

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025** AT 7.00 P.M. AT NEWTON'S PLACE, WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT

Present: Councillors C Parker (Mayor) Presiding  
L Cooke (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: B Bailey                      A Hall  
P Bullivant                              A Ineson  
D Corney-Walker                      M Ryan  
C Davieson                                L Wood  
A Gibbs                                    N Yabsley

Officers in attendance: Phil Rowe                      Town Clerk  
Sam Scott                                Deputy Town Clerk & RFO  
Pierre Doutreligne                      Projects & Strategy Officer  
Linda McGuirk                            Principal Administrator  
Rob Woodger                              Facilities Maintenance Team Leader  
Nigel Canham                              Communications Advisor

By invitation                              Reverend Kevin Hooke

Also, present                              2 x Members of the public

**191. WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor welcomed those present to the meeting and invited Reverend Kevin Hooke to open the meeting with prayers.

**192. APOLOGIES**

Valid reasons for absence were received from Councillors J Bradford, R Buscombe, T Corney-Walker, G Jennings, M Joyce and P Parker.

Apologies were noted from District Councillor Jackie Hook, Freeman Mike Hocking and Freewoman Carol Bunday.

**193. INTERESTS**

None declared.

**194. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council Meetings held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025

The minutes were received and signed as a correct record.

**195. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

**196. PRESENTATION – LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION**

The Projects & Strategy Officer gave an update on the current position regarding Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). It was noted that several local authority leaders had sought clarity from Westminster following the recent Cabinet reshuffle, given that both Angela Rayner and Jim McMahon, previously strong advocates of the LGR plans, had been replaced.

Leaders of Exeter City Council, including the Chief Executive and senior Members, had attended Parliament to launch the Case for Cities report and to promote their proposal for a unitary Exeter.

Attendance at a recent DALC branch meeting, it was reiterated that:

- LGR is a transitional phase towards the creation of Strategic Authorities.
- Three bids are expected for Devon: the 5-4-1 model, the Exeter unitary model, and the Devon unitary model, with potential permutations involving Plymouth and Torbay.

It was further noted that Devon County Council is now working with DALC to refine their proposal ahead of the November deadline. A more detailed update will be presented to Council on 12th November.

**197. CIVILITY & RESPECT PLEDGE**

The Town Clerk reported that the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Improvement Development Board (IBD) task force are actively encouraging Councils who have previously signed the pledge to ensure it remains in the minds of councillors and staff.

Members were reminded that the Council had signed the Civility & Respect Pledge on 3rd October 2022 and were invited to reaffirm the Council's ongoing commitment to civility and respect across the organisation. This commitment forms part of the Council's Code of Conduct and Dignity at Work Policy. Copies of the Code of Conduct and the Civility & Respect Certificate were circulated prior to the meeting.

Councillor L Wood, speaking in her capacity as Chairperson of the Policy & Resources Committee, expressed her disappointment that matters discussed in confidential session appeared to have been shared with members of the public. Councillor Wood reminded Members of the importance of upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles).

The Town Clerk further advised that the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has invited Councillors to sign an individual Statement of Assurance, personally committing to uphold the highest standards of civility, respect, and professionalism in their daily work and interactions. Copies of the Statement were tabled at the meeting for Members to sign should they so wish.

Arising from the discussion, it was:

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

**RESOLVED** that Newton Abbot Town Council hereby reaffirms its ongoing commitment to the Civility and Respect Pledge.

## 198. **REPORTS OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

The Mayor invited County and District Councillors to provide a report on their recent activity in Newton Abbot.

District Councillor J Hook, having submitted apologies for attendance, had provided a written report which was circulated prior to the meeting. The report highlighted a number of issues in which she has had direct involvement. Members noted the report and were invited to contact Councillor Hook directly for clarification on any matters.

Councillor M Ryan expressed his thanks to Councillor Hook for her detailed report, in particular information on asylum seekers in Teignbridge.

District Councillor A Hall reported on issues in which he has had direct involvement:

- Traveller encampments – TDC has passed a motion to improve the management of travellers.

