Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Full Council meeting held 28th October 2026 at 7:45pm in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Northam.

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

In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO), Rev T Sutton

2610/386 **Apologies**
All members were present

2610/387 **To agree the agenda as published.**
It was **resolved** to proceed with the agenda as published.
Proposed Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Sawyer (all in favour)

2610/388 **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.

2610/389 **Mayor's Announcements**
The Mayor reminded members that the annual Remembrance Services will be held at the war memorials in Northam (from 10am at St Margaret's Church) and Appledore (from 2pm at the Memorial) on Sunday 8th November 2026.

The Town Clerk reported that a homeless person had pitched a tent in Westward Ho! Park. Her situation had been reported to Police, Housing Services at the District Council and Streetlink. Outreach workers had visited her and explained her options. The Town Clerk had sought legal advice and would, on behalf of the Council, write to the homeless person requesting she leave the Park by the end of Wednesday, 4th November 2026.

2610/390 **To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Council held 30th September 2026**
It was resolved to confirm the minutes as a true and accurate record.
Proposed: Cllr Bell, Seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour).

2610/391 **To receive and adopt the reports of minutes and resolutions contained therein from Committees and Sub-Committees**
The below listed minutes were received and adopted.

- Finance & Human Resources 9th September 2026
- Environment & Maintenance 19th August 2026
- Planning & Development 3rd and 24th September 2026

2610/392 **Public Participation**
There were no members of the public present.

2610/393 **To note correspondence received**
The Town Clerk reported that a series of correspondence had been received from Mr L Ford (Appledore resident) requesting council support. The Town Clerk advised members that the correspondence was available to read at the Council Offices.

2611/394 **To receive a report (if any) from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary**
No representative was present.

2610/395 **To receive a report from the Devon County Councillor**
The County Councillor was not present.

2610/396 To receive reports from Torridge District Members

Cllr Whittaker had attended her first meeting of HATOC as DALC's Torridge representative and reported that the non-voting status of the role was to be reviewed.

Cllr Bach reminded the Council that all Torridge District Council meetings were recorded and available to view on that council's YouTube channel.

Cllr Hames reported that the proposed alternative Local Government Reorganisation proposal for Devon had not been approved by Torridge District Council. That council had also discussed the proposal that Plymouth join the Combined County Authority (of Devon and Torbay) and proposed a change of terms of reference of that body to allow District Council representatives a vote.

2610/397 To receive a report (if any) from the Police-Councillor Advocate

Cllr Sawyer reported that crime statistics for August 2026 showed a reduction in crimes when compared to July, with 55 in the month of August, the busiest for holiday makers locally.

In response to a question, Cllr Sawyer would clarify if the figures included cases of fraud.

2610/398 To receive an update regarding Local Government Reorganisation

No further update was available.

2610/399 To consider the action point update

The action point updates were received as below.

2512/525 Speedwatch **2609/261**	Advise the Police of the intention to recommence the SpeedWatch initiative in the Parish and of the volunteer coordinator. A total of four volunteers needed, the coordinator plus three. Adverts have been placed on the Council's website and re-shared fortnightly on social media. Assistance with promotion would be sought. One volunteer had come forward and the Town Clerk was in the process of arranging the training. Cllr Hodson volunteered to promote the initiative to local and community groups and organisations, asking if other members would also do so. **Action Point: contact local and community organisations (e.g. schools' Friends groups) to promote the project and seek further volunteers.** Friends Groups have been contacted and responses received. There are no formal Friends Groups meetings that representatives of the Council could attend but the Groups may be willing to arrange a special meeting. ONGOING
2601/551 Pension arrangements for Council Staff	Initial staff feedback sought 14th July 2026. All staff at the meeting stated they would be willing to make the increased contribution required by the LGPS over the NEST scheme, which could vary between 0.8% and 2.5% more. A report will be prepared for the Full Council meeting later in September 2026. Members requested that the October Finance & HR committee receive the report in the first instance. The Finance & HR committee considered the report and resolved to align staff terms and conditions with other similar councils. COMPLETE

