



**Minutes of the Full Council of Holsworthy Town Council
held in the Holsworthy Market Chambers, The Square,
Wednesday 5th February 2025 commencing at 7:00pm**

Present: Cllrs; N. Kenneally, D. De ste Croix, P. Brown, H. Parker, L. Piper,
I. Edwards, J. Tadman, J. Hutchings

In attendance: Town Clerk (TC), Assistant to the Town Clerk (ATTC),
Acuiti: M. Nute, D. Dunmore.

Absentees: No absentees.

5588. Apologies for Absence
No apologies received.

5589. Declaration of Interest - To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interests in respect of items on this agenda.
The Mayor asked Councillors to declare any relevant interests as they arise.

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders (Unanimous)

5590. Public Question Time - *To receive questions from the Public.*

5591. Acuiti Presentation.
M. Nute & D. Dunmore introduced themselves and began

Cllr J. Morrish entered the meeting at 19:02

D. Dunmore began the presentation by demonstrating how to set up calendar meeting invites. He tested sending invites, explaining features such as selecting participants, setting dates and times, enabling recurring meetings, and configuring reminders. He also mentioned the option to merge inboxes but recommended using individual accounts instead.

Discussion ensued regarding email access and security. Cllr. J. Hutchings noted that he only accesses emails via his office computer and wished to consolidate accounts for convenience. While local government guidance discourages this due to security risks, it is not strictly prohibited. M. Nute explained that emails could be accessed via webmail or an app but warned that consolidating accounts on shared devices could compromise security. He suggested cloud-based access to mitigate risks.

Cllr. N. Kenneally enquired about the cost of adding email access to a computer. M. Nute confirmed it would be £2 per person per month. M. Nute suggested providing councillors with corporate devices, though this would be significantly more expensive it

would address the access issues. M. Nute explained the security benefits of cloud access versus local downloads, which could expose data if a device is shared.

Cllr. Hutchings expressed his preference for access, while Cllr. N. Keneally suggested further discussion in the F&GP committee. TC advised against increased expenditure without prior agreement. Discussion ensued

Cllr. L. Piper raised the idea of evaluating management software for transparency, including tools for logging actions, task management and time tracking. It was suggested that the TC contacts John Walters for advice on IT security solutions.

The Mayor and councillors thank M. Nute & D. Dunmore for their presentation.

M. Nute & D. Dunmore exited the meeting at 19:30

5592. County Councillor's Report

February started with a busy schedule. There were 11 calls and communications, mostly concerning the road surfaces at Glebelands. A significant issue was identified right opposite the sorting office, where water has eroded a gully through the middle of the road. Photos were sent to Devon County Council, who initially claimed the road had not been adopted, though it has. The lower section, however, remains unadopted. Discussions with Westward revealed their reluctance to repair the roads, but as the property owners, they are responsible.

There are two new Highways Officers, though an attempt was made to allocate only one to Holsworthy. Efforts are being made to ensure at least one of them visits the site. Housing issues have been carefully passed on, and a domestic violence case was signposted appropriately. There seems to be an increase in people seeking help for domestic violence, indicating that awareness is growing.

Regarding devolution and unitary authority changes, the government has confirmed that elections will take place in Devon. £1.3 million was allocated last year for election costs, meaning elections will be held in May. The newly elected members will serve for 12 months before another election in May next year establishes a Shadow Board. Current Torridge District Council councillors will step down, and the Shadow Board will serve another 12 months before both TDC and the Shadow Board are dissolved in 2027. If Plymouth and Exeter gain independent unitary status, the remainder of Devon, including Torridge, will be in a difficult position.

For Holsworthy Town Council, this could mean taking on additional responsibilities such as public toilets, streetlighting, and car parks. However, these services will not generate income and accepting them could lead to more challenges. There will also be a significant reduction in the number of elected members. The newly elected council in May will face challenges from the ongoing devolution process, with many members likely new to local government. There is concern that few experienced councillors will return to County Hall.

Devon County Council's finances include reserves for childcare and adult care, which are statutory responsibilities. DCC's total weekly costs amount to approximately £1.5 million, while running all core services, including education and council operations, costs £5 million per week.

