

FINANCE & HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**12th August 2026 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

Present: Cllrs Hodson (Chair), Newman-McKie (Mayor), Leather, and Whittaker.

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

2608/214 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)

Cllrs Edwards, Hames, Himan, and Tait offered their apologies, the reasons for which were approved by the committee.

2608/215 Chair's announcements

The Chair made no announcements.

2608/216 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.

2608/217 To agree the agenda as published.It was **resolved** to amend the agenda, all but four items (approval of the previous minutes, subscription to Grants Online, payroll and HR matters) to the next agenda of this committee.

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

2608/218 To consider the minutes of the Finance meeting held on the 18th July 2026 as a true and correct recordIt was **resolved** to accept the minutes as a true and correct record, which were signed by then Chair.

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

2608/219 Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

2608/220 To consider continuing to subscribe to Grants OnlineIt was **resolved** to continue the Council's subscription to Grants Online at a cost of £200 (inc VAT) and to transfer sufficient funds from the Council's General Projects to meet the deficit in the Subscriptions cost code, estimated to be £497.

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

Action point: make an internal transfer between the cost codes on the council's accounting software.*It was **resolved** to exclude members of the press and public, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Proposed: Cllr Whittaker, seconded Cllr Leather (all in favour)***2608/221 To receive and sign the payroll information sheet for submission, considering overtime claimed**It was **resolved** to approve the payroll submission sheet for August 2026.

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

The payroll information sheet was signed by the Chair.

Action points: Submit the information.**2608/222 To receive an update on staffing matters**

A confidential verbal update was received from the Town Clerk & RFO.

*It was **resolved** to readmit members of the press and public, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Proposed Cllr Leather, Seconded: Cllr Hames (all in favour)*

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6:55pm

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

Chair's initials

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Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Parks and Recreation committee meeting held Wednesday 15th July 2026 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.

Present: Cllrs Jeremy Bell, Louis Bach, Barry Edwards and Niki Tait and The Mayor, Cllr Sam Newman-McKie.

Arriving during the meeting: Cllr Claire Hodson (from 19:01hrs) and Cllr Jane Whittaker (from 19:08 hrs).

In attendance: Ian Rawle – Parks & Buildings Manager.

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

Barbara Potts – Volunteer Gardener (Westward Ho! Park).

2607/161 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Hames (Chair) due to illness.

Apologies were received from Cllr Hodson and Cllr Whittaker, who were attending a meeting of Torridge District Council and would be joining the meeting later.

2607/162 Chair's Announcements

In the absence of the Chair, Cllr Tait (Vice Chair) took the Chair for the meeting.

Cllr Hodson had advised that she would be arriving later due to her attendance at a meeting of Torridge District Council. She therefore requested that Agenda Item 9 be considered towards the end of the meeting.

This was **proposed** by Cllr Bell, seconded by Cllr Edwards, (all in favour).

The Parks & Buildings Manager provided the following updates:

- Members were advised that the area is currently experiencing a prolonged period of dry weather. The maintenance team is working hard to maintain the Council's parks and floral displays, and watering regimes have been increased wherever possible to help protect planting and maintain display standards.
- Members were informed that a homeless individual is currently staying within Westward Ho! Park. The matter has been reported to the relevant authorities and support organisations to ensure appropriate welfare assistance and support can be offered.

- An update was received regarding the Pavilion Project. Philip Hinton is currently preparing concept designs using Autodesk Revit (Building Information Modelling software) to produce detailed 3D visualisations. The designs will include both a potential new-build option and a refurbishment option, providing Members with a clearer understanding of each proposal. It is anticipated that these designs will be available to present to Members in the near future.

Cllr Edwards requested a further update on the work of the Pavilion Working Group, noting that there had been limited recent activity and seeking clarification on the project's progress and next steps.

Cllr Edwards also raised concerns regarding the number of weeds present in Appledore and requested that the matter be reviewed.

2607/163 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.

2607/164 To agree the agenda as published
It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published.
Proposed Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Edwards (all in favour)

2607/165 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Committee held on 20th May 2026
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 Bell (one abstention due to not being present at the previous meeting; majority in favour)

2607/166 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 two members of the public present: Barbara Potts and Christine Hutchins. Christine and Barbara would be invited to contribute at the relevant time.

