

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF TAWSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 17th DECEMBER 2024 AT 7.00 p.m.**

Present: - Councillor Mason (In the Chair)
Councillors Bates, East, Jenkins, Knight, Lines, Lofthouse, Needham,
Norman and Short.

NDC Councillors Knight and Norman.

M Isaac (Clerk)

In Attendance: Parishioner/Members of the Public – None

149. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Bowden.

**150. ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE
CHAIR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY**

There were no issues raised.

151. PUBLIC SESSION

There were no questions from Parishioners.

152. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

153. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to report

154. FINANCIAL MATTERS.

a) Payments

RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

North Devon Council Clerks Salary + Admin Fee	£917.86
Ucanstore.com – Storage	£28.60
M. Isaac – Clerks Expenses	£9.25
L. Evely – Grounds Maintenance Contract	£940.43
Barnstaple Town Council – Play Area Inspections + underpayment	£225.04

b) Financial Position

The Clerk updated Council on the current financial position as at 5 November 2024 Current A/C £38,283.94 (includes £6,581.62 ringed fenced for Tower View Project) and Business Reserve A/C £16,430.84

c) Draft Budget and Precept 2025/2026.

The Council considered the draft budget for 2025/2026 (previously circulated) and the increase in expenditure in the ensuing municipal year. The current reserves were noted.

It was RESOLVED:

- i) That a precept of £27,310.58 for 2025/26 be agreed (Band D £22.00).
- ii) That the draft budget (previously circulated) be agreed.

Councillors Knight and Norman wished it recorded that they abstained from voting.

155. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 19th November 2024 be approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Needham further to the question asked at the last meeting by Councillor East asked for an update on when the new Customer Service Council Office in Green Lanes would be opened. It was also asked who ran the Green Lanes car park.

Councillors Knight and Norman stated that they would ask the questions and report back to the next Parish Council meeting.

156. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING NOT LISTED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

The Council noted that the defibrillator for Harracott would be installed on 6th January 2025.

Councillor Short reported that a resident had asked about a defibrillator for Tawstock Village. It was agreed to put an item on the next meeting agenda.

157. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

There were no DCC Councillors reports.

158. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

a) NDC Councillor Knight

Councillor Knight reported the following:

- That the new long stay car park at Seven Brethren would be open on 16th January 2025.
- That the devolution of Local Councils was at this time unknown.
- That improvements had been made to the Train Station forecourt and the bus routes along Sticklepath Terrace would remain the same.
- New Bus Lanes were being installed by Sainsburys and along Braunton Road.

Councillor Norman reported the following:

- **Community Governance Review** – North Devon Council would be commencing a review of Community Governance arrangements for the North Devon District area. The review can include parish boundary changes, Parish/Town ward changes, changes to the numbers of Councillors on a Parish/Town Council, grouping or meeting of councils, creation of a parish council or change of a parish council to a parish meeting. There is an opportunity for Parish/Town Councils to feed into the process and the Elections team would be writing out to Parish/Town Councils shortly.
- **Second Homes Council Tax Premium** – Council had agreed to introduce a premium of 100% for all dwellings which are unoccupied but substantially furnished (including second homes) from 1 April 2025. The draft Council tax base figures for each town and parish council were currently being worked on and would be made available mid-December. The impact of second homes would increase the tax base in some areas alongside all normal ‘ups and downs’ movement. Full Council will approve the Council Tax base calculation at its meeting on 15 January 2025.
- **Northern Devon Joint Local Plan** – North Devon Council and Torridge District Council had committed to preparing a new joint local plan for Northern Devon. Town and Parish Councils had a key role to play in developing the new local plan through their connection with communities. Parish and Town Councils to engage with local communities by providing a route to disseminate information. It would provide a real opportunity to shape the local plan and to deliver the best for their communities. There will be a range of opportunities for Parish and Town Councils to get involved over the coming months and years.
- **Local Government Finance Settlement** –Government announcement for funding for North Devon Council for 2025/26 was expected to be received around the third week of December 2024.
- That the Instow By Election would be on 9th January 2025

159. HIGHWAY ISSUES

It was reported that the lines on the A39 Roundswell roundabout were practically non-existent and required re-painting of safety grounds. Signage was also required to indicate the correct lane to be in.

160. PLANNING MATTERS

The Acting Chair updated Council on the Planning Applications considered by the Planning Committee.

161. PARISH SURVEY

Councillor Mason reported that he would arrange a meeting of the appointed Councillors before the January Council meeting.

162. GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP

Councillor Needham reported the recommendations of the Working Group held on 26th November 2024 (previously circulated).

- a) Standing Orders

The following recommendations were made:

i) Order of Business

- Paragraphs 28 and 29 – For clarification Amend wording to Annual Parish Council Meeting.
- Paragraph 30 – Amended as follows:
 - A) That the pre-amble to paragraph 30 be amended to state ‘after the first business has been completed, the order of business unless Council otherwise decides on the grounds of urgency shall be as follows if required’
 - B) Delete section (a)
 - C) Delete section (i)
 - D) Section (b)(i) to allow 3 minutes for Parishioners to speak to accord with present practice
 - E) Re-order following sections to accord with current agenda order of business: Sections (g), (h) and (p) to be listed before section (c) and re-lettered.
 - F) Section (r) be amended to clarify Major Planning Applications
- Paragraph 85 be amended to ‘ All Planning Applications shall be considered and determined by the Planning Committee except those planning applications deemed to be Major Planning Applications
- Paragraph 86 that the wording be aligned.
- That the Standing Orders be reviewed annually and the next review be November 2025

b) Financial Regulations

The following recommendations were made:

- General Section - Delete second bullet point Paragraph 1.7 ‘authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of £500’
- Risk Management Internal Control – That in accordance with paragraph 2.6 a Member other than the Clerk, Chair or a cheque signatory be nominated at the January Parish Council meeting, as required to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO for this financial year end and thereafter appointed each May at the Annual Parish Council meeting.
- Procurement – Paragraph 5.15 – bullet point 3 add excluding VAT
- Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations – Paragraph 18.1 be amended and the Financial Regulations reviewed annually and the next review be November 2025.

It was agreed that the recommendations of the Governance Working Group be accepted and adopted.

163. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

It was agreed that consideration of the Community Governance Review be deferred to the next meeting.

164. GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON ENABLING REMOTE ATTENDANCE AND PROXY VOTING AT COUNCIL MEETINGS.

It was agreed that no response be made by the Parish Council but that Members make individual responses if they so wished.

165. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETING

The following matter was agreed:

Shorelands Road Roundabout

166. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

It was noted that the next Parish Council meeting would be on Tuesday 21st January 2025 at 7.00 p.m.

Chairman

The meeting ended at 8.03 p.m.