**Page 001**

**Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held 7th May 2025 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

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

In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO); Cllr D McGeough (County Councillor) and Hon Alderman A Eastman.

**2505/001 Election of the Mayor and signing of acceptance of Office**

Cllr Leather **nominated** Cllr Bach as Mayor of Northam Town Council. The nomination was seconded by Cllr Whittaker. There being no other nominations, the matter was put to a vote. All members were in favour and Cllr Bach was **duly elected Mayor of Northam Town Council** for 2025-26.

Cllr Bach signed the acceptance of Office.

**2505/002 Presentation of the symbols of office:**

Cllr Bach was presented with the Mayoral Chain and Gavel and took the chair.

**2505/003 Election of the Deputy Mayor and signing of acceptance of Office**

Cllr Edwards **nominated** Cllr Newman-McKie as Deputy Mayor of Northam Town Council. The nomination was seconded by Cllr Tait. There being no other nominations, the matter was put to a vote. All members were in favour. Cllr Newman-McKie was **duly elected Deputy Mayor of Northam Town Council** for 2025-26.

Cllr Newman-McKie signed the acceptance of Office and was presented with the Deputy Mayor’s chain.

**2505/004 Mayor’s Announcements**

The Mayor welcomed Cllr Bell and Horrocks, who had been elected to the Town Council at the by-elections on 17th May 2025 and congratulated Cllr McGeough on his re-election as the Northam Division County Councillor on 1st May 2025.

Finally, he announced that Cllr Roscoe had resigned and the notice of the casual vacancy would be posted on the 8th May 2025.

**2505/005 Apologies**

All members were present. The Council had one vacant seat, in the Westward Ho! ward.

**2505/006 To agree the agenda as published.**

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

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

**2505/007 To confirm and sign the minutes of the Full Council meeting held 23rd April 2025**

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes, with a typographical error amended.

They were signed by the Mayor.

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

**2505/008 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.

**2505/009 Public Participation**

No member of the public wished to address the Council.

**2505/010 To confirm the adoption of the General Power of Competence**

It was **resolved** that Northam Town Council resolves from the date of this meeting, until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council that having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, to adopt the General Power

**Page 002**

of Competence, noting that the Town Clerk & RFO held the CiLCA qualification (2021). Proposed: Cllr Tait, Seconded Cllr Hodson (all in favour).

**2505/011 To receive reports from Committee Chairs for 2024-25**

Written reports had been circulated and taken as read. They are attached to these minutes.

**2505/012 To agree which members wish to receive email correspondence and which hard-copy correspondence in respect of council meetings**

It was agreed that Council correspondence would be circulated as follows:

E-Copy Cllr Hames, Cllr Himan, Cllr Lo-Vel

Both Cllr Horrocks, Cllr Newman-McKie, Cllr Hodson, Cllr Bach, Cllr Singh Cllr Edwards, Cllr Leather, Cllr Whittaker & Cllr Tait

Hard copy Cllr Bell

**2505/013 To consider Scheme of Delegation**

It was **resolved** to adopt the Scheme of Delegation as presented (V0.5), which would be published online.

Proposed Cllr Hodson, Seconded Cllr Newman-McKie (all in favour)

**2505/014 To note the Terms of Reference for committees and approve those for the Finance and Human Resources Committee**

It was **resolved** to adopt the revised Terms of Reference (V0.5) for the combined Finance & HR committee.

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

The remainder of the document was noted and would be published online

**2505/015 To consider a review of Standing Orders to the Review Committee**

[NALC Model Standing Orders were updated in 2022. NTC last comprehensively reviewed its Standing Orders in 2021.](https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/members-library/templates/model-standing-orders-for-england-and-wales/3713-model-standing-orders-2018-for-england-version-two-april-2022) Northam Town Council’s published Standing Orders are available on its [website](https://www.northamtowncouncil.gov.uk/_UserFiles/Files/Standing%20Orders%20after%20amendment%20by%20Full%20Council%20July%2023.pdf).

It was **noted** that it had previously been **resolved** to delegate the review of the Standing Orders to the Review Committee (minute 2405/019) and it was **agreed** that this review would be undertaken in 2025-26.

**Action point: include the review on the agenda for the first meeting of the Review Committee in 2025-26.**

**2505/016 To consider the Financial Regulations**

It was **resolved** to adopt Financial Regulations V1.2, with an amendment to paragraph 8.2 as shown below

A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal *other than in exceptional* circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.

Proposed Cllr Tait, Seconded Cllr Newman-McKie (all in favour)

The document was noted and would be published online.

**2505/017 To note Northam Town Council policies.**

It was noted that all Council polices could be found on its website at [Policies - Northam Town Council](http://northamtowncouncil.gov.uk/Policies_31647.aspx).

**2505/018** **To receive the schedule of meeting dates for 2025-26**

The schedule of meeting dates was received. The calendar would be published online. It was noted that the Environment & Maintenance Committee meeting scheduled for 24th December 2025 would be moved or cancelled, the committee could agree that in due course

**Page 003**

**2505/019 To resolve the appointments to the Council’s standing committees**

The Mayor sits ex-officio on all committees, though may vote once only.

It was **resolved** to appoint members to committees as follows:

• Environment & Maintenance Committee (7 seats plus Mayor)

Cllrs Bell, Edwards, Hames, Lo-Vel and Tait, plus the Mayor. There remained two vacancies

• Finance and Human Resources Committee (7 seats plus Mayor)

Cllrs Edwards, Hames, Himan, Hodson, Leather, Tait and Whittaker, plus the Mayor.

• Parks & Recreation Committee (7 seats plus Mayor)

Cllrs Bell, Edwards, Hames, Hodson, Newman-McKie, Tait and Whittaker, plus the Mayor.

• Planning & Development Committee (7 seats plus Mayor)

Cllrs Hames, Hodson, Horrocks, Lo-Vel and Newman-McKie, plus the Mayor. There remained two vacancies.

• Review Committee (7 seats plus Mayor)

Cllrs Edwards, Hodson, Horrocks, Newman-McKie and Tait, plus the Mayor. There remained two vacancies.

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

**2505/020 As Corporate Trustee of the Northam Burrows Charity, to resolve appointment to the Northam Burrows Charity Management Committee**

The membership of the Northam Burrows Charity Management committee was confirmed as follows:

The Mayor sits ex-officio on this committees, though may vote once only. The deputy Mayor sits ex-officio on this committee.

It was **resolved** to appoint members to committees as follows:

• Cllrs Edwards, Hames, Leather, Tait and Whittaker, plus the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor.

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

**2505/021 To resolve Council appointments to the external and other bodies**

Council representation on external and other bodies was confirmed as follows:

Blue Lights Hall: Cllr Edwards

Taw-Torridge Estuary Forum: Cllrs Bell and Hames

Bideford Archive Management Committee: Cllrs Himan and Whittaker

Northam Community Centre: Cllr Lo-Vel

Northam Town Twinning: Cllrs Bach and Himan

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

**2505/022 To appoint a Police Advocate**

It was **confirmed** that Cllrs Hodson and Whittaker would share the role of Police Councillor advocate for 2025-26.

