



**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held in the Market Hall, The Square, Holsworthy on
Wednesday 7th January 2026 at 7pm**

Present: Councillors; J. Hutchings, H. Parker, J. Allen, P. Brown, D. Cole, D. De ste Croix, I. Edwards
N. Kenneally, G. Mardle, L. Piper & S. Preston

In attendance: Town Clerk (TC), TDC Councillor P. Shepherd.

5763. Apologies for absence.

Councillors: J. Tadman & DCC Cllr L. Rowsell.

5764. 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 arise.

Councillor J. Hutchings declared an interest regarding Agenda Item 11, Minute Number 5773.

5765. Public Open Question Time

No members of public in attendance.

5766. County Councillors' Report

Councillor Lynne Rowsell submitted apologies and had no current updates.

5767. District Councillors reports

Councillor Pete Shepherd had no current updates.

Councillor Lyndon Piper gave a verbal update regarding the Agricultural Business Centre noting that the project is continuing and will be corresponding with the Mayor, Councillor J. Hutchings & TDC District Cllr N. Kenneally to work together.

Cllr. H. Parker thanked Cllr. L. Piper and Cllr. P. Shepherd for their hard work on this project.

5768. Council Meeting Minutes – To approve and sign the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 3rd December 2025.

Councillors reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 3rd December 2025.

Councillor J. Hutchings proposed to sign the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 3rd December 2025 and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor H. Parker and approved. (10 For, 1 Abstention, 0 Against).

5769. Matters Arising - To consider matters arising from the Minutes of the 3rd December 2025 Meeting. For information only.

No matters arose from the minutes held on 3rd December 2025.

5770. Review Action Items from Full Council Meetings.

Councillors reviewed the Full council action items and noted the following updates:

Cllr. N. Kenneally has discussed the allotments project with an officer at TDC in the planning department and was advised that HTC should submit a pre-planning application which will be on the agenda for Planning & Highways. TC noted that no read closure is in place for the

Market but a TTRO requires further investigation. Councillors discussed recent parking tickets issued in the Square on Wednesday. TC will follow-up on the parking tickets and update councillors. Further discussion ensued.

5771. Mayor's Announcements – To receive a report from the Mayor.

A small project supporting families in need helped 28 families, with additional support provided by the food bank. School teachers and parents assisted with wrapping presents and as part of the families-in-need initiative.

There was a Santa Run which was great fun and well attended.

The Christmas Tree Festival was successfully held and Jag Signs kindly donated a large number of stars for the Christmas Tree Festival, helping to raise money for the church.

Peter Peter Wright won first place in the *Best Dressed Window* competition and displayed the certificate immediately. More businesses have expressed interest in entering next year which is very positive.

The Cadets held a Christmas dinner and presentation, which I attended and it was excellent.

There was a Christmas Carol Service which was well attended.

Christmas Eve carols around the tree were enjoyed by many.

The Portreeve and I visited Deer Park and Wroes; residents were very happy, and it was wonderful to see everyone.

Christmas lights were taken down following the festive period, thank you to everyone that helped.

Progress continues to be made at the Agricentre.

5772. To Review payments and budget – To receive and approve the accounts

The TC briefed councillors on the finances. TC thanked Cllr. J. Allen & H. Parker for their regular help with reconciling the finances.

Councillor H. Parker proposed the Finances for November are a true record and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor P. Brown and approved. (Unanimous)

5773. To agree any virements from grants received into the Christmas Budget.

The Town clerk briefed councillors on 2 grants received by Balsdon Trust in aid of the Christmas Switch on event for volunteers and Families in Need which will be virement into the Christmas Budget.

Councillor P. Brown proposed to approve the Virements totalling £900 from Grants Received into Cost Code 77 and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor D. De ste Croix and approved. (10 For, 1 Abstention, 0 Against).

5774.To agree the decision to donate Christmas 2025 funds towards Holsworthy families in need.

Councillors discussed the funding received from local organisations which are to be donated towards Holsworthy families in need and discussed donating additional funds on behalf of Holsworthy Town Council. Donations received: £400 Balsdon Trust and £200 from Holsworthy Lions.

Councillor N. Kenneally proposed that a donation of £216.97 is granted toward the Holsworthy Families in need and be approved. This was seconded by Councillor I. Edwards and agreed. (10 For, 1 Abstention, 0 Against).

5775.To agree Holsworthy Town Council's Budget and associated Projects for the financial year 2026/2027

The Council reviewed the options for the budget and associated projects for the financial year 2026/27.

Councillor J. Hutchings proposed that Option C for the Council's Budget and associated Projects for the financial year 2026/27 be approved. This was seconded by Councillor H. Parker and agreed. (10 For, 0 Abstention, 1 Against).

5776.To agree Holsworthy Town Council's Precept for the financial year 2026/27.

The Council reviewed the Precept for the financial year 2026/27. Councillors discussed publishing a press release to inform the public of the agreed budget, projects and precept.

