



**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held in the Market Hall, The Square, Holsworthy on  
Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 7.00pm.**

**Present:** Councillors: J. Hutchings, H. Parker, J. Allen, D. De ste Croix, P. Brown, D. Cole, I. Edwards,  
N. Kenneally, G. Mardle, J. Tadman

**In attendance:** Town Clerk (TC), Assistant to the Town Clerk (ATTC)

**5673. Apologies for absence**

Councillors: S. Preston & L. Piper

**5674. Declaration of interests - *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 arose.

**The Chairman suspended Standing Orders (Unanimous)**

**5675. County Councillor's Report**

The Town Clerk informed the committee that Devon County Councillor Lynne Rowsell has sent apologies as she will be attending and will be late, however, has not submitted a report as she is currently in the process of training for her new role as County Councillor and therefore, has no updates.

**5676. District Councillor's Reports**

**District Councillor Piper's Report**

Please accept my apologies for tonight's meeting.

Hopefully we can arrange a meeting soon regarding the improvement works to Manor offices. I will try to touch base with Harvey Gardener to see if we have any deadlines to adhere to.

Worrying rumours circulating about the agri-business park project. It will be incredibly disappointing if the potential of the livestock market is not realised after such a long delay and the golden opportunity of government funding to kick start things. I have asked for an update from officers. Cllr Shepherd may have more insight from the Leader Cllr James. This coupled with the old market site still lying in rubble is somewhat taking the edge off of the very successful new livestock market.

I am meeting with Andrew Combes at the weekend. He has been keeping up communication with Historic Railways Estate regarding the Coles Mill viaduct which will hopefully keep this project on course for de-vegetation next winter.

I see works appear to be progressing in the area of the promised footpath at Rydon Fields. I have asked the developer for an update.

The Sports Hall is having further upgrade works to the netting this week. Please see Active Torridge website for updates. I believe classes are being carried out in the scout hut to minimise disruption.

The youth football club have carried out the annual renovations to the football pitch north of Stanhope Park and have asked if use of the space can be kept to a minimum to allow the new seed to take hold.

I will be attending a Health and Well Being workshop on Monday involving North Devon Biosphere. This will feed into the new Local Plan for Northern Devon. The biosphere team do fantastic work, mostly in the north of the region, and I will be lobbying for their positive impacts to be spread more in our direction.

Final thought - I am seeing a rise in vital community groups across Torridge coming up against serious financial challenges. We seem to be in a world which forces costs onto these groups where they once did not exist and coupled with a society less able to volunteer time I have concerns as to where things are heading. With Local Government Reorganisation on the horizon perhaps it is time to really think hard about how we spend our precept monies and how we can support groups and organisations that make lasting improvements to people's lives.

As always, I am happy to take questions from Councillors via e-mail or ideally phone and apologies again for not being there in person tonight.

## **District Councillor Shepherd's Report**

### **Torridge**

We had our AGM and an extraordinary meeting on Monday the 19th last month. The highlights are as follows:

#### **Extraordinary Meeting:**

TDC awarded a grant totalling over £1M to buy 5 residential houses for temporary accommodation means. These are all based in East-the-water but adds to Torridge's stock.

We had an update to the new Operational Services Centre. This will centralise operations such as the waste team. I will be in the process of seeing what plans there are for the redundant Piper's Yard in Chapel Street. There was a vote to increase spending on the centre to cover new machinery and extra solar panels.

#### **AGM:**

These meetings always seem a bit scripted, but the members chose Cllr. Ken James as leader and Cllr. Claire Hodson as deputy. In fact, most of the positions (chairs/ vice chairs etc.) remained the same as last year.

Following on from the Peer review there is now a 'cabinet' style of governance by the means of a newly formed Senior Leadership team (SLT) and removing the Leadership Team Group. The councillors who pushed this idea are the very same who sit on the SLT! This group will 'provide strategic oversight, governance and direction to the Council' and not makes decisions but the more you delve the more this group will make decisions and recommendations to committees.