DRAFT

0606/067 Write to Devon County Council and bus service provider to express the Council's concern over the different levels of service provided to Appledore and Westward Ho!	**July 2026:** No further correspondence from the County Council regarding the cost of extending the bus services serving Appledore. No further correspondence regarding the cost of providing a temporary Night Bus to Appledore. **September 2026:** It was noted that the provided Night Bus service to Westward Ho! was not what the Council agreed to fund at its meeting in April 2026 (minute 2604/775) and that this should be included in any arranged meeting with the County Council and bus service provider. In the first instance, a meeting has been arranged with the DCC Division member, DCC Officers and Town Clerk with a view to a wider meeting including members of this council and the bus services provider(s). **October 2026:** The County Councillor and Town Clerk have had a series of meetings with DCC Officers at which several options have been discussed. Stagecoach was asked by DCC Officers to price a service that would provide a bus service to Appledore / Westward Ho! opposite the one currently provided in the evening at 2-hourly intervals, so making the service hourly to each location. DCC Officers would then investigate funding pots that may be available. At the time of writing, no further detail had been received. ONGOING
2607/211 Split rooms G14&G15 back into two	Work has been completed and electrical work is planned. Furniture ordered. The final cost will be reported to the Finance & HR committee. COMPLETE
2609/263 Declare the NNP Referendum Expenses	The final invoice had not been received at the time of writing. The expenses would be declared as soon as the final total was available. ONGOING
2609/342 Allotment Terms & Conditions and Pollinator advice	New Terms & Conditions issued. Pollinator guide sent to plot holders and ca copy placed in the allotment noticeboard. COMPLETE
2609/343 Pedestrian Barriers	Received. COMPLETE
2609/344 Bench at bus stop – Northam Sq	Delegated to Environment & Maintenance committee, complete for this meeting. COMPLETE
2609/246 DALC HATOC seat	DALC advised that Cllr Whittaker had been nominated by this council and contact details shared. COMPLETE
2609/347 Apply the 3.3% uplift to member's allowances	Payroll advised, payment due 23rd October 2026. COMPLETE

DRAFT

2610/400 To receive the Clerk's report

On 30th September 2026 the Council's balances were:

Account	Balance	Interest	Notes
Petty Cash	£56.62	zero	Financial Regulations expect the balance to be maintained at approximately £100
Hinkley & Rugby Building Society	£275,000	1.65%	Holding account for general expenditure and £50,000 of the General Reserve
Mayor's Charitable Fundraising	£2,805.00	1.06%	Mayor's civic dinner and other fundraising
May Fair	£5,250.35	1.06%	Funds for deposits and other spending leading up to the next May Fair
Cambridge & Counties Bank (31-day)	£99,177.72	2.72%	General Reserves
Nationwide (Business 95-day saver)	£98,938.78	3.20%	Earmarked Reserves (as per agreed budget: parks, defibrillators, LCWIP, war memorial cleaning, skate park and pavilion renovation reserve)
Cambridge Building Society	£10,792.20	1.55%	Tennis Reserves
Coop Bank (current account)	£257,674.93	zero	General expenditure

Total cash in hand (SCRIBE) £749,695.60

Petty Cash: The council spent £45.38 of petty cash in September 2026.

Tennis courts: The gross volume of sales in September 2026 was £238.94 after fees.

1st April to 30th September	Received (net)	Change	Payments (net)
2026	£4,116.96	-20.14%	£3,438.48 £798.14 normal spending plus £2,604.34 final payment for 2023/24 refurbishment.
2025	£5,155.34	+14.76%	N/A
2024 (1st year)	£4,492.36	N/A	N/A

Tennis-related payments in 2024 and 2025 are not available (inconsistent descriptions and cost codes).

Payments:

In September 2026, the council made 129 payments, totalling £45,484.29 (ex VAT)
There were 34 payments of £100 or more totalling £43,726.30 (ex VAT) (below).

Receipts: In September 2026, the council had 107 receipts totalling £345,679.21 (ex VAT) including:

- £1,929.89 for the hire of Northam Hall (95 receipts)
- £55.00 for allotment tenancies (3 plots)
- £5,141 for grass cutting (DCC contract)
- £334,352.50 precept (payment 2 of 2)

DRAFT

2610/401 **To Consider the recommendation from the MUGA procurement working group**

The Chair thanked the Working Group and Parks & Buildings Manager for their diligence and it was **resolved** to

i. Adopt the Working Group's recommendation and formally accept Tender 2 (submitted by TK Play), providing an estimated £2,999.24 of the project from the Westward Ho! Park cost centre,
ii. Request the £72,949 of S106 funds from Torridge District Council (£58,949 + £14,000 for maintenance), and
iii. Instruct TK Play to instal the MUGA as per their tendered specification.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Himan (majority in favour, 1 against and 2 abstentions)

Action point: Advise those that submitted the tenders and progress the MUGA project.

2610/402 **To consider hosting a public showing of the National Emergency Briefing**

Cllr Sawyer proposed that he make use of the equipment he had available and arrange for a location to show the film in Westward Ho! on behalf of Northam Town Council. This was seconded by Cllr Bell and it was so **resolved**.

The majority were in favour, with two voting against the motion.

Action point: Town Clerk to liaise with Cllr Sawyer to arrange the showing.

2610/403 **To consider the working with the Bideford, Littleham & Westward Ho! Cricket Club to renovate part of the pavilion in Westward Ho! Park**

Cllr Edwards proposed that the council did not respond until it was clear what the future of the pavilion would be, this was seconded by Cllr Tait.