Councillor J. Hutchings proposed that the Council's Precept of £234,300 for the financial year 2026/2027 be approved. This was seconded by Councillor S. Preston and agreed. (10 For, 0 Abstention, 1 Against).

5777.To agree the final income and expenditure on the Christmas Switch on Event and other Christmas expenditure.

The TC briefed councillors on the additions to the Christmas switch on income and expenditure. Councillors reviewed the overall Christmas finances. Discussion ensued.

Councillor H. Parker proposed to agree the final Christmas income and expenditure be approved. This was seconded by Councillor N. Kenneally and agreed. (10 For, 1 Abstention, 0 Against).

5778.To give an update on the Ruby Way Project

Councillor L. Piper the Ruby Country Path gave brief update on the Ruby Way Project. IT connects into a wider network, Pegasus Way from Halwill to Okehampton. The project managed by Devon County Council. Further discussion ensued. Torridge District Council is supportive of the project and Devon County Council's support is growing. Cllr. L. Piper will continue to update the council on updates from the Ruby Way project when appropriate and advise when a Holsworthy working group is required.

5779. To discuss and agree any actions to support improvement with the Southwest Water Overflow system.

The TC provided councillors with overflow statistics for the local area and noted Southwest Water began recording the statistics in 2022. Councillors reviewed the statistics. Cllr. D. Cole expressed his concerns over the frequency of overflow into the local rivers. Councillors requested the TC to write to Southwest water to request an update on status of overflow improvements and highlight the Council's concern of the long timelines for improvement.

5780. To discuss and agree to support Northern Devon Railway Alliance with its aim to provide a railway link between Bideford and Barnstaple.

The council received correspondence requesting support for their aim to provide a railway link between Bideford and Barnstaple. Discussion ensued. Councillors discussed the benefit it would provide for residents regarding transport within Torridge.

Councillor J. Hutchings proposed to support Northern Devon Railway Alliance with its aim to provide a railway link between Bideford and Barnstaple and upgrade North Devon Tarka line between Exeter and Barnstaple and be approved. This was seconded by Councillor S. Preston. (10 For, 1 Abstention, 0 Against).

5781. To Receive External Committee Updates.

Councillor J. Allen informed the committee that Holsworthy Library have forwarded a survey regarding Devon Libraries. Discussion ensued. Councillors requested the survey to be shared to residents on HTC's website and social media.

5782. To Receive Correspondence – To receive correspondence and make decisions on any actions to be taken on matters arising from these.

The TC informed the committee that a resident wrote a complaint to HTC regarding the Christmas Switch-on and the light-up sticks. Discussion ensued. The TC will write to the resident regarding their concern of non-environmentally friendly products at HTC events.

5783. Town Clerk's Report - To receive a report from the Town Clerk for information only.

The HTC HSBC investment matures on January 8th and unless otherwise directed will return to the main account. Please advise re-investment to be discussed at F & GP Committee and ratified at February Full Council. Full Council were in favour for the reinvestment of the funds.

The 3rd financial quarter VAT refund will be filled later this week.

Grit box re-fills have been requested on the DCC website and HTC has 2 pallets of salt inventory at Badock Gardens. Residents will be able to pick up if requested with support. Councillors discussed having a trained snow warden and access to grit for icy areas.

The TC attended the annual SLCC meeting in Exeter in December. The national SLCC CEO was presented and highlighted new UK legislation in the works under the

Standards reform government group

The UK government has recently announced significant reforms to enhance public standards and ethics in government. These reforms include the establishment of the Ethics and Integrity Commission (EIC), which replaces the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) and aims to simplify existing arrangements. The EIC will promote the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life. The group is looking at powers to suspend a position for 6 months up to 1 year and/ or disqualification for more than 6 months for breaches in the code of conduct. Councils are currently encouraged to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge.

The AGAR is expected to become fully digital in 2027.

In December 2025 new crockery was purchased and picked up from IKEA and is now located at the Sunlounge. The new shutters will be installed on January 15th. The Parks Committee will be working towards a grand opening in the Spring with defined management procedures in place for public use.

Due to poor weather and trader illness, both planned markets in December were cancelled. Market Committee will work on a new seasonal market with a launch in the Spring. Planning permission has been submitted for the MUGA playzone in Holsworthy and no update on the Manor offices project. Repairs to Penrose Terrace roof and guttering were completed in December.

Councillor N. Kenneally proposed that in view of the special or confidential nature of the following business to be transacted, it is advisable, in the public interest, that the public and press temporarily be excluded and they will be instructed to withdraw. This was seconded by Councillor H. Parker and agreed. (Unanimous)

Councillor D. De ste Croix proposed that the meeting returns to Part 1 and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor H. Parker and approved. (Unanimous)

5784.Exchange of information -- With permission of the mayor, to exchange information only on any other subject.
No additional information was exchanged.

Close

Councillor J. Hutchings closed the meeting at 20:47.

Signed *D H P Parker*

Dated *4/2/26*