2607/167 To receive an update on actions
The Action table is presented below.

Item 7 update on actions

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Action	November 2025	January 2026	March 2026	May 2026	June/July 2026
1 To seek legal advice regarding installation of a step at Blackies (Ref: 2507/194 Construction of Steps and improvement of 'desire line' surface at Blackies Footpath)	Added to actions	If access and steps are created for public use, they must meet safety standards and be regularly inspected to avoid liability. Public liability insurance should be considered. Permission is needed from the landowner, and if the access meets a road or pavement, Highways approval is required. Planning permission may also be needed. Further checks with insurers, legal advisors, and the landowner are recommended.	In progress.	In discussion with DCC Public Rights of Way Officer	On Agenda
2 Permanent PumpTrack	Added to actions	Burrough Farm preferred site, Lord's Meadow less suitable. Obtain expert advice and cost estimate. If feasible, seek Full Council approval and go to tender. Explore funding opportunities (Sports Lottery, Section 106, others).	In progress.	Researching funding and contractor cost (by in and place using contractors and NTC staff)	On Agenda
6 MUGA WWH!		-Meet with Contractor to discuss plans -investigate Planning, contact Environmental Health	Contractor appointed to revise MUGA plans following feedback -Design reduced in size due to planning constraints	To update P & R in July 2026.	On Agenda

Chair's initials

				-Additional noise mitigation included (anti-vibration posts and revised fencing) -Changes remain within approved budget		
7	Pavilion WWH!		-Survey completed -Plans being developed for options (new build or renovation) -Demolition costs currently being obtained	No Change	-Survey completed -Plans being developed for options (new build or renovation) – Philip Hinton currently preparing draft plans -Demolition costs currently being obtained	On Agenda.
8	Planned works for all Parish Play Parks and Annual Inspection Report		Inspections carried out	On Agenda	On Agenda	Works started.
9	Hedge laying Lords Meadow		Contact Steve McCulloch for quotation and advice.	In talks with Steve McCulloch.	Awaiting quotation.	Awaiting Site visit from Steve McCulloch.

2607/168 To receive a report from the chair of FOTWHOP (Verbal)

The Chair reported that the Annual General Meeting had been held and that the committee membership remained largely unchanged, with existing committee members continuing in their roles. Consideration was being given to financial arrangements, including placing funds into savings accounts where appropriate.

The gardening team continued to make a significant contribution, recording approximately 270 volunteer hours up to April, with a further 89 hours in May and 113.25 hours in June. It was noted that the warmer weather may affect volunteer hours during July.

The 200 Club draw continued to operate successfully. There were 105 numbers in the June draw. The Chair noted that participants either reinvested their winnings or donated them back to the organisation, which was greatly appreciated.

Members were reminded that increased participation would support the draw and improve participants' chances of winning.

2607/169 Construction of Step at Blackies Footpath (Ref: 2507/194)

Members considered a report regarding the potential installation of a step at Blackies Footpath following Minute 2507/194.

The Parks & Buildings Manager advised that further investigations had identified a number of practical and legal considerations, including the ongoing maintenance and liability that would arise should the Town Council install a step for public use.

Members were also informed that, despite enquiries, the ownership of the land had not been established, preventing the Council from obtaining the necessary landowner's permission.

In addition, free verbal legal advice had confirmed that the use of a disclaimer or "use at your own risk" sign would not remove the Council's legal responsibilities if it undertook the works.

It was **Resolved:** That, having considered the potential liabilities, the inability to identify the landowner, and the likely cost of obtaining formal legal advice, the Council does not pursue the installation of a step at Blackies Footpath and leaves the existing informal access unchanged

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

Chair's initials

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2607/170 Modular Pump Track Proposal

Members considered a report regarding the potential provision of a modular pump track as an alternative to a permanent installation. The Parks & Buildings Manager outlined the advantages of a modular pump track, including its lower cost, flexibility, ability to be relocated, and the potential for future expansion. Members were advised that the estimated cost of a modular pump track would range between £49,300 and £63,500, depending on the size and configuration selected. Potential locations identified included Burrows Farm, Lords Meadow and Anchor Park.