Cllr Hodson proposed that members of the Pavilion Working Group meet with representatives of the Cricket Club to outline the council's plans for the pavilion.

Cllr Edwards proposal was voted on first, and with 6 votes for, 8 against and no abstentions, the proposal was not resolved.

Cllr Hodson's proposal was then voted on and with 10 votes for, 2 against and 2 abstentions was passed and it was so **resolved**.

Action point: Arrange a meeting between the pavilion Working Group and representatives of the Cricket Club.

There being no further business, the meeting close at 8:50pm

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

DRAFT

Voucher	Date	Net	VAT	Total	Description	Cost Centre	Cost Code	Minute
608	02.09.26	£108.12	£21.62	£129.74	PPE & Workwear	Council Machinery & Equipment	PPE & Workwear	
605	01.09.26	£110.30	£22.06	£132.36	Copier Charges	Administration	Photocopier Fees	
600	01.09.26	£119.78	£23.96	£143.74	Stationery	Administration	Stationery	
627	08.09.26	£130.00	£26.00	£156.00	Alarm maintenance	Administration	Town Hall - Alarm	
651	16.09.26	£140.00	£28.00	£168.00	Training	Training	Training	
697	30.09.26	£146.57	£29.31	£175.88	Copier Charges	Administration	Photocopier Fees	
601	01.09.26	£150.00	£30.00	£180.00	DALC conference - 3 attendees	Training	Training	
701	30.09.26	£187.50	£37.50	£225.00	Remembrance teas	Community	Remembrance	
644	15.09.26	£196.50	£0.00	£196.50	Water bill	Northam Hall	Water	
602	01.09.26	£200.00	£40.00	£240.00	The Link	Community	Newsletters & Communication	
662	17.09.26	£200.00	£40.00	£240.00	The Link	Community	Newsletters & Communication	
645	15.09.26	£243.47	£48.70	£292.17	Fuel	Council Machinery & Equipment	Fuel - WF18 PTX	
698	30.09.26	£250.00	£0.00	£250.00	Legal Fee (on account - Seagate)	General Project Budget	Projects	2607/211
673	22.09.26	£251.49	£0.00	£251.49	Staff Costs	Staff Costs	Salaries, HMRC and NEST	
668	18.09.26	£282.03	£56.41	£338.44	Computer and software	ICT	Website	
625	08.09.26	£300.00	£0.00	£300.00	Planning Training	Training	Training	
607	02.09.26	£314.00	£62.80	£376.80	IT contract	ICT	Cloudy IT	
611	02.09.26	£335.00	£67.00	£402.00	Civic.ly Subscription	ICT	Civic.ly Asset Management Software	
649	15.09.26	£360.00	£0.00	£360.00	Vehicle Tax GX23 DHD	Council Machinery & Equipment	VED	
603	01.09.26	£400.00	£0.00	£400.00	Cleaning Northam Hall	Northam Hall	Cleaning	
699	30.09.26	£400.00	£0.00	£400.00	Cleaning Northam Hall	Northam Hall	Cleaning	
672	22.09.26	£422.70	£0.00	£422.70	Staff Costs	Staff Costs	Salaries, HMRC and NEST	
589	01.09.26	£450.73	£0.00	£450.73	Room rental (monthly -Town Hall)	Administration	Room Rental	
626	08.09.26	£455.00	£91.00	£546.00	Cleaning CPT	CPT	Cleaning	
686	25.09.26	£705.60	£141.12	£846.72	Scribe Bookings Renewal	ICT	Scribe - Bookings	
604	01.09.26	£750.00	£150.00	£900.00	Tree Works	Environment & Maintenance	Burrough Farm	2608/245
696	29.09.26	£755.00	£151.00	£906.00	Picnic Table	Parks & Recreation	Anchor Park	2609/305
621	08.09.26	£1,129.46	£0.00	£1,129.46	insurances	Insurances	General	
702	30.09.26	£1,365.00	£273.00	£1,638.00	External audit	Administration	Audit & Data Protection	
687	25.09.26	£1,673.73	£0.00	£1,673.73	Salaries (top up)	Staff Costs	Salaries, HMRC and NEST	2609/290
606	02.09.26	£2,461.05	£0.00	£2,461.05	Pensions	Staff Costs	Salaries, HMRC and NEST	2608/221
681	25.09.26	£2,986.64	£0.00	£2,986.64	Pensions	Staff Costs	Salaries, HMRC and NEST	2609/290
676	24.09.26	£6,546.63	£0.00	£6,546.63	HMRC PAYE	Staff Costs	Salaries, HMRC and NEST	
665	18.09.26	£19,200.00	£0.00	£19,200.00	Salaries	Staff Costs	Salaries, HMRC and NEST	2609/290
34	**Totals**	**£43,726.30**	**£1,339.48**	**£45,065.78**				

Chair's initials