Proposed: Cllr Hames, Seconded: Cllr Newman-McKie (all in favour)

**2505/023 To review the Council’s and/or employees’ memberships of other bodies**

It was **resolved** to renew the Council and/or employees’ memberships of other bodies as follows:

* DALC (including NALC) at a cost of £1,982 (exVAT)
* Society of Local Council Clerks (Town Clerk & RFO’s membership) at an approximate cost of £400 (exVAT), to be renewed in August 2025.
* Rural Services Network (Rural Market Towns Group) at a cost of £144 (exVAT)
* Campaign for the Protection of Rural England at a cost of £60 (exVAT)

**Page 004**

Other memberships will be put to the Finance Committee as the annual renewals arise.

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

**2505/024 To review Councillor Allowances**

It was **resolved** to increase Councillor allowances a similar percentage as has been offered to the Council’s staff by the employers national (3.2%) and increase the annual allowance for elected members, which would be paid in one lump sum in June 2025, to £1,075.

 Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Whittaker (majority in favour)

**2505/025 To review the assets and office equipment and receive a report on Asset Management**

 It was **resolved** to accept the revised asset list, which is appended to these minutes for clarity.

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

**2505/026 To note the funds raised for the Mayor’s Charity 2024-25**

Cllr Bach noted the great success of fundraising for the Appledore RNLI in 2024-25, the sum to be donated had reached £5,004.67.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7:40pm.

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

**Environment & Maintenance Committee**

Dear Members and Officers of the Council, I have pleasure in outlining my annual report for this committee:

I was elected Chair in June 2024, together with the members, past and present as shown on the respective minutes.

As a committee, we have covered a wide area of work and issues, too many to list here, but the following is a summary which includes planned, routine and reactive maintenance to our buildings, parks and open spaces as follows:

* Buildings, Parks, Grounds and    Estate Management.
* Weed Control.
* Planting Trees and Spring Bulbs.
* Upkeep of Hanging Baskets.
* Notice Boards, Interpretation Signs and Public Notices.
* Maintaining the Parish Network of Public Footpaths.
* Community Speed Awareness and mobile detection equipment.
* Requests for dog litter bins.
* Identifying areas for Drop Kerbs.
* Procurement and upkeep of equipment for Buildings and Estate Management and Maintenance.
* Community Engagement,
* Liaising, and working in conjunction with partner agencies, the public and other local authorities.
* Festive and Festoon Lighting.
* Bus Shelters.
* Ensuring that this Committees Aims and Objectives, align with our agreed Climate Emergency Strategy, to achieve "Carbon Zero by 2030"

Finally, to thank all the members associated with this committee for their help and support throughout the year, and for the help and support of our Town Clerk, the Buildings & Park Manager and Maintenance Crew, and last but not least the Office Staff, who we rely on so much to keep matters running smoothly.

**Cllr Bach, Committee Chair 2024/25**

**Finance Committee**

Firstly, I would like to thank the Committee members for their commitment and their contributions to the financial agenda of the Council. This year has seen significant changes in our systems and banking arrangements to ensure that every penny of the public purse is well spent, monitored and reported to the entire Council and to the Community.

Despite some initial challenges of updating the existing banking arrangements we have now agreed new accounts which attract interest and adds to the spending power of the Council. It was also agreed to outsource Payroll to a sector specialist provider who could provide an effective and efficient service to deliver this service.

Decisions were made with the setting of the budget to increase the precept, the funding received from Torridge’s collection of the Council tax, by only 4.35%. This allowed for the increased costs of Employers National Insurance, agreed pay increases for the staff and the anticipated increase in energy costs payable for our amenity spaces.

Through the prudent approach to accumulating reserves your Council was able to finance the purchase of replacement, upgraded electrically powered maintenance equipment and a new vehicle to replace one of the fleet. These acquisitions will ensure that your Maintenance Team can function effectively to keep our green spaces in order. It has also enabled the introduction of electric battery charged appliances which can be charged using our own generated solar energy, demonstrating our commitment to Climate change and the reduction of carbon emissions.

A Fire Risk Assessment was undertaken for the Northam Hall premises. The report identified a number of areas which required work to ensure that the safety of the building remained compliant with regulations. The reserves yet again proved vital in enabling the works to commence, some undertaken by our Maintenance Team, the major works being commissioned through the Councils procurement policy. These works will extend into 2025/26 thus spreading the expenditure over two budget years.

The Westward Ho! park tennis courts were successfully launched with funding from the Lawn Tennis Association who required an amount to be set aside each year of £3600 for the eventual refurbishment costs. The income generated has exceeded this total, £5855, and a bank account has been opened specifically for this earmarked sinking fund. It should be noted that this income was generated over a 15-month period (January 2025 to March 2025) which may account for the surplus.

In November Northam Town Council approved grants to 41 Community organisations totalling £20,606, to be budgeted for in 25/26 and distributed after the Annual Electors meeting in April.

The recommendations of the Human Resources committee to increase the staffing of the Council has enabled the appointment of a part-time Finance Assistant and general Administrator. The post-holder was recruited and commenced work in September 2024. This post has proved to be an asset to the Council ensuring that in the absence of the Town Clerk the functions of the organisation can continue.

I am sure that I may have overlooked some areas of work undertaken by the Committee but I am confident that the detailed minutes of the eight meetings can be relied on to provide a transparent oversight of the decisions that have been implemented.

**Cllr Hodson, Committee Chair 2024/25**

**Human Resources Committee**

This Committee was newly re-formed to address the needs of the organisation’s response to the findings of a staffing review after the retirement of the Town Clerk in March 2024. It was considered that to ensure appropriate consideration of all aspects of the Councils duties and responsibilities a requirement to dedicate time to the decisions and recommendations to be made to Full Council was required.

Acting on the recommendations from the Councils Employment Advisors and specifically from their consultant who had conducted the last staffing review, the Committee examined the options for a new structure.

The appointment of the Deputy Town Clerk in 2021 was a new post but was seen as an opportunity for succession planning if the successful candidate proved to be competent and capable of stepping up in the future.

The Consultant recommended that a post be created to focus on managing the Maintenance team, also deputising for the Town Clerk in their absence. The growing responsibilities for the management of Finance and assets of the Council identified the need for a post of a part time Finance Assistant.

Recommendations were made to Full Council that the recruitment of a Parks and Buildings Manager and a Finance Assistant should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity to address the pressure on the remaining two members of office staff. That an offer be made to the Deputy Town Clerk of the position of Town Clerk and RFO and that the administration Officer be offered the newly created post of Community Engagement and Administration Officer. These recommendations were approved by full Council in June 2024. After a recruitment exercise both new posts were offered to the successful candidates with start dates in the Autumn.

The major work of the Human Resources Committee has now concluded with the newly appointed staff having satisfactorily completed their probationary periods and now have permanent contracts of employment with the Council.

The Committee has also addressed the training needs of all the staff providing First Aid training , ROSPA Play Equipment Inspection training for the Parks and Buildings Manager, extended training for the Town Clerk, updating the Chapter 8 training for the Maintenance Team and a food hygiene level 2 qualification for food preparation and sales to be provided at any event that the Council organises. A range of training is undertaken remotely by e-learning which extends skill sets and capabilities of all the staff.

In conclusion this Committee achieved its ambition and can now be recommended to being reinstated as a part of the Finance Committee.