During the discussion, Members considered the estimated costs, potential locations and possible funding opportunities. It was agreed that further information was required before an informed decision could be made, particularly regarding the total project costs, available grant funding and the overall financial implications for the Council.

It was **Resolved**: That consideration of the proposal be deferred pending further investigation into the full project costs and potential funding opportunities, with a further report to be presented to the Committee.

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

Action Point: *Parks & Buildings Manager to investigate the full project costs, identify potential grant funding and other external funding opportunities, and report back to a future meeting.*

2607/171 Request from Torrington Tennis Club for Court Hire

Members considered the report regarding Court Hire.

Following discussion, Members agreed that the current booking arrangements should remain unchanged for the remainder of the current season. It was **agreed** that the use of the facility should be monitored throughout the summer period and reviewed ahead of the next season.

It was **Resolved**: That bookings continue under the existing arrangements with no reduction in charges, and that the use of the facility be reviewed following the summer season, with a report brought back to the Committee for consideration prior to the next season.

Proposed: Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Edwards (one abstention due to not being present at the previous meeting; majority in favour)

Chair's initials



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Action Point: *Parks & Buildings Manager to monitor the use of the facility during the summer period and present a review to the Committee ahead of the next season.*

2607/172 Harbour to Hedge Project – Anchor Park Update

Members received an update regarding discussions with representatives from the Harbour to Hedge community group and Appledore School concerning a potential partnership project at Anchor Park.

The Parks & Buildings Manager advised that the aims of Harbour to Hedge align with the Council's environmental objectives, including biodiversity enhancement, habitat creation and community engagement.

Members were informed that the Parks & Buildings Manager had attended a meeting with the North Devon Biosphere on 21 July 2026 to discuss potential funding opportunities and support for environmental projects.

It was **noted** that further discussions would take place with Harbour to Hedge and Appledore School to explore how a partnership could operate in practice, with any future proposals being brought back to the Committee for consideration.

This was **noted** by the Council

Action Point: *Parks & Buildings Manager to continue discussions with the relevant organisations and keep Members informed of the progression of the project, reporting any future proposals back to the Committee for consideration.*

2607/173 Pavillion Project

Members received an update on the Pavilion Project. The Parks & Buildings Manager advised that Philip Hinton is currently preparing concept designs using Autodesk Revit (Building Information Modelling software) to produce detailed 3D visualisations.

The designs will include both a potential new-build option and a refurbishment option, providing Members with a clearer understanding of each proposal. It was anticipated that the concept designs would be available for presentation to Members in the near future.

This was **noted** by the Council.

Chair's initials

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2607/174 To update members from the MUGA Working Group.

Members received an update from the MUGA Working Group regarding progress on the proposed Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA). The update included the current status of the Lawful Development Certificate application, the project budget and funding position, the draft specification and Invitation to Quote documentation, and the proposed procurement approach.

Members noted the positive response received during the public consultation and the ongoing work of the MUGA Working Group in progressing the project.

During the discussion, Members requested that the proposed MUGA design plans, together with an updated project budget and funding position, be circulated to all Councillors for information.

This was **noted** by the Councillors.

Action point: *Parks & Buildings Manager to circulate the proposed MUGA design plans, together with an updated project budget and funding position, to all Councillors*

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7:41 pm.

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

Chair's initials

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**Minutes of the Review Committee held 22nd July 2026 at 6.30pm
in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

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

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

The meeting was opened by the outgoing Chair, Cllr Newman-McKie who explained that she was unable to continue as Chair as she had been elected Mayor of the Council in May 2026.

2607/175 To elect a Chair for the committee

Cllr Hodson proposed Cllr Whittaker be elected Chair of this committee. This was seconded by Cllr Newman-McKie. There being no other nominations, a vote was taken and Cllr Whittaker was elected unanimously.

Cllr Whittaker thanked the committee and took the Chair.