I have a meeting with the leader of the Council after I write this but before the meeting this evening so I will update you on the very latest with the Local Government Reorganisation LGR and the Regeneration Project. As it stands there are calls to scrap the LGR altogether, this will involve all of the Devon districts working as one so not sure this will happen.

As for the Regeneration Project, talks are still on going. The price of the land is a stumbling block but I'm confident we as a town will still get the money and the expansion of the Agri-site will happen.

### **Correspondence**

Cllr. David Cole is on the case with the missing bench down the bottom of Honey Meadows and I'm talking to Simon Hoare next week to see where we stand (or sit) on the situation!

### **Other**

Prior to this meeting I'm having another meeting with the organisers of the Youth Centre. As for many local groups and organisations they are faced with ever increasing money issues. This will be a great loss to the Town if this asset was lost, I know the Town Council give a grant each year, but they need something more substantial. If any members have any ideas on how to secure this asset or need to ask me a question on anything Torridge related, please get in contact.

### **The Chairman resumed Standing Orders (Unanimous)**

- 5677. Council Meeting Minutes** - To approve and sign the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Council Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

**Councillor D. De ste Croix proposed the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Council held on 7<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025 be signed as a true record. This was seconded by Councillor H. Parker and approved. (9 For, 1 Abstention, 0 Against)**

- 5678. Matters arising** - To consider matters arising from the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Council Meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025. Not already covered by the Agenda.

No matters arose that were not already covered by the Agenda.

- 5679. Review Action Items from Full Council Meetings**

The committee reviewed the Action Items.

- 5680. Mayor's Announcements** - To receive a report from the Mayor

I'd like to begin by welcoming our County Councillor, Lynne Rowsell. Although you unfortunately missed your time slot, I'd still like to warmly welcome you to your first Full Council meeting.

Next, I'd like to present a gift of appreciation to a very special friend of mine to mark his mayorship. In the spirit of encouragement (and perhaps a little more drinking!), we've purchased a whisky glass engraved with your name. I hope you enjoy it.

**Mayor Councillor Jon Hutchings presented the gift to Councillor Nigel Kenneally.**

I believe I've now been Mayor for around four weeks, and I must say, it's been a busy start! I've already received more Freedom of Information requests in this short time than I've seen in the past four years.

In the past few weeks, I've also had the pleasure of attending several community events, including the Army Cadets, the Football Club Presentation, and activities with the Twinning Committee.

From a personal point of view, I'd like to extend heartfelt thanks to Allison and Tegan. I know I've probably been a bit of a pain at times, but I genuinely want to do whatever I can to make things easier for the office.

**5681. Accounts Due for Payment and Budget Review** - To receive and approve the accounts due for payment

Councillors discussed the renaming of the agenda item to 'To review payments and budget'. Councillor J. Hutchings informed the committee that in future the finance reports that will be brought to committee will be: Summary of Income & receipts, Working budget sheet (Monthly Progress) and Earmarked Reserves. It was also noted that each councillor has a login which they can request from the office to gain access to their 'read only' account to review the finances. TDC Cllr P. Shepherd queried if members of public would have read only access for the new financial software- Scribe. The TC clarified that members of public would not have access. The Finance & General Purposes Committee agreed the financial documents that will be uploaded to the website to remain transparent and open such as Income, Expenditure & Earmarked Reserves.

**Councillor D. De ste Croix proposed that the accounts due for payment be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor N. Kenneally and approved. (Unanimous)**

**5682. To receive and to Note the minutes of the following committee Meetings:**

- |                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| a) Planning & Highways        | 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2025 |
| b) Parks                      | 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2025 |
| c) Finance & General Purposes | 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2025 |

Councillors reviewed the minutes of the above committee meetings and noted that Finance & General Purposes minutes were not provided due to being the day prior. The Finance & General Purposes minutes will be reviewed at the next Full Council meeting in July 2025.

**5683. To receive and agree the Annual Internal Audit Report and Internal Accounts for the Financial Year 2024/25**

The Town Clerk informed the committee that there is a variable greater than 15% in section 2, box number 3 which is due to a decrease in income from Grants and s106 funds.

