Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Environment and Maintenance committee meeting held Wednesday 21st October 2026 at 6:30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.

Present: Cllr Louis Bach, Cllr Jeremy Bell, Cllr Peter Hames, Cllr Peter Sawyer, Cllr Wendy Lo-Vel and the Mayor, Cllr Sam Newman-McKie (ex-officio).

In attendance: Ian Rawle – Parks & Buildings Manager.

2610/372 **To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)**
Cllr Hodson gave her apologies for absence, for reasons were accepted.

2610/373 **Chair's Announcements** There were none.

2610/374 **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.

2610/375 **To agree the agenda as published**
It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published.
Proposed**:** Cllr Bach, Seconded: Cllr Sawyer (all in favour).

2610/376 **To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Environment and Maintenance Committee held on 19th August 2026.**
Members noted a typographical error on page 114, where Cllr McKie's name had been spelt incorrectly. It was agreed that this be amended.
It was then **resolved** that, subject to this amendment, the minutes of the Environment and Maintenance Committee meeting held on 17th June 2026 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.
Proposed**:** Cllr Sawyer, Seconded Cllr Lo-Vel (all in favour).

2610/376 **Public Participation**
Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 4 minutes. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.
There were no members of the public present.

2610/376 **To receive an update on actions**
The Action table is presented below.

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	Action	October 2025	February 2026	March 2026	June 2026	August 2026	October 2026
1	Traffic issues at the Square, Northam	Traffic survey cost received, Discussion required in refence to air quality survey	Seeking updated quotes. ONGOING.	Include condensed report for June	On Agenda	Ongoing, MVSIDS location TBC by DCC	Awaiting approval from DCC
2	Arrange the removal of the two failed trees and replacement with Hawthorn trees at Appledore Quay Front at the start of autumn**.**			Added	Added to schedule for Works in October 2026	No change	Trees ordered, works planned for November.
3	Prepare a report on opportunities to support climate resilience, biodiversity, and community food-growing initiatives.				Placed on Agenda	Ongoing	Attending Devon Community Resilience Forum – 22nd October 2026-report after.
4	Forward the contractor's quotation for the proposed works to Footpath 36 to the Public Rights of Way**.**				Placed on Agenda	Ongoing	Awaiting go/no go from DCC. On Agenda
5	Purchase and plant three fruit trees (apple, pear, and plum) within the £500 approved budget during the October/November 2026 planting season. Review lavender planting proposal and present alternative pollinator-friendly options at a future meeting**.**				Placed on Agenda	Ongoing	On Agenda
6	**Floral Display Scheme Update** Further cost information has been prepared in line with the Committee's request. A detailed breakdown of expenditure relating to plants, hanging baskets, Christmas trees, and Christmas lights has been provided to support consideration of the proposed purchase of 12 additional hanging basket brackets and the associated sponsorship charge. The matter					Placed on Agenda	Report will be ready for November's F&HR meeting.

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	has been referred to the Finance & HR Committee for review and recommendation						
7	**Replacement Portable Generator Update** The replacement portable generator has been purchased in accordance with the Committee's resolution. Funding was secured through Councillor Dermot McGeough's Locality Budget, resulting in no capital cost to the Council. The Honda EG4500 4.5kW Petrol Generator was selected and purchased.					On Agenda	Complete
8	**Woodchip Supply to Appledore School Update** Delivery of the surplus woodchip to Appledore School is being arranged and will be undertaken by the Maintenance Team as approved.					On Agenda	Complete
9	**Road Sign Cleaning Equipment Update** The telescopic road sign cleaning system has been purchased using Councillor Dermot McGeough's Locality Budget at no cost to the Council. Clarification is being sought regarding Northam Town Council's role in cleaning highway signs before the equipment is incorporated into a formal maintenance programme.					On agenda	Work undertaken as part of the Road Warden scheme. Complete.
10	**Tree Works Update** The approved tree works at Burrough Farm and Northam Memorial have been completed. The dead willow tree and ash tree affected by Ash Dieback were felled in accordance with the approved quotation from Acacia Arb.					On Agenda	Complete
11	**Litter Picking and Street Cleaning Update** The purchase of two street cleaning barrows and options for community litter-picking events are currently being investigated.					On Agenda	A further update will be provided to Members in due course.

