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**FINANCE Committee**

**12th February 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

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

In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO)

Ian Rawle (Parks & Buildings Manager)

**2502/586 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)**

Cllr Whittaker tendered her apologies, the reasons for which were approved.

**2502/587 Chair’s announcements**

The Chair made no announcements.

**2502/588 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.

**2502/589 To agree the agenda as published.**

It was **resolved** to bring consideration of item 12 (*To consider renewing the Council’s fleet and machinery to meet the requirements of the Council’s responsibilities and duties and to consider if the Council should extend those duties to include routine street and pavement cleaning*), recorded at minute 2502/592, forward to allow the Parks & Buildings Manager to contribute. With that amendment, the agenda was agreed.

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

**2502/590 To consider the minutes of the Finance meeting held on the 16th January 2025 as a true and correct record**

It was **resolved** to accept the minutes as a true and correct record, which were signed by the Chair.

Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Hames (majority in favour, 2 abstentions – not present at the meeting)

**2502/591 Public Participation**

There were no members of the public present.

**2502/592 To consider renewing the Council’s fleet and machinery to meet the requirements of the Council’s responsibilities and duties and to consider if the Council should extend those duties to include routine street and pavement cleaning**

The committee considered the report, in particular the vehicle which would replace the Council’s 2016 DFSK Loadhopper. Both used and new models were considered as replacements, the committee viewing that there were benefits and disadvantages of all options but that a new vehicle would be more effective over the longer term. The Council already operated one of these vehicles so had experience of it in daily operation.

It was noted that the Council would be replacing all its petrol hand tools (e.g. strimmers and leaf blowers) with electric equivalents, so reducing noise, vibration and carbon footprint in use.

It was noted that a two-wheel tractor could, with the appropriate attachments, support the Council’s mowing and street cleaning activities but only required one petrol engine to fuel and maintain.

It was **resolved** to:

1. Replace the whole set of maintenance equipment with electric models and purchase sufficient batteries and chargers, at a cost of approximately £13,000.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Hames (majority in favour, 1 against)

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1. purchase a petrol powered ‘two-wheel tractor’ and three attachments – a weed ripper, a brush and collector set and a rotary mower at a cost of approximately £23,000.

Proposed: Cllr Bach, Seconded: Cllr Edwards (majority in favour, 1 against)

1. Replace the DFSK with a new Nextem Orca EV, equipped with a tipper body and tow bar, at a cost of approximately £23,000

Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded: Cllr Leather (majority in favour, 3 against)

1. In all cases, the Council seek to reduce the cost by effective negotiation and offering the Council’s current equipment and truck in part-exchange.

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

1. Allocate the spending (estimated to be £59,000) to the cost centres for replacing a Truck and larger Council machinery (combined total of £43,250 in 2025-26), with any shortfall being identified from the Council’s end of year carry-forward or earmarked reserves.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Leather (majority in favour, 1 against).

In recognition of the level of expenditure, it was **agreed** to recommend to Full Council that:

* The Council replace the whole set of maintenance equipment with electric models and purchase sufficient batteries and chargers, and
* The Council purchases a petrol powered ‘two-wheel tractor’ and three attachments – a weed ripper, a brush and collector set and a rotary mower, and
* The Council replaces its oldest truck, A DFSK Loadhopper, a new Nextem ORCA, equipped with a cage tipper body and a towbar.
* In all cases, the Council seek to reduce the cost by effective negotiation and offering the Council’s current equipment and truck in part-exchange.
* The spending (estimated to be £59,000) be allocated to the cost centres for replacing a Truck and larger Council machinery (combined total of £43,250 in 2025-26), with any shortfall being identified from the Council’s end of year carry-forward or earmarked reserves.

Proposed: Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Hames (majority in favour, 2 abstentions – not present at the meeting)

*I Rawle left the meeting at this point (19:30)*

**2502/593** **To receive an update on Action Points**

The action points were noted as below and overleaf.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **December 2024** | **January 2025** | **February 2025** |
| 1. Council’s banking arrangements and draft a report for a future meeting of the committee. | The review has not yet been carried out.  INCOMPLETE | The review has been started. The Town Clerk will present a report to a future meeting if this committee.  Considerations will include the opening of further deposit accounts, including interest-bearing easy access and moving the Council’s main account to another provider.  ONGOING | On the agenda  COMPLETE |

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|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item**  **Page 188** | **December 2024** | **January 2025** | **February 2025** |
| 2. To consider improvements to the office accommodations, to include decorating painting and the provision of a sink  It was resolved to seek permission from the building owner (Torridge District Council) to install a sink for washing up. | The Chamber has been completed.  Suitable sink units are being investigated by the Parks & Buildings Manager.  ONGOING | The Chamber has been completed.  Suitable sink units are being investigated by the Parks & Buildings Manager.  ONGOING | The work has been placed on hold with the Council concentrating its attention on Northam Hall and the response to the actions identified in the Fire Risk Assessment.  ONGOING |
| 3. Include Northam Town Council logo in the advertising for the 2025 Christmas Fair. |  |  | To be undertaken at the appropriate time  ONGOING |
| 4. Liaise with the Westward Ho! Business association regarding the location and provision of Christmas Trees in 2025. |  |  | To be undertaken at the appropriate time  ONGOING |
| 5. Northam Hall works in response to the findings of the Fire Risk Assessment in December 2024 |  | The requirements had been reviewed and work identified that NTC staff could undertake. | Work has commenced. Estimates for the ceiling work are being sought and grants researched.  ONGOING |
| 6. Consider recommendation to purchase machinery referred from the Environment & Maintenance committee. |  | In the light of the repairs needed by the Council’s DFSK, the committee requested a full review of the needs of the Council’s maintenance machinery and vehicle fleet be undertaken and returned to this committee. | On the agenda.  COMPLETE |
| 7. Consideration of a request from a hirer of Northam Hall that the Council reimburse the cost of the Hall hire. |  | The committee agreed to donate the cost of the Hall Hire to the charitable beneficiary. | The hirer has been contacted  COMPLETE. |