**Cllr Hodson, Committee Chair 2024/25**

**Parks & Recreation Committee**

This Committee began life in May 2024, combining some of the activity associated with the former Town Projects Committee and all of the work required to support the Westward Ho! Park Committee which formerly existed to try to deliver the Parks supporters aspirations.

The Committee's role is self-evident in that it's responsible at an initial stage for all the Parks that belong to Northam Town Council and for the smaller Play Areas of which there are several within the Council's area. It also monitors and tries to maintain to a reasonable condition the many Footpaths across the district. This was a role originally undertaken by the County Council from which Northam Town Council receives some annual, although limited, financial support. What's received is used to upgrade the condition of various Footpaths each year, in addition the Council's team of Maintenance Operatives can sometimes provide additional help if a particular path needs work to keep it safe and useable. Allotments in the widest sense can be considered under this Committees remit, as can any open space or recreational area. We are fortunate enough to have a Parks and Recreation Manager, appointed during this year and five Maintenance Operatives all of whom work tirelessly to keep the whole of Northam Town Council's area in the best shape possible. There are also some buildings and hard landscapes which Committee members have to take an interest in, particularly Northam Hall, the Changing Places facility in Westward Ho! Park, the Tennis Courts situated there and the wellbeing of the Pavillion as it currently exists and the Public Toilet in Northam

Along with the seven Cllrs who are members of this Committee it also welcomes the Chair of FOTWHOP and a representative of the Volunteer Gardeners at each meeting and has a specific agenda item so to receive regular updates from them both.

* The work of this Committee is substantial given its wide and often varied remit. Some examples are listed below
* Work done at Wren Close and the Lords Meadow Play areas
* Petroc asked, prepared and costed a new Pavillion/Community Building
* Maintenance and storage of the Planters organised
* Maintenance of Churchfield Skate Park organised
* Play equipment at Westward Ho! Park maintained
* Work done at Anchor Park
* 7,000 bulbs planted at Lords Meadow
* Free Tennis at the Westward Ho Tennis Courts organised
* Arrangements made for a Pump Track to be installed at Lords Meadow for summer 2025
* New equipment i.e. Battery Strimmer and Lawn Mower purchased
* Work on Northam Hall arranged
* Work done at Burroughs farm
* Hedge planted around King George V Field in Burroughs farm
* Outdoor Gym equipment removed due to safety concerns
* Damage done to Play equipment repaired
* An Asset List and Maintenance costs completed
* Play Inspection Reports received and planned actions noted.
* Bee friendly planting at Anchor Park undertaken
* Potential for a MUGA discussed for Westward Ho! Park
* The Maintenance Operatives continued to mow verges and maintain the general cleanliness of the whole area throughout the twelve-month period.

**Cllr Whittaker, Committee Chair 2024/25**

**Planning and Development (inc NNP)**

The Committee has continued its work over the year of scrutinising planning applications and making recommendations to the Local Planning Authority and I thank the committee members for their invaluable contributions.

Most of the land allocated in the Joint Local Plan for housing and other development in Northam has now been the subject of planning approvals.  Given this it is important that remaining green spaces in the parish are protected and this is the main objective of the Council’s Draft Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan has now been submitted for independent examination and it is hoped that the final document will go to public referendum as soon as possible. My thanks go in particular to Nick Arnold for all the work he has done on the Plan and also to our Town Clerk, Guy Langton and, of course, to all the people who have been involved with the Plan from the beginning.

Although most of the development land in our parish has been allocated, we once more have a situation, unfortunately, where the required housing allocation in the Local Plan has not been fulfilled and this opens up the possibility of planning applications on land which is outside the designated development sites. One example is the current re- application to develop housing at Bloody Corner which our Committee recently recommended once more for refusal at a meeting attended by many members of the public.

Another significant application is a current one to develop Richmond Dock in Appledore to provide a building in which to house a wartime German military vessel. This has been the subject of controversy amongst some residents in Appledore and their concerns were expressed at the Planning Committee meeting when the application was considered. Amongst these concerns are that the development will lead to flooding, that the building will have adverse visual impact and that there is no provision for public benefit. Given the public response about this application and the Bloody Corner one I have called in both applications to be considered by Torridge District Council’s Planning Committee.

Another important application considered by our Committee is the one for a Clean Maritime Innovation Centre on the estuary in Appledore. This received support from Members and the project will be of great importance for the economy of the area and for initiatives which will help meet the impacts of climate change.

The Northam Neighbourhood Plan has been completed and submitted to Torridge District Council for independent examination and then on to referendum in due course.

At Torridge District Council the work of revising the Local Plan continues, along with North Devon District Council with whom Torridge shares the Plan. As a Torridge Councillor I am on the Joint Local Plan Review Committee and my particular interest as Lead Member for Climate is to look at ways of strengthening policies relating to climate change and biodiversity. When the public consultation process regarding the draft Plan commences, I strongly recommend that all members of the public take part in expressing their views on the policies, and especially regarding proposed development sites. I must stress that once the revised Plan has been approved there won’t be another opportunity to object to these sites.

**Cllr Hames, Committee Chair 2024/25**

**Review Committee**

The Chair of this committee resigned from the Council in January 2025, this brief report has been drafted by the Town Clerk.

The Review committee met occasionally in 2024/25, with quarterly meetings planned. Through the year, the committee considered:

* The Council’s Procurement Policy
* The Council’s scheme of delegation
* A Civic Regalia protocol for the Council
* An initial review of the Emergency Plan
* Revising the protocol following the death of the Sovereign, senior national figure or local holder of high office
* The proportion of the Council’s precepted income that covers staff costs.

**G Langton, Town Clerk & RFO**

**Northam Burrows Charity Management Committee**

In total members of the Charity's Management Committee met five times during the 2024/25 year and once prior to a Full Council Meeting where it presented its report to the Corporate Trustee who is in fact the Councillors and Members of Northam Town Council.

In June we discussed that members had become aware that the Landowner, Torridge District Council had engaged a Consultant, funded by DEFRA, to help ascertain the most suitable Environmental Stewardship Scheme for Northam Burrows Country Park. A meeting was arranged to meet with this Consultant on the morning of the 19th of July. All members of the Corporate Trustee Board i.e. NTC's Full Council members and the Graziers would also be invited. Other items brought forward were the recharges made to the Council for work undertaken by members of Staff relating solely to the Burrows. In the main this usually relates to the issue of the Burrows Passes and any work connected with grazing right on the Burrows themselves at this meeting it was also agreed that alternative banking arrangements would also better suit the income being generated.

In July as already mentioned, we met with and considered the role of the Consultant, Chantal Brown. The existing Environmental Stewardship Scheme could be replaced by a Countryside Stewardship Scheme about which consultation would be held with all interested parties, including members of Northam TC and the Graziers invited. In addition to the members of the Charity's Management Committee a number of Graziers attended. A range of questions were asked all of which would form part of the overall study, and the conclusions arrived at.

Sometime after this Meeting Chantal did hold an Open Event at Northam Hall where local residents were able to raise any concerns they may have about the proposed new Scheme and where they were invited to complete questionnaires.

The Committee met again in September where the Consultants progress was queried especially as to date no updates had been made available. The Grants Policy needed updating which it was agreed the Town Clerk, and I would undertake together. There was some discussion about the Objects of the Charity which fall into two categories. The first object is to help to manage and preserve Northam Burrows and the second when the income of the Charity cannot be applied specifically to object one, then can be used to benefit the inhabitants of the Wards of Northam Town Council. Cllr Bach again brought forward a number of concerns and queries from his Ward of Westward Ho! These again were considered after which is was felt a meeting with TDC was the only way to get them resolved.