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2610/377 MVSID Data Reports

The Parks and Buildings Manager presented an update on the Council's Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (MVSIDs), including monitoring data from Bay View Road and Appledore, progress on future deployment locations, and the installation of a new MVSID at Buckleigh Road.

Members noted the monitoring results, the approval of the Buckleigh Road location, the ongoing discussions with Devon County Council regarding additional sites, and the planned Chapter 8 training to enable the Maintenance Team to install future MVSID posts.

This was **noted** by the Council.

2610/378 Purchase of Christmas Trees for the 2026 Festive Period

The Parks and Buildings Manager presented a report seeking approval for the purchase of Christmas trees for the 2026 festive period.

Members agreed to purchase six 18–20ft Nordmann Fir Christmas trees for installation at Northam Square, Bone Hill, Westward Ho! Green, Westward Ho! Park, Appledore Memorial/Gig Club and Northam Hall, together with one 12ft Nordmann Fir Christmas tree for Appledore Seafront (Quay).

It was **resolved** to approve the purchase of the Christmas trees, together with the associated expenditure from the approved Christmas tree budget, and to authorise the Parks and Buildings Manager to arrange the purchase, delivery, installation and subsequent removal of the trees.

Proposed: Cllr Sawyer, **Seconded:** Cllr Edwards (all in favour).

Action Point: Parks and Buildings Manager to arrange the purchase, delivery, installation, decoration and subsequent removal of the Christmas trees for the 2026 festive period, including the additional 18–20ft tree for Westward Ho! Park.

2610/379 Christmas Outdoor Decorative Displays – 2026 Festive Period

The Parks and Buildings Manager presented a report seeking approval for the purchase of additional outdoor Christmas decorative displays for Northam Hall, Westward Ho! Green and Appledore.

An amendment to the recommendation was proposed that, for Northam Hall, only the following two displays be purchased:

- Pre-Lit Santa's Sleigh & Reindeers Silhouette
- Pre-Lit 2D Nativity Scene Silhouette

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Proposed: Cllr Bach
Seconded: Cllr Sawyer

The amendment was carried by 4 votes to 3.

Members then considered the remaining recommendations.

It was **resolved** to:

Approve the purchase of the Pre-Lit Decorative "HO HO HO" Silhouette for Westward Ho! Green (majority in favour, one vote against).

Approve the purchase of the Pre-Lit 2D Penguin Family Set for Appledore. Members also agreed, following a proposal from Cllr Edwards, that the display be located alongside the 12ft Nordmann Fir Christmas tree on Appledore Quay, rather than at the Gig Club (all in favour).

***Action Point: Parks and Buildings Manager to arrange the purchase and installation of the approved Christmas decorations in accordance with Members' decisions*.**

2610/380 Blackies Orchard and Pollinator Planting

The Parks and Buildings Manager presented a report updating Members on the approved Blackies Orchard project and seeking approval to utilise the remaining budget for additional pollinator-friendly planting.

Members noted that the purchase of the three edible fruit trees (Apple, Pear and Plum) is estimated to cost no more than £300, resulting in a saving against the previously approved budget.

It was resolved to approve expenditure of up to £120 from the remaining approved budget under Cost Code 63 – Environment & Maintenance for the purchase of Red Campion, Pulmonaria and Wood Sage to enhance the pollinator planting area at Blackies.

It was further resolved to authorise the Parks and Buildings Manager to arrange the purchase and planting of the approved species during the 2026/27 planting season.

Proposed: Cllr Lo-Vel, **Seconded:** Cllr Hames (all in favour).

***Action Point:* Parks and Buildings Manager to purchase the approved fruit trees and pollinator-friendly plants, and arrange for their planting during the 2026/27 planting season within the approved budget.**

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2610/381 Westward Ho! Seawall Commemorative Plaque – Restoration Works

The Parks and Buildings Manager presented a report on the condition of the commemorative marble plaque set into the Westward Ho! seawall and outlined proposals for its specialist cleaning and restoration.