**2502/594 To receive the Clerk’s report**

**On 31st December 2024, the Council’s balances were:**

At 28th January 2025 (the last available statement balance), the Council’s balances were:

Nationwide (Business 95 day saver) £93,166.35 current interest rate is 3.9%

Cambridge & Counties Bank (31 day) £93,884.82 current interest rate is 3.55%

Cambridge Building Society £5,024.40 current interest rate is 2.4%

Petty Cash £94.29

Coop Bank (current account) £245,134.80

**Total cash in hand £437,304.66**

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**Payments:**

The Council made 1081 payments in January 2025, totalling £38,799.24 (exVAT). There were 34 payments of £100 or more (exVAT). These include:

* £24,794.47 in payroll and associated costs
* £2,400 for an independent Planning expert’s check on the NNP
* £1,613.50 to book entertainers and facilities for the May Fair 2025
* £1,090.81 direct debit for monthly insurance payment
* £996.00 for Scribe accounts
* £771.78 on materials and tools to repair footpaths
* £752.84 to service the ride on mower
* £660.00 for an 240v pressure washer and consumables
* £603.78 for gas to heat Northam Hall in December
* £428.49 for room rental at the Town Hall
* £420.00 to clean the CPT and Community Centre toilet in December
* £416.67 as deposit for the Mayor’s civic dinner
* £400.00 to clean Northam Hall in December
* £312.10 monthly IT contract
* £300.00 for two 2nd hand stationery/filing cupboards (£150 each)
* £299.00 Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) at Northam Hall
* £199.00 FRA at the Pavilion
* £180.00 on manual handling training for all Maintenance staff
* £175.25 for electricity at Northam Hall
* £166.47 on fuel for vehicles and equipment
* £148.50 on repairing and updating the Mayor’s chain
* £126.32 on PPE
* £114.00 water bill at Northam Hall (monthly direct debit)

**Receipts:**

In January 2025, the Council received 47 payments, totalling £7,923.73, detailed below. There was a £15.00 refund for an overcharged May Fair brochure advert.

**Tennis courts:**

The gross volume of sales since 1st January 2024 is £5,495. After fees, the Council has received £5,114.45. 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. The Council is £1,514.45 over the target, in this extended year (1st January 2024 to 31st March 25). At the 31st March, a payment will be made to the Council’s Cambridge Building Society account, where this earmark is held.

**Petty Cash:**

A screen shot of the petty cash cashbook is presented overleaf showing the items on which the Council has spent petty cash. The aim of the Town Clerk is to maintain a level of £100 or thereabouts in the account.

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**A screenshot of a computer screen

AI-generated content may be incorrect.**

**Receipts:**

In November / December 2024, the Council received 101 payments, totalling £6,351.12, including interest paid into the Council’s deposit accounts (£1,386.69); payment from TDC for the hire of the Council’s Tower and staff (£312.50); and the annual fee to use Burrough Farm from Northam Lions FC (£120). Payments received in respect of Council services provided for the community was £4,204.37, which included rent payable on the Council’s carpark adjacent to the Seagate Hotel in Appledore. There was a £40.44 refund for cancelled Hall bookings.

**Tennis courts:**

The gross volume of sales since 1st January 2024 is £5,470. After fees, the Council has received £5,091.45. 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. The Council is £1,491.45 over the target, in this extended year (1st January 2024 to 31st March 25). At the 31st March, a payment will be made to the Council’s Cambridge Building Society account, where this earmark is held.

**Council IT contract:**

Following an increase by Microsoft, the Council’s monthly bill to the IT service provider will increase to £327.20 (exVAT). A £10 increase per month.

**Council precept request:**

The Town Clerk had submitted the precept requirement to Torridge District Council, that being £644,337. The District Council has acknowledged receipt.

**2502/595 To note the Devon County Council highway verge grass cutting contract**

It was noted that Devon County Council for 4 cuts per year, as outlined below. The Contract would be considered by Full Council.

A screenshot of a computer

Description automatically generated**Page 218**

**2502/596 To note the annual account returns for 2023-24 for the charities for which the Council is corporate trustee**

It was noted that the accounts for 2023-24 for the two Charities for which the Council was Corporate Trustee (Northam Burrows Charity [charity number 1198021] and Mrs Anderson’s Bequest for a Recreation Ground [charity number 300746]) had been filed by 31.01.2025 as required and could be viewed on the Charities’ pages of the Charity Commission’s website.

**2502/597 To consider the Council’s banking arrangements**

The committee noted the reasons why the Council held each account, as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Institution | Why held | Type of account | Interest rate | Balance at 31.01.2025 |
| Co-operative Bank | Day-to-day use | Business Current Account | 0.0% | £207,500 |
| Co-operative Bank | Mayor’s Charity | Business Current Account | 0.0% | £278 |
| Nationwide Building Society | Earmarked and general reserves | 95-day notice community savings account | 3.9% | £93,474 |
| Cambridge and Counties Bank | Earmarked reserves | 31-day notice business savings account | 3.49% | £94,178 |
| Cambridge Building Society | Tennis Court ‘sinking fund’ | Instant access council saver | 2.4% | £5,027 |

The committee noted that with a large precept sum being paid to the Council, it would be financially prudent to place a part of that on deposit to gain interest. Placing it in an instant access account would allow the Council to access it as an when it was needed.