There is little else to report around Holsworthy, but the role continues to be enjoyable. The experience of being a Devon County Councillor is different from that of a Torridge District Councillor. Acknowledgment was given to town and parish councillors for their hard work, as they often face as much, if not more, pressure than higher-tier councillors. Holsworthy and its rural areas are fortunate to have strong representatives. It was confirmed that the councillor will not stand for re-election in Holsworthy next year, though there is talk of standing elsewhere. Personal belief remains that the best people should be chosen for the job regardless of political views.

Cllr. J. Hutchings requested that item 19 be brought forward after the TDC councillor report. Councillors thanked him for his attendance. Cllr. Lenny Ford referenced a legal case involving a council member and highlighted the importance of following rules and regulations. Small issues can escalate, and elected members must be aware of this. He shared his experience attending a standards hearing and advised councillors to be cautious in aggressive situations and seek help if needed. The monitoring officer in Torridge was praised as very capable.

Q&A summary from Cllrs:

Councillor J. Hutchings asked for confirmation on whether the devolution deal is definitely happening. Councillor J. Morrish confirmed that it is, explaining that while unitary and devolution are different topics, they are closely linked. The devolution deal has been signed by the minister in charge of local government, meaning that devolution for Devon and Torbay is proceeding. There are two district council representatives involved in the deal—one from East Devon and one from Exeter—while North Devon and Torridge are not being represented.

5593. District Councillor's Report

Councillor Pete Shepherd

- Cllr. N. Kenneally requested TDC Cllr P. Shepherd to formally send apologies and a report.

Councillor Lyndon Piper:

Devolution / Local Government Reorganisation update

With the County Council elections set to proceed in May, there remains significant discussion around the future of local governance, asset transfers, and the broader impact of devolution.

Transfer of Assets

Discussions with Torridge District Council's Assets Manager suggest a complex and uncertain future for asset transfers. While concerns align with those raised by Councillor J. Morrish, there are potential options that could ensure assets remain in Holsworthy while generating some income. However, caution is necessary to safeguard the town's long-term interests.

Future of Active Torridge

The future of Active Torridge remains uncertain amidst these broader structural changes. Ensuring continued investment in leisure services will be key, especially as the region navigates funding challenges and shifting local priorities.

Levelling Up

There has been little recent update on the Levelling Up Fund. Some discussions appear to have gained traction, but priority projects such as the Appledore Maritime Centre and the Agriculture Business Park seem to be at the forefront. It remains unclear how Holsworthy may benefit from these funding allocations.

Market Charter

Currently under the control of Torridge District Council, Holsworthy has faced challenges in managing and leveraging the Market Charter. There is a growing sentiment that now may be the time to regain control of the charter, enabling adjustments to better serve the town's needs and enhance market operations.

Financial Considerations & Democracy

Discussions around local government finances highlight varying perspectives on spending levels, with figures needing to be viewed in the context of weekly expenditure. Councillor J. Morrish has provided insight into the scale of financial commitments, emphasising the importance of transparency and proportionate understanding.

Broader Challenges for Devon County Council

Devon County Council faces a monumental task in addressing interconnected issues, from local government reorganisation to healthcare concerns extending up to North Devon District Hospital. With so many overlapping challenges, there are growing concerns about the costs associated with elections at this time and whether resources could be better allocated elsewhere.

MUGA update

All progressing well and full application submitted by Torridge District Council Officers on or around 10th of January

C & R Budget Special

Agenda worth a read.

Argued against planned rises of parking fees at Well Car Park. Tabled motion to rise in line with inflation or as near as possible. Supported.

Also argued for rises on less essential items such as beach huts.

Freeze price rises at Torrington Work hub

Supported maximum 2.99% increase in TDC portion of council tax. Government grants being pulled next year (possibly to force the desire to do away with two tier authorities). Meaning that TDC is forecast to deplete its budget deficit reserves within around 3 years its budget deficit reserves.

Council Tax increases 16/17 to 25/26:

Torridge – 31%

Devon County - 49%

Police – 67%

Fire – 30%

Parish - 73%

Torridge share of council tax collected – 7.88%

(Lowered from 9% in 2016/17)

Supported replacement of new parking meters.

