



NORTH TAWTON TOWN COUNCIL

14a The Square
North Tawton
EX20 2EP

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Minutes of a meeting of North Tawton Town Council held in the Town Council Offices 14a The Square EX20 2EP On Tuesday 4th March 2025 7.30pm

Present: Cllr S McKnight (Chairman), Cllr C Lee, Cllr J Palfrey, Cllr C Burrow,
Cllr M Kennedy, Cllr S Whiteley, Cllr N Smith, Cllr K Hodge, Cllr S Watson

In Attendance: Caroline Ellis – Town Clerk
Dr Hannah Bruni – Deputy Town Clerk
Cllr Casbolt – WDBC
Cllr Watts - WDBC
10 Members of the public

261/24 Apologies for absence – None

262/24 Declarations of Interest – None

263/24 Confirmation of the minutes of the Town Council meetings
Council Meeting 4th February 2025 – deferred to next meeting due to two
Councillors requesting amendments.

Personnel Committee Meeting 10th February 2025 – on the proposition of Cllr
Kennedy, seconded Cllr Burrow (5 abstentions) the Council **RESOLVED** to
approve the minutes.

264/24 Matters raised by the Chairman – The Chairman agreed to bring forward item
273/24 VE Day Celebration. Cllr Palfrey reported on 8th May there would be the
raising of the flags and both the Church and the school would be involved. On
Saturday 10th they were planning an event in the Town Hall involving other
organisations as it was to be a community event. It was suggested a PA system
may be needed. The flag-pole in the Memorial Park needed to be repaired. The
Council would be asked for a grant of £150 towards the cost of the Town Hall hire
and the Lamp of Peace.

3 members of the public left the meeting.

Cllr McKnight reported to the Council a Data breach reported to the ICO, as a
document with wet signatures had been shared on social media. The Councillor
training planned for 26th March had been postponed. New date to be arranged.
The Clerk and been copied into a reply to the complainant regarding AGAR. The
Council are waiting for instruction and further updates from the External Auditor.
Cllr Kennedy was concerned how much this was costing the Council

*Cllr Whiteley, Cllr Burrow, Cllr Lee, Cllr Hodge, Cllr Watson, Cllr Kennedy,
Cllr Palfrey, Cllr McKnight, Cllr Smith*

265/24 **District and County Councillor Reports** – Cllr Watts explained there was still funds available in the Localities Budget. Applications must be minimum of £100. The Council had nothing official to report regarding the Devolution Deal. Cllr Kennedy asked if the Councillors could report the dog waste bin in Barkers Way has not been emptied and had been reported several times.

266/24 **Planning –**

0524/25/TCA – 1: Goat Willow – Remove, T2: Goat Willow – Remove, T3: Laurel – Remove, T4: Goat Willow – remove due to overshadowing area, T5: Goat Willow – Remove due to overshadowing, T6: Goat Willow – Remove due to overshadowing area, T7: Laurel – Remove due to overshadowing area, T8: Laurel – remove due to overshadowing area, T9: Laurel – remove due to overshadowing area, T10: Laurel – remove due to overshadowing area, T11: Laurel – remove due to overshadowing area, T12: Elder – remove due to being dead, replace with new elder, T13: Laurel – remove due to overshadowing area, T14: Laurel – remove due to overshadowing area, T14: Laurel: - remove due to overshadowing area, T15: Laurel – remove due to overshadowing area. 22 Fore Street, North Tawton EX20 2DT on the proposition on Cllr Smith, seconded Cllr Burrow, all in favour, the Council **RESOLVED** to support

The Council noted the following decision from the Planning Authority

0369/25/COM Notice of intent to install electronic communication apparatus comprising installation of 1 no Communication Node together with ancillary development thereto. Lower Nichols Nymett Farm, North Tawton EX20 2BW
Decision – Authority has no comments to make.

267/24 **Finance –**

- I. On the proposition of Cllr McKnight, seconded Cllr Lee, one against the Council **RESOLVED** to approve Payment and receipt reports
- I. On the proposition of Cllr Palfrey, seconded Cllr Kennedy, one against, the Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Budget report and bank reconciliation dated 31st January 2025
- II. On the proposition of Cllr Lee seconded Cllr Kennedy, one against, the Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Payment schedule and salaries payments.

268/24 **Co-option** – No applications received

269/24 **Utility Quotations** – The Council asked the Clerk to check the cemetery electric estimated usage and to see if night rates were available. On the proposition Cllr Smith, seconded Cllr Burrow the Council **RESOLVED** to delegate powers to the Clerk, to obtain the best quotations, but asked if the Clerk could email the proposed supplier and costs to the Councillors.

270/24 **Telephone & Broadband** – The Clerk explained the benefits of a VOIP cloud system. On the proposition of Cllr McKnight, seconded Cllr Kennedy, one against, the Council **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation from Purple Telecommunications.