The committee considered that, despite the Council not being eligible for the FCS compensation scheme, spreading its funds across a number of institutions was prudent.

It was **resolved** to open a Local Council Easy Access Deposit Account at Hinkley & Rugby Building Society to hold a portion of its current account balance and precept to maximise the benefit gained from the public money held by the Council.

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

It was further **resolved** to close the Council’s Mayor’s Charity account and transfer the balance to the Council’s general account.

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

**2502/598 To consider a request from a hirer of Northam Hall**

Northam Hall has been booked on the 14th March 2025 by the Bideford Tarka Rotary Club, who are holding a fundraising quiz, in support of Siman Randall’s mission to raise funds for North Devon Hospice. The organiser has asked that the Council provide the Hall free of charge or make a donation of equal value to the cost to the North Devon Hospice. The Council has taken the latter approach in the past. The cost of the hire is £66.25.

It was **resolved** to ask the hirer to pay the hire fees, which the Council would then donate to the North Devon Hospice.

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

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It was **resolved** to exclude members of the press and public for the remaining items, pursuant to

the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

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

**2502/599 To receive a report into the accumulated TOIL hours across the staff and requests for overtime and sign the payroll information sheet for January 2025 payroll**

It was **resolved** to approve the payroll submission sheet, noting the TOIL hours accumulated and overtime claimed. The payroll information sheet was signed by the Chair.

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

It was **resolved** to readmit members of the press and public, pursuant to

the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

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

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.59pm.

Signed………………………………………………..Dated……………………………………………….

