting: Cllrs Edwards, Lo-Vel and Whittaker, supported by the Town Clerk, the Mayor would also be invited.

Action points:

Arrange a meeting between the Council and the Club.

It was **resolved** that, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (subsection 2), members of the public and press would be readmitted to the meeting at this point.

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

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:40pm.

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

External members' reports to Full Council 27th August 2025**Cllr McGeough – Devon County Division member for Northam**

Local government reorganisation (LGR) is progressing throughout Devon with pop up information vans around the county, today there has been a van in Morrisons Bideford for the public to attend to give their views on the future of the three-tier system being abolished. The results will be sent to the government in early November this year 2025, where the new cabinet will present to the full council.

Central Government are reluctant to provide Devon with additional funding unless we raise the council tax precept up a full 5%.... in my views this is not acceptable for our hard-working residents within the county of Devon to have to endure. So many of us are already suffering from the cost-of-living crisis that has hit most households extremely hard, leaving no surplus income available to pay more council tax. When will the Government understand the needs of its people and get their own house in order before we help any other countries, given the monies in foreign aid is funded by the British public.

The subject of weeds is an emotive one too, however the District Council is the street cleansing Authority and if the streets were cleaned thoroughly then the weeds would not be present in the first instance. Devon no longer treats for weeds as it is not part of statutory duty to do so, unlike the District Councils.

Concerning parking restrictions as you know we are monitoring various sites in the area amongst our list of future potential parking restrictions as this list is already very long and comprehensive we are not looking at any additional sites currently.

Irsha street Appledore has seen the double yellow lines (DYL) improved and additional lines installed, this was to try and help residents and businesses along the street gain safe access, unfortunately due to the regular repeat offenders who keep creating the traffic obstructions besides the beaver inn, it still remains extremely hard to enforce as the tickets keep being issued to the same vehicles who do not seem to care about the costs of the penalty notices!

Therefore, I have urged the local councillors to politely ask the repeating individuals to respect the village and adhere to the rules like 99% of us do here, the only option you will leave Devon County Council with is to REMOVE THE PARKING IN IRSHA STREET COMPLETELY. How else can we provide safe access for emergency vehicles, delivery vehicles, which is a necessity for the street. Yet again the few will spoil it for the many.

Regarding any potential resident parking scheme for Appledore, it is very likely that it would be funded by a pay & display along the Quayside and where many schemes are allowed two parking permits, Appledore may have to restricted to one per property due to the limited number of parking spaces. It also must be remembered that we have no duty to provide parking and there is no right to park on the Highway.

Road and footway surfacing is still very much restricted due the current levels of funding and is on a priority basis including preventative works, eg. Bay View Rd. The new administration has trialled the additional monies from central government around £86Million to tackle potholes over Devon, such a shame many of us other councillors not within the administration have not seen our areas blessed with the additional repairs.

On a plus note, we have received another delivery from DCC of Instamac tarmac (waiting since MAY) for remedial repairs to potholes of which I will continue to try my best tackle as many as I can.

Bayview road traffic calming is seeing alterations; this is funded by the developer as the stage 3 safety audit I called for in October 2023 came back highlighting the need for the improvements. Below you will see the planned works that are being undertaken here.

- (b) because of the likelihood of danger to the public, or of serious damage to the road, which is not attributable to such works; or
- (c) for the purpose of enabling the duty imposed by section 89(1)(a) or (2) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (litter clearing and cleaning) to be discharged, the authority may by order restrict or prohibit temporarily the use of that road, or of any part of it, by vehicles, or vehicles of any class, or by pedestrians, to such extent and subject to such conditions or exceptions as they may consider necessary.

None of the above apply here so a TTRO would not be suitable.

An Experimental Traffic Order can be used where an authority wishes to test if a scheme will work and involves monitoring the outcomes, but only if it genuinely is to test the impacts of doing the scheme before a decision to proceed with it is made. It is not a way of doing the thing while we wait for the TRO to get finalised. By doing that we would be suggesting that we know the result of the experiment already. This would enable challenge to both the ETR and the ultimate TRO in the legal advice offered.