District Councillor P Bullivant reported on issues in which he has had direct involvement:

- Attendance at a meeting of the Newton Abbot Chamber of Commerce, noting the Chamber's keenness to work in partnership with the Town Council.
- Advising Members that, as Chairperson of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, he would welcome suggestions for issues to be included on forthcoming agendas.
- Attendance at a meeting of the District Council to consider its current financial position.

Councillor A Hall requested that the Chamber of Commerce is invited to report to the Council on the Discover Newton Abbot website.

District Councillor M Ryan reported on issues in which he has had direct involvement:

- Advised that the Buckland Hub has received £300,000 in funding.
- Attendance at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Expressed concerns the District Council is not spending its Capital Fund.
- Correspondence has been undertaken in relation to travellers.

District Councillor C Parker reported on issues in which he has had direct involvement:

- Attendance at the Devon County Council A382 consultation event was reported.
- It was noted that the box junctions and road markings at Penn Inn roundabout had been re-lined.
- Reference was made to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the need to consider asset implications.

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

The Mayor thanked the District Councillors for their reports as they provided a valuable insight into the issues within Newton Abbot.

199. **MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a) The Mayor, Councillor Colin Parker, provided an update on recent engagements that he and the Mayoress had attended, as circulated prior to the meeting.

The Mayor highlighted the following events:

- HMS Triumph De-commissioning
- Barham Cup
- Heritage Lottery Fund visit
- Town Criers

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor L Cooke reported on her attendance at the Launch of the Museum Exhibition.

Members suggested that the Town Clerk contact HMS Triumph to enquire whether an item from the ship could be displayed in the Museum.

- b) The Mayor reminded members of the forthcoming Civic Service, to be held at the Avenue Church on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

200. **POLICIES**

The Town Clerk introduced the policy documents, as circulated prior to the meeting.

Members considered the following policies, as circulated prior to the meeting.

- Strategic Plan 2025 – 2027
- Sustainable Procurement & Environmental Responsibility Policy
- Green Spaces Strategy
- Dignity at Work Policy

Accordingly, it was:

**RESOLVED** that the policies in relation to the:

- a) Strategic Plan 2025 – 2027
- b) Sustainable Procurement & Environmental Responsibility Policy
- c) Green Spaces Strategy
- d) Dignity at Work Policy

be hereby, approved and adopted.

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

201. **PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES**

- a) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2025, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor N Yabsley were received and approved.
- b) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2025, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor N Yabsley were received and approved.
- c) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Policy & Resources Committee**, held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor L Wood were received and approved.

202. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 SECTION 123(1), (2A) DISPOSAL OF INTEREST IN OPEN SPACE**

The Town Clerk reported that the District Council had given notice under Section 123 (1), (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 of its intention to dispose of an interest in an area of open space known as the land and grounds at Old Forde House, Newton Abbot, by way of freehold disposal.

It was noted that the Town Clerk had submitted an objection to the proposed disposal on behalf of the Council on the grounds that the property should remain in public ownership.

Members noted the Notice of Disposal.

203. **LATE CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

204. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting to be held on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

205. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was:

**RESOLVED** that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

206. **ASSET - PROPERTY**

Members considered a recommendation from the Policy & Resources Committee (Minute No. 25/06(176)) that the Town Clerk be delegated authority to proceed with  
Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

discussions, surveys, consultations, and associated actions to acquire the premises on a long leasehold.

The Town Clerk provided a brief update on negotiations and advised that an application to the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) would be required. As part of the PWLB process, a public consultation must be undertaken.

Arising from the discussion, it was:

**RESOLVED**

- a) that the Town Clerk be delegated authority to proceed with discussions, surveys, consultations, and associated actions to acquire the premises on a long leasehold;
- b) that the approval of the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government be sought to make an application to the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) for a loan of £600,000 over the borrowing term of 25 years for the acquisition of a town centre asset. The annual loan repayments will be in the region of £46,500;
- c) that the Council acknowledges that the effect of b) above will be to increase the Council Tax Precept by 2.7% which is equivalent to an additional £5.00 per annum (42p per month, 9p per week) for a Band D household in Newton Abbot and will be subject to public consultation.

Meeting closed at 20:25 hours.

Chairperson (Mayor).....

Date.....

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....