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Voucher | Date | Net | VAT | Gross | Description |
| 1077 | 02.01.2025 | £1.35 | £0.00 | £1.35 | Milk |
| 978 | 02.01.2025 | £4.17 | £0.83 | £5.00 | Mobile Phone - IR |
| 998 | 02.01.2025 | £4.22 | £0.00 | £4.22 | Stripe Fees |
| 982 | 02.01.2025 | £168.00 | £0.00 | £168.00 | Equipment various |
| 312 | 02.01.2025 | £428.49 | £0.00 | £428.49 | Room rental |
| 983 | 03.01.2025 | £4.17 | £0.83 | £5.00 | Mobile Phone - CW |
| 977 | 03.01.2025 | £46.07 | £9.21 | £55.28 | telephone system |
| 1078 | 06.01.2025 | £1.70 | £0.00 | £1.70 | Milk |
| 979 | 06.01.2025 | £61.67 | £12.33 | £74.00 | wifi N Hall |
| 980 | 06.01.2025 | £186.01 | £0.00 | £186.01 | Equipment various |
| 985 | 07.01.2025 | £1.34 | £0.00 | £1.34 | square fees |
| 984 | 07.01.2025 | £1.34 | £0.00 | £1.34 | square fees |
| 997 | 07.01.2025 | £6.25 | £1.25 | £7.50 | Domain name renewal |
| 995 | 07.01.2025 | £21.67 | £4.33 | £26.00 | cleaning services |
| 987 | 07.01.2025 | £36.50 | £7.30 | £43.80 | copier charges |
| 990 | 07.01.2025 | £41.98 | £8.40 | £50.38 | Tools |
| 994 | 07.01.2025 | £63.20 | £0.00 | £63.20 | Community Centre Water |
| 996 | 07.01.2025 | £80.00 | £0.00 | £80.00 | Mayor charity event |
| 988 | 07.01.2025 | £299.00 | £59.80 | £358.80 | fire assessment N Hall |
| 992 | 07.01.2025 | £400.00 | £0.00 | £400.00 | cleaning Northam Hall |
| 991 | 07.01.2025 | £420.00 | £84.00 | £504.00 | Cleaning CPT |
| 989 | 07.01.2025 | £660.00 | £132.00 | £792.00 | Pressure washer and consumables |
| 986 | 07.01.2025 | £752.84 | £150.57 | £903.41 | Mower service |
| 1079 | 08.01.2025 | £4.55 | £0.00 | £4.55 | Milk and coffee |
| 999 | 08.01.2025 | £9.45 | £1.89 | £11.34 | cadet armband |
| 1000 | 08.01.2025 | £11.92 | £2.38 | £14.30 | Photo frame |
| 993 | 08.01.2025 | £312.10 | £62.42 | £374.52 | IT contract |
| 303 | 08.01.2025 | £1,090.81 | £0.00 | £1,090.81 | insurance |
| 1009 | 09.01.2025 | £0.22 | £0.00 | £0.22 | square fees |
| 1007 | 09.01.2025 | £0.88 | £0.00 | £0.88 | square fees |
| 1012 | 09.01.2025 | £1.19 | £0.00 | £1.19 | square fees |
| 1006 | 09.01.2025 | £1.19 | £0.00 | £1.19 | square fees |
| 1011 | 09.01.2025 | £1.27 | £0.00 | £1.27 | square fees |
| 1008 | 09.01.2025 | £1.27 | £0.00 | £1.27 | square fees |
| 1004 | 10.01.2025 | £2.62 | £0.52 | £3.14 | safety signs |
| 1005 | 10.01.2025 | £4.75 | £0.95 | £5.70 | Signage N Hall |
| 1001 | 10.01.2025 | £5.05 | £1.01 | £6.06 | safety signs |
| 1003 | 10.01.2025 | £6.88 | £1.38 | £8.26 | safety signs |
| 1002 | 10.01.2025 | £12.41 | £2.48 | £14.89 | Bus Shelter |
| 1010 | 13.01.2025 | £1.19 | £0.00 | £1.19 | square fees |
| 1013 | 13.01.2025 | £1.50 | £0.00 | £1.50 | square fees |
| 1014 | 13.01.2025 | £4.17 | £0.83 | £5.00 | Mobile Phone - TT |
| 1016 | 14.01.2025 | £35.00 | £0.00 | £35.00 | glasses for computer |
| 1017 | 14.01.2025 | £126.32 | £25.26 | £151.58 | PPE |
| 1015 | 14.01.2025 | £166.47 | £33.30 | £199.77 | Fuel |
| 1019 | 14.01.2025 | £180.00 | £0.00 | £180.00 | Training |
| 1018 | 14.01.2025 | £5,613.35 | £0.00 | £5,613.35 | HMRC PAYE |
| 1080 | 15.01.2025 | £1.89 | £0.00 | £1.89 | Milk |
| 1025 | 15.01.2025 | £3.86 | £0.77 | £4.63 | safety signs |
| 1026 | 15.01.2025 | £7.44 | £1.49 | £8.93 | safety signs |
| 1023 | 15.01.2025 | £14.97 | £0.00 | £14.97 | Equipment various |
| 1027 | 15.01.2025 | £23.75 | £4.75 | £28.50 | Domain name renewal (WWHo! Pk - 5 yrs) |
| 322 | 15.01.2025 | £28.50 | £0.00 | £28.50 | water rates |
| 1021 | 15.01.2025 | £110.00 | £0.00 | £110.00 | Tools and equipment |
| 1020 | 15.01.2025 | £114.00 | £0.00 | £114.00 | water bill |
| 1022 | 15.01.2025 | £603.78 | £120.76 | £724.54 | gas account |
| 1029 | 16.01.2025 | £0.31 | £0.00 | £0.31 | square fees |
| 1033 | 16.01.2025 | £9.58 | £1.92 | £11.50 | cadet armband |
| 1032 | 16.01.2025 | £27.50 | £5.50 | £33.00 | flagpole work |
| 1030 | 16.01.2025 | £199.00 | £39.80 | £238.80 | Fire Assessment Pavillion |
| 1031 | 16.01.2025 | £16,899.09 | £0.00 | £16,899.09 | Salaries |
| 1040 | 17.01.2025 | £2.95 | £0.59 | £3.54 | safety signs |
| 1039 | 17.01.2025 | £3.45 | £0.69 | £4.14 | safety signs |
| 1038 | 17.01.2025 | £6.15 | £1.23 | £7.38 | safety signs |
| 1037 | 17.01.2025 | £20.00 | £0.00 | £20.00 | licence TDC |
| 1036 | 17.01.2025 | £45.00 | £9.00 | £54.00 | SLCC Training etc |
| 1028 | 17.01.2025 | £175.25 | £8.76 | £184.01 | Electricity Account |
| 1035 | 20.01.2025 | £0.31 | £0.00 | £0.31 | square fees |
| 1081 | 20.01.2025 | £1.35 | £0.00 | £1.35 | Milk |
| 1034 | 20.01.2025 | £1.78 | £0.00 | £1.78 | square fees |
| 1044 | 20.01.2025 | £15.00 | £3.00 | £18.00 | flags |
| 1043 | 20.01.2025 | £33.33 | £6.67 | £40.00 | Cabinet |
| 1042 | 20.01.2025 | £75.65 | £15.13 | £90.78 | VE Day Flag |
| 1045 | 21.01.2025 | £1.78 | £0.00 | £1.78 | square fees |
| 1041 | 21.01.2025 | £28.95 | £5.79 | £34.74 | internet |
| 1054 | 22.01.2025 | £53.30 | £10.66 | £63.96 | VE Day Lamp Post Sign |
| 1082 | 23.01.2025 | £1.35 | £0.00 | £1.35 | Milk |
| 1053 | 23.01.2025 | £30.00 | £6.00 | £36.00 | delivery/collection charge |
| 1047 | 23.01.2025 | £33.50 | £6.70 | £40.20 | Equipment repair |
| 1049 | 23.01.2025 | £50.12 | £10.02 | £60.14 | Footpath work |
| 1052 | 23.01.2025 | £70.73 | £14.15 | £84.88 | Toilet rolls paper towels |
| 1051 | 23.01.2025 | £148.50 | £29.70 | £178.20 | Repairs and additions Mayor's chain |
| 1050 | 23.01.2025 | £196.48 | £39.30 | £235.78 | Footpath work |
| 1048 | 23.01.2025 | £2,282.03 | £0.00 | £2,282.03 | Nest January 2025 Payment |
| 1056 | 24.01.2025 | £4.17 | £0.83 | £5.00 | Mobile Phone - GL |
| 335 | 24.01.2025 | £6.25 | £1.25 | £7.50 | Mobile Phone - IH |
| 1046 | 24.01.2025 | £47.42 | £2.37 | £49.79 | Electricity - Pavilion |
| 1057 | 24.01.2025 | £80.97 | £16.19 | £97.16 | VE Day Flag |
| 1055 | 27.01.2025 | £0.31 | £0.00 | £0.31 | square fees |
| 1083 | 27.01.2025 | £2.92 | £0.58 | £3.50 | Twine |
| 1058 | 27.01.2025 | £14.98 | £3.00 | £17.98 | Laptop sleeves |
| 1059 | 27.01.2025 | £80.91 | £0.00 | £80.91 | Books |
| 1074 | 28.01.2025 | £4.17 | £0.83 | £5.00 | Mobile Phone - RG |
| 1071 | 28.01.2025 | £15.00 | £3.00 | £18.00 | delivery/collection charge |
| 1072 | 28.01.2025 | £15.39 | £3.08 | £18.47 | Footpath work |
| 1069 | 28.01.2025 | £79.96 | £15.99 | £95.95 | Footpath work |
| 1070 | 28.01.2025 | £111.29 | £22.26 | £133.55 | Equipment hire |
| 1067 | 28.01.2025 | £125.00 | £0.00 | £125.00 | May Fair 2025 |
| 1062 | 28.01.2025 | £220.00 | £0.00 | £220.00 | May Fair 2025 |
| 1063 | 28.01.2025 | £230.00 | £46.00 | £276.00 | May Fair 2025 |
| 1066 | 28.01.2025 | £255.00 | £0.00 | £255.00 | May Fair 2025 |
| 1073 | 28.01.2025 | £268.50 | £0.00 | £268.50 | May Fair 2025 |
| 1065 | 28.01.2025 | £300.00 | £60.00 | £360.00 | 2nd hand Stationery cupboards (x2) |
| 1068 | 28.01.2025 | £416.67 | £83.33 | £500.00 | civic dinner |
| 1064 | 28.01.2025 | £515.00 | £103.00 | £618.00 | May Fair 2025 |
| 1061 | 28.01.2025 | £996.00 | £199.20 | £1,195.20 | Scribe Accounts Renewal |
| 1060 | 28.01.2025 | £2,400.00 | £480.00 | £2,880.00 | Healthcheck Northam NDP |
| 1086 | 29.01.2025 | £4.17 | £0.83 | £5.00 | Mobile Phone - TA |

