

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Human Resources Committee held in the Chamber, Town Hall Windmill Lane, Northam, 10.00am 10th April 2024

Present: Cllrs Hodson (Chair), Bach, Edwards, Himan, Leather, Tait and Whittaker and the Mayor (Cllr Hames) ex-officio.

In attendance: G Langton – Deputy Town Clerk.

2404/878 Apologies: All Members present.

2404/879 Chair's announcements

The Chair noted that this meeting would focus on the Human Resources element of the committee's function and that the financial matters would be presented to an extra committee meeting scheduled for 10am on the 24th April 2024.

The Chair reported that the Council's leases for the small storage room and the Town Clerk's office at the Council Offices were due to be renewed on the 23rd September 2024. The costs matter would be placed before the next meeting of this committee and the lease renewal be considered at the appropriate time.

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to seek further information from the building owners.

2404/880 Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that all interests must be declared prior to the item being discussed.

2404/881 To agree the agenda between Part A and B (confidential matters)

It was **resolved** to agree the agenda between Part A and B (confidential matters)
Proposed: Cllr Hodson, seconded: Cllr Whittaker (all in favour)

2404/882 To confirm and sign the minutes of the previous meeting.

It was **resolved** to defer the confirmation of the Part A minutes until the next meeting of this committee.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour)

2404/883 Action Points

It was agreed to note the Action Points (as presented below), which would be carried forward as appropriate.

Chair's announcements	Hard copy of agenda to be sent to all committee
To consider a request from Climate Emergency Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing procurement policies for sustainability Review of sustainable investment opportunities 	It was agreed that both items be referred to Review Committee in the first instance.
To consider the Staff Handbook as reviewed by Worknest.	It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting. Members to be provided with details of the changes from the current handbook. Action Point: Provide Members with details of changes from the current handbook agenda next meeting. Matter deferred to the 24th April 2024 meeting.
To consider the purchase of trench covers £205 each (minimum 3 per order)	It was resolved to purchase trench covers at a cost of £615.00. Proposed: Cllr Leather, seconded Cllr Whittaker (all in favour) Action Point: proceed with purchase of trench covers.

Staff issues Part B	Issues to be actioned.
To consider exploring the benefits of NTC joining with other local authorities and organisations in offering a Town Lottery.	Town Clerk to send links to the presentation and agenda in the future.

2404/884 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. A question shall not receive a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.

No members of the public were present.

2404/885 To consider and confirm the project brief for the WorkNest staffing review.

Cllr Hodson reported that a more detailed review of the requirements and the services offered by WorkNest and other similar providers.

The recommendations were resolved as follows:

1. The committee consider the terms of the current WorkNest contract and consultancy support, and the details of the service offered by South West Councils, which could be supplemented by tailored support services at the next meeting of this committee.
Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Whittaker (all in favour).
2. To consider seeking temporary administrative support from experienced smaller authority locums that are registered with DALC. The responsibility would be delegated to Cllrs Hames and Hodson, with the support of the Deputy Town Clerk, to report to the next meeting of this committee.
Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Leather (all in favour)

2404/886 To note the date of the next meeting: 24th April 2024 at 10:30am.

The date and time were noted.

Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Planning Meeting held 14th March 2024 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Northam.

Present: Cllrs Bach (Chair), Brading, Bruins, Hames, Leather and Lo-Vel.

In attendance: Guy Langton – Deputy Town Clerk.

2403/838 Apologies

Cllrs Hodson and Singh tendered their apologies.

2403/839 Chair's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Chair.

2403/840 To agree the agenda as published

It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published
Proposed Cllr Brading, Seconded Cllr Leather (all in favour)

2403/841 Declarations of interest:

Members were reminded that all interests should be declared prior to the item being discussed.

2403/842 To confirm and sign the minutes of the Planning Meeting held 22nd February 2024

It was **resolved** to confirm and sign the minutes of the Planning Meeting held 22nd February 2024.

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

2403/843 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.

2403/844 To Consider: Section 106 agreements.

The Officer reported that clarification had been sought from Torridge District Council regarding those elements of Section 106 allocations that had been earmarked for projects by that Authority. A response was awaited. The members noted the report.

