

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Council held at G107, 1st Floor, South West Institute Development Building, Petroc, Barnstaple - Petroc College on Wednesday, 26th February, 2025 at 6.30 pm

PRESENT: Members:

Councillor Walker (Chair)

Councillors Bell, Biederman, Bishop, Bushell, Cann, Clayton, Coombs, Crabb, Davies, Haworth-Booth, Jones, Jusef, D Knight, R Knight, Lane, C Leaver, Lethaby, Lovering, Maddocks, Milton, Norman, Prowse, Quinn, Stevenson, Topps, Wilkinson, Williams, Wilson, Worden and York

Officers:

Chief Executive, Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive and Senior Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

Also Present virtually:

Councillor Orange

90. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bulled, Denton, Hunt, P. Leaver, Maskell, Orange, Patrinos, Roome, Spear and Whitehead,

(NOTE: It was noted that apologies were received from Councillor Turton via email which had not been viewed prior to the commencement of the meeting)

91. TO APPROVE AS CORRECT RECORDS THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 9 AND 15 JANUARY 2025 (ATTACHED)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 9 January 2025 and 15 January 2025 (circulated previously) be approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

92. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chair's announcements.

93. BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY OR WITH THE CONSENT OF THE CHAIR

(a) Order of Agenda

It was agreed that item 7 be considered before item 6 on the agenda to allow for the Declarations of Interest to be recorded prior to item 7 and that item 10 be considered before item 7 on the agenda.

94. 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

(a) To consider the following question submitted by Tanya Rebel to the Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Climate and Biodiversity

The Chair invited Tanya Rebel to present her question to Council.

Tanya Rebel put her question to Council.

Councillor Clayton, Leader of the Council provided a response to the question and advised that any development, of whatever nature, that produces carbon or has an adverse impact on carbon reduction will have an impact on the Council's aim of becoming a carbon neutral area. The Council has no responsibility for 5G infrastructure strategy or roll out. The UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy is the responsibility of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). The Council's only responsibility for communication and emerging technology infrastructure is to assess prior approvals and planning applications for new or upgraded installations (e.g. masts or antennae). To assess these the Council follows the UK Government legislation and guidance: The Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 (section 16) and the national planning policy framework (NPPF) on communications infrastructure. Officers dealing with such applications can only make recommendations based on agreed national and local policy. In relation to safety issues, a developer is required to submit a statement that confirms that a proposed mobile mast will adhere to exposure limits set by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection. Details of any application submitted to the council, together with accompanying documentation, can be found on the Council's website.

Tanya Rebel asked a supplementary question. Have you asked for people's written informed consent right enshrined by law to be exposed to ubiquitous 24/7 radiation, electromagnetic radiation, according to Ikneof, that's allowed and what specific measures have you put into place to protect the electro hypersensitive from exposure inside and outside their homes in accordance with the 2010 Equality Act 2010, UK inclusion policy and duty of care, people and wildlife according your declaration of emergency etc should come before project should come before best interests?

In response to the supplementary question, Councillor Clayton, Leader of the Council advised that the Council were following the guidelines, as is every Authority across the country. To say they are outdated, these are robust guidelines and are specific. He recalled when mobile phones were introduced and the scare stories and when railways were introduce. There was always going to be some dangers, but we have to have specific guidelines and these were probably the most robust in the

world. The Council didn't have authority to go against the guidelines and had to follow national legislation.

(b) To consider the following question by Glynis Walker to the Leader of the Council

The Chair invited Glynis Walker to present her question to Council.

Glynis Walker put her question to Council.

Councillor Clayton, Leader of the Council provided a response to the question and advised that the Council has no responsibility for 5G infrastructure strategy or roll out. The UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy is the responsibility of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). The Council's only responsibility for communication and emerging technology infrastructure is to assess prior approvals and planning applications for new or upgraded installations (e.g. masts or antennae). To assess these the Council follows the UK Government legislation and guidance: The Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 (section 16) and the national planning policy framework (NPPF) on communications infrastructure. Officers dealing with such applications can only make recommendations based on agreed national and local policy. In relation to safety issues, a developer is required to submit a statement that confirms that a proposed mobile mast will adhere to exposure limits set by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection. Details of any application submitted to the council, together with accompanying documentation, can be found on the council's website. The Council had no say over the masts rolled out at Sainsburys, North Devon District Hospital and Petroc, as these had already been approved.

