

NORTH TAWTON TOWN COUNCIL

Town Clerk:
Mrs Sarah Say
Assistant Town Clerk:
Mr Stephen Webb

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North Tawton
EX20 2EP
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Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of North Tawton Town Council held at the Council Offices on:
TUESDAY 3 December 2019 at 7.30 pm.

Present:

Cllr S Whiteley (Chair)	Cllr K Hodge	Cllr Mrs C Burrow
Cllr J Gray	Cllr Miss K Drake	Cllr Ms J Trehwitt
Cllr Dr P Brickley	Cllr Mrs S Watson	Cllr Miss R Testa
Cllr M Kennedy	Cllr C Lee	
WDBC Cllr B Ratcliffe	Mrs S Say, Town Clerk	

There were two members of the public in attendance.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – It was reported that Cllr Gray had an emergency situation and would not be able to attend the meeting.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – none declared at this time.
3. **Minutes of the Previous Meetings**
 - 3.1 To approve and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of North Tawton Town Council held at the Council Offices on Tuesday 5th November 2019 at 7.00 pm – **approved.**
 - 3.2 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee of North Tawton Town Council held at the Council Office on 1 August 2019 at **7.30 pm - approved.**
 - 3.3 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Estates Committee of North Tawton Town Council held at the Council Office on 20th November 2019 – **approved.**
4. **Updates - Please keep your update to a maximum of 3 minutes**
 - 4.1 Chairman to update the Council on various issues - No specific updates.
 - 4.2 Update on the NT Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Ms J. Trehwitt
A meeting is set with Duncan Smith of WDBC on 17 December, the plan is to agree final changes and then go to referendum in January/February 2020.
 - 4.3 Update from Estates Committee – Cllr Mrs J. Trehwitt
There is an agenda item.
 - 4.4 Update from Finance Committee – Cllr Mrs R. Davies
There is an agenda item.
 - 4.5 Update from Section 106 Monitoring Group - No specific updates.
 - 4.6 Update from Section 106 Arts Group
New base now installed, sculpture to be re-erected 16 December.
 - 4.7 Update from Personnel Advisory Group - No specific updates.
 - 4.8 Update from Den Brook Community Fund – No specific updates.
 - 4.9 Update from Parking and Traffic Group/Meeting with Sarah Campbell Devon Highways
NB – this should have had an agenda item, which was omitted by mistake, therefore members were updated in the Parish Matters section of the agenda.
 - 4.10 Update from North Tawton Nature Group – Cllr Ms R. Testa –
There is an agenda item.
 - 4.11 Update from WDBC from Cllr Ms. Lois Samuel and Cllr Mr. B Ratcliffe.
Cllr Ratcliffe reported that further to WDBC declaring a Climate Change Emergency in May, the Borough Council had now drawn up a Climate Change Action Plan.

5. Ongoing issues

'Action Log' – see final pages Annex A.

- Cllr Whiteley confirmed that work on the Directory is a priority for 2020.
- The Clerk confirmed that the new NTTC website has gone live, there will be a declaration about the launch of the website in the New Year when any teething issues should be sorted out.
- Gov.uk email addresses being progressed now, as we have got the Gov.uk domain name confirmed.

6. Consultations/Newsletters/Invitations

6.1 Sports for all ages

Newsletter received from the organisation, they have 2 open meetings in the New Year - 21.1.20 and 11.2.20, both at the Rugby Club premises.

7. Budget and Precept (Please refer to minutes of NTTC Finance Committee 19.11.19)

Cllr Mrs R Davies, Chair of the NTTC Finance Committee introduced the budget and the precept request. It was reported that there were 2 major issues that had to be taken into account in the setting of the budget for the next financial year. The first was that although a final vote still had to be taken at WDBC they were in fact almost certain to vote to discontinue paying parishes the Parish Precept Support Grant. Secondly, the Council had written to WDBC with reference to business rates relief, and instead of obtaining some extra funding NTTC had been advised that business rates relief had been incorrectly applied, and therefore our payments in this regard would increase substantially as from 2020-2021. WDBC had been unable to supply information as to the number of houses in the parish, or the Council Tax Base for the next financial year, therefore the Council has had to work on information available, and will not be able to calculate the average Band D increase as yet.