2403/845 To consider: Responding to planning proposals and the Town Council's role in the planning process.

The members received the report and were satisfied that there had been no issues raised in the past arising from possible conflicts of interest caused by being elected members at both authorities. It was noted that the Localism Act (2011) made a distinction between pre-determination of a decision and a pre-disposition towards a decision and that proposed changes to the Planning process nationally would be likely to reduce the number of proposals considered, with more being carried out under permitted development rights.

The officer advised that the Council's statutory role as a consultee was to make, or not make, comments on a proposal and that *support* and *objection* should be substantiated with comments to make the Council's position clear.

It was agreed that no change in the Council's practice was required.

2403/846

Torridge District Council Planning Applications:

Torridge District Council, the determining Authority, has asked for comments from the Town Council on the following Parish planning applications:

- i) 1/0129/2024/FUL Applicant: Walton
 Proposal: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling (Variation of condition 2 of planning approval 1/0039/2023/FUL)
 Location: Still Waters, Torridge Road, Appledore
 It was **resolved** to recommend that the proposal be granted permission.
 Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Brading (all in favour)
- ii) 1/0133/2024/FUL Applicant: Heard
 Proposal: Replacement windows & doors, installation of PV array & air source heat pump and part conversion of garage to kitchen dining room
 Location: 14A Cross Street, Northam, Bideford, Devon
 It was **resolved** to recommend that the proposal be granted permission but the Council does not consider the roller garage door to be in keeping with the conservation area and would expect the existing style of garage door to be maintained.
 Proposed: Cllr Brading, Seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour)
- iii) 1/0149/2024/FUL Applicant: Martin
 Proposal: Conversion of portacabin to annexe associated to Barton Croft
 Location: Portakabin At Barton Croft, Abbotsham
 It was **resolved** to recommend that the proposal be granted permission as an annexe and therefore be ancillary to the main house and not operated as a separate dwelling.
 Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Brading (all in favour)
- iv) 1/1154/2024/FUL **re-consultation** Applicant: Ryan
 Proposal: Use of property as a single dwelling with alterations and extensions
 Location: Orchard Hill Hotel , Orchard Hill
 It was **resolved** to recommend that the proposal be granted permission.
 Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Brading (majority in favour)
- v) 1/0180/2024/FUL & 1/0178/2024/LBC Applicant: Page
 Proposal: Internal alterations and a single storey rear extension (Variation of condition 2 of planning approval 1/0289/2022/FUL & 1/0314/2022/LBC)
 Location: 15 The Quay, Appledore
 It was **resolved** to recommend that the proposal be granted permission.
 Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded: Cllr Leather (all in favour)
- vi) 1/0989/2023/FUL **re-consultation** Applicant: Mr Warwick
 Proposal: Proposed erection of 2 no. holiday units (Amended description and type of application)
 Location: Duckhaven Stud, Cornborough Road, Westward Ho!
 It was **resolved** to recommend that the proposal be granted permission.
 Proposed: Cllr Brading, Seconded: Cllr Leather (all in favour)
- vii) 1/0200/2024/FUL Applicant: Mr Warwick
 Proposal: Replacement of conservatory with orangery style extension, extension of cottage, installation of a link between existing house and cottage, replacement doors and internal alterations (Variation of conditions 2 & 4 of planning approval 1/1076/2023/FUL)
 Location: Garth, Diddywell Road, Appledore
 It was **resolved** to recommend that the proposal be granted permission.
 Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded: Cllr Brading (all in favour)

- viii) 1/0218/2024/FUL Applicant: Davie
Proposal: Extensions and alterations to existing cottage, including repair/replacement of existing pitched roof
Location: 58 Irsha Street, Appledore
It was **resolved** to recommend that the proposal be granted permission.
Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Brading (all in favour)

2403/847 Members agreed to note the Torridge District Council Planning Decisions
Torridge District Council, the determining Authority, has **granted permission** for the following applications with conditions as filed:

