

**Minutes of the Review committee held on the 23rd September 2026 at 6.30pm
in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

Present: Cllrs Bach, Hodson, Horrocks, Lo-Vel, Newman-McKie and Whittaker.

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

2609/306 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)

All members were present. There were two vacancies.

2609/307 Chair's announcements

The Chair made no announcements.

2609/308 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.

2609/309 To agree the agenda as published.

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

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

2609/310 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Review Committee meeting held on the 22nd July 2026

It was **resolved** that to approve the minutes of that meeting of the Review Committee as a correct record, with a typographical correction, they were signed by the Chair.

Proposed Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Lo-Vel (all in favour)

2609/311 Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

2609/312 To consider the action point update

The action points were noted as below.

Item	September 2026
1. Emergency planning	The Town Clerk has contacted the Emergency Planning project manager from Devon Communities who emphasised the nature of the role of the Town Council in preparing for emergencies. The contact details and locations included in the Emergency Plan had been reviewed and published on the Council's website at Emergency Plan - Northam Town Council The Town Clerk and Parks & Buildings Manager were to attend a seminar in October presented by the Devon Community Resilience Forum. After this, the Officers would review the previous drafts of the Emergency Plan and Risk Assessment for consideration and amendment (at a future meeting). Emergency Services have been advised of the Council's identified refuge buildings. ONGOING
2. Vision Statement and action Plan	To prepare a separate report for the completed actions; Remove/hide the columns for 2023/24; To prepare a separate report for the completed actions. ONGOING
3. Allotment Terms & Conditions	The Ts & Cs revised by this committee were sent to allotment holders and members for comment. On the Agenda. COMPLETE

Chair's initials

2609/313 To consider the enclosed revised policies / controlled documents:**a) Allotment Terms and Conditions V1.0**

The committee considered the feedback from allotment plot holders and Cllr Hames. Regarding how netting may be used, members heard advice was available from the RSPB regarding net dimensions and the National Allotment Society regarding fruit cages and netting on allotments more generally.

It was **resolved** to recommend the document to Full Council for adoption with the below amendments to the copy provided to the committee:

- Inclusion of a clause encouraging plot holders to mulch their allotments to retain water and restrict weed growth.
- Inclusion of a clause detailing the use of fruit cages to restrict avian access to soft fruit crops.

Proposed: Cllr Newman-McKie, seconded: Cllr Horrocks (all in favour)

Action point: report the concerns regarding the health and longevity of the trees bordering the site to the north to the attention of the power grid provider and the landowner.

b) IT Policy v1.0

It was **agreed** to reconsider the document at a future meeting of this committee, though the following changes would be made in the meantime:

- Amend the Header to read Northam Town Council – IT Policy.
- Throughout clarify that references to ‘council’ means ‘Northam Town Council’.
- 1.3 replace ‘viola’ with ‘violated’.
- 4.2.1 remove ‘Councillors’ and correct typographical errors.
- 4.2.7 add the word ‘users’ after ‘authorised’.
- 5.16 (iv) delete ‘where possible’
- 7.4 replace ‘offboarding’ with ‘leaving the organisation.’
- 7.4 add the word ‘an’ before ‘employee’
- 12.7 (xiv) consider adding the inappropriate use clause to staff contracts at the next review (for example alongside the January 2027 Employment Law amendments following the passing of the Employment Rights act (2025)).
- 13.1 add ‘by staff and authorised users’ after ‘equipment’.

Action point: place on a future agenda after the changes had been made.

c) Publication Scheme v1.2

It was **resolved** to recommend the document to Full Council for adoption with the below amendments to the copy provided to the committee:

- Class 6 (d), add ‘received by councillors and staff, over the value of £50’

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

d) New Councillors advert, councillor role descriptor and induction plan v0.1

It was **agreed** to reconsider the document at a future meeting of this committee, though the following changes would be made in the meantime:

- Page 1:
 - Add ‘Orchard Hill’ as an area.
 - Change ‘a couple’ to ‘at least a couple’.
 - Include member’s allowances and expenses.
- Page 2: Reword the subtitles
- Page 3:
 - Clarify eligibility criteria to include sentencing to an imprisonable term.
 - Change ‘if’ to ‘or’ in footnote

Chair’s initials

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- Page 11:
 - Change title to 'Useful skills and qualities'
 - Change 'Working collaboratively' to 'teamwork'.
 - Add 'Basic' in front of 'IT skills'.
 - Add that there are opportunities for personal and council-specific development for members.
- Page 16:
 - Months 2-3 – add a phrase regarding training available to members, which could be undertaken online, in person or at the council's premises, for example:
'You may get more out of being a councillor if you attend training offered, please speak to the Town Clerk who will be pleased to discuss what is available'.
- General:
 - Include reference to disqualification (the '6-month' rule).

Action point: place on a future agenda after the changes had been made.

2609/314

To consider recommending the enclosed Civility & Respect protocol to the Council for adoption

It was **agreed** to include a copy in future "New Councillor's Packs".

Action point: include in all new packs.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:30pm.

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

Chair's initials

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