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**Minutes of the Planning and Development Committee**

**13th March 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

Present: Cllrs Bach, Hames (Chair), Lo-Vel, Newman-McKie and Tait (Mayor)

In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO)

**2503/654 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85 (1)**

All members of the committee were present. There were three vacant seats.

**2503/655 Chair’s announcements**

The Chair noted that the window for X-Links proposals had closed and that Torridge District Members and the Council itself had submitted comments. The committee noted concerns regarding the environmental impact of the proposals and that the planning process was in its early phases.

**2503/656 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.

**2503/657 To agree the agenda as published**

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

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

**2503/658 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Planning & Development Committee meeting held on 20th February 2025**

It was **resolved** that to approve the minutes of that Planning & Development committee meeting as a true and correct record.

Proposed Cllr Lo-Vel, Seconded Cllr Hames (Majority in favour with two abstentions - not present at that meeting).

**2503/659 Public Participation**

None present at the meeting

**2503/660 To receive an update on the progress of the Northam Neighbourhood Plan**

The design phase of the Plan had been completed. The Working Group would meet on Thursday 20th March 2025 to consider that design, which would then be presented to this committee and Full Council before proceeding.

**2503/661 Appeal Notifications:**

Torridge District Council had notified the Town Council that the following appeals have been lodged with the Department of Communities and Local Government against the refusal of Planning Permission:

i) **Planning Ref: 1/0760/2024/FUL**

Appeal Reference: [APP/W1145/D/25/3361210](https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?caseid=3361210)

Appeal Start Date: 5th March 2025

Interested Party Comments due: to be determined

Proposal: Roof conversion and rear extension

Location: 9 Highfield, Northam, Bideford, Devon

The committee **noted** this council’s support for the original proposal during the consultation stage of the planning process.

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ii) **Planning Ref: 1/0205/2022/OUTM**

Appeal Reference: [APP/W1145/W/25/3359853](https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?caseid=3359853)

Appeal Start Date: 3rd March 2025

Interested Party Comments due: 7th April 2025

Proposal: Outline application for No.36 dwellings, public open space and associated infrastructure with all matters reserved except access

Location: Land At Wooda Road , Pitt Lane, Appledore, Devon

The committee **noted** this council’s objections, as posted, to this proposal during the consultation stage of the planning process.

It was **resolved** to write to the Planning Inspectorate to request a public hearing be held as part of the examination of this appeal and that the Chair of committee request the Planning authority do the same

Proposed: Cllr Tait, Seconded: Cllr Lo-Vel (majority in favour, 1 against)

**Action points:**

**Town Clerk to write to the Planning Inspectorate to request a public hearing.**

**Cllr Hames to request Torridge District Council write to the Planning Inspectorate to request a public hearing.**

*Cllr Tait left the meeting at this point (7:00pm)*

**2503/662 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) **1/0932/2024/FUL (re-consultation)**

Proposal: Roof level extension to form first floor bedroom suite and balcony deck

Location: Duckhaven Stud, Cornborough Road, Westward Ho!, Bideford

It was **resolved** to recommend the proposal be refused permission. The amendments made to the proposal did not address the concerns of the council. The previous comments would be resubmitted.