- i) 1/1164/2023/FUL
Proposal: Create off road parking in existing front garden
Location: 26 Atlantic Way, Westward Ho!, Bideford, Devon1/1083/2023/FUL
(Northam Town Council recommended the proposal be granted permission)
- ii) 1/0016/2024/FUH
Proposal: Retrospective erection of games room
Location: 4 Boulevard Way, Westward Ho!
(Northam Town Council recommended the proposal be granted permission)
- iii) 1/0838/2023/FUL
Proposal: Part retrospective application for all weather turnout
Location: Land At Grid Reference 244858 129911, Northam
(Northam Town Council recommended the proposal be granted permission)
- iv) 1/0002/2024/FUL
Proposal: Erection of a first floor extension
Location: 52 Taylor Crescent, Westward Ho!
(Northam Town Council recommended the proposal be granted permission)

2403/848 Members agreed to note the Torridge District Council Planning Decisions
Torridge District Council, the determining Authority,, has **refused permission** for the following applications with conditions as filed:

- i) 1/1252/2023/FUL
Proposal: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 3 dwellings (Variation of condition 2 of planning approval.
Location: Site Of 51, Atlantic Way, Westward Ho!
(Northam Town Council recommended the proposal be refused permission)

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.15pm

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

Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Town Projects and Asset Meeting held on Thursday 7th March 2024 at 10,00 am in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam

Present: Cllrs Tait, (Chair), Bach, Edwards (Deputy Chair), Hodson, and Lo-Vel,

In attendance: Jane Mills - Town Clerk
Guy Langton – Deputy Town Clerk at minute no: 2403/830

- 2403/820 Apologies**
Apologies – Cllr Whittaker
- 2403/821 Chair’s announcements**
A letter had been received complimenting the workmen employed to do the hedge laying at Anchor Park.
Action point: Town Clerk to convey the email contents to the workmen.
- 2403/822 Declarations of interest**
Members were reminded that all interests should be declared prior to the item being discussed.
There were none.
- 2403/823 To agree the agenda between Part A and Part B (confidential information)**
It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published.
Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour)
- 2403/824 To confirm and sign the minutes of the Town Projects Meeting held 25th January 2024**
It was **resolved** to confirm and sign the minutes of the Town Projects Meeting held 25th January 2024 as correct record,
Proposed: Cllr Bach, Seconded: Cllr Lo-Vel (all in favour)
- 2403/825 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.
No members of the public were present.
- 2403/826 To consider review of Action Points and Projects,**
Amendments and updates attached.
- 2403/827 To receive an update on the annual footpath survey and consider the actions suggested (to include the resurfacing of footpath 10a and other items)**
Members noted the report and requested sight of a footpaths map, there was a request to investigate the availability of scalpings, can they be purchased in bulk? An update on footpath 24 was given, advising that the owner was agreeable in principle subject to there being no liability attached to him if allowing the installation of a handrail. Members requested to see a copy of the P3 survey when costs are attached.
Action Points: Provide members with a footpaths map, investigate bulk purchase of scalpings, provide members with P3 costings.