By December's Meeting we were waiting for a date to meet with TDC to be organised.

The meeting resolved to recommend the Corporate Trustee adopt the revised Grants Policy At its AGM in January 2025. The grant fund would be made available so it could open the Charity's Grant Awards Scheme during the summer of 2025. It would have a fund of approaching 40k. The opportunity to apply for a grant from this fund will be advertised at the appropriate time. The date that the Manor Passes will be issued in 2025 was discussed with applications beginning from the 24th February and forms to be made available from the Friday before.

The final meeting of this twelve months was held on the 21st of March,2025. The topics covered were an update on the issue of the Manor Passes, which by all accounts went very well. The fact that a date was now in place for Committee members to meet with Officers of TDC so they could better consider some of the concerns that Cllrs, particularly Cllr Bach, had brought to the Charity's attention. That the signatories for the Deposit Account were agreed and that the Grazing allocations had been discussed and were also agreed.

This report rounds off a varied and interesting year. I am not able to report or comment on the Charity's AGM as I was not in the Country when it took place. The Charity's Grants Programme will begin later in the summer and will be reviewed again for 2026, A better partnership approach to the care and investment in Northam Burrows via this Charity has a greater chance of becoming more meaningful since the meeting with TDC.

**Councillor Jane Whittaker - Chair of the Northam Burrows Charity Management Committee 2024/25**



**Page 264**

**FINANCE Committee**

**9th April 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

Present: Cllrs Bach, Himan, Hodson (Chair), Leather, Whittaker and Tait (Mayor).

In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO)

**2504/718 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)**

Cllrs Edwards and Hames tendered their apologies, the reasons for which was approved.

**2504/719 Chair’s announcements**

The Chair made no announcements.

**2504/720 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.

**2504/721 To agree the agenda as published.**

It was **resolved** to proceed with the agenda as published.

Proposed Cllr Whittaker, Seconded Cllr Leather (all in favour)

**2504/722 To consider the minutes of the Finance meeting held on the 12th March 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 Bach (all in favour)

**2504/723 Public Participation**

There were no members of the public present.

**2504/724** **To receive an update on Action Points**

The action points were noted as below and overleaf.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Action** | **January 2025** | **February 2025** | **March 2025** |
| **1** | To consider improvements to the office accommodations, to include decorating painting and the provision of a sinkIt 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 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 |
| **2** | 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 | Estimates for the ceiling work are being sought and grants researched.ONGOING |

**Page 265**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Action** | **January 2025** | **February 2025** | **March 2025** |
| **3** | Purchase:1. The whole set of maintenance equipment (electric models) to replace the Council’s maintenance equipment and purchase sufficient batteries and chargers, and
2. A petrol powered ‘two-wheel tractor’ and three attachments – a weed ripper, a brush and collector set and a rotary mower, and
3. A new Nextem ORCA, equipped with a tipper body and a towbar to replace the Council’s oldest truck.
 |  | The order has been placed with JLCEV for the ORCA.The other orders have yet to be placed.ONGOING | Orders placed and all items to be received by the end of 7th April 2025.COMPLETE |
| **4** | Open a Local Council Easy Access Deposit Account at Hinkley & Rugby Building Society |  | On the agenda.ONGOING | Account open. Initial deposit of £5,000 made.COMPLETE |
| **5** | Present amended Finance Regulations to the Full Council at its Annual Meeting in May 2025 |  |  | Amendments to be made.ONGOING |

**2504/725 To receive the Clerk’s report**

On 31st March 2025 (or according to the last available statement balance), the Council’s balances were:

Nationwide (Business 95-day saver) £94,065.15 interest rate is 3.9% General and Earmarked Reserves

Cambridge & Counties Bank (31-day) £94,710.99 interest rate is 3.49% Earmarked Reserves

Cambridge Building Society £5,027.04 interest rate is 2.2% Tennis Reserves

Petty Cash £13.45

Coop Bank (current account) £113,593.43 no interest Includes budgeted carry-over

**Total cash in hand £327,410.06**

On 9th April, the Town Clerk reported that the Council had £76,172.68 in its current account and had invested £5,000 to open a Hinkley & Rugby Building Society account to hold Council funds to gain interest (current rate 2.2%).

The bank reconciliation was signed by the Proper Officer and the Chair.

**Page 266**

**Payments**

The Council made 119 payments in March 2025, totalling £46,016.08 (exVAT). A full list of these is appended to these minutes. There were 33 payments of £100 or more (exVAT). These include:

* £23,838.70 in payroll and associated costs
* £11,845.00 for the complete replacement of the Maintenance Equipment with electrically powered variants.
* £969.30 monthly charge for the Council’s general insurance
* £950.00 to value the Council buildings
* £800.83 for play area inspection training (IR)
* £621.167 for gas to heat Northam Hall
* £455.00 to clean the CP Toilet
* £450.00 to remove asbestos from Northam Hall
* £428.49 monthly room rental at the Town Hall
* £400.00 to clean Northam Hall in December
* £356.60 in copier fees and charges
* £310.90 to service alarms and CCTV
* £284.70 monthly IT contract
* £250.00 to remove a dangerous tree at Wren Close
* £237.00 1st Aid Training (Maintenance Team)
* £185.02 late invoice for work to festive lighting at Westward Ho!
* £1,000.02 for franking for Northam Burrows Charity (6 direct debits of £166.67)
* £151.00 Asbestos Awareness training
* £150.00 Repair to display cabinet (Men’s Shed)
* £140.00 for SLCC training for IR
* £140.00 for SLCC training for TT
* £114.00 water bill (Northam Hall)
* £113.04 Truck and mower fuel
* £110.26 for plasterboard at Northam Hall
* £102.01 for high security padlocks for containers

It was **resolved** to approve the list of payments.

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

**Receipts:**

In March 2025, the Council received 79 payments, totalling £9,673.84.

**Tennis courts:**

The gross volume of sales 1st January 2024 to 31st March 2025 is £5,855. After fees, the Council has received £5,452.32. 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 approximately £1,850 over the target, in this extended year (1st January 2024 to 31st March 25). In due course, a payment of £425.28 will be made to the Council’s Cambridge Building Society account, where this earmark is held.

**Page 267**

The Council has sold 89 annual membership passes, a small number of which have already been renewed. The revenue from the sale of membership was £3,115 (before fees) 1st January 2024 to 31st March 2025.

**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, £90 has been withdrawn on the 1st April 2025 to maintain that level.



It was **resolved** that, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (subsection 2), members of the public and press would be excluded from the meeting to enable the Council to consider confidential matters. Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Tait (all in favour)

**2504/726 To note and approve staff annual salary increments**

It was **resolved** to apply an annual increment to all staff that were eligible, as detailed in their appraisal and probationary reports. Those increments would be applied from the 1st April 2025.

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

The committee noted that one member of staff had not had their appraisal for 2024-25 because of absences by that employee and other key staff (both sickness absence and annual leave). Consideration of any scale point rise applicable was deferred to after the appraisal had been carried out.

The committee requested that the salary scales of the Maintenance Operatives be reviewed by the Human Resources committee at a suitable meeting.