Glynis Walker asked a supplementary question as to whether the North Devon Residents Association would be able to put forward 3 to 4 people to through the information further with unbiased Councillors, as the Council represented the people and had a duty of care.

In response to the supplementary question, Councillor Clayton, Leader of the Council advised that all Councillors were open minded. He suggested that the North Devon Residents Association invited some Councillors to attend their next meeting to listen to their concerns. The papers referred to by Glynis Walker could then be provided to those Councillors that attended the meeting.

95. UPDATE ON LOCAL POLICING MATTERS

Council received a presentation by Superintendent Toby Davies, North and West Local Policing Area Commander.

Superintendent Davies advised Council that this would be the last Council meeting that he would be attending as he was due to retire in April 2025. He thanked Councillors and Officers at North Devon Council for their support and advised that the relationship was strong. He spoke about staffing, audits, Leadership changes, response times, crime levels, focus on domestic abuse, funding, local schemes such as Street Marshalls and Parish Council engagement.

There then followed a question and answer session.

Councillor York, on behalf of the Licensing and Community Safety Committee, thanked Superintendent Davies for his support and helping keeping communities safe.

Councillor Walker, Chair, presented Superintendent Davies with a gift to thank him on behalf of North Devon Council.

Councillor Leaver, presented Superintendent Davies with a gift to thank him on behalf of the Community Safety Partnership.

96. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were received:

Councillor Bell, Item 6(a), non registerable interest as an employee of the National Health Service and North Devon District Hospital.

Councillor Lovering, Item 6(a), non registerable interest as an employee of the Maternity unit at North Devon District Hospital.

Councillor Prowse, Item 6(b), non registerable interest as his wife fell into this category.

Councillor Williams, Item 6(b), non registerable interest as she fell into this category.

Councillor Wilkinson, Item 6(b), non registerable interest as his wife fell into this category.

97. 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 Williams – Support for Our MP Ian Roome’s campaign and North Devon District Hospital

Councillors Bell and Lovering left the meeting during the consideration of this item.

Councillor Biederman declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in this item as he worked for Ian Roome MP and left the meeting during the consideration of this item.

Councillor Williams presented her notice of motion to Council.

The notice of motion was moved by Councillor Williams and seconded by Councillor Jusef.

Councillor Crabb moved an amendment to approve the notice of motion subject to paragraph 1 being amended to include “that Councillor Roome remind the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on his previous promise to attend North Devon District Hospital in Barnstaple and that if he did not attend that he stand up in Parliament to apologise”, which was seconded by Councillor Jones.

A vote was taken on the amendment, which was carried. The amendment then became the substantive motion.

RESOLVED that Council:

- (i) Write to the Health Minister Mr Wes Streeting MP, cc'ing Cllr Ian Roome MP in order to express the urgent need to reconsider the timescale involved in supplying genuine changes to our hospital and that Councillor Roome remind the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on his previous promise to attend North Devon District Hospital in Barnstaple and that if he did not attend that he stand up in Parliament to apologise.
- (ii) Commit to working with healthcare partners, local MPs and community representatives to highlight the importance of timely action to rebuild NDDH.
- (iii) This Council reaffirms its commitment to advocating for the health and wellbeing of all its residents in North Devon. This Council owes it to our community, our healthcare professionals and future generations to ensure that NDDH remains a centre of excellence, with modern facilities that match the dedication of those who work there. This is not just an investment in infrastructure but an investment in the health and resilience of North Devon.

Councillors Bell, Biederman and Lovering returned to the meeting.

**(b) To consider the following notice of motion from Councillor Williams –
Notice on Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI)**

Councillors Prowse, Williams and Wilkinson left the meeting during the consideration of the item.

Councillor R. Knight declared a non registerable interest as his wife was within the category and left the meeting during the consideration of the item.

Councillor C. Leaver presented her notice of motion to Council.