Further to some discussion, the following proposals were considered and voted on accordingly:

- 7.1** To consider setting the Council's budget for 2020/21 as recommended by the NTTC Finance Committee at its meeting on 19 November 2019 (further paperwork will be circulated at the meeting).

The Finance Committee recommend that the Council approve the NTTC Budget for 2020/21 in the sum of £123,459.45. Cllr Miss R Testa proposed that the Council approve this recommendation. This was seconded by Cllr Ms J Trehitt and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was CARRIED.

- 7.2** To resolve to make the relevant precept request to West Devon Borough Council for the year 2020/21 as recommended by the NTTC Finance Committee at its meeting held on 19 November 2019.

Deducting the Council's estimated income for 2020/21 from the required budget, leaves a figure of £118,403.45. However, during 2020/21 WDBC will no longer be paying the annual Precept Support Grant, which would have been £3785.67. WDBC advised Towns and Parishes to make allowance for this in their proposed budgets for the coming Financial Year. Therefore our precept request for 2020/21 is £118,403.45 plus £3785.67 = £122,189.12. Cllr P Brickley proposed that the Council approve this recommendation. This was seconded by Cllr Miss R Testa and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was CARRIED.

8. Clerk Membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)

Further to an explanation from the Clerk as to the advisability of joining the SLCC Cllr Miss R Testa proposed that the Council approve the Town Clerk to apply for membership. This was seconded by Cllr C Lee and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried.

9. Members visit to Cemetery

Further to discussion it was agreed to postpone the cemetery visit to a suitable date in 2020.

10. Report from NTTC Estates Committee:

10.1 Further to some discussion and confirmation that the proposed bird and bat boxes would be constructed at Lindfield Day Opportunities Care Farm where appropriate insurances are in place, Cllr

Ms J Trehwitt proposed that a sum of money up to £500 be made available for this project. This was seconded by Cllr P Brickley and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried.

10.2 Further to discussion and some explanation by Cllr Miss R Testa, Cllr Mrs R Davies proposed that the Council agree the proposal as set out by the Estates Committee for the planting of yellow rattle. This was seconded by Cllr P Brickley and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried.

11. Review of Committee Structures.

Further to some discussion, Cllr Ms R Testa suggested she could transfer to the Finance Committee from the Planning Committee. Cllr Mrs R Davies proposed that the Council accept the amended Committee Structure. This was seconded by Cllr Miss K Drake and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried.

12. NTTC Risk Management Policy

Councillor Ms R Testa proposed that the Council adopt this Policy, dated December 2019, and that it be reviewed as part of a general review of policies in 2020. This was seconded by Cllr C Lee and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried.

13. NTTC Reserves Policy

The Chair of the NTTC Finance Committee and the Town Clerk made some explanations with reference to the policy, and there was some discussion as to the content of the policy. Cllr Ms R Testa proposed that the Council approve the policy and the specification that for the 2020/21 financial year the sum of £75k be allocated to Earmarked Reserves as set out in the policy dated December 2019. This was seconded by Cllr Miss K Drake and there were 11 votes in favour therefore the proposal was carried. Cllr Ms J Trehwitt then proposed that the Council accept the recommendation to allocate £59k to General Reserves, accepting the proviso as to possible end of year adjustment as set out in the report. This was seconded by Cllr P Brickley and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried.

14. Climate Emergency (see Annex C for background and supporting information/advice)

Further to some discussion the following proposals were made:

14.1 Cllr P Brickley proposed that NTTC 'declares a Climate Emergency'. This was seconded by Cllr Ms R Testa. There were 6 votes in favour, 4 abstentions, and 1 objection, therefore the proposal was carried.

14.2 Cllr Ms R Testa proposed that the Town Council make a commitment to seeking ways to facilitate and encourage our community in reducing direct and indirect CO2 emissions. This was seconded by Cllr C Lee and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried.

14.3 Cllr Ms J Trehwitt proposed that the Council researches and implements ways in which North Tawton can become more resilient to changes caused by the changing climate situation. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs R Davies and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried.

14.4 Cllr C Lee proposed that the Council considers how best to progress these aims – for example, perhaps joint working between the Estates Committee and the Nature Group in order to make viable and well researched proposals to the Council. This was seconded by Cllr Ms J Trehwitt and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried.