**Action point: Include the review of the salary scales of the Maintenance Operatives to the next Human Resources agenda.**

**Page 268**

**2504/727 To receive and sign the payroll information sheet for submission**

It was **resolved** to approve the payroll submission sheet, noting the amended spinal column points for staff, as appropriate. The payroll information sheet was signed by the Chair.

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

**Action point: submit the information.**

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 Whittaker (all in favour)

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.10pm.

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Voucher | Date | Net | VAT | Gross | Description |
| 1323 | 31.03.2025 | £4.17 | £0.83 | £5.00 | Mobile Phone - TA |
| 1322 | 31.03.2025 | £4.17 | £0.83 | £5.00 | Mobile Phone - RG |
| 1321 | 31.03.2025 | £1.20 | £0.00 | £1.20 | Milk |
| 1320 | 24.03.2025 | £1.20 | £0.00 | £1.20 | Milk |
| 1319 | 24.03.2025 | £29.17 | £5.83 | £35.00 | keys  |
| 1318 | 20.03.2025 | £36.90 | £0.00 | £36.90 | Juices |
| 1317 | 19.03.2025 | £4.74 | £0.00 | £4.74 | Milk coffee sugar |
| 1316 | 18.03.2025 | £1.39 | £0.00 | £1.39 | Milk |
| 1315 | 12.03.2025 | £1.19 | £0.00 | £1.19 | Sugar |
| 1314 | 11.03.2025 | £1.35 | £0.00 | £1.35 | Milk |
| 1313 | 06.03.2025 | £0.95 | £0.00 | £0.95 | Milk |
| 1312 | 04.03.2025 | £2.78 | £0.00 | £2.78 | Milk |
| 1311 | 28.03.2025 | £1.19 | £0.00 | £1.19 | square fees |
| 1310 | 28.03.2025 | £0.60 | £0.00 | £0.60 | square fees |
| 1309 | 31.03.2025 | £1.65 | £0.00 | £1.65 | square fees |
| 1308 | 31.03.2025 | £0.60 | £0.00 | £0.60 | square fees |
| 1307 | 31.03.2025 | £166.67 | £33.33 | £200.00 | Postage franking machine (Burrows - to be recharged) |
| 1306 | 27.03.2025 | £1.25 | £0.00 | £1.25 | square fees |
| 1305 | 27.03.2025 | £1.25 | £0.00 | £1.25 | square fees |
| 1304 | 27.03.2025 | £1.25 | £0.00 | £1.25 | square fees |
| 1303 | 26.03.2025 | £0.88 | £0.00 | £0.88 | square fees |
| 1302 | 26.03.2025 | £0.94 | £0.00 | £0.94 | square fees |
| 1301 | 26.03.2025 | £33.32 | £6.66 | £39.98 | Tables N Hall |
| 1300 | 26.03.2025 | £45.60 | £9.12 | £54.72 | repair noticeboard |
| 1299 | 26.03.2025 | £102.01 | £20.40 | £122.41 | padlocks (Containers) |
| 1298 | 26.03.2025 | £140.00 | £28.00 | £168.00 | SLCC Training etc (IR) |
| 1297 | 26.03.2025 | £140.00 | £28.00 | £168.00 | SLCC Training etc (TT) |
| 1296 | 27.03.2025 | £47.00 | £0.00 | £47.00 | Data Protection |
| 1295 | 25.03.2025 | £4.17 | £0.83 | £5.00 | Mobile Phone - GL |
| 1294 | 25.03.2025 | £74.98 | £15.00 | £89.98 | PPE |
| 1293 | 25.03.2025 | £11,845.00 | £2,369.00 | £14,214.00 | Electric maintenance equipment |
| 1292 | 25.03.2025 | £1.19 | £0.00 | £1.19 | square fees |
| 1291 | 21.03.2025 | £95.00 | £19.00 | £114.00 | Amazon |
| 1290 | 21.03.2025 | £3.35 | £0.00 | £3.35 | Postages |
| 1289 | 25.03.2025 | £166.67 | £33.33 | £200.00 | Postage franking machine (Burrows - to be recharged) |
| 1288 | 25.03.2025 | £0.31 | £0.00 | £0.31 | square fees |
| 1287 | 24.03.2025 | £0.88 | £0.00 | £0.88 | square fees |
| 1286 | 24.03.2025 | £0.94 | £0.00 | £0.94 | square fees |
| 1285 | 21.03.2025 | £30.00 | £0.00 | £30.00 | Photographs |
| 1284 | 21.03.2025 | £24.00 | £0.00 | £24.00 | Mayor expenses |
| 1283 | 20.03.2025 | £11.10 | £2.22 | £13.32 | noticeboard erection |
| 1282 | 20.03.2025 | £35.15 | £7.03 | £42.18 | noticeboard erection |
| 1281 | 20.03.2025 | £41.70 | £8.34 | £50.04 | Toilet rolls paper towels |
| 1280 | 20.03.2025 | £17,773.82 | £0.00 | £17,773.82 | Salaries |
| 1279 | 19.03.2025 | £3.53 | £0.71 | £4.24 | Tools  |
| 1278 | 19.03.2025 | £4.94 | £0.99 | £5.93 | work at Northam Hall |
| 1277 | 19.03.2025 | £23.41 | £4.68 | £28.09 | work at Northam Hall |
| 1276 | 19.03.2025 | £37.18 | £7.44 | £44.62 | work at Northam Hall |
| 1275 | 19.03.2025 | £34.98 | £7.00 | £41.98 | work at Northam Hall |
| 1274 | 19.03.2025 | £2.83 | £0.57 | £3.40 | work at Northam Hall |
| 1273 | 19.03.2025 | £40.18 | £8.04 | £48.22 | work at Northam Hall |
| 1272 | 19.03.2025 | £5.04 | £1.01 | £6.05 | work at Anchor Park |
| 1271 | 19.03.2025 | £26.95 | £5.39 | £32.34 | work at Northam Hall |
| 1270 | 19.03.2025 | £12.56 | £2.51 | £15.07 | work at Northam Hall |
| 1269 | 19.03.2025 | £9.26 | £1.85 | £11.11 | work at Northam Hall |
| 1268 | 19.03.2025 | £450.00 | £90.00 | £540.00 | Northam Hall Asbestos Removal |
| 1267 | 19.03.2025 | £310.90 | £62.18 | £373.08 | Alarms and cctv |
| 1266 | 19.03.2025 | £31.75 | £6.35 | £38.10 | oil |
| 1265 | 19.03.2025 | £800.83 | £160.17 | £961.00 | Training (IR ROSPA play area inspections) |
| 1264 | 19.03.2025 | £151.00 | £30.20 | £181.20 | Training (Asbestos Awareness) |
| 1263 | 19.03.2025 | £237.00 | £0.00 | £237.00 | Training (1st Aid - Maintenance Team) |
| 1262 | 19.03.2025 | £1.00 | £0.00 | £1.00 | Skate Park |
| 1261 | 19.03.2025 | £30.82 | £6.17 | £36.99 | Part for trailer |
| 1260 | 19.03.2025 | £950.00 | £190.00 | £1,140.00 | Building valuations |
| 1259 | 19.03.2025 | £6.29 | £0.00 | £6.29 | cleaning materials |
| 1258 | 19.03.2025 | £59.34 | £11.87 | £71.21 | Postage franking machine |
| 1257 | 19.03.2025 | £17.92 | £3.58 | £21.50 | internet |
| 1256 | 19.03.2025 | £166.67 | £33.33 | £200.00 | Postage franking machine (Burrows - to be recharged) |
| 1255 | 17.03.2025 | £27.22 | £5.45 | £32.67 | new planters |
| 1254 | 18.03.2025 | £1.09 | £0.00 | £1.09 | square fees |
| 1253 | 18.03.2025 | £1.50 | £0.00 | £1.50 | square fees |
| 1252 | 17.03.2025 | £166.67 | £33.33 | £200.00 | Postage franking machine (Burrows - to be recharged) |
| 1251 | 17.03.2025 | £114.00 | £0.00 | £114.00 | water bill (Northam Hall) |
| 1250 | 14.03.2025 | £14.00 | £0.00 | £14.00 | title register and title plan search |
| 1249 | 13.03.2025 | £4.17 | £0.83 | £5.00 | Mobile Phone - TT |
| 1248 | 13.03.2025 | £0.30 | £0.00 | £0.30 | square fees |
| 1247 | 13.03.2025 | £102.66 | £20.53 | £123.19 | Equipment hire (Parks) |
| 1246 | 13.03.2025 | £284.70 | £56.94 | £341.64 | IT contract |
| 1245 | 13.03.2025 | £250.00 | £0.00 | £250.00 | Tree felling (Wren Close) |
| 1244 | 13.03.2025 | £91.27 | £18.26 | £109.53 | Service etc |
| 1243 | 13.03.2025 | £5,964.88 | £0.00 | £5,964.88 | HMRC PAYE |
| 1242 | 13.03.2025 | £113.04 | £22.62 | £135.66 | Fuel (Trucks and mowers etc) |
| 1241 | 12.03.2025 | £1.50 | £0.00 | £1.50 | square fees |
| 1240 | 12.03.2025 | £166.67 | £33.33 | £200.00 | Postage franking machine (Burrows - to be recharged) |
| 1239 | 11.03.2025 | £92.72 | £4.64 | £97.36 | Electricity - Pavilion |
| 1238 | 07.03.2025 | £23.32 | £4.66 | £27.98 | Printer inks |
| 1237 | 09.03.2025 | £621.16 | £124.23 | £745.39 | Northam Hall gas account |
| 1236 | 09.03.2025 | £61.67 | £12.33 | £74.00 | wifi N Hall |
| 1235 | 08.03.2025 | £0.94 | £0.00 | £0.94 | square fees |
| 1234 | 06.03.2025 | £1.19 | £0.00 | £1.19 | square fees |
| 1233 | 06.03.2025 | £166.67 | £33.33 | £200.00 | Postage franking machine (Burrows - to be recharged) |
| 1232 | 05.03.2025 | £0.47 | £0.00 | £0.47 | square fees |
| 1231 | 04.03.2025 | £4.17 | £0.83 | £5.00 | Mobile Phone - CW |
| 1230 | 04.03.2025 | £47.19 | £9.44 | £56.63 | telephone system |
| 1229 | 05.03.2025 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | Cash Withdrawal |
| 1228 | 03.03.2025 | £34.43 | £6.89 | £41.32 | floor cleaner |
| 1227 | 03.03.2025 | £23.32 | £4.67 | £27.99 | Shower Head |
| 1226 | 03.03.2025 | £4.17 | £0.83 | £5.00 | Mobile Phone - IR |
| 1224 | 03.03.2025 | £5.58 | £0.00 | £5.58 | Stripe Fees |
| 1223 | 03.03.2025 | £22.90 | £4.58 | £27.48 | plaster |
| 1222 | 03.03.2025 | £100.00 | £20.00 | £120.00 | Payroll processing |
| 1221 | 03.03.2025 | £185.02 | £37.00 | £222.02 | festoon and festive lighting (late invoice) |
| 1220 | 03.03.2025 | £1.88 | £0.38 | £2.26 | Northam Hall |
| 1219 | 03.03.2025 | £32.12 | £6.42 | £38.54 | Bus Shelter |
| 1218 | 03.03.2025 | £7.88 | £1.58 | £9.46 | PPE |
| 1217 | 03.03.2025 | £49.82 | £9.96 | £59.78 | work at Northam Hall |
| 1216 | 03.03.2025 | £110.26 | £22.05 | £132.31 | plasterboard (Northam Hall) |
| 1215 | 03.03.2025 | £28.73 | £5.75 | £34.48 | plasterboard |
| 1214 | 03.03.2025 | £4.59 | £0.92 | £5.51 | Carpenters Pencils |
| 1213 | 03.03.2025 | £8.85 | £1.77 | £10.62 | fluorescent lights |
| 1212 | 03.03.2025 | £150.00 | £0.00 | £150.00 | Display Cabinet Repair |
| 1211 | 03.03.2025 | £400.00 | £0.00 | £400.00 | cleaning Northam Hall |
| 1210 | 03.03.2025 | £356.60 | £71.32 | £427.92 | copier charges |
| 1209 | 03.03.2025 | £455.00 | £91.00 | £546.00 | Cleaning CPT |
| 1208 | 03.03.2025 | £28.17 | £5.63 | £33.80 | cleaning offices and cttee room |
| 337 | 24.03.2025 | £6.25 | £1.25 | £7.50 | Mobile Phone - IH |
| 324 | 15.03.2025 | £28.50 | £0.00 | £28.50 | water rates |
| 314 | 03.03.2025 | £428.49 | £0.00 | £428.49 | Town Hall Room rental |
| 305 | 09.03.2025 | £969.28 | £0.00 | £969.28 | insurance |