The notice of motion was moved by Councillor C. Leaver and seconded by Councillor York.

RESOLVED that Council:

- (i) Publicly voice its disappointment with the previous and current governments to ensure women born in the 1950s received compensation and recognition of the problems arising from the lack of adequate notice of changes in pensionable age.

- (ii) Ask our North Devon MP to join the All-Party Parliamentary Group on State Pension Inequality for Women.
- (iii) Write to our North Devon MP asking them to contact the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to outline the effects of the injustice to the 6,820 women in North Devon born in the 1950s and to seek:
 - a. Proposals for a compensation scheme, in line with the PHSO's report, to be urgently brought forward by the DWP
 - b. An urgent debate and vote, in Government time in the House of Commons, on delivering compensation to affected women."

Councillors R. Knight, Prowse, Williams and Wilkinson returned to the meeting.

98. CHAIR'S REPLIES TO ANY QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL BY MEMBERS SUBMITTED UNDER PART 4, COUNCIL PROCEDURES RULES, PARAGRAPH 10 OF THE CONSTITUTION

Council noted that no questions had been submitted to the Leader or the Chair of a Committee under Part 4, Council Procedure Rules, paragraph 10.4 of the Constitution.

99. REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Council considered and noted a report by the Leader of the Council (circulated previously) regarding work that had been undertaken since the last Council meeting.

In response to a question, the Leader advised that Council that all Members were invited to a meeting following the Strategy and Resources Committee on Monday 3 March 2025 to discuss options to be put forward in relation to the Local Government Review. The deadline to submit options was by 21 March 2025. He was hoping that the Devon Leaders had been discussing potential options and would put forward a number of options to the Government. He advised Council of the current option that was being discussed which was known as the 1, 4, 5 model. A working party had been set up by the Council with representatives from each political group.

The Chair advised that Councillors would be able to join the informal meeting on 3 March 2025 virtually.

The Chief Executive advised that it was proposed that an Extraordinary Council meeting would take place on 19 March 2025, however the date had not yet been confirmed. Council at this meeting would consider and approval proposals to be put forward to Government. Councillors were invited to an informal session following Strategy and Resources Committee on 3 March 2025. Options to be put forward would be considered at the meeting on 3 March 2025. All proposals were welcome and any concerns could be raised at this meeting.

100. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

(a) Questions by Members

The following question was submitted in advance of the meeting and response provided by the Leader was circulated previously:

- (i) Question for the Leader from Councillor Bell “Plymouth and Leeds have both worked with key dental providers to open centrally located dental hubs to tackle the growing NHS dental care crisis. With North Devon experiencing some of the worst dental access issues in the country, far below the national average, can I ask you to champion a plan to explore how North Devon Council, Green Lanes and an appropriate provider could provide a similar Dental hub in conjunction with a dental provider or dental school? A centrally located hub would provide much-needed access to dental care for residents, particularly those using public transport, while making use of flexible commercial space in a high-footfall location. Plymouth’s and Leeds both provide potential templates, ensuring emergency and routine care is available to those who need it most. This would not only improve public health but also contribute to the revitalisation of Green Lanes. Will you please take this forward?” Councillor Clayton, Leader’s response “Green Lanes is managed on behalf of the Council by Praxis. We work closely with Praxis to identify appropriate uses of the centre some of which, such as the Council Hub and health services, are not traditional shopping centre uses. We will liaise with Praxis over the suggestion and report back through members in the normal way”. In response to a supplementary question regarding other Councils looking at ways to provide additional services and whether the Council could actively express its concerns to NHS Devon and the MP to take it forward, Councillor Clayton advised that the Policy Development Committee had carried out a review on NHS Dentistry in 2024. Ian Roome MP was now the Chair of the Parliamentary Dental Commission. The Council was not a provider of dental services and could only be facilitators. Green Lanes was a commercial venture.

101. LEAD MEMBER REPORTS

(a) **Lead Member for Commercialisation and Resources**

Council considered and noted a report by the Lead Member for Commercialisation and Resources (circulated previously).

In response to a question regarding a question regarding National Insurance contributions, the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources advised that the Council’s contributions per employee was approximately £1,000.

102. PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT Q3 2024-25

Council considered a report by the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive regarding the Performance and Financial Management report for quarter 3 of 2024/25 to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 3 February 2025 (circulated previously).

(a) **Report of the Policy Development Committee**

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Councillor Jones of the Policy Development Committee presented the Committee's report on the Performance and Financial Management Quarter 3 of 2024/25 to the Policy Development Committee on 13 February 2025 (circulated previously).

(b) **Report of meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee**

Councillor Clayton, Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee reported the recommendations of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 3 February 2025 on the Performance and Financial Management Quarter 3 of 2024/25 report (circulated previously).

It was moved by Councillor Clayton and seconded by Councillor Crabb "that minute 105 (g) of the report of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 3 February 2025 regarding the Performance and Financial Management quarter 3 of 2024/25 report be adopted".

RESOLVED that minute 105 (g) of the report of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 3 February 2025 regarding the Performance and Financial Management quarter 3 of 2024/25 report be adopted.

103. FEES AND CHARGES 2025-26

Council considered a report by the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive regarding the Fees and Charges 2025-26 to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 3 February 2025 (circulated previously).

(a) **Ilfracombe Harbour Charges Review 2025-26**

Councillor Wilkinson, Chair of the Harbour Board reported the recommendation of the Harbour Board (circulated previously) held on 11 February 2025 regarding the Ilfracombe Harbour Charges Review 2025-26.

(b) **Report of the Policy Development Committee**

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Councillor Jones of the Policy Development Committee presented the Committee's report on the Fees and Charges 2025-26 to the Policy Development Committee on 13 February 2025 (circulated previously).

(c) **Report of meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee**

Councillor Clayton, Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee reported the recommendations of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 3 February 2025 on the Fees and Charges 2025-26 report (circulated previously).

It was moved by Councillor Clayton and seconded by Councillor Jones “that minute 106 of the report of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 3 February 2025 regarding the Fees and Charges 2025-26 report be adopted”.

RESOLVED that minute 106 of the report of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 3 February 2025 regarding the Fees and Charges 2025-26 report be adopted.

104. REVENUE BUDGET 2025-26, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2025-26 TO 2030-31

The Lead Member for Resources and Commercialisation introduced the report to Council.

Councillor Clayton, Leader of the Council thanked the Lead Member for Resources and Commercialisation for her work with the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive.

Council received a presentation by the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive on the Revenue Budget 2025-26, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2030-31 (circulated previously) as follows:

- The Core Spending Power total for England was 6%. By region, the South West Core Spending Power was 5.4% and by authority type North Devon Council, being a Shire District, the Core Spending Power was however only 0.3%. In comparison, the CPI (Consumer Price Index) inflation to November 2024 was 2.6%.
- A Shire Districts referendum would be required if the Council set an increase of 3% or more than £5 for Council Tax, whichever was the greater.
- Following the draft finance settlement in December 2024, the draft budget has assumed an increase on Council Tax of 2.99%. The overall Council Tax Increase of £708,000 was broken down as £223,000 from the 2.99% increase and £485,000 from increase in tax base (of which £353,000 came from the second homes premium and £132,000 tax base).
- The Business Rates draft budget figure came from the Retained Growth (made up of £2m North Devon Business rates growth, £680,000 Renewable Energy Schemes and £350,000 Devon pool retained income).
- Giving an overall figure of £3.090m factored into the draft budget.
- Revenue Support Grant and Baseline Funding – additional £49,000.
- New Homes Bonus – actual award £705,000 (£355,000 more than 2024-25).
- Rural Services Delivery Grant had been removed (£421,000 less than 2024-25).
- Services Grant – had been removed (£21,000 less than 2024-25).
- Funding Guarantee – had been removed (£1,507,000 less than 2024-25).
- New Recovery Grant – an additional £267,000
- New Funding Floor Grant – an additional £988,000.
- The overall net impact of less Government funding was £290,000 reduction.