I have also received the following advice and update on progress, which underscores the advice above:

The matter of a TRO for the road is question is being dealt with through the Local Waiting Restriction Programme, with the aim being to permanently introduce No Loading restrictions. It will be taken to Torridge HATOC on 30th June with a recommendation to make and advertise the Order. If the recommendation is agreed the Order is due to be advertised this summer, with the plan being that any objections will be considered at HATOC in the Autumn and a final decision made then as to whether to implement the Order.

It is acknowledged that, subject to the final decision being made to implement the Order, any agreed works may not be completed until 2026. However, it is essential that Devon County Council follows the correct legal process if it is to successfully implement an Order. There is a risk that the proposals may not be supported by all drivers or residents and any objections may require changes to the Order or even result in a public inquiry.

We are aware that it has been suggested that a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) could be implemented in the interim period. However, it would not be appropriate to use the TTRO process in that manner. A TTRO is not intended fill in the gap until a TRO is brought into force. Using a TTRO in this manner would undermine the consultation process for the TRO and suggest a level of predetermination on the part of the Council. It would further complicate the legal process and potentially open DCC up to more legal challenges and potentially jeopardise any TRO being implemented.

It is not that a lack of funding is preventing DCC progressing this issue based on a TTRO until a TRO is in place, but rather it is a question of DCC following the correct legal process in implementing any Order.

As you will see, it would not be legally possible or advisable to apply a TTRO or an ETO to the section of road at Westward Ho! and the process that is in motion needs to be completed in the correct way to be enforceable and not open to challenge.

I appreciate Cllr McGeough's frustration, but we cannot shorten the process or apply a temporary measure.

Cllr McGeough

Cllr Louis Bach - Combined Mayoral and District Councillor Report for NTC Full Council Meeting 27th August 2025.

It's been a relatively quiet time for me since our last full council meeting, so not much to report:

1) Along with members from NTC, Appledore Parish and our The Town Clerk Guy Langton, I attended the Appledore Residents meeting which was held on the 24th July in the Appledore Community Centre, Although few members of the public were present, a range of issues were discussed, which were mainly considered to be the responsibility of TDC. It was agreed that these would be raised with the officers responsible.

2) At TDC full council meeting on the 28th July one of the items raised was the apparent lack of engagement by the independent persons that sit on various committees namely standards and external scrutiny. It was explained that these members often work outside of meetings, when matters may be referred to them for consideration, prior to a committee report. However, there is still a need for more independent members to represent these committees, so please do get in touch with the TDC Monitoring Officer, if you know of any community spirited individuals that may be interested in this volunteering role.

3) On the 7th August I attended a joint presentation to Town Clerks and Mayors by the Chief Executive of TDC Mr Steve Hearse, and the Leader Mr Ken James, to update us on the current position on local government reorganisation. Our own Town Clerk Guy Langton was present, and raised several questions, on possible future transfer of assets to Town Councils. For me, the one thing that seems certain at this present time, ***is that nothing is certain***, and much work still needs to be done, not least what the future of the unitary councils may look like here in the West Country.

4) As Mayor I have several civic engagements to attend in the coming months, which I can report back at the next opportunity.

5) As mentioned at our last full council meeting, I now have pleasure of confirming that my charity fund raising event will be on the 13th February next year. The chosen venue is The Pier House Westward Ho! Final details and ticket price will be confirmed shortly. I do hope very much that you will all support this event and invite as many of your family & friends to join you, in what will be an amazing fun evening. If you wish to donate a raffle prize, or anything that could be auctioned to raise funds for my chosen charity Devon Air Ambulance, then please let Tina know as soon as possible ... Thank you.

In the meantime, donations can be made via the fundraising page at: ***Justgiving.***

Com/page/louis-bach-6

That concludes my report, but please do contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Cllr Louis Bach, Northam Town Mayor

Cllr Jane Whittaker - District Councillor Report for NTC Full Council Meeting 27th August 2025.

Not the busiest few weeks but quite varied in what was asked of this District Cllr.

These four weeks started with a Plans Committee meeting at the end of July which I think is worth a mention. Mainly because among the agenda items were two applications for rural self builds both of which were recommended for Refusal.

However, after considerable debate and not unanimous agreement both were changed to a Grant recommendation. From what I've heard it's the intention of the current Government to remove Plans Committees from the planning process, which would have resulted in both applicants not having achieved the result that they had so hoped for and is something that really concerns me.