 **Page 277**

**Minutes of the Planning and Development Committee**

**24th April 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

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

In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO)

2 representatives of the Wheatcroft Collection

**2504/749 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 two vacant seats.

**2504/750 Chair’s announcements**

The Chair welcomed the newly elected Councillor, Jon Horrocks to the committee, his seat on which had been agreed at the previous evening’s Full Council.

**2504/751 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.

Cllrs Horrocks and Newman-McKie declared that proposal 1/0311/2025/FUL neighboured their property and they would therefore not take part in the consideration of or voting on that proposal.

**2504/752 To agree the agenda as published**

It was **resolved** to amend the agenda so that planning proposal 1/0311/2025/FUL was considered second, after proposal 1/0288/2025/FULM.

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

**2504/753 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Planning & Development Committee meeting held on 3rd April 2025**

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

Proposed Cllr Newman-McKie, Seconded Cllr Bach (Majority in favour with one abstention - not present at that meeting).

**2504/754 Public Participation**

The representatives of the Wheatcroft Collection addressed the committee, seeking to clarify some points.

* The height of the proposed structure was 6.9m, 1.5m higher than the draft plans. Previously a block of apartments had been proposed (and refused) which would have been taller. At appeal, the height of that block had not been considered a factor in upholding the refusal.
* The Wheatcroft Collection’s advisors were continuing to work with the Environment Agency to address the Agency’s concerns, with a view to the Agency withdrawing its objection.
* All piling at the site would be auger-based rather than rammed deep piles. This approach had been decided upon to demonstrate to Historic England that no damage would be caused to the listed dock, neighbouring and close-by listed buildings and the wider conservation areas.
* The Wheatcroft Collection intended to hold a limited number of open days at the site after the redevelopment had been completed. This dialogue would commence at the appropriate time.