- The Government’s consultation on the Finance Settlement ended 15 January 2025.
- North Devon Council’s consultation response could be seen in Appendix F of the agenda report.
- There was an increase in the gap of Government funding per head of population between rural and urban authorities of £166.19.
- The Extended Producer Responsibility aimed to make ‘producers’ responsible for the cost of collection, managing and recycling of packaging and incentivise them to make their products recyclable by modulating fees based on the recyclability of products. It also aimed to reduce unnecessary packaging, increase quality and reduce litter.
- The Government had made an announcement on ‘Simpler Recycling’ services due to start March 2026.
- New burdens funding to be provided for food waste collections.
- The provisional Extended Producer Responsibility payment allocation for North Devon was £1,178,000. There was improved capacity with the investment that had been made at Brynsworthy Environment Centre and the vehicles types that had been acquired and operated put the Council in a strong position to implement the “simpler recycling requirements”.
- The Medium Term Financial Strategy (2024-2030) showed a budget gap year on year:

Years	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	2026-27 £m	2027-28 £m	2028-29 £m	2029-30 £m
Budget gap/(surplus)	0	0.487	2.945	3.306	3.044	3.263

- Key elements already factored into the above forecasts were:
 - Pay increases for 2025-26 at 3% and 2026-27 2% and ongoing.
 - Ongoing 2.99% increase in council tax level.
 - 2025-26 inclusion of 100% premium on second homes.
 - Review of fees and charges on car parks in 2025-26 and 2028-29.
 - Assumed transfer of all public conveniences to town and parishes by the end of 2025-26.
 - Government funding review assumed for 2026-27.
- The summary position for 2025-26:

Medium Term Financial Gap (February 2024)	£487,000
Net impact Employers National insurance increase 25/26	£383,000
Employee costs (pay award 24/25, other NI changes 24/25)	£281,000
Increase in Finance Lease costs (vehicles)	£140,000
Increased Insurance costs	£257,000
Phased transfer of Public Conveniences to parishes	£155,000

Government funding changes	£164,000
Extended Producer Responsibility grant	(£1,178,000)
Revised 2025-26 Budget gap to bridge	£689,000
Additional Planning Fee income (price change)	(£120,000)
Growth in Recycling sales material income	(£54,000)
Proposed 3% increase on fees and charges	(£25,000)
Re-profiled Borrowing costs (timing of external borrowing and interest payments)	(£96,000)
Use of additional grant funding to offset revenue spend	(£115,000)
Additional Business Rates income	(£90,000)
Use of Budget Management reserve	(£164,000)
Other	(£25,000)
Budget gap for 2025-26	£0

- Council Tax breakdown. For 2024/25, Council Tax increased Band D by £6.11 (equivalent of 2.99%). Rural Councils could increase by up to 3% or £5 (whichever was the higher). £6.29 would increase the £210.39 to £216.68 (increase of 2.99%) for Band D properties.
- Green Lanes shopping centre – 2021-22 net return (4.5 months) £243,600. 2022-23 net return £291,000. 2023-24 net return £237,000 which included £150,000 income volatility reserve. 2024-25 cash flow in line with the business case.
- **Appendix A:** Detailed the breakdown of the North Devon net budget of £18.073m for 2025-26. Assumptions had been made for 3% increase on salary costs, 2.99% increase on Band D Council Tax, fees and charges general uplift by 3% and garden waste subscription frozen at £60.
- **Appendix B:** Detailed the breakdown of Grants. New for 2024-25 was the North Devon Council central fund from the Community Lottery of £12,000. It was proposed to be placed into a reserve for spend in 2025/26. There had been a steer from the Councillor budget workshop that £3,000 of the funds be allocated to the North Devon Records Office. There was an option to top up the existing strategic grant recipients with the remaining £9,000. Contact had been made with Age Concern, Mid Devon Mobility and North Devon Voluntary Service. No response had been received from Mid Devon Mobility. The Policy Development Committee at its meeting on 13 February 2025 had received a presentation from Citizens Advice and had recommended that pending further information from North Devon Voluntary Services and Mid Devon Mobility Ring and Ride bus service that the Council allocates an additional £7,000 to Citizens Advice and £2,000 to Age Concern. The presentation received from Citizens Advice together with further information received from North Devon Voluntary Service and Age Concern had been circulated to all Councillor in advance of the meeting. It was recommended that the £9,000 be allocated proportionality to Citizens Advice (£6,000), North Devon Voluntary Services (£2,300) and Age Concern (shop mobility) £700.
- **Appendix C:** Detailed the breakdown of Reserves.
- The General Fund balance forecast at 31st March 2026 was £1.238m, which equated to 7% of the net budget. The recommended level was 5% -10%.
- Earmarked reserves were forecast at 31 March 2026 at £5.727m.