Proposed: Cllr Bach; Seconded: Cllr Newman-McKie (all in favour)

ii) **1/0127/2025/LBC**

Proposal: Internal alterations and associated works, and external signage

Location: 4 & 5 'The Champ' Meeting Street, Appledore, Bideford, Devon

It was **resolved** to recommend the proposal be granted permission.

Proposed: Cllr Bach; Seconded: Cllr Newman-McKie (all in favour)

iii) **1/0145/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Erection of detached garage and associated works

Location: The Retreat, Hilltop Road, Bideford, Devon

It was **resolved** to recommend the proposal be granted permission.

Proposed: Cllr Newman-McKie; Seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour)

iv) **1/1043/2024/FUL (re-consultation)**

Proposal: Extension and alterations to existing dwelling including new garage and driveway (Variation of Condition 2 of Planning Permission 1/0326/2023/FUL) (Amended Plans)

Location: Fordlands, Heywood Road, Northam, Bideford

It was **resolved** to recommend the proposal be refused permission. The amendments made to the proposal did not address the concerns of the council. The previous comments would be resubmitted.

Proposed: Cllr Newman-McKie; Seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour)

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v) **1/0156/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Partial removal of existing hedge bank and enlarged conservatory

Location: 8 Mondeville Way, Northam, Bideford, Devon

Response date: 22nd March 2025

It was **resolved** to recommend the proposal be granted permission.

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

vi) **1/0157/2025/FUL & 1/0158/2025/LBC**

Proposal: Erection of replacement roof

Location: 16 Bude Street, Appledore, Bideford, Devon

Response date: 24th March 2025

It was **resolved** recommend the proposal be granted permission, with the expectation the proposer would undertake works in line with their submitted ecology report.

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

vii) **1/0169/2025/LBC**

Proposal: Replacement window

Location: On Track Education, Saunders House, Fore Street, Northam

Response date: 24th March 2025

It was **resolved** to recommend the proposal be granted permission.

Proposed: Cllr Newman-McKie; Seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour)

viii) **1/0895/2024/FUL (re-consultation)**

Proposal: Construction of detached 3 no. bedroom dwelling with associated external & landscaping works (self build) (Amended red edge)

Location: Land At Norwest, Churchill Way, Northam, Bideford

Response date: 28th March 2025

It was **resolved** to submit no further comments.

Proposed: Cllr Bach; Seconded: Cllr Newman-McKie (all in favour)

ix) **1/0174/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Removal of approved loft conversion application number 1/0373/2024/FUL and construction of a new first-floor extension over approved single storey side extension

Location: The Mount, Lakenham Hill, Northam, Bideford

Response date: 28th March 2025

Cllr Newman-McKie proposed the council recommend the proposal be refused permission, there was no seconder.

It was **resolved** to recommend the proposal be granted permission though the council noted with concern that this proposal was a missed opportunity to install solar PV cells on the large roof area and include significant water storage facilities to capture rainwater runoff and requested this be made a condition of any permission granted.

Proposed: Cllr Bach; Seconded: Cllr Hames (majority in favour, 1 abstention)

x) **1/0179/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Extension and Internal Alterations to Existing Clubhouse

Location: Royal North Devon Golf Club, Westward Ho!, Bideford, Devon

Response date: 28th March 2025

It was **resolved** to recommend the proposal be granted permission.

Proposed: Cllr Bach; Seconded: Cllr Newman-McKie (all in favour)

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**2503/663** **To Note: Torridge District Council Planning Decisions**

It was noted that Torridge District Council, the determining Authority, had **granted** permission for the following applications with conditions as filed:

i) **1/0035/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Extension to surgery and associated works

Location: Northam Surgery, Bay View Road, Northam, Bideford

(Northam Town Council recommend the proposal be granted permission)

ii) **1/1001/2024/FUL**

Proposal: Replacement outbuildings

Location: 71 Atlantic Way, Westward Ho!, Bideford, Devon

(Northam Town Council recommend the proposal be granted permission)

iii) **1/0891/2023/FUL**

Proposal: Erection of 5 dwellings, creation of access and associated external works (Amended plans)

Location: Green Trees, Buckleigh Road, Westward Ho!, Bideford

(Northam Town Council recommend the proposal be granted permission)

iv) **1/0002/2025/FUH**

Proposal: Removal of existing lean-to front porch and creation of enclosed front porch

Location: 2 Venton Drive, Westward Ho!, Bideford, Devon

(Northam Town Council recommend the proposal be granted permission)

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7:50pm.

Signed………………………………………………..Dated………………………………………

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**Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Parks and Recreation committee meeting held 29th January 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

Present: Cllrs Bach, Edwards, Hames, Newman-McKie, and the Mayor, Cllr Niki Tait (Deputy Chair).

In attendance: Ian Rawle – Parks & Buildings Manager.

**2501/552 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)**

Cllr Whittaker and Christine Hutchins – Chair of FOTWHOP apologised, the reasons for which were accepted.

**2501/553 Chair’s Announcements**

There were none.

**2501/554 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.

**2501/555 To agree the agenda as published**

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

**Proposed** Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Hames (all in favour)

**2501/556 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Committee held on 27th November 2024**

It was **resolved** that to approve the minutes as a true and correct record, which were signed by the Chair.

**Proposed** Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Hames (all in favour)

**2501/557 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.

**2501/558 To receive an update on actions**

The Action table is presented overleaf.