**Councillor H. Parker proposed that the Annual Internal Audit Report and Internal Accounts for the Financial Year 2024/25 be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor J. Allen and approved. (Unanimous)**

**5684. To receive and agree the Annual Governance Statement detailed in the Annual Return for the Financial Year 2024/25**

Councillors discussed the Annual Governance Statement detailed in the Annual Return for the Financial Year 2024/25.

**Councillor J. Hutchings proposed the Annual Governance Statement detailed in the Annual Return for the Financial Year 2024/25 be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor H. Parker and approved. (Unanimous)**

**5685. To receive and agree the Accounting Statements for the Financial Year 2024/25**

Councillors discussed the Accounting Statements for the Financial Year 2024/25.

**Councillor N. Kenneally proposed the Accounting Statements for the Financial Year 2024/25 be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor H. Parker and approved. (Unanimous)**

**5686. To review current projects for 2025/26**

Councillor J. Hutchings noted that the Town Centre Regeneration funds have not been broken down into the previously agreed projects but will be to enable a clearer visual of the funds remaining in the Earmarked Reserves. Another reason for looking at the projects is to nominate council members to take lead over their projects and enable each project to be progressed forward. Discussion ensued.

**Projects and their Leads**

Allotments	Cllr. N. Kenneally & D. De ste Croix
Bicycle Trail	Cllr. J. Hutchings
Christmas Lights	Cllr. J. Hutchings
Sun Lounge	Cllr. H. Parker
Youth Shelter	Cllr. D. De ste Croix

**5687. To receive External Committee Updates**

Cllr. D. De ste Croix queried whether further information can be sourced regarding the role as Rep for Devon Local Nature Partnership. ATTC will investigate this and forward any information to both reps: Cllr. D. De ste Croix & Cllr. D. Cole.

**5688. To receive Correspondence**

The committee discussed the pharmaceutical response. Cllrs suggested copying NHS England and publish on social media to keep residents informed. Discussion ensued. It was noted that another Pharmacy will not operate within Holsworthy whilst a licensed Pharmacist is in place even while they current one does not open. Cllrs discussed that this may be a reoccurring issue with other towns / parishes and maybe HTC could work with them to put pressure on the joint issues together. Further discussion ensued. To write Pharmaceutical to further investigate the issues and include MP Sir Geoffrey Cox in addition to our Devon County Cllr Lynne Rowsell and Torridge District Cllrs Pete Shepherd & Cllr Lyndon Piper.

Currently there are no further responses received from the Dentist.

**5689. Town Clerk's Report**

HTC is in the final steps of completing the necessary changes to update banking. We now have authority to enable quick access to telephone banking and will shortly be looking at re allocating funds for short term investment and income generating purposes.  
The ATTC is enrolled in CiLCA. This is a 200-hour course over a 12-month period over and above the normal contracted hours. Some work time will be allocated for completion of the certification as per DALC recommendations. I am also contemplating not doing it this year as 2 people with that time commitment would not be viable.

The TDC Leader Ken James and CEO Steve Hearse are meeting with the Mayor and Clerk on 17<sup>th</sup> June to discuss the current situation.

The TDC EDT are meeting with the Mayor and TC on 23<sup>rd</sup> June to discuss current and future economic development opportunities in Holsworthy.

The ATTC and TC will be attending a Clerk Expo in Exeter on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025 for sector information, networking and development opportunities.

Thank you again to Deputy Mayor Councillor Helen Parker for her leadership on the Badock Gardens Sun Lounge Project. The Parks Committee is working toward a grand opening event.

The HTC Annual insurance was reviewed by the Finance Committee with an enquiry regarding a duplication of cyber security coverage between James Hallam insurance and Acuiti. Acuiti is investigating if the additional coverage is required and the insurance payment is due on 24<sup>th</sup> June.

**5690. Exchange of Information**

No additional information was exchanged.

**5691. To update and discuss the Holsworthy Football Club Lease.**

The committee discussed the Holsworthy Football Club Lease.

**5692. Close**

Councillor J. Hutchings closed the meeting at 20:38

Signed .....

Dated .....