Ruby Way

Had a positive meeting with the Forestry Commission. Slow but steady progress. De vegetation of the viaduct delayed until winter 2025 due to ecology and health and safety issues not aligning.

Pharmacy provision in the town

Taking this up with NHS Devon. I have more information and contact details for complaints if the Town Council would like to get involved.

Holsworthy Leisure Centre update:

Hi Lyndon,

Just following up on our phone call earlier, here is the information in writing. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Despite the challenges posed by the recent forced closure of our facility, we are excited to highlight several positive developments that will enhance the leisure centre.

We are pleased to announce that the sports hall has been approved for reopening, and we will welcome back students and the public starting Monday, 10th February. We have communicated this news to the school, clubs, and regular customers. During the necessary renovations, all materials from the area—including dividing nets, cricket nets, and basketball hoop nets—had to be removed. We are currently gathering quotes for replacements; however, some fitness classes will continue in their temporary locations until these items are installed.

In conjunction with the reopening of the sports hall, we will provide changing and restroom facilities through a portable unit situated on the hard-court area outside.

Regarding the swimming pool, it has been open to the public since December 23rd following its initial closure. However, we will commence work on the pool roof in early March 2025, which will necessitate the temporary closure of this facility. This project is expected to last until mid to late May 2025.

On Monday, 10th February, we will send out a communication to all members regarding the upcoming pool closure. We will offer a 50% reduction in membership fees or the option to freeze swimming memberships, including swimming lesson customers. This message will also include relevant updates about the improvements being made to the facility. We are collaborating with our clubs, groups, and customers to ensure alternatives are available during the closure.

The renovations will include the replacement of windows along the poolside, new air handling systems for both the pool hall and changing facilities, the creation of a more open and inviting reception area, the development of a dedicated office space for staff, and a complete renovation of the changing facilities with new lockers, benches, cubicles, showers, flooring, and fresh decor.

Additionally, we would like to reassure our members that the gym will remain open throughout this phase of work.

Pool steps – we have had confirmation that these will be back with us by Tuesday 11th, next week.

Thank you once again for your support, Lyndon. It's fantastic to have you as a champion for both the facility and Active Torridge within the community.

Kind regards,

Chris

As there have been issues for residents with the Pharmacy, Cllr. L. Piper stated that he has contact details for the complaints procedure which he will forward to the TC for publishing online.

Cllr. L. Piper informed Council that there is a political discussion led by the Liberal Democrats with three MPs on Saturday, 15th February in the Memorial Hall. Tickets are £15. Everyone is welcome to attend. The three MPs attending are Danny Chambers, Danny Maguire, and Martin Wrigley. The event will include pasties and refreshments. There will also be a question-and-answer session.

Councillor N. Kenneally proposed that Item number 19 is moved forward and discussed. This was seconded by Cllr. L. Piper and approved. (Unanimous)

5594. To discuss and agree a letter to send to DALC regarding Devolution.

Cllrs discussed the drafted letter to DALC regarding Devolution. Discussion ensued. DCC Cllr. J. Morrish suggested focusing on the agricultural sector. TC agreed. Discussion ensued. Cllr. L. Piper suggested linking the agricultural business park to Holsworthy more in addition to the Cattle Market. Discussion ensued. It was agreed that the council would like to incorporate the agricultural business centre and cattle market into their Devolution letter to DALC.

The Chairman resumed Standing Orders (unanimous)

5595. Council Meeting Minutes – To approve and sign the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 15th January 2025

Councillor I. Edwards proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 15th of January 2025 and be approved. This was seconded by H. Parker and agreed. (8 For, 2 Abs)

5596. Matters Arising

5609 – To discuss and agree HTC's Budget and associated projects for 2025/26 – Cllr J. Hutchings clarified that the bicycle trail would not be part of the National Trail, it would be a bicycle trail around Holsworthy and not specific to the national trail.

5597. Review Action Items (Appendix 1)

The provisions of the Plough Arts Centre in Holsworthy are being organised and HTC will ensure thorough advertisement.