- In compliance with Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Financial Officer assured Members of:
 - The robustness of the estimates; and
 - The adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.
- **Appendix D:** Detailed the refreshed Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2025-2031:

Years	2025-26 £m	2026-27 £m	2027-28 £m	2028-29 £m	2029-30 £m	2030-31 £m
Budget gap/(surplus)	0	1.558	2.804	3.074	3.629	4.161

- Key factors assumed included the recent decisions not to fully compensate local councils for the increased National Insurance contributions and the cumulative impact of a 0% future Core Spending Power continuing.
- The refreshed Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2025-2031 period included:
 - Fair Funding Review – planned for 2024/25 (now assumed for 2026/27)
 - Pay increases – 2026/27 and ongoing at 2%
 - Ongoing 2.99% increase in Council Tax level
 - Budget gap as detailed in paragraph 4.1.5.7 and what had not been included as detailed 4.1.5.16 of the report.
 - Fundamental to bridging future year budget gaps would be further income generation and net revenue gains through the Commercialisation Strategy.
- **Appendix E:** Detailed the Draft Capital Programme for the years 2024-25 to 2026-27 of £35.841m. This was funded by:
 - External and Internal Borrowing (£13.991m).
 - Capital receipts (£0.320m).
 - External grants and Contributions (£19.546m).
 - Reserves (£1.984m).
 - Total funding (£35.841m).
- Projected borrowing need included within the 10 year Capital Strategy.
- The following areas of risk could affect the financial plans:
 - Government Grants.
 - Key areas of income.
 - Capital receipts
 - Savings plans.
 - Increase in demand for services.
 - Localisation council tax support.
 - Business rates retention.
 - Welfare reform.
 - Devolution, this was a newly added risk.

In response to questions, the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive advised the following:

- The Council could set an increase of up to 3% or £5 for Council Tax, whichever was the greater.
- As part of the Finance Policy Statement it had been indicated that Councils would be fully compensated for the increase in National Insurance. However, the Council had not been fully compensated and had only been awarded £65,000. In relation to the care sector, the national insurance compensation grant was for staff directly employed and not for those staff who were outsourced.

Councillor York declared an other registerable interest as a Trustee of Age Concern and left the room.

It was moved by Councillor Clayton and seconded by Councillor Prowse “that £3,000 of the North Devon Community Lottery Central fund be allocated as a strategic grant to the North Devon Records Office and the remaining £9,000 be allocated proportionality as a top up to the existing strategic grants for 2025/26 as follows: Citizens Advice Torridge, North, Mid and West Devon £6,000, North Devon Voluntary Services £2,300 and Age Concern (shop mobility) £700.”

RESOLVED that £3,000 of the North Devon Community Lottery Central fund be allocated as a strategic grant to the North Devon Records Office and the remaining £9,000 be allocated proportionality as a top up to the existing strategic grants for 2025/26 as follows:

Citizens Advice Torridge, North, Mid and West Devon £6,000
North Devon Voluntary Services £2,300
Age Concern (shop mobility) £700.

(a) **Report of the Policy Development Committee**

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Councillor Jones of the Policy Development Committee presented the Committee’s report on the Revenue Budget 2025-26, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2030-31 to the Policy Development Committee on 13 February 2025 (circulated previously).

(b) **Report of meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee**

Councillor Clayton, Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee presented the Committee’s report on the Revenue Budget 2025-26, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2030-31 to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 3 February 2025 (circulated previously).

It was moved by Councillor Clayton and seconded by Councillor Topps “that the recommendations in minutes 107 (e) to (h) “Revenue Budget 2025-26, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2030-31” of the Strategy and Resources Committee on 3 February 2025 be adopted.”