I attended the Joint Place and Community meeting at Brynsworthy along with colleagues from N. Devon. This was a meeting where discussion and debate about the content of next Local Plan was being considered. It's still early days but as I know many of us from Torridge sometimes wish the current Plan allows for better outcomes, so it was a meeting worth attending.

I attended the VJ Day event at RBH where some Cllrs and some TDC staff spent time thinking about what this day meant to so many in August 1945.

A recently held joint Torridge and North Devon Workshop meant that Cllrs from both Councils could work together as a part of the whole LGR process. To my mind this is a small but extremely useful 'slice of the cake' but none the less an important one. It offered us all an opportunity to say what we cared about here, what was so very special and/or important about Northern Devon and what we hoped would be recognised and considered far away from here in Westminster.

There was a Crematorium Committee last week in which a range of things were raised. You may know that four local Charities benefit from this local service. At present only one is granted a useful amount of money once during each twelve-month period. It has been suggested that rather than receiving a substantial grant, it was 12k this time around, it should be split into 4 and give each Charity a smaller but still useful grant. This decision will be considered in the New Year with I hope each Charity then receiving a small annual grant. The Bereavement Manager gave her report in which two items I thought were worth a mention. The Rowen Chapel's Rest Room has received a revamp making it much less of a waiting room but somewhere to sit quietly and more comfortably. She also told the meeting that the whole of the Crematorium needed updated or improving and in some cases needs some real attention. We will receive a list and the priority required at the next Committee Meeting.

Cllr Whittaker

Cllr Wendy Lo-Vel - District Councillor Report for NTC Full Council Meeting 27th August 2025.

There have not been many TDC meetings in August but I joined Cllr O'Rourke's "Meet and Greet" initiative at the end of July where constituents were invited to come and meet councillors and gain better understanding of the different roles District, Local and County Councillors have. It was very well received and Cllr O'Rourke should be commended for this initiative.

I attempted to speak to Sir Geoffrey Cox about some of my concerns when he came to do one of his surgeries in Kingsley Hall but he was 10 minutes late arriving, spent 40 minutes with one lady and I felt I had to give my place (in a queue of five) to a family with children who had also been waiting patiently. I did suggest that his time might be better spent maybe having an open session for part of his hour as many of the concerns e.g. Rural bus services, are held by all or maybe limiting each person to a 10-minute slot but these suggestions were not well received so I gave up again. It was suggested that I would do better emailing.

I attended the recent Joint North Devon and Torridge Place Story Workshop. This was well attended by Councillors from both Councils. It was clear that everyone recognised and wanted to protect the special nature of the area but at the same time the need for better communications, housing, public transport, job opportunities, cultural opportunities, health and welfare facilities are likely to conflict with this.

I attended the Crematorium meeting and was encouraged to hear that the solar panel project was moving forward but disappointed to learn that there would be no opportunity to have a feed in tariff for any excess electricity generated as the National Grid infrastructure cannot cope with the electric being generated by such schemes.

Cllr Lo-Vel

Cllr Peter Hames - District Councillor Report for NTC Full Council Meeting 27th August 2025.

At the TDC Climate Emergency Working Group we agreed to send out a climate survey to the public asking what their priorities are and their views on what TDC has done and could do to address climate and biodiversity issues. At the October meeting of the Group, we are due to discuss the possible use of Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil for powering the Council's waste fleet.

We had a well-attended session with NDC Councillors to consider a Northern Devon Place Story. We heard from consultants that the area performs badly on productivity, outward migration of young people, affordable housing provision and educational facilities and that the population is skewed towards retired people. Better communications, better education facilities, more affordable housing, skilled jobs and better public transport provision were some of the things we want to see in the Northern Devon of the future but also a desire to retain the distinctiveness of our countryside and towns and villages.

Regarding LGR a consultants' report has been produced assessing three possible options for our area: the 5.4.1 model and two Northern Devon based models, one taking in North Devon, Torridge, mid and west Devon the other covering North Devon, and Mid Devon. Councillors will have to vote on whether they continue to consider the latter two models or stick with 5.4.1.

Cllr Hames