An online calendar is being developed to display upcoming events, meetings, and training. The banking mandate signatories have been updated, with primary user authority awaiting. Councillor training has been postponed due to the rearrangement of meetings. A Cyber Security Seminar is booked for 25th March 2025 at 17:00.

Cllr N. Kenneally has met with the Bowls Club regarding a light at Jubilee Path, the timer for the lights has been extended, and further issues will be monitored.

Donations of £100 have been organised and delivered to Holsworthy Lions, Holsworthy Youth Club, and Holsworthy Town Band. The implementation of financial software was discussed at F&GP and will proceed with historic data input. A new councillor has been appointed to subcommittees, with Cllr I. Edwards assigned to Markets.

The finalisation of Christmas expenditure and income is in progress, awaiting the cherry picker. F&GP is investigating its previous recommendation to Full Council regarding Market Hall and Market Chambers renovation.

DCC Events has been informed that Cllr L. Piper has been nominated as the representative for Holsworthy Town Council. TDC has been informed of the council's agreed precept, with the completed form submitted. A letter of support from the council has been sent for Trewyn Designs' request for a bollard. Westward Housing has been contacted to request assistance for a resident's disability apparatus.

The Primary School has been informed that a feasibility study for drainage in Stanhope Park has been conducted. A £100 donation from the Mayor's Allowance has been made towards a memorial bench at the Skateboard Park.

TDC has been informed that councillors request HUC reports for Holsworthy Cattle Market, Industrial Estate, and Underlane.

5598. Mayor's Announcements – *To receive a report from the mayor.*

On the 16th of January, I met with Dan from Acuiti to discuss emails and the calendar.

On the 21st of January, I attended a meeting with Torridge District Council, where I met with Ken James and Kirsty Brown.

On the 27th of January, I was present for the presentation of a hand-carved otter, which was donated to Holsworthy by local woodcarver Mr Chris Osborne.

On the 29th of January, I took part in a photo opportunity alongside the Chair of Parks, Councillor Helen Parker, at Station Close. The contractor who completed the works, Scott Cholwill, was also present.

On the 30th of January, I attended a devolution meeting via a DALC Zoom call. Later that day, I participated in a Scribe cost centre meeting with the Town Clerk, V. Saunders and Cllrs J. Hutchings and P Brown.

Regarding devolution, a drone video is being worked on by Kai, who will be coming in within the next three weeks. The councillor vacancy must now be included on all agendas. The mayoral photos have been completed, though some still need to be chased up. Elvis tickets are now available

5599. Accounts due for payment and budget review

Councillors discuss the accounts for payments due and approved the payment.

Councillor H. Parker proposed that the accounts for payment be approved. This was seconded by Councillor J. Tadman and agreed. (Unanimous)

5600.	To Receive and to Note, the Draft Minutes of the following Committee Meeting:	
	Planning & Highways	15th January 2025
	Parks	22nd January 2025
	Markets	22nd January 2025
	Finances & General Purposes	29th January 2025

5601. To advise the resignation of Councillor Dentlinger in January 2025 and to update on the current Councillor vacancy posted 31st October 2024, not yet filled.

The TC informed the committee that the currently there are 2 councillor vacancies. The vacancies must be on the agenda until all places are filled and has been advertised in our noticeboards, website and social media.

5602. To approve the addition of Private John Bailey - 2nd Btn Devonshire Regiment, to the Holsworthy War Memorial and to plant a tree in his name at Stanhope Park.

The TC informed the committee that HTC have recently been informed that the war memorial is missing 'Private John Bailey'. Discussion ensued. Cllr .J. Hutchings queried the costings of the overall item and location of the tree. The TC clarified the tree will be put in the park. Discussion ensued. Cllrs are in agreement to add the name to the war memorial however, would like park users to be consulted for the location of the tree. It was also suggested to ask for sponsorship for the tree.

Councillor D. De ste Croix proposed to approve the addition of Private John Bailey- 2nd Btn Devonshire Regiment to the Holsworthy War Memorial and to plant a tree in his name at Stanhope Park and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor S. Preston and approved. (Unanimous)

5603. To discuss proposals for the Council and approve a working group to mark the 80th Anniversary of VE Day in May 2025.

Councillors discussed who would like to be on the Victory Events Working Group.

