



North Devon Council
Brynsworthy Environment Centre
Barnstaple
North Devon EX31 3NP

K. Miles
Chief Executive.

To: All Members of the Council
and Chief Officers

NOTE: PLEASE NOTE THAT PRAYERS WILL BE SAID AT 6.25 P.M. PRIOR TO THE COUNCIL MEETING FOR ANY MEMBER WHO WISHES TO ATTEND

COUNCIL MEETING

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to attend a meeting of **NORTH DEVON COUNCIL** to be held in the G107, 1st Floor, South West Institute Development Building, Petroc, Barnstaple - Petroc College on **WEDNESDAY, 20TH NOVEMBER, 2024 at 6.30 pm.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Miles", written in a cursive style.

Chief Executive

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2024 (attached) (Pages 13 - 24)
3. Chair's announcements
4. Business brought forward by or with the consent of the Chair
5. Replies to any questions submitted by the Public and/or to receive Petitions under Part 4, Council Procedures Rules, Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Constitution
6. To consider motions of which notice has been submitted by Members in accordance with Part 4, Council Procedure Rules, Paragraph 11 of the Constitution

(a) To consider the following notice of motion from Councillor Bell

"Bideford/Barnstaple Rail Connection

The Strategy and Resources Committee meeting on 4th April 2022 considered a

Motion, referred from Full Council on 23rd February 2022, “to support the reinstatement of Bideford to Barnstaple rail link for passenger and other services, as proposed by ACE Rail” proposed by Councillor Lofthouse.

The Motion was supported by the Committee, and it was agreed

- (a) That the inclusion of this policy aim within the revised joint local plan be referred to the Joint Planning Policy Committee for consideration; and
- (b) To work with partners and organisations to explore this idea and where necessary to lobby those who may contribute to making this happen including Great British Railways, Devon County Council, Peninsula Transport, and the Government.

The Joint Planning Policy Committee on 15th July 2022 RESOLVED that the Bideford to Barnstaple rail link is considered as part of the People and Place project.

The Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance has this opening declaration of purpose: *“To secure a new rail link between Bideford and Barnstaple and upgrade of the North Devon (Tarka) Line between Exeter and Barnstaple, championing their transformational benefits for communities and businesses and advocating to decision-makers the economic, social and environmental case for developing and investing in the project.”*

Stakeholders who have already joined the alliance as founding members are Barnstaple Town Council, Bideford Town Council, Northam Town Council, Torridge District Council, Railfuture, and Tarka Rail Association. This newly formed alliance held its inaugural event, generously sponsored by Barnstaple and Bideford Town Councils, on 1st March in Bideford’s Royal Hotel with senior officers present from North Devon Council.

Motion:

- 1) That North Devon Council join the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance as a founding Member.
- 2) That North Devon Council considers following the example of Torridge District Council in 2024/25 will commit to providing a contribution towards feasibility studies / business case development to be commissioned on behalf of the Alliance. This study will create a “roadmap” to extending rail services to Bideford as well as vital improvements to the antiquated Tarka Line to allow additional passing points in order to ensure 2 services per hour, an express Barnstaple to Exeter and the existing stopping service to Exmouth. Any costs to be presented for agreement at a later NDC S&R meeting.
- 3) That North Devon Council uses its influence as a founder member of the Alliance to
 - a) call on other public bodies, voluntary and business stakeholders and others to support sustainable transport options for northern Devon and to take an active role in the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance.

b) support an integrated sustainable transport strategy for northern Devon, including long-term ambitions to see Bideford fully reconnected to the national rail network via Barnstaple.

c) include rail development plans and other sustainable transport plans in any future North Devon Council contribution to Local Planning processes and reflect this desire in any plans brought forward for public consultation.

d) Consider how public transport can be rejuvenated across North Devon and into Torridge and Mid Devon through the creation of express bus services linking Ilfracombe through Barnstaple, South Molton and onto Tiverton Parkway. Mirroring the discontinued rail service that was removed in 1965. Also the feasibility of an Express bus servicing Bideford and Barnstaple.

e) attend next year's meeting of the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance, proposed to be held in Barnstaple, and work with its other members to promote the reconnection of Bideford with Barnstaple and the national rail network.”

(b) To consider the following notice of motion from Councillor Bulled

Protecting British Family Farms and Preserving Rural Communities

North Devon Council notes with concern the proposed changes to inheritance tax announced by the Labour Government in the recent Autumn budget, which would scrap Agricultural Property Relief (APR). APR has been instrumental in allowing British family farms to remain intact across generations, supporting food security, sustaining rural communities, and aiding environmental stewardship.

This tax is estimated to impact over 70,000(1) family farms, leaving the average farming family with a tax bill of at least £240,000(2), which will force many to sell portions of their land or close entirely, paving the way for corporate ownership and lifestyle buyers over family ownership.

The Council believes that this tax will have severe impacts on :-

1. **Food Security:** Selling off land or closing farms will put our national food independence at risk, at a time when global stability is already fragile. British family farms are critical to ensuring a steady supply of homegrown food.