- 2403/828 To consider installation of planters either side of the bus shelter opposite the Seagate.**
A letter had been received requesting NTC install planters either side of the bus shelter opposite the Seagate. This was from a group wishing to refresh the bus shelter. The Town Clerk was asked to write to the group commending their community spirit, but pointing out that the bus shelter belongs to TDC and it is not within the remit of NTC to decide on decoration. With regard to planters, members felt that there were already adequate planters in place.
Action Point: Write to the group commending their community spirit, but pointing out that the bus shelter belongs to TDC and it is not within the remit of NTC to decide on decoration. With regard to planters, members felt that there were already adequate planters in place.
- 2403/829 To consider the tree survey for Northam Town Council owned land and work required.**
The Deputy Town Clerk was invited into the meeting, to explain about the survey. It was **resolved** to seek quotes for any work which could not be completed by the maintenance team.
Proposed: by Cllr Tait, seconded: Cllr Bach, (all in favour)
Action Point: obtain quotes, future agenda item.
Item 14 was brought forward at this juncture, whilst the DTC was still in the meeting.
- 2403/830 To receive an update on the play inspection report and consider its recommendations.**
Members discussed the report.
It was **resolved** that a consultation takes place regarding the usage of the Lords Meadow gym equipment. This could be by means of posters.
Proposed: by Cllr Bach seconded: Cllr Tait, (all in favour)
It was **resolved** that 4 litter bins be purchased for the parks, from project provision.
Proposed: by Cllr Hodson, seconded: Cllr Tait, (all in favour)
It was further **resolved** that longevity reports be added to the play inspection reports in 2025 at a cost of £105 for seven play areas. Also, that the skatepark be added back next year.
Proposed: by Cllr Hodson, seconded: Cllr Tait, (all in favour)
Action Point: Prepare a consultation re gym equipment in Lords Meadow.
Purchase 4 litter bins, add longevity reports to the play inspections for 2025 and include skatepark for inspection.
- 2403/831 To consider the renewal of the three defibrillators through SWAST or alternative options and additional for Westward Ho! Park.**
Cllr Hodson felt the report was excellent.
It was **resolved** that 4 defibrillators should be purchased through London Hearts
Proposed: Cllr Hodson, seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour)
At this juncture gave her apologies and left the meeting
Action Point: Purchase 4 defibrillators, 3 replacements and 1 new for Westward Ho! Park
- 2403/832 To consider purchase of a salt spreader**
It was **resolved** to purchase a salt spreader at best value to a maximum of £350.00
Proposed: by Cllr Tait, seconded: Cllr Bach, (all in favour)
Action Point: Purchase salt spreader.
- 2403/833 To consider requests from Climate Emergency Committee.**
- **To consider composting.** It was agreed to defer this item until Cllr Hames was present.
 - **To consider a storage location for the Council's Planters during the off-season**
This is currently under review.

2403/834 **To consider a request to adopt a small piece of land at Burrough Farm.**
It was **resolved** to respond to the request advising that the overhanging trees will be dealt with and the council will clear the overgrowth but is not open to adoption of any of the area.
Proposed: Cllr Edwards, seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour)
Action Point: respond to the request

PART B

2403/835 **To resolve: that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting.**
It was **resolved** that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting.
Proposed: Cllr Tait, seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour)

2403/836 **To consider work required on the floor at Northam Hall** (report and quotes attached)
It was **resolved** to accept the quote from Floor Sanding Services in the sum of after confirmation that the price of £3650.00 includes clearing up after the sanding.
Proposed: Cllr Bach, seconded: Cllr Tait (all in favour)
Action Point: accept quote from Floor Sanding Services subject to clearing up after sanding

2403/837 **To resolve to readmit members of the press and public.**
It was **resolved** to readmit members of the press and public.
Proposed: Cllr Tait, seconded: Cllr Edwards (all in favour)

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.40pm

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

Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Review Committee held in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Wednesday 7th February 2024 at 6.30pm

Present

Cllr Hodson (Chair), Bach, Edwards, Hodson, Leather, Singh, Tait and the Mayor (ex-officio)

In attendance

Deputy Town Clerk Mr G Langton

- 2403/849 Apologies**
Apologies were received from Cllr Newman-McKie.
- 2403/850 Chair's announcements**
The Chair made no announcements.
- 2403/851 Declarations of interest**
Members are reminded that all interests should be declared prior to the item being discussed.
- 2403/852 To agree the agenda as published**
It was resolved to agree the agenda as published.
Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour)
- 2403/853 To confirm and sign the minutes of the previous Review Committee Meeting held on 7th February 2024**
It was resolved to confirm and sign the minutes of the previous Review Committee Meeting held on 7th February 2024 as a correct record.
Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Tait (all in favour)
Cllr Singh arrived at the meeting.
- 2403/854 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.
No members of the public were present.
- 2403/855 To consider Action Points**
The action points were presented as follows:
1) To Consider reconfiguration of the Council Committee structure moving forward from May 2024.
The draft structure had been amended in accordance with the agreements made at the meeting. They had then been circulated to the committee members for consideration at Review and the final draft went to Full Council. At Full Council it was agreed a meeting would be held to consider the draft terms of reference and scheme of delegation. It was agreed this should be at a special meeting of the Review committee, to be held on 11th April 2024 at 6.30pm.
Action point: arrange special Review committee meeting on 11th April 2024.