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| **Action** | | **November 2024** | **January 2025** |
| 1 | Asset list and maintenance costs. | Estimated costs included in the draft budget.  ONGOING | Costs included in budget.  COMPLETE |
| 2 | replacement of the ball fencing at Lords Meadow, a substantial sum has been included in the budget for work required at Lords Meadow for next year. | The damp weather has caused some issues. The contractor is being reminded the work needs completing.  ONGOING | The damp weather has caused some issues. The contractor is being reminded the work needs completing.  ONGOING |
| 3 | Battery powered equipment replacement, under regular review. Purchase of a second battery has been added to the 2024-25 budget. | The Town Clerk and Parks & Buildings Manager are seeking a grant for a walk-behind electric ‘tractor’ from DCC.  ONGOING | The grant fund is no longer available. The matter has been passed to the Finance committee as part of a wider review of machinery and vehicles.  COMPLETE |
| 4 | To consult the community on the use of outdoor gym. |  | It was agreed that the outdoor gym equipment will be removed the week prior to the installation of the PumpTrack in the summer, with no community consultation taking place until after the removal.  ONGOING |
| 5 | To consider protecting the paint finish of the Nextem Orca EV with a white vinyl wrap (to include NTC crest and contact details) – approximate cost £700. | ONGOING | Designs being created.  ONGOING |
| 6 | Churchfields Skate Park – paint and ‘graffiti’. | ONGOING | It was agreed that no graffiti artist be commissioned until the current vandalism in Churchfields has been resolved.  ONGOING |
| 7 | Tennis Court gate – quality of work |  | The matter has been raised with the LTA directly and the Surveying Firm overseeing the work. The gate installer has advised the Surveyor that the replacement parts will be installed. No date for the work has yet been advised.  ONGOING |

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| 7 | Tennis Court gate – quality of work |  | The matter has been raised with the LTA directly and the Surveying Firm overseeing the work. The gate installer has advised the Surveyor that the replacement parts will be installed. No date for the work has yet been advised.  ONGOING |
| 8 | Reinstall sign bee friendly planting at Anchor Park |  | The sign has not yet been reinstated. The Council is advised to wait until the new work is undertaken to establish wildflower swathes at the Park.  ONGOING |
| 9 |  | Rejuvenate the willow arch at Westward Ho! Park | The work has been started by then maintenance team.  COMPLETE |
| 10 |  | Costs for works at the Pavilion building | Passed to the Finance Committee.  COMPLETE |
| 11 |  | Liaise with ARC Tennis regarding formal tennis provision in 2025 | On the agenda.  COMPLETE |
| 12 |  | Arrange for a temporary PumpTrack at Lords Meadow (if suitable) in the summer holidays 2025 | Dates of 11th to 19th August agreed with provider.  Deposit to be paid (25%).  COMPLETE |

**2501/559 To receive the annual play inspection reports and note the planned actions**

It was noted and agreed that the Playpark Action Plan, presented by the Parks and Buildings Manager, including repairs to be carried out at Anchor Park, Appletree Gardens, Churchfields Skate Park, Lords Meadow, Ridgeway Drive, Westward Ho! and Wren Close would be carried out or returned to this committee for decision as appropriate.

It was **agreed** to carry out repairs to the 1 Bay 2 Seat Cradle swing Crux/T connectors at Anchor Park, and to paint the Churchfields Skate Park in Blue Anti – Graffiti paint.

**Proposed** Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Tait (all in favour)

**ACTION POINT: All work identified for future years should be included in the budgets going forward to ensure that the necessary funds are reserved and available when the work is required.**

**2501/560 To consider scheduling the next annual Play Area Inspections (January 2026)**

It was **resolved** to agree the scheduling of the next Play Area Inspection for January 2026 at the cost of £805 (exVAT).

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

**2501/561** **To note the plans for formal Tennis provision at the courts in 2025, as agreed at Finance Committee in January 2025**

This was noted.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:01pm.

Signed………………………………………………..Dated……………………………………………….

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**Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Environment and Maintenance committee meeting held 6th February 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

Present: Cllrs Bach (Chair), Edwards, Hames, Lo-Vel and the Mayor, Cllr Tait.

In attendance: Guy Langton – Town Clerk & RFO.

Ian Rawle – Parks & Buildings Manager.

**2502/574 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)**

All members were present.

**2502/575 Chair’s Announcements**

The Chair had no announcements.

The Town Clerk reported that following the winter storms, the hedge layer instructed to work on the hedge and bank at Burrough Farm had contacted the Council to ask if the work could be delayed until the autumn. The Committee agreed to delay the work.

**Action point: contact the hedge layer.**

The Parks & Buildings Manager reported that a tree would be removed from adjacent to Wren Close play area following the play area inspection, which had identified it as a hazard. It was agreed to remove the tree and plant two others locally to replace it.

**Action point: Communicate the decision to local residents and arrange the removal and planting.**

**2502/576 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.

**2502/577 To agree the agenda as published**

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

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

**2502/578 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Environment & Maintenance Committee held on 11th December 2024**

It was **resolved** to confirm the minutes of the meeting as a correct record, though the action point at minute 2412/469 would be clarified to read: *Include consideration of the draft Biodiversity Policy on the agenda of the next meeting of the Review committee.*

The amended minutes would be signed at a later date.