Cllr Lo-Vel asked why the whole roof, or a portion of it, could not be designed to be retractable, as could be seen at Albion Dock in Bristol.

The Architect responded saying that retractability had been considered in the early stages of the project but not brought forward.

**Page 278**

Cllr Newman-McKie sought clarity on the Environment Agency’s position. The representative of the Wheatcroft Collection confirmed that at the current time, the Agency’s objections remained.

**2504/755 To receive an update on the progress of the Northam Neighbourhood Plan**

The Chair reported that at the meeting of the Full Council held on the 23rd April 2025, it had been resolved to submit the Northam Neighbourhood Plan to the District Council for external examination.

**2504/756 To note correspondence regarding the XLinks project and to consider attending the preliminary meeting**

It was **noted** that the Planning Inspectorate would be holding two events on 20th and 21st May 2025 at the Park Hotel, Barnstaple, to examine the proposals. There would be a preliminary meeting at 10am on the 20th May. The body of the letter is copied below:

*Dear Sir/Madam*

*Please find below a link to a letter from the Examining Authority (ExA) that has been published on the National Infrastructure Planning website.*

*This letter (the ‘Rule 6’ letter) is an invitation to the Preliminary Meeting for the above application which will be held on 20 May 2025, 10.00, The Park Hotel, 1 Taw Vale, Barnstaple, EX32 9AE and virtually via Microsoft Teams. The letter includes an agenda for the meeting, a draft Examination Timetable and other important matters.*

*The letter also provides notification of the following events at The Park Hotel and virtually via Microsoft Teams:*

*20 May 2025, 5.00pm – Open floor hearing 1 (OFH1)
21 May 2025, 10.00am – Issue specific hearing 1 (ISH1)*

*Other important information about the hearings, including details about how to make a request to be heard and the procedure that will be followed at the hearings is included in the letter.*

[*https://nsip-documents.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/published-documents/EN010164-000426-Rule%206%20letter%20&%20annexes.pdf*](https://nsip-documents.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/published-documents/EN010164-000426-Rule%206%20letter%20%26%20annexes.pdf)

*You can also view the letter under the Documents tab on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website:*

[*https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010164*](https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010164)

**2504/757 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) **1/0178/2025/FULM**

Proposal: Erection of shelter over dry dock with PV panels, ancillary welfare building, realigning and rebuilding part of the boundary wall and installation of new gates

Location: Richmond Dock, New Quay Street, Appledore

It was **resolved** to recommend the proposal be **refused permission**, resubmitting the response made to the associated Listed Building Consent at the meeting on 3rd April 2025. The Council had numerous reasons for objecting to the proposal.

The proposal was to cover a Grade II\* listed dry dock, filling it with sufficient water to float a historic second World War era German vessel. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) requires development proposals to “set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats” (paragraph 203). The proposals as presented do not include detail setting out how the applicant would meet this requirement. The proposed filling of the dry dock would affect the local water tables and the structure of the Grade II\* listed dry dock itself. The effect of heavy rain and tides on local water tables has not been investigated by the applicant. To do so would be required to demonstrate that the proposals would not have a detrimental effect on the other structures and buildings in the locality.

**Page 279**

Paragraph 214 of the NPPF (December 2024) requires planning authorities to “refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss”. The Council does not consider that the proposal as submitted has addressed the harm that both the eventual structure and the construction process (driving piles into the ground) would have on both the Grade II\* listed dry dock or the adjacent listed buildings on Marine Parade and the conservation areas. The proposal does not include any plans for public access to view the Grade II\* listed dry dock, nor to use the site as a heritage centre for the public to view the item(s) in the collection. The Council does not therefore consider that the harm the proposal would have on the Grade II\* listed site and the setting of the listed buildings and conservation areas would be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal.

Proposals affecting heritage assets (Paragraph 207 of the NPPF December 2024) requires that, in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. In the case of the proposal

submitted, there are numerous surrounding heritage assets to the application site which will be affected. The Council considers it reasonable to expect a detailed assessment on the effect of the proposals on the wider setting, including the effect of the planned construction method (deep pile driving) on the structure of those buildings.

The planned structure would be approximately twice the height of the existing wall. The proposed structure would detrimentally affect the setting of the adjacent conservation areas and be overbearing on the street scene.

The emerging Northam Neighbourhood Plan, states, at policy HE2 that:

“Redevelopment of Richmond Dock will be supported for maritime-related or small business use provided that:

i the integrity of the structure and setting are retained; and

ii the dry dock remains capable of its original use, with sufficient vehicular access and clear

working space; and

iii the construction methods do not adversely impact on the historic structure and setting.”

(the Northam Neighbourhood Plan is available to view on the Town Council’s website and at www.northamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk). The Council does not consider the proposal to be in line with the expectations of this emerging policy. The proposal is to float a vessel in the dry dock. This cannot be done whilst also retaining the Grade II\* listed asset as capable of use as a dry dock. Proposed: Cllr Tait; Seconded: Cllr Newman-McKie (majority in favour)

*The members of the public left at this point (7:02pm)*

ii) **1/0311/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Erection of 2 single storey extensions

Location: 48 Goodwood Park Road, Northam

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

Proposed: Cllr Bach; Seconded: Cllr Hames (majority in favour). Cllrs Horrocks and Newman-McKie did not take part in the consideration or vote.

*Cllr Tait left at this point (7:05pm)*

**Page 280**

iii) **1/0288/2025/FUH**

Proposal: Conversion of loft into additional bedroom with en-suite and associated works.

Location: Lower Lodge, Golf Links Road, Westward Ho!

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

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

iv) **1/0057/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Erection of double garage and widening of existing access in connection with an existing dwelling (Amended red edge and certificate)

Location: Lower Lodge, Golf Links Road, Westward Ho!

It was **resolved** to recommend the proposal be refused permission, the amendments had not adequately addressed the Council’s concerns. The previous response is presented below, for clarity.

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

*Northam Town Council recommends that the proposal be refused permission. The Councils objections to the proposal were that: The planned exit of the driveway was into a public car park, operated by Torridge District Council. The safety of pedestrians walking through the carpark would be adversely affected, especially as the carpark acts as a pedestrian route from the seafront and shopping area to Westward Ho! Park. The planned exit of the driveway was onto a public car park, which is land held by the District Council, rather than a public highway or private road. It was not clear if permission for this had been sought, or an easement considered as part of this proposal.*

v) **1/0303/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Extension to existing reception

Location: The Pier House, Merley Road, Westward Ho!

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

Proposed: Cllr Bach; Seconded: Cllr Horrocks (all in favour)

vi) **1/0195/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Alterations to roof dormers and creation of first floor bay window with associated works

Location: 7 Hillcliff Terrace, Irsha Street, Appledore

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

Proposed: Cllr Horrocks; Seconded: Cllr Bach (all in favour)

vii) **1/0254/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Retrospective application for the erection of a new bar and storage building, pergolas and proposed band stand shelter with the associated works.

Location: Land At Grid Reference 243195 129182, Golf Links Road, Westward Ho!