2) To consider the appointment of a consultant to review staffing.

Arrange an appointment with a consultant as used previously through WorkNest. This matter was to pass to the Finance and HR committee.

Action point: Deputy Town Clerk to review the current position with WorkNest and arrange a time for the consultant to attend.

The remaining action points were noted.

2403/856

To consider Risk Review to include Financial Risk Management.

- **Risk Management Policy** (as recommended by the Internal Auditor)
- **Financial Risk Management Record** (as recommended by the Internal Auditor)

It was **resolved** to include the following additional points on the Financial Risk Register at the appropriate locations (amendments/additions in italics) and to change the title of the policy to 'Northam Town Council Financial Risk Management Policy'.

Proposed: Cllr Tair, Seconded: Cllr Edwards, all in favour.

Risk Area	Risk Identified	Level of Risk (H/M/L)	Management of Risk	Action Required	Review Date
Section two: Working with others to help manage risk.					
The provision of services being carried out under agency/partnership agreements <i>or contracts</i> with principal <i>or other</i> authorities	Standing orders and financial regulations dealing with the award of contracts.	L		Grass cutting for DCC reviewed annually before renewing. <i>The contract for grass cutting for Abbotsham PC reviewed annually before renewal.</i>	Usually January/ February when the information is received from DCC. <i>Renewal date to be confirmed.</i>
<i>IT Services and software (Accounts and bookings package; IT systems; Payroll; Website; Tennis Court booking and payments; Point of sale system; Banking; Mapping)</i>	<i>Information could be at risk if not suitably protected and backed up.</i>	L	<i>Contracts with providers of the software and IT systems listed include service levels agreements and information backup. IT security provided where appropriate.</i>	<i>Review service providers periodically for best value for money and service levels</i>	<i>Once per Council election cycle at the minimum.</i>

Action point: Recommend to the Northam Burrows Charity Management Committee that a Financial Risk Management Policy and Assessment be prepared for its activities.

Action point: Recommend to Finance and HR committee that cyber-security training be arranged for all office-based staff.

2403/857

To review the current procurement policy

Following a request from Climate Emergency Committee to Finance and HR (now referred from Finance and HR to Review Committee).

- Reviewing procurement policies for sustainability.

Cllr Tait noted that the approved contractor list may be out of date and would benefit from being reviewed.

Cllr Hames noted that social value should be included in the procurement policy.

It was **resolved** that a revised policy be collated into one document, including the presented paper 9C on sustainable procurement as an appendix, replacing the application to be an approved contractor, referenced at items (5) and (6) and paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 presented as the first paragraph of the revised draft and that the resulting paper be presented to Full Council for its consideration.

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

Action point: Prepare the revised Procurement Strategy and Policy for consideration at the next Full Council meeting.

Action point: Review the approved contractor list.

2403/858

To review investment strategy

Following a request from Climate Emergency Committee to Finance and HR (now referred from Finance and HR to Review Committee)

- Review of sustainable investment opportunities

It was **resolved** to revise the Investment Strategy to include, at paragraph (5), a reference to ethical investments.

Proposed Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Tait. (all in favour).

Action point: amend the Investment Strategy so paragraph (5) reads:

Any other type of investment is considered 'Non-Specified Investment'

to which there can be greater risk and where professional investment advice may be required, *including ethical investments.* (addition in italics)

2403/859

To review the Emergency Plan

Cllr Tait noted that the contact list in the Council's Emergency Plan was out of date and should be reviewed and updated as required.

Cllr Hames reported that a Devon/Cornwall/Isles of Scilly (DCIoS) Climate Adaption Strategy had been drawn up and it's impact on the Emergency Plans for authorities being considered.

It was **resolved** to defer the item pending further information regarding the impact of the (DCIoS) Climate Adaption Strategy.

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

Action point: Review the contact list in the Northam Town Council Emergency Plan.

Action point: Include the matter on a future agenda as appropriate.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30 pm

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