Proposed Cllr Tait, Seconded Cllr Hames (all in favour)

**2502/579 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.

**2502/580 To receive an update on action points**

The Action points were considered and noted as presented overleaf

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| **Action** | | **December 2024** | **February 2025** |
| **1** | Write to the Company Secretary regarding the handrail at Fosketh Hill, footpath 24. | Rail not yet received.  Action point: Town Clerk to follow up with the Company Secretary at Kipling Terrace and the fabricators.  ONGOING | The installation was scheduled for 31st January 2025.  COMPLETE |
| **2** | Drop kerbs in Westward Ho!  (brought forward from TP&AM) | DCC has confirmed that no licence fee would be required. The locations will be re-identified and a contractor instructed.  ONGOING | No further action has been taken.  **Action point: The Parks and Buildings Manager was to approach contractors before the next meeting of this committee.**  ONGOING |
| **3** | Footpath work | The agreed and reported footpath work is being reviewed and are scheduled for week commencing 16th Dec 24. ONGOING  The signs have been purchased and installed on Footpath 10a. COMPLETE | Footpath work is continuing, working through the works agreed in 2024.  COMPLETE |
| **4** | Schools to be contacted to design their own ‘don’t idle’ signs for the Council to have made and installed. | The schools have been contacted. Only one was interested but not all had replied.  ONGOING | Seeking a discussion with the interested school.  ONGOING |
| **5** | Prepare a report on the purchase and installation of MVSIDs for the Parish | NOT STARTED | NOT STARTED |
| **6** | Planting hedge whips at Burrough Farm | The hedge whips have been received and temporarily planted. The work is scheduled. ONGOING | Work COMPLETE. |
| **7** | Design a suitable graphic for the Council’s EV to wrap on bodywork | ONGOING | On the agenda  COMPLETE |
| **8** | Request from member of the public for litter picking equipment |  | Member of the public invited to the February 2025 meeting.  ONGOING |

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| **Action** | | **December 2024** | **February 2025** |
| **9** | Traffic issues at the Square, Northam |  | Mr Gilbert’s response is on the agenda.  Costs of traffic surveys not yet researched.  ONGOING |
| **10** | Offer Council help for the bus shelter opposite the Seagate Hotel, Appledore |  | Council assistance offered, the volunteers advised the Town Clerk that they had agreed works with TDC, to start May 2025.  COMPLETE |
| **11** | Locations of Council provided Christmas trees in 2025 – liaise with the Westward Ho! Business association over the sites in Westward Ho! |  | To be considered later in the year.  ONGOING |
| **12** | Include suitable machinery in the budget for 2025-26 and arrange for its purchase. |  | Following advice from the Council’s vehicle maintenance provider that one of the Council’s trucks required considerable repair, the matter has been passed to the Finance committee for further review.  COMPLETE |
| **13** | Schedule the works for Life on the Verge |  | Works scheduled in 2025.  ONGOING |
| **14** | Refer the draft Biodiversity Policy to the Review committee |  | The matter would be included on the next committee agenda.  COMPLETE |

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**2502/581 To consider the Devon County Council grass cutting agreement**

The committee **recommended** that the contract be signed and referred the matter to a meeting of the Full Council.

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

**Action point: Include on a Full Council meeting agenda.**

**2502/582 To note the plans for Churchill Way bank**

The Parks & Buildings Manager had submitted the below plans to DCC Highways the Ecologist.

The Ecologist was supportive of the plans, noting the bramble had become out of control, though its ecological benefits are considerable. The bramble patch to the southern end of the bank, towards the retaining wall, would be left (but trimmed back to aid pedestrian passage).

DCC Highways had asked NTC’s officers to prepare a more detailed plan with exact locations and distances to maintain the visibility splay opposite the entrance to North Street, which the officers planned to complete in February 2025.

It was **resolved** to continue with the project.

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

A road with a hill and bushes

Description automatically generated with medium confidence**Action points: Draft a more detailed plan as required by Devon County Council.**

**2502/583 To consider plans for improving the street scene at Golf Links Rod, between Avon Lane and Beach Road**

It was **agreed** that Town Council officers would seek a derelict boat for use as a planter along that stretch of road and enhance the current planting.

**Action points:**

**Seek a suitable derelict boat.**

**Make the land good after recent utility works and enhance the current planting scheme.**

**2502/584 To consider offering a Christmas tree recycling scheme to residents of the Northam Town Council area in 2025**

It was resolved to offer a Christmas Tree recycling scheme across the Parish after the 2025-26 festive season, identifying a number of suitable collection locations, which could include:

* Northam Hall
* Burrough Farm, allotment entrance and football club entrance
* Lords Meadow, both entrances

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* Anchor Park, main entrance
* Westward Ho! Park, both entrances
* Bone Hill
* Other local play areas
* Town Hall

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

**Action point: Advertise service in December 2025.**

**2502/585 To receive the response from TDC regarding the siting of air quality survey equipment**

The Town Clerk reported that he had received a response from the Torridge District Council Public Health and Community Safety Manager, which is copied below:

*Yes, we are responsible for air quality monitoring in the district. We have a number of fixed sites around the district, as described in the appendices of the air quality status reports, produced annually and available on this page: https://torridge.gov.uk/article/20227/Air-Quality*

*Every monitor we place has a resource implication in terms of officer time collecting and replacing the monitors and lab costs for analysis. This is not huge, but our resource is planned around the current monitoring sites. For this reason, and because we don’t have any concerns about other areas exceeding the thresholds, we will not be substantially increasing the number of monitoring sites.*

*That said, we do have plans to install a further three monitors around schools in the district in 2025. We will not be considering further monitoring sites until 2026.*

The Council’s officers noted that they were in the process of seeking costs for private air quality and traffic monitoring.

**Action point: Include on a future meeting of this committee when costs are available.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7:30pm.

Signed………………………………………………..Dated……………………………………………….