Cllrs: D. De ste Croix, I. Edwards, J. Hutchings, H. Parker, L. Piper, S. Preston

The first meeting will be held on Monday 10th February 2025 at 4pm in the Manor Offices.

Councillor D. De ste Croix proposed that the Victory Events Working Group with the above councillors is agreed. This was seconded by Councillor H. Parker and approved. (Unanimous)

5604. To discuss and approve the recommendation from Parks Committee to purchase the Galleon Ship, in composite with a 30-year lifespan and a roundabout.

Discussion removal of former bird nest post, replacement on inclusive roundabout & erection of galleon ship.

Councillor N. Kenneally proposed the purchase of the Galleon ship in composite with a 30-year lifespan, a roundabout and removal of former play equipment is agreed. This was seconded by Councillor S. Preston and approved. (9 For, 1 Abstention)

5605. To discuss and approve an additional part-time staff member for the next financial year.

Councillor N. Kenneally informed Full Council that F&GP is the staffing committee and therefore, should be discussing this item.

Councillor N. Kenneally proposed to defer this item to Finances & General Purposes Committee and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor D. De ste Croix and approved. (Unanimous)

5606. To discuss and agree HTC's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

The TC gave a brief description to the committee regarding what an AUP is, in addition to the importance of it. Discussion ensued. The TC clarified to the committee that an AUP is standard practice for employees and has this policy has been modified to include councillors and contractors. Further discussion ensued.

Councillor N. Kenneally proposed to adopt the HTC Acceptable Use Policy and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor P. Brown and approved. (9 For, 1 Abstention)

Cllr. J. Hutchings requested a list of policies that indicated current policies and when they were adopted and last approved.

5607. To discuss and agree an HTC representative for Speccotts Charity.

Cllr. H. Parker informed the committee that Speccotts is a small charity that assists Holsworthy residents that are in great need for things. Money is not given out, however they do assist with replacing items. Discussion ensued. Cllr. J. Hutchings stated that he used to be on the committee, however, a former Cllr became the representative. It was clarified that formerly, the mayor was the representative however, now all councillors are welcome to be a representative. Discussion ensued. Cllr. H. Parker stated they are not only looking for a HTC representative but also a resident representative. Cllr. D. Cole expressed that he would like to be a representative. Cllr. L. Piper suggested asking Speccotts if Cllr. Hutchings can be a HTC rep and Cllr. D. Cole become the resident rep.

Councillor H. Parker proposed that Cllr. J. Hutchings is elected as a representative for Speccotts and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor N. Kenneally and approved. (Unanimous)

5608. To receive External Committee Updates.

No additional external committee updates were received.

5609. To receive a list of Correspondence.

- Southwest Ambulance – RE: Contract for defib supplies
Councillors requested this to be added to F&GP agenda.
- Holsworthy Bellringers – RE: Thank you to the council for the donation
- Friends of Holsworthy Library – RE: Thank you to the council for their grant & update on the use of the grant. Library is now wheelchair accessible.

5610. Town Clerk's Report – To receive a report from the Town Clerk

Torrige District Council (TDC) have installed 3 new bollards at the Manor car park, to prevent unauthorised vehicles from driving on the grass and pedestrian areas in front of the Manor Offices. TDC will be painting the bollards black when there is better weather.

I met with Cllr. J. Hutchings, P. Brown and the Mayor last week, to identify the cost centres for the new financial package with Scribe. The financial data for 2024/25, new cost centres, bank account names and earmarked reserves were sent to Scribe yesterday, to begin building the data base for the HTC Scribe application which will start in the new financial year.

The sunlounge project is progressing. I met with Active Asbestos on 25th January and they completed the asbestos survey on 31st January. Blackman Builders have confirmed a start date of mid-March for the works on the Sun Lounge. Cllr. H. Parker is meeting with the contractors to select the new cabinetry colours and designs.

Thank you to the Parks Committee for their engagement with the new parks equipment process and Full council for approving the new equipment.

The fire panel at the Manor Offices is being replaced next week, due to faults and HTC staff will receive training from M&E Alarms on the use of the panel. The annual check of Penrose Terrace's water boiler is being arranged. Currently compiling a list of TDC and DCC assets in the Holsworthy area, for your information.