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

Proposed: Cllr Bach; Seconded: Cllr Horrocks (majority in favour)

viii) **1/0190/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Demolition of existing garage, erection of single storey rear extension and two storey side extension

Location: 17 Graham Way, Westward Ho!

It was **resolved** to recommend the proposal be refused permission on the grounds that the reduction in parking resulting from the proposal would be contrary to Local Plan policies DM05 and DM06 and would be in opposition to the policies on parking provision within the emerging Northam Neighbourhood Plan.

Proposed: Cllr Bach; Seconded: Cllr Horrocks (all in favour)

**Page 281**

ix) **1/0331/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Erection of 1no. dwelling and additional double garage with associated works

Location: Woodbine Cottage, Tadworthy Road, Northam

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

Proposed: Cllr Bach; Seconded: Cllr Horrocks (majority in favour)

x) **1/0279/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Installation of air source heat pump

Location: The Challenge, Limers Lane, Northam

The Council did not make a comment on this proposal.

**2504/****758 To note British Telecom’s intention to remove payphones and consider if representatives should be made and/or if the Council should adopt the red telephone box(es)**

 **Proposal: Representation request for removal of (two) payphones**

**GE/0245/2025**

Location: Telephone Kiosk At Grid Reference 246260 130911, Irsha Street, Appledore

**GE/2047/2025**

Location: Land At Grid Reference 246506 130635, The Quay, Appledore

Closing date for representations: 10th July 2025 (details on page 10)

It was **resolved** to make representations to British Telecom requesting that both call boxes be retained. The mobile signal coverage at both locations was unreliable. This, when considered in conjunction with their coastal locations, meant that they provided essential access to the telecoms network allowing anyone to contact the emergency services, should people be in danger in or close to the estuary, including the Coast Guard (and thus the RNLI). Finally, the location of both was in a conservation area and these red boxes contribute to the traditional street scenes.

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

**2504/759 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) **1/0068/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Rear extension, roof extension creating new first floor and external works including new garage (Resubmission of 1/0970/2024/FUL)

Location: 36 Fairlea Crescent, Northam

(Northam Town Council did not wish to make a comment on this resubmission).

ii) **1/0932/2024/FUL**

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

Location: Duckhaven Stud, Cornborough Road, Westward Ho!

(Northam Town Council recommended that this proposal be refused permission).

iii) **1/1043/2024/FUL**

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

(Northam Town Council recommended that this proposal be refused permission).

**Page 282**

iv) **1/0099/2025/FUL**

Proposal: Proposed refurbishment of dwelling, including a single storey rear extension and raising of the ridge height of the roof to incorporate first floor accommodation

Location: 5 Century Drive, Northam

(Northam Town Council commented on the application).

v) **1/0127/2025/LBC**

Proposal: Internal alterations and associated works, and external signage

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

(Northam Town Council recommended that this proposal be granted permission.)

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

Proposal: Erection of replacement roof

Location: 16 Bude Street, Appledore

Northam Town Council recommended that this proposal be granted permission.

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

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

 **Page 252**

**Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Parks and Recreation committee meeting held 26th March 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

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

In attendance: Ian Rawle – Parks & Buildings Manager.

 Barbara Potts and Brian Russell – Volunteer Gardeners (Westward Ho! Park).

Christine Hutchins – Friends of Westward Ho! Park (FOTWHOP).

**2503/682 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)**

All elected members were present.

**2503/683 Chair’s Announcements**

There were none.

**2503/684 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.

**2503/685 To agree the agenda as published**

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

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

**2503/686 Recreation Committee held on 25th September 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 Newman-McKie (all in favour).

**2503/687** **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 other than volunteer gardeners and Christine Hutchins FOTWHOP, who would be invited to contribute at the relevant time.

**2503/688 To receive an update on actions**

The Action table is presented overleaf.

**Page 253**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **November 2024**  | **January 2025** | **March 2025** |
| 1 | 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 | The contractor will undertake the works in April 25. Date TBCONGOIG |
| 2 | To consult the community on the use of outdoor gym.  |  | INCOMPLETE | The committee has decided to remove the gym equipment due to safety concerns regarding its current conditionCOMPLETE |
| 3 | Churchfields Skate Park – paint and ‘graffiti’. | The Parks & Recreation Manager has been in discussion with a graffiti artistONGOING | This committee agreed it would remain as painted now until it is next refurbished.COMPLETE |
| 4 | 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  | The work has been completed by the installer. The condition will continue to be monitored.COMPLETE |
| 5 | 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 | The work has been completed by the Maintenance Team.COMPLETE |
| 6 | Actions arising from Play Inspection Reports |  |  | On the agenda ONGOING |
| 7 | Schedule Play Inspection Reports for 2025-26 |  |  | Scheduled for January/February 2026COMPLETE |

**Page 254**

**2503/689 To receive an update on the actions arising from the annual play inspection reports**

It was acknowledged and confirmed that the works and repairs outlined in the Playpark Action Plan would commence this week.

**2503/690 Westward Ho! Park**

1. To receive an update from the Chair of FOTWHOP and a representative of the volunteer gardeners at Westward Ho! (verbal)

The Chair of FOTWHOP gave a Financial update and discussion for the possibility of a Fund-raising event, involving a Hog Roast and Barbecue to link with the event at the tennis courts in May half-term. It was noted NTC Insurance would cover the event.

**Action point: Discuss with The Town Clerk and Community Engagement Officer and prepare a risk assessment.**

The Chair of FOTWHOP requested the scattering of ashes in the Sensory Garden at Westward Ho! Park.

**Action point: raise with Town Clerk. Further discussion required with The Town Clerk regarding the feasibility of this.**

Barbara Potts gave an update on recruiting volunteers and the challenges in recruiting.

**Action point: Further discussion required with The Town Clerk and Community Engagement Officer to explore opportunities to promote volunteering.**

1. **Barbara Potts** requested the Council consider installing of CCTV at Westward Ho! Park in response to a recent increase in vandalism within the park.

**Action point: Further discussion required with The Town Clerk on the costings of installation and location.**

1. To receive an update on plans for the Pavilion building (verbal)

**It was noted that the officers planned to install Picture boards in windows of the Pavillion Building in Westward Ho!**

**Action point: Costing and design would be considered by the Finance Committee in due course.**

**It was noted that future plans for the Pavillion Building at Westward Ho! Park would be resumed after the completion of works at Northam Hall.**

**Action point: All funding avenues would be explored in due course.**

1. To receive update on tennis plans for summer 2025 as agreed at Finance Committee (confidential report attached)

 **This was noted.**

1. To consider a project to install a MUGA on the space left by the 4th court, referred from Full Council (March 2025) (to follow)

**It was discussed that there are potential plans to install a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) on the western side of the tennis courts. The proposed area would be designed for use in football, basketball, and netball.**

**Page 255**

**2503/691 Anchor Park**

a. To receive an update on works at Anchor Park

i. Planting update (verbal) **It was noted that two wildflower areas had been sown, along with hazel, rowan, and beech hedging planted along the new fencing**.

ii. Fencing installation (verbal) **It was noted that new post and rail fencing had been installed by the Maintenance Team**.

**2503/692 Wren Close**

a. To receive an update on works undertaken (verbal)

**The Parks and Buildings Manager provided an update on the removal of the tree at Wren Close and the planting of an additional five trees at Burrough Farm to compensate for the loss.**

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

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