Council noted that in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations (as amended) and the Constitution, Council was required to take a recorded vote when setting its budget and Council Tax.

Voting on the motion

Voting for the motion: Councillors Bell, Bishops, Biederman, Bushell, Cann, Clayton, Coombs, Crabb, Davies, Haworth-Booth, Jones, Jusef, D. Knight, R. Knight, Lane, C. Leaver, Lethaby, Maddocks, Milton, Norman, Prowse, Quinn, Stevenson, Topps, Walker, Wilkinson, Williams, Wilson and Worden.

Voting against the motion: None

Abstained from voting on the motion: None

Totals: 29 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstained.

The motion was carried.

RESOLVE that the recommendations in minutes 107 (e) to (h) "Revenue Budget 2025-26, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2030-31" of the Strategy and Resources Committee on 3 February 2025 be adopted.

105. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2025/26

Council considered a report by the Head of Governance regarding the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025/26 to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 3 February 2025 (circulated previously).

(a) **Report of the Policy Development Committee**

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Councillor Jones of the Policy Development Committee presented the Committee's report on the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025/26 to the Policy Development Committee on 13 February 2025 (circulated previously).

(b) **Report of meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee**

Councillor Clayton, Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee reported the recommendations on the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025/26 of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 3 February 2025 (circulated previously).

It was moved by Councillor Clayton and seconded by

Councillor Topps “that minute 108 of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 3 February 2025 regarding the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025/26 be adopted”.

RESOLVED that minute 108 of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 3 February 2025 regarding the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025/26 be adopted.

106. 10 YEAR CAPITAL STRATEGY 2025 TO 2035

Council considered a report by the Head of Governance regarding the 10 Year Capital Strategy 2025 to 2035 to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 3 February 2025 (circulated previously).

(a) **Report of Policy Development Committee**

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Councillor Jones of the Policy Development Committee presented the Committee’s report on the 10 Year Capital Strategy 2025 to 2035 to the Policy Development Committee on 13 February 2025 (circulated previously).

(b) **Report of meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee**

Councillor Clayton, Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee reported the recommendations on the 10 Year Capital Strategy 2025 to 2035 of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 3 February 2025 (circulated previously).

It was moved by Councillor Clayton and seconded by Councillor Prowse “that minute 109 of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 3 February 2025 regarding the 10 Year Capital Strategy 2025 to 2035 be adopted.”

RESOLVED that minute 109 of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 3 February 2025 regarding the 10 Year Capital Strategy 2025 to 2035 be adopted.

107. COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTIONS 2025/26

Council considered a report by the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive (circulated previously) regarding the Council Tax Resolutions for 2025/26.

The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive highlighted the following:

- Devon County Council at its meeting on 20 February 2025 had approved a Council Tax increase of 4.99% which was in line with the report.
- Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner at its meeting on 31 January 2025 had approved a Council Tax increase of 4.99% as detailed in the report.

- Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority at its meeting on 17 February 2025 had approved a Council Tax increase of £5 which was in line with the report.

It was moved by Councillor Worden and seconded by Councillor Clayton “that the formal Council Tax Resolutions for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A of the report be approved”.

Council noted that in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations (as amended) and the Constitution, Council was required to take a recorded vote when setting its budget and Council Tax.

Voting on the motion:

Voting for the motion: Councillors Bell, Bishop, Cann, Clayton, Coombs, Crabb, Davies, Haworth-Booth, Jones, Jusef, D. Knight, R. Knight, Lane, C. Leaver, Lethaby, Maddocks, Milton, Norman, Prowse, Quinn, Stevenson, Topps, Walker, Wilkinson, Williams, Wilson, Worden and York.

Voting against the motion: Councillor Bushell

Abstained from voting on the motion: None

Totals: 28 For, 1 Against and 0 Abstained.

The motion was carried.

RESOLVED that the formal Council Tax Resolutions for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A of the report be approved.

108. MEMBER TRAINING PROGRAMME 2025/26 - 2026/27

Council considered a report by the Member Development Working Group (circulated previously) regarding the Member Training Programme for 2025/26 to 2026/27.