2607/176 To elect a Deputy Chair for the committee

Cllr Newman-McKie proposed Cllr Hodson be elected Deputy Chair of this committee. This was seconded by Cllr Bach. There being no other nominations, a vote was taken and Cllr Hodson was elected unanimously.

2607/177 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)

All members were present. There were two vacancies.

2607/178 Chair's announcements

The Chair made no announcements.

2607/179 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.

2607/180 To agree the agenda as published.

It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published.
Proposed Cllr Hodson, Seconded Cllr Lo-Vel (all in favour)

2607/181 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Review Committee meeting held on the 5th March 2026

It was **resolved** that to approve the minutes of that meeting of the Review Committee as a correct record, they were signed by the Chair.
Proposed Cllr Hodson, Seconded Cllr Horrocks (majority in favour, 2 abstentions – not present at the meeting)

2607/182 Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

2607/183 To consider the action point update

The action points were noted as presented overleaf.

Chair's initials

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Item	July 2026
1. Emergency planning	The Town Clerk has contacted the Emergency Planning project manager from Devon Communities who emphasised the nature of the role of the Town Council in preparing for emergencies. The contact details and locations included in the Emergency Plan had been reviewed and published on the Council's website at Emergency Plan - Northam Town Council. The Town Clerk is attending a seminar in October presented by the Devon Community Resilience Forum and will apply any changes advised after that. The first piece of work that would be completed was a Risk Assessment, which would be put to this committee for consideration. Emergency Services would be advised of the Council's identified refuge buildings. ONGOING
2. Vision Statement and action Plan	A group of members and staff had met on 7th July to review progress. A second date would be arranged to complete the task. ONGOING

2607/184 To consider the enclosed revised policies:

a) Anchor Park Agreement V1.0

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

2.2: The Town Council will maintain the Park as a public recreation ground for the benefit of the inhabitants of and visitors to Appledore, in the Parish of Northam and the neighbourhood without ~~distinction of sex or of political religious or other protected characteristics~~ **discrimination based on any protected characteristic.**

2.5: ~~The Town Council will impose on any person or organisation which uses the facilities in the Park those terms of hire rules and conditions (if any) as have previously been imposed by the Trustee subject to any additional terms.~~ **Any groups or organisations wanting to use the Park for events must obtain permission from the Town Council. The Town Council reserves the right to seek recompense for any damages caused by the activities of any groups or organisations that are permitted to use the Park. The Town Council fully expects organisations that seek to use the Park for their event(s) to provide their own insurance.**

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

b) Financial Regulations V1.3

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

5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:

the Clerk (or officer **formally identified as** deputising for them) under delegated authority, for any items below £1,000 excluding VAT.

the Clerk (or officer **formally identified as** deputising for them), under delegated authority, for any items within budget and below £5,000 excluding VAT,

the Clerk (or officer **formally identified as** deputising for them), under delegated authority, for repair work or other urgent work below £5,000, which will be reported to the Finance and Human Resources committee

Proposed: Cllr Whittaker, Seconded: Cllr Lo-Vel (all in favour).

Chair's initials

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c) Procurement Policy V1.2

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

- Clarification of the example criteria contained within the exemplar evaluation table to include 'Local company / organisation'.

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

d) Allotment Tenancy Agreement V1.0

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

- Remove the word 'joint' from the first tenant details and signature box.
- Add the name of the allotment site.

It also **agreed** to provide a site map on the noticeboard at Windmill Lane allotments.

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

e) Allotment Terms and Conditions V1.0

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

In the preamble:

- We ~~expect~~ **encourage** you to have your own compost area (to compost any green waste) and a means of harvesting and storing water on your plot as a matter of good practice.
- ~~You~~ **All named tenants** may only have one allotment plot administered by Northam Town Council. It also **agreed** to provide a site map on the noticeboard at Windmill Lane allotments.
- Add: **All named tenants must be residents within the parish administered by Northam Town Council.**

Paragraphs:

9. Should plot holders need to use chemicals, ~~all pesticides~~, **they** must be in date and stored **off site**, ~~used and disposed of in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.~~

~~11. Spraying pesticides may only be done as a last resort. It must be confined to still days and in the early morning to protect bees and cause the least possible damage to wildlife and natural biodiversity. Neighbouring plots, gardens and water storage must not be affected by the application of pesticides.~~

Section: Water Supply, **BBQs**, Bonfires, Carpets and Rubbish

23. **BBQs**, Bonfires and the use of personal incinerators is not allowed. Any plot holder contravening these conditions will be dealt with via the termination policy.