15. PLANNING MATTERS

15.1 Application 3554/19/ARM

Proposal: Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval 1836/16/OPA for construction of three self-build dwellings

Address: Land at SX 665 101 Adjacent to east of Devonshire Gardens North Tawton

Further to discussion, including recognition that the plans have been modified and re-designed so as to be more in keeping with the existing dwellings at Devonshire Gardens, Cllr P Brickley proposed that the Council does not support the reserved matters application. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs S Watson and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried and the Clerk requested to respond to WDBC accordingly.

15.2 Application 3515/19/HHO

Proposal: Householder application for single storey extensions to dwelling
Address: 10 Bouchiers Close North Tawton EX20 2DB

Further to discussion, Cllr Mrs R Davies proposed that the Council accept and support this application. This was seconded by Cllr Ms J Trewitt, there were 10 votes in favour and 1 abstention, therefore the proposal was carried.

15.3 Monkey Puzzle Tree adjacent to NT Memorial Park

There was some discussion as to the suggestion to ask for a TPO to be placed on this tree to protect it. Cllr Mrs S Watson proposed that we ask for a TPO on this tree. This was seconded by Cllr Miss K Drake, there were 8 votes in favour and 3 abstentions, therefore the proposal was carried.

16. FINANCE

16.1 Invoices. To approve payments listed at Annex B (to be circulated at meeting). Cllr Miss R Testa proposed that the Council approve the payments list. This was seconded by Cllr C Lee and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried.

16.2 Monthly statement – to receive the monthly statement and to consider adoption. Make the appropriate transfers, from reserve accounts to the current account, to allow payments to be made, as necessary. Cllr Ms J Trewitt proposed that the council accept the monthly statement, and also approve a transfer of £30k from the Council's Instant Access Unity Trust account to the Council's NatWest Current Account to facilitate required payments. This was seconded by Cllr C Lee and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried.

Cllr S Whiteley declared an interest in the following item, as a Member of the NT RBL. Cllr Whiteley did not take part in any discussion of item 16.3 and abstained from voting.

16.3 Remembrance Sunday Wreath

Cllr C Lee proposed a donation of £50 to the RBL. This was seconded by Miss K Drake, and there were 10 votes in favour, with Cllr S Whiteley abstaining, therefore the proposal was carried.

The meeting was closed for the next item.

17. Questions/Comments from members of the public

- 1 Mrs S Knott had a query relating to item 10.1 – will the bird boxes be sold with appropriate instructions as to siting? – the answer is yes.
- 2 Mrs C Hughes had a query as to the tree survey. The assistant Clerk is identifying contractors and obtaining assistance in prioritising the necessary works.
- 3 Mrs S Knott commented on item 14, with reference to declaring a climate emergency, and suggested the desirability of a public meeting to encourage residents to be part of the whole issue.

The meeting was reopened.

18. Parish Matters

No decision may lawfully be made under this item but matters may be discussed which involve no more than an exchange of information.

18.1 Due to a mistake whereby this issue was not included in the agenda, the Chair allowed a brief report from the Transport and Parking Group under Parish matters in order that the Council could be advised of current issues. A meeting has taken place with the local Highways Engineer and her colleague. Some of the Council's suggestions as to road markings were agreed, the effect being that 4 additional parking spaces would be achieved on the highway. The suggestion of a 20 mph zone and/or a vehicle weight limit cannot be undertaken as the relevant criteria are not met. With reference to speeding issues, 4 residents are to train as community speedwatch volunteers.

18.2 The Chair advised that he intended to purchase 6 x £10 book tokens for the NTPS children who had their designs chosen for use as anti-speeding posters, the funding to come from the Chairman's Annual Allowance of £100.00.

18.3 Cllr Ms R Testa advised that she had become aware that DCC were to replace all street lights with LED lights.

19. Date of next meeting

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council shall be **TUESDAY 14 JANUARY 2020.**

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

PART II - EXEMPT REPORTS:

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by S.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

1 Consideration of approval of additional inscription on an existing memorial in the Cemetery (Mr Walter Bines, additional inscription for Mrs Phyllis Bines).

Cllr Mrs R Davies proposed approval of this application. This was seconded by Cllr P Brickley and there were 11 votes in favour, therefore the proposal was carried.

2 Planning Matter

Cllr B Ratcliffe (WDBC) advised members as to a recent discussion that had taken place with a WDBC Planning Officer.