Members noted the deteriorated condition of the plaque and recognised the importance of preserving this historic feature.

It was resolved to **approve** the specialist cleaning and restoration of the commemorative plaque at a cost of £480.00, to be funded from Cost Code 80 – General Projects.

It was further **resolved** to **authorise** the Parks and Buildings Manager to arrange the restoration works, subject to obtaining the necessary permission from Torridge District Council, as owners of the seawall.

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

Action Point: Parks and Buildings Manager to seek permission from Torridge District Council for the restoration works and, once approval has been obtained, instruct the specialist contractor to undertake the cleaning and restoration of the commemorative plaque at an appropriate time.

2610/382 Item 13 – Supply of Bedding Plants for the 2027 Floral Display Programme

The Parks and Buildings Manager presented a report seeking approval to appoint a supplier for the Council's 2027 floral display programme.

Members considered the quotation received from Merry Harriers Garden Centre and noted the additional services provided, including the collection, winter storage and maintenance of the Council's hanging baskets, replanting of all displays, and free delivery, which represented good value for money.

It was **resolved** to appoint Merry Harriers Garden Centre as the supplier for the Council's 2027 floral display programme and to approve expenditure of £7,741.72 (excluding VAT), funded from Cost Code 67 – Environment & Maintenance, for the supply and planting of hanging baskets, troughs, three-tier planters and containers throughout the parish.

The Parks and Buildings Manager was further authorised to place the order and make the necessary arrangements for the collection, winter storage, planting and delivery of the Council's floral displays for the 2027 season.

Proposed: Cllr Edwards, Seconded: Cllr Sawyer (all in favour).

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Action Point: Parks and Buildings Manager to place the order with Merry Harriers Garden Centre and arrange the collection, winter storage, planting and delivery of the Council's floral displays for the 2027 season.

2610/383 Westward Ho! Fingerpost – Finial

The Parks and Buildings Manager presented a report seeking approval for the purchase of a replacement decorative finial for the recently installed fingerpost at Westbourne Terrace, Westward Ho!.

Following discussion, Members agreed **not** to proceed with the purchase of the decorative finial at this time.

Members instead requested that an alternative quotation be obtained for an additional fingerpost arm directing members of the public to the nearby defibrillator, with the intention that this option be considered at a future meeting.

It was **resolved** not to approve the purchase of the replacement finial and to request that a quotation be obtained for an additional fingerpost arm directing users to the defibrillator.

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

Action Point: Parks and Buildings Manager to obtain a quotation for an additional fingerpost arm directing the public to the defibrillator and present the proposal to a future meeting for Members' consideration.

2610/384 Northam Hall – Replacement Entrance Sign

Members considered the report and the quotations received for the replacement of the Northam Hall entrance sign.

Members agreed that the item should be **deferred** pending further information.

Members requested that an alternative quotation be obtained for Company 2's design, manufactured from sustainably sourced timber, in line with Northam Town Council's environmental and sustainability policies, before a decision is made.

It was **resolved** to defer the item until the additional quotation has been obtained and presented to a future meeting.

Proposed: Cllr Hames, **Seconded:** Cllr Sawyer (all in favour).

Action Point: **Parks and Buildings Manager to obtain a quotation for Company 2's fingerpost finial design manufactured from sustainably sourced timber and report back to a future meeting for Members' consideration.**

Chair's initials

2610/385 Northam Square Bench

Members noted the advice received from Devon County Council, including the legislative requirements and accessibility guidance relating to the installation of street furniture on the public highway.

Members acknowledged the work being undertaken by Cllr Whittaker in progressing the proposal with Costcutter and expressed their support for her continuing to explore options for the installation of the bench. Members **agreed** that officers would provide assistance where required and that any future proposals should be reported back to the Committee for consideration.

Action Point: Cllr Whittaker, with officer support where required, to continue discussions with Costcutter and other relevant stakeholders regarding the potential provision of a bench within Northam Square and report back to a future meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19:34pm.

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

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