Community engagement (through correspondence, phone calls and posters) are improving as well as Councillor engagement and social media promotion of HTC activities. In process of implementing contingency systems for business continuity. Most recently TDC agreed to have their waste management staff manage Stanhope Park bins when HTC staff are absent due to annual leave, illness or training. Currently working a contingency plan for the Markets, set up and down to cover HTC staff absences as well as finance continuity.

Training – staff have obtained training in manual handling and risk assessments.

5588. To discuss and approve the permanent employment of the Town Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer.

Councillor N. Kenneally proposed to defer this item to Finances & General Purposes Committee and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor D. De ste Croix and approved. (Unanimous)

5589. Close

Councillor N. Kenneally closed the meeting at 21:45

Signed

Dated

Appendix 1 – Actions from Full Council on 15th January 2025

		Action	Who	Completed
1.	17.07.24	Investigate working with District and County to improve the overall maintenance of paths in Holsworthy. (Cllr Piper's Report)	Cllr. L. Piper	In progress. Rydon path to Viaduct Path to review updates with Cllr. L. Piper.
2.	17.07.24	Investigate the provisions of the Plough Arts Centre in Holsworthy and ensure it is thoroughly advertised. (Also involve HATS)	Office	In Progress, Plough Arts have been contacted with the options.
3.	02.10.24	Ask TDC for Compensation for Market Hall & Chambers.	Office	Contacted, may require review due to white paper.
4.	02.10.24	Councillor Training – Councillors that want training need to contact the Office with the dates they are available in conjunction with the dates provided at Full Council and to New Councillors via Email	Councillors	Councillors training postponed due to rearrangement of meetings. Cyber Security Seminar booked for 25 th March 2025 at 17:00.
5.	06.11.24	TC to ask Maintenance Operative to investigate and identify land requiring maintenance. To be agreed, if necessary, at the next Full Council. Add to Agenda in Feb.	Office & Town Ranger	May require review due to white paper.
6.	06.11.24	Cllr. N. Kenneally to meet with Bowls Club RE: a light stationed at Jubilee Path.	Cllr. N. Kenneally & Town Ranger	Cllr. N. Kenneally visited Bowls and set an extended timer for the lights and will investigate if issues persist.
7.	04.12.24	Add 'To discuss and agree implementation of financial software' to F&GP's next Agenda	Town Clerk	Completed. To be implemented and historic data input.
8.	04.12.24	To summarise the Magpies RBL EGM on 13 th Dec to update Council.	Cllr. L. Piper & Magpies RBL Chair	Draft Minutes were received at Full Council Jan 2024
9.	15.01.25	To finalise Christmas Expenditure & Income	Office	In process, awaiting cherry picker.
10.	15.01.25	F&GP to investigate their previous recommendation to Full Council for Market Hall & Market Chambers renovation.	F&GP	With F&GP
	15.01.25	To inform DCC Events that Cllr. L. Piper has been nominated as Representative for Holsworthy Town Council.	Town Clerk	Completed
11.	15.01.25	To inform TDC of Holsworthy Town Council's agreed Precept with a completed form.	Town Clerk	Completed
12.	15.01.25	To write support from Holsworthy Town Council for Trewyn Designs' request for a bollard.	Town Clerk	Completed
13.	15.01.25	To write to Westward Housing to request they assist a resident with their request for disability apparatus in their property.	Town Clerk	Completed – awaiting response
14.	15.01.25	Cllrs L. Piper and D. Cole to visit Stanhope Park and analyse the drainage.	Cllr. L. Piper & Cllr. D. Cole	
15.	15.01.25	To write to the Primary School and inform them that HTC have got a feasibility study for the drainage in Stanhope Park and investigating drainage though funds will need to be sourced.	Town Clerk	Completed
16.	15.01.25	To donate £100 of the Mayor's Allowance to the memorial bench residents have requested at the Skateboard Park	Town Clerk	Completed
17.	15.01.25	To request Cllr. I. Edwards to sign the agenda for Item 25 – correspondence	Office	To ask before Full Council as Register of interest book will be available.