2. **Rural Community Stability:** Family farms are the foundation of North Devon, and rural Britain, contributing to local jobs, schools, and essential services. Labour's proposed tax risks destabilising communities, eroding the rural way of life, and causing a negative ripple effect across the countryside.

3. **Environmental Stewardship:** Farms cover 70% of the UK's land, with family farms playing a leading role in nature recovery, biodiversity enhancement, water quality improvement and sustainable land management. The sale and fragmentation of these lands would hinder conservation efforts and undermine

environmental initiatives.

4. **Mental Health Issues.** Farmers are already at high risk of suicide due to precarious state of their incomes allied to the isolated situations in which they work. This tax will inevitably exacerbate those concerns with more potential suicides ensuing.

This Council resolves to:

Write a letter to the Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, the Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves & the Secretary of State for DEFRA Steve Reed to :-

- Oppose the Labour Government's changes to inheritance tax affecting family farms.
- Advocate for the exemption of family farms to preserve the UK's food security, rural communities, environmental initiatives.

- The letter to be signed by the Leaders of Groups on North Devon Council
- This Council urges all Councillors to stand with our North Devon & all Britain's family farms, to support our rural communities, and to protect the environment by formally rejecting this proposed "family farm tax."

References

1. CLA 2024 October <https://www.cla.org.uk/news/help-the-cla-save-your-family-business/>
2. AHDB 2024 October <https://ahdb.org.uk/news/ahdb-response-to-budget-2024>

7. Declarations of Interest

Please telephone the Corporate and Community Services team to prepare a form for your signature before the meeting. Interests must be re-declared when the item is called. A declaration of interest under the Code of Conduct will be a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, an Other Registrable Interest or a Non-Registrable Interest. If the item directly relates to your interest you must declare the interest and leave the room for the item, save in the case of Other Registrable Interests or Non-Registrable Interests where you may first speak on the item as a member of the public if provision has been made for the public to speak. If the matter does not directly relate to your interest but still affects it then you must consider whether you are affected to a greater extent than most people and whether a reasonable person would consider your judgement to be clouded, if you are then you must leave the room for the item (although you may speak as a member of the public if provision has been made for the public to speak) or, if you are not, then you can declare the interest but still take part).

8. Chair's replies to any questions to Council by Members submitted under Part 4, Council Procedures Rules, Paragraph 10 of the Constitution

9. To agree the agenda between Part 'A' and Part 'B' (Confidential Restricted Information).

PART A

10. **Report of the Leader of the Council** (Pages 25 - 28)
Report by Leader of the Council (attached).
11. **Questions by Members**
Questions to the Leader or the Chair of a Committee submitted under Part 4, Council Procedure Rules, paragraph 10.4 of the Constitution.
12. **Lead Members reports**
- (a) Lead Member for Housing report (Pages 29 - 36)
Report by Lead Member for Housing (attached).
- (b) Lead Member for Climate and Biodiversity Report (Pages 37 - 40)
Report by Lead Member for Climate and Biodiversity (attached).
13. **Performance and Financial Management Quarter 2 of 2024/25** (Pages 41 - 102)
Report by Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 4 November 2024 (attached).
- (a) Report of the Policy Development Committee
To receive the report of the Policy Development Committee held on 7 November 2024 (to follow).
- (b) Report of meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee (Pages 103 - 104)
To receive the report of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 4 November 2024 (attached).
14. **Mid Year Treasury Management Report 2024/25** (Pages 105 - 118)
Report by Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 4 November 2024 (attached).
- (a) Report of the Policy Development Committee
To receive the report of the Policy Development Committee held on 7 November 2024 (to follow)
- (b) Report of Strategy and Resources Committee (Pages 119 - 120)
To receive the report of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 4

November 2024 (attached).

15. **Statement of Accounts 2023/24**

(a) Report by Chief Financial Officer (attached) (Pages 121 - 224)
Chair of the Governance Committee to report the recommendations of the Governance Committee held on 12 November 2024 (to follow).

(b) Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 (Pages 225 - 276)
Report by Head of Governance (attached) and to consider the recommendation of the Governance Committee held on 11 June 2024 (attached)

(c) Letter of Representation on behalf of the Council (Pages 277 - 282)
It is RECOMMENDED “that the letter of representation on behalf of the Council be approved and signed by the Chief Financial Officer”. To consider the recommendation of the Governance Committee held on 12 November 2024 (to follow).

16. **Half Yearly Report of Chair of Governance Committee** (Pages 283 - 288)

Report by the Chair of Governance Committee (attached).

17. **Requests for Waiver of 6 Month Councillor Attendance Rule** (Pages 289 - 292)

Report by Chief Executive (attached).

18. **Ilfracombe Healthy Homes and Community Land Trust, Combined County Authority BIDs** (Pages 293 - 296)

Report by Head of PMO and Environmental Health and Housing (attached).

19. **North Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee - Outside body appointment**

To consider the appointment of a Councillor(s) to replace Councillor(s) on the North Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee for the life of Council and that attendance at meetings be an approved duty.