Councillor Bell presented the report to Council on behalf of the Member Development Working Group.

It was moved by Councillor Davies and seconded by Councillor Jones “that the Member Training Programme for 2025/26 to 2026/27 as detailed in Appendix A be adopted which incorporated the mandatory training sessions that Councillors are required to undertake subject to the frequency of the mandatory training entitled “The Role of Councillors in Planning: Property and Good Practice” being reduced to once a year.”

RESOLVED that the Member Training Programme for 2025/26 to 2026/27 as detailed in Appendix A be adopted which incorporated the mandatory training sessions that Councillors are required to undertake subject to the frequency of the mandatory training entitled “The Role of Councillors in Planning: Property and Good Practice” being reduced to once a year.

109. UPDATE TO THE CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES (PART 4 CONSTITUTION) IN LIGHT OF THE PROCUREMENT ACT 2023

Council considered a report by the Senior Solicitor and Monitoring Officer (circulated previously) regarding an update to the Contract Procedure Rules (Part 4 of the Constitution) in light of the Procurement Act 2023.

The Senior Solicitor and Monitoring Officer highlighted the following:

- That all Councillors would receive training at the next meeting of Council on 23 April 2025 regarding the implications of the new Procurement Act 2023.
- That there were typographical errors contained within Appendix 1 as follows:
 - Page 1 – Covered Procurement definition – “with a value” repeated
 - Page 11 – Para 11.4 – unnecessary ‘s’ on the end of the word Contract

It was moved by Councillor Clayton and seconded by Councillor Norman “that the revisions to the Contract Procedure Rules (Part 4 of the Constitution) as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report be approved subject to the typographical errors being amended as follows: Page 1 – Covered Procurement definition – “with a value” repeated being removed and on Page 11 – Paragraph 11.4 – the removal of unnecessary ‘s’ on the end of the word Contract”.

RESOLVED that the revisions to the Contract Procedure Rules (Part 4 of the Constitution) as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report be approved subject to the typographical errors being amended as follows: Page 1 – Covered Procurement definition – “with a value” repeated being removed and on Page 11 – Paragraph 11.4 – the removal of unnecessary ‘s’ on the end of the word Contract.

110. STATUTORY PAY POLICY

Council considered a report by the Head of Organisational Development (circulated previously) regarding the Statutory Pay Policy.

In response to a question, the Head of Organisational Development advised that the Statutory Pay Policy referred to specific officers classified as Chief Officers.

It was moved by Councillor Prowse and seconded by Councillor Clayton “that the Statutory Pay Policy for 2025, its Appendix and Annex thereto be approved”.

RESOLVED that the Statutory Pay Policy for 2025, its Appendix and Annex thereto be approved.

111. OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENT - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION COASTAL SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

Council considered the appointment of a deputy Member to the Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group to replace former Councillor Renshaw.

It was moved by Councillor Wilkinson and seconded by Councillor Leaver “that Councillor Williams be appointed as a deputy Member to the Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group, to replace former Councillor Renshaw, for the life of Council and that attendance at meetings be an approved duty.”

RESOLVED that Councillor Williams be appointed as a deputy Member to the Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group, to replace former Councillor Renshaw, for the life of Council and that attendance at meetings be an approved duty.

112. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(a) **Building Control Joint Committee**

RESOLVED that the following minutes of the Building Control Joint Committee (circulated previously) be noted and adopted as follows:

(i) 23 January 2025

(b) **Joint Planning Policy Committee**

RESOLVED that the following minutes of the Joint Planning Policy Committee (circulated previously) be noted and adopted as follows:

(i) 24 January 2025

(c) **Policy Development Committee**

RESOLVED that the following minutes of the Policy Development Committee (circulated previously) be noted and adopted as follows:

(i) 13 January 2025

(ii) 13 February 2025

- a. Minute 68: Revenue Budget 2025-26, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2030-31 (NOTE: This recommendation was considered under minute 104)

(d) **Strategy and Resources Committee**

RESOLVED that the following minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee (circulated previously) be noted and adopted as follows:

(i) 3 February 2025

Chair

The meeting ended at 9.02 pm

NOTE: These minutes will be confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting of the Committee.