- 271/24** **Councillor Surgery** – Cllr Palfrey proposed to hold a Councillor Surgery once a month on a Saturday to be held in the Council Offices. It was suggested it could also be held at the Repair Café on the 2nd Saturday of the month. Cllr Kennedy would make enquiries. There would be two Councillors attending the surgery. Cllr Casbolt offered to attend when he was available. On the proposition of Cllr Lee, seconded Cllr Smith, one against, the Council **RESOLVED** to hold monthly Councillor Surgeries for a trial of 3 months. Cllr Lee and Cllr Palfrey offered to conduct the first surgery. Date to be announced.
- 272/24** **Grant** - It was brought to the attention of the Council that the application form had not been completed correctly. The Clerk would inform the applicant. Once re-submitted a Finance Committee Meeting would be held to discuss the application.
- 273/24** **VE Day Celebration** – The Item was brought forward to 264/24 at the discretion of the Chairman.
- 274/24** **Lone Working Policy** – On the proposition of Cllr Whitely, seconded Cllr Lee the Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the amended Lone Working Policy, with the removal of the last sentence in 6.1. Cllr Watson asked the Clerk to investigate the model policy supplied by DALC and NALC.
- 275/24** **Asset Register Policy** - On the proposition of Cllr Whiteley, seconded Cllr McKnight, the Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the Asset Register Policy but to remove the item ‘Corresponding period measures of usage or occupation’.

A member of the public left the meeting.

- 276/24** **Asset Register 2024/2025** – Deferred until the next meeting.
- 277/24** **Code of Conduct Complaint RP/536211** – The Council noted the Monitoring Officer had received a complaint alleging that Cllr McKnight had broken the Town Council’s Code of Conduct. Cllr Knight read the finding to the Council. The Monitoring Officer had determined that, based on the facts as alleged in the complaint, she did not do so, and this is now the end of the matter. It was noted in the Consideration of the Facts that public speaking at Council Meetings was not a legal right and was done at the discretion of the Council and it is at the discretion of the Council to remove it, should they be inclined to do so. Standing Orders may also provide for the exclusion of the press and public from a meeting for disorderly behaviour. In considering the allegations about an informal meeting, it is common practice for councils to meet prior to a formal meeting. This may for example, comprise some or all of the members of the council meeting to review the papers which relate to a decision and to have an informal discussion about them prior to the formal meeting. Holding such meetings as the one covered in the Complaint can demonstrate good governance as informal meetings can allow issues to be raised prior to a meeting thereby making the meetings more efficient; also it shows commitment to the role in that the members of the Council are prepared to give time outside of formal meetings to matters which are important. I do not agree that this is in any way a breach of the Nolan Principles and a breach of the Code and I do not consider this disrespectful to the public. There is nothing in the working of the complaint which would show that the members who have discussed matters in informal meetings were predetermined; members may discuss something, but this does not mean they entered the chamber with a closed mind and that their mind was closed at the time of the decision.

*Cllr Whiteley, Cllr Burrow, Cllr Lee, Cllr Hodge, Cllr Watson, Cllr Kennedy,
Cllr Palfrey, Cllr McKnight, Cllr Smith*

278/24

Members Reports –

- 7.5 Tonne weight limit and 20mph speed – Cllr Lee had chased DCC highways for an accurate price. A member of the public questioned whether 7.5 tonne weigh limit was suitable. Cllr Lee reported it was appropriate and would contact the member of the public and explain.
- LEVI – Cllr Smith reported he had received an update and confirmed we are included in the 71 sites in the first wave of site. There would be 2 charging points and would generate 3-10% revenue. There would be no cost to the Council
- Footpath – Cllr Burrow reported the footpath was completed.
- Parking – Cllr McKnight had no report.
- Benches & Noticeboards – Cllr Kennedy reported the missing key had been found for the noticeboard. Cllrs Kennedy and Palfrey would be conducting an audit of benches and noticeboards on 5th March 2025
- Defibrillators - Cllr McKnight informed the Council they had been updated on the website.

279/24

Councillor Reports and items for future agenda

Cllr Burrow requested a working group to be formed to draw up proposed plans for the park, to be able to submit to Planning. Cllrs McKnight, Palfrey, and Kennedy offered to on the working group. The need for Snow Warden volunteers to be added to the next agenda. It was reported a large vehicle entered the village from Gregories, and blocked the road, it was going to Strawberry Fields. The Clerk was asked for an update regarding the VAS sign. The Clerk has spoken to the contractor they agreed to supply the pole. Prices would follow. Cllr Palfrey reported there would be a meeting this month regarding plans for 2025 Christmas lights and tree. Cllr Lee requested a scheme of planting was proposed around the sculpture. Cllr Whiteley felt the Council should be stricter regarding grant applications and possibly invite the applicant to present their application to the Council. Cllr Watson asked if the repairs to the clock tower had been completed. The Clerk informed the Council she had contacted the contractor and was waiting for a reply. Cllr Watson also asked if the live-streaming of Council meetings could be on the website. Cllr Kenney explained it was not possible on the current website. Other social media sites to be considered. Cllr Burrow asked if the existing frame for the swings could be strengthened to allow installation of new swings. Cllr Smith offered to investigate.

Meeting Closed 21.02

*Cllr Whiteley, Cllr Burrow, Cllr Lee, Cllr Hodge, Cllr Watson, Cllr Kennedy,
Cllr Palfrey, Cllr McKnight, Cllr Smith*

Councillor S McKnight
Chairman

DATED:

*Cllr Whiteley, Cllr Burrow, Cllr Lee, Cllr Hodge, Cllr Watson, Cllr Kennedy,
Cllr Palfrey, Cllr McKnight, Cllr Smith*