28. Ponds must be no deeper than 60cm at the deepest part. Ponds must have shallow sloping sides, **incorporating a hedgehog ladder**. ~~and~~ **You** must ensure that the edges of the pond remain clearly visible. Ponds must not be allowed to stagnate. We recommend ponds are surrounded by a low fence or barrier. It is your responsibility to carry out a risk assessment to avoid any risk to other site users **especially including children**.

30. The allotment site is open is aspect and access to and around plots should be unrestricted. **Permanent fences over 1m in height** should not be erected without permission from the Council. Any officer of the Council or any person appointed by the Council (that can include a member of the Site Committee) must be permitted to enter any allotment plot for inspection purposes or to investigate complaints.

Chair's initials

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42. If the cultivation standard at any time on a plot is below the 75% required by the T&Cs, this could trigger the termination process. **The Council will exercise a degree of lenience in your first year.**

Appeal process:

An appeal hearing will be called where you will have an opportunity to present your case. The hearing will comprise an Appeal Panel of **three councillors, including at least one** of the Chair ~~and/or~~ Vice-Chair of the appropriate committee ~~or (either or both may be substituted by the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor.~~ The panel may have to visit your plot before the appeal hearing. The decision of this panel is final.

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

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

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

Chair's initials

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MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
13th August 2026 at 7.45pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.

Present: Cllrs Bach, Hames (Chair), Horrocks, Lo-Vel, Newman-McKie and Sawyer.
In attendance: Guy Langton (Town Clerk & RFO), Nick Arnold (co-opted NNP Working Group member)

2608/223 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85 (1)

All members were present. There were two vacant seats.

2608/224 Chair's announcements

The Chair noted the helpful training session that the committee had just attended.

2608/225 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.

2608/226 To agree the agenda as published

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

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

2608/227 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Planning & Development Committee meeting held on 23rd July 2026

It was **resolved** that to approve the minutes of that Planning & Development committee meeting as a true and correct record, they were signed by the Chair.

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

2608/228 Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

2608/229 To receive an update on the Northam Neighbourhood Plan

Nick Arnold reported that volunteers had been out delivering leaflets and circulating posters. The Facebook pages had between them over 1,400 followers. Good engagement with short (25sec) videos, with over 71,000 views. Comments from over 150 supporting the plan and 5 not supporting it.

Press releases had been sent to and published in local newspapers.

Issues with downloading the Plan from www.northamneighbourhoodplan.co.uk had been revised and the documents should download faster.

The Town Clerk reported that the count would be held after the referendum in the chamber at the Council Offices on Windmill Lane.

The committee expressed its thanks all those that had volunteered to circulate leaflets and engaged with community.

2608/230 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. 1/0492/2026/FUL

Proposal: Retrospective application for alteration to shopfront to add a serving hatch

Location: 22 Nelson Road, Westward Ho!

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

Proposed: Cllr Horrocks, Seconded: Cllr Newman-McKie (majority in favour, one abstention)

Chair's initials



2608/231 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) **1/0075/2026/LBC**

Proposal: Alterations to the design of previously approved application references 1/0455/2017/FULM and 1/0456/2017/LBC. (Variation of condition 2, 3, 4, 5 of 1/1183/2019/LBC)

Location: Fairlea Residential Home, South Lea, Northam,
(Northam Town Council recommended that the proposal be granted permission.)

ii) **1/0435/2026/FUH**

Proposal: Single storey extension to front of dwelling

Location: 37 The Fairways, Westward Ho!
(Northam Town Council recommended that the proposal be granted permission.)

iii) **1/0445/2026/FUL**

Proposal: Single storey extension and alterations to existing dwelling

Location: Atlantis House, Churchill Way, Northam
(Northam Town Council recommended that the proposal be granted permission.)

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:10pm

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

Chair's initials

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