20. **Minutes of Committees**

Council is recommended to note the schedule of Committee minutes and approve recommendations as listed below:

(a) Governance Committee (Pages 297 - 306)

(i) 23 September 2024

a. Minute 113: Update to Constitution – Delegated Powers to Harbour Board (NOTE: This recommendation was adopted

by Council at its meeting on 25 September 2024)

- (b) Joint Planning Policy Committee (Pages 307 - 316)
 - (i) 20 September 2024
- (c) Licensing and Community Safety Committee (Pages 317 - 322)
 - (i) 10 September 2024
- (d) Planning Committee (Pages 323 - 338)
 - (i) 4 September 2024
 - (ii) 13 September 2024
 - (iii) 9 October 2024
- (e) Policy Development Committee
 - (i) 7 November 2024 (to follow)
- (f) Strategy and Resources Committee (Pages 339 - 348)
 - (i) 7 October 2024
 - a. Minute 60 (c): Pest Control Service
 - (ii) 4 November 2024 (to follow)
 - a. Minute 73 (e): Approval and Release of S106 Public Open Space Funds – Burrington, Heasley Mill and Lovacott
 - b. Minute 75: Gambling Act Statement of Licensing Principles
 - c. Minute 79: NDC Corporate Strategies

PART B (CONFIDENTIAL RESTRICTED INFORMATION)

Nil.

If you have any enquiries about this agenda, please contact Corporate and Community Services, telephone 01271 388253

12.11.24

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS OF COUNCIL

Part 4, Council Procedure Rules of the Constitution

The basics

At a meeting of Full Council, Members shall stand when speaking unless unable to do so and shall address the Chair.

While a Member is speaking, other Members shall remain seated unless rising for a point of order, a point of information or in personal explanation.

No speeches may be made after the mover had moved a proposal and explained the purpose of it until the motion has been seconded.

Unless notice of motion has already been given, the Chair may require it to be written down and handed to him before it is discussed.

When seconding a motion or amendment, a member may reserve their speech until later in the debate.

Speeches must be directed to the question under discussion or to be personal explanation or point of order.

A speech by the mover of a motion may not exceed 5 minutes without the consent of the Chair.

Speeches by other Members may not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the Chair, unless when the Council's annual budget is under discussion, the leader of each political group on the Council may speak for up to 5 minutes or such longer period as the Chair shall allow.

The rules of Question Time

At a meeting of the Council, other than the Annual meeting, a Member of the Council may ask the Leader or the chair of a committee any question without notice upon an item of the report of a committee when that item is being received or under consideration by the Council.



North Devon Council protocol on recording/filming at Council meetings

The Council is committed to openness and transparency in its decision-making. Recording is permitted at Council meetings that are open to the public. Members of the public that attend meetings must be aware that these meetings are open to the public and so therefore both individuals and the Council itself have the right to record the meeting. The Council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be filmed. The Chair of the meeting will make sure any request not to be filmed is respected.

The rules that the Council will apply are:

1. The recording must be overt (clearly visible to anyone at the meeting) and must not disrupt proceedings. The Council will put signs up at any meeting where we know recording is taking place.
2. The Chair of the meeting has absolute discretion to stop or suspend recording if, in their opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting or if the person recording is in breach of these rules.
3. We will ask for recording to stop if the meeting goes into 'part B' where the public is excluded for confidentiality reasons. In such a case, the person recording should leave the room ensuring all recording equipment is switched off.
4. Any member of the public has the right not to be filmed. We ensure that agendas for, and signage at, Council meetings make it clear that recording can take place – anyone not wishing to be filmed must advise the Chair at the earliest opportunity to allow them to be directed to an area in the room where they will not be caught on camera. Subject to paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 above, audio recordings shall be permitted at all times during public meetings.
5. The recording should not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or in a way that ridicules or shows a lack of respect for those in the recording. The Council would expect any recording in breach of these rules to be removed from public view.

Notes for guidance:

Please contact either our Corporate and Community Services team or our Communications team in advance of the meeting you wish to record at so we can make all the necessary arrangements for you on the day.

For more information contact the Corporate and Community Services team on **01271 388253** or email memberservices@northdevon.gov.uk or the Communications Team on **01271 388278**, email communications@northdevon.gov.uk.

Room G107 is located on the first floor of the South West Institute Development building at Petroc, Old Sticklepath Hill, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 2BQ. A lift is available to the first floor.

The following page shows a location plan of Petroc.

G Block on the plan indicates the South West Institute Development building.

Parking

Point 5 on the plan indicates the short stay car park which is located adjacent to the South West Institute Development building which is free to park after 5.00 p.m.

Cycle Racks

Covered cycle racks are located on the grassed area opposite Petroc's main reception, before the Lifestyle building.

Bus Routes

Stops in **Sticklepath Hill** (East bound) bus service 310
Wrey Arms (West bound) bus services 5B, 21, 21A, 21C, 62C, 322, 386, 646, 815, 821, 903, 921
([Sticklepath, Barnstaple – Bus Times](#))

Fire evacuation procedures

Fire evacuation procedures - Upon hearing a constant 2-tone alarm, please leave the building via your nearest marked fire exit and make your way to the nearest assembly point which is the short stay car park (Point 5 on the map). Lifts are not to be used. Please do not take time to pick up personal belongings and leave the building promptly.

