



MINUTES FOR THE COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE
MONDAY 9TH MARCH 2020 AT THE GUILDHALL TOTNES

Present: Cllr E Price (Chair), Cllr C Allford, Cllr P Paine, Cllr J Hodgson, Cllr Piper, Cllr Adams, Cllr Luker
 Not present: Cllr Simms
 Present: Catherine Marlton (Town Clerk).

No	Subject	Comments
1	To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Council.	None.
<i>The Committee will adjourn for the following item:</i>		
	Public Question Time: A period of 15 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions or make comment regarding the work of the Committee or other items that affect Totnes.	None.
<i>The Committee will convene to consider the following items:</i>		
2	To discuss any matters arising from the minutes of: Council Matters 10 th February 2020 - (already agreed through Full Council)	None.
3	To consider the current year's budget allocations, budget monitor, balances and forecast. (already noted at Full Council 2 nd March 2020)	The current year budget monitor was considered and AGREED unanimously.
4	To consider recruitment timelines for the following positions: a) Town Maintenance Officer - extension b) Green Travel Coordinator	This was unanimously AGREED .
5	To consider Community Traffic Management Training and Chapter 8.	It was AGREED to fund the Community Traffic Training and invite partner agencies to fill any empty spaces, at cost.
6	To note any update of items or proposed expenditure from the Venues Working Group.	Noted.
7	To note any update or proposed items of expenditure from the Arts Working Group.	Noted and the proposed expenditure AGREED . It was noted that Cllr Allford was also present but not recorded in the notes.
8	To note any update or proposed items of expenditure from the Public Realm Working Group a) Bank Lane update b) Town Mill signage update	Update noted, no expenditure.
9	To note the draft Christmas Events debrief document (emailed to all Councillors) and budget.	Noted.
10	To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan (standing item).	None.
11	To consider writing to support the Littlehempston Cycle Path.	This was AGREED . Councillor Hodgson to forward a letter to the Town Clerk to send on from the Council Matters committee.
12	a) To review the Payments to Councillors Policy.	It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that Payments to Councillors policy be adopted. It was noted that receipts for Mayoral expenditure were now required in lieu of the Mayoral Allowance.
13	To consider a request from Cllr Luker for an audit to be completed of the Guildhall contents.	It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that 4 authorised personnel are allowed to enter the Guildhall to undertake the audit with a limited remit. The Town Clerk would formalise this in writing by email.
14	To note the proposed timeline for the Market Square project.	Noted.

		It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the old section of the building attached to the Civic Hall is converted as outlined in the plans for the purposes of Town Council Offices/HQ It is RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the Town Clerk continues with the Market Square and Civic Hall projects as outlined in the project plan and has delegated authority to spend on professional surveys up to £12300 as detailed.
15	To consider a plan for how to operate the Town Council offices in the case of the Coronavirus outbreak significantly worsening.	The proposal was noted and AGREED as comprehensive.
16	To consider an end date for the Castle Meadow lease.	It was AGREED to wait until the Strategic Planning session had taken place before formalising an end date.
17	To note the new Guildhall Booking form for Councillor use.	Noted. Councillors AGREED this was essential.
18	To consider the proposed breakdown for the 2020/21 Totnes Gardens budget allocation.	This was unanimously AGREED .
19	a) To consider a timeline and process for reviewing the Town Council's priorities and Standing Orders.	The timeline was AGREED .
<i>The Committee will be asked to RESOLVE to exclude the press and public "by reason of the confidential nature of the business" to be discussed and in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.</i>		
20	To consider and agree the bank and petty cash reconciliations. <i>(CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)</i>	The reconciliations were unanimously AGREED .
21	To consider and sign (Clerk and Chair) the 2019/20 staffing budget (updated). <i>(CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)</i>	This was unanimously AGREED .
22	To receive a general staff update. <i>(CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)</i>	Noted.
23	To consider the uses and layout of the Civic Hall spaces. <i>(CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)</i>	Recommendations as above.
24	To consider a request from Transition Town Totnes for an interim payment on the agreed contribution towards core costs. This was agreed at 2 nd March 2020 Full Council. <i>(CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)</i>	It was RECOMMENDED to Full Council to allow the interim payment as requested by TTT in advance of the outcome of the grant application. The remainder would be dependant on the success of the bid.
25	To note the new employment contract format which will be issued to all staff members. <i>(CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)</i>	Noted.
26	To note an issue regarding standing order payments. <i>(CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)</i>	Noted.
27	CANCELLED BECAUSE OF THE COVIC-19 PANDEMIC	

PAYMENTS TO COUNCILLORS

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED SEPTEMBER 2019

REVIEWED 9TH MARCH 2020 BY COUNCIL MATTERS

This Policy outlines the occasions on which payments may be made to Town Councillors.

Background

The elected members of Totnes Town Council may receive an allowance in recognition of the time, work and costs involved in representing the people of Totnes. This allowance is not to be confused with expenses or with training and travel costs, all of which are defined below. In order to qualify for this allowance, Councillors must attend 75% of Full Council and committee meetings during the 12 months prior to the payment being made. Councillors who start part way through the year will receive a pro rata allowance assuming they have attended 75% of the meetings as detailed above during their time. Co-opted Councillors are not eligible to receive this allowance.

Councillor Allowances

Councillors can claim a paid Basic Allowance each year. This relates to the work they do as local councillors in attending local and community meetings. The levels of allowance paid are agreed by South Hams District Council in accordance with national legislation.

The annual permitted allowance for members of Totnes Town Council is £394.05 and this is subject to taxation.

Historically the Mayor could be awarded twice the sum for additional costs related to the position. The advice received in early 2020 from Crispin Taylor (SLCC National Finance & VAT Adviser) is that this should not be paid as a lump sum without receipts.

Town Councillors who are members of another local authority and who are entitled to an allowance from that authority should be guided by the Declaration of Interest Guidance in the Council's Code of Conduct.

Town Councillors will be required to declare their allowance to HMRC through the Town Council PAYE system.

Councillors Expenses

Councillors can reclaim a limited range of travel and other expenses they have paid out of their own pocket when they have had to travel out of the town or when they are out of pocket for some other approved reason.

Councillor Training and Travel

Councillors can reclaim the cost of any approved training and the associated travel costs at the agreed rate per mile or fares paid.

Rates set by South Hams District Council

Parish Basic Allowance

The formula recommended by the Parish Remuneration Panel at its last meeting calculates an allowance based on a percentage of the district basic allowance (now fixed at £5,254 per annum) and the size of the electorate.

The 19/20 agreement is as follows:-

Electorate	% of District Basic Allowance	Amount per Councillor
5,001 – 10,000	7.5%	£394.05

Travel and subsistence

The main rates are:

(a) Travel Allowances

- Car mileage can be paid at 45p per mile (in line with the HMRC advisory rate and automatically adjusted in the event that the HMRC adjust this rate);
- Motorcycle mileage can be paid at 24p per mile;
- A supplement of 5p per mile for each passenger carried can also be paid; and
- The actual amount incurred on any tolls, ferries or parking fees can be reimbursed.

(b) Subsistence Allowances

If a town or parish councillor is away from their usual place of residence for more than four hours, they can claim £10.00 towards their breakfast, lunch and/or evening meal.

Totnes Town Council Protocol for the Civic Budget & Mayoral Allowance

All Civic and Mayoral spending will be limited to the agreed budgets over the course of the financial year, therefore pre planning of proposed events and larger commitments is essential. All major civic events should take place within the Council's financial year ending 31st March.

During the period from 1st April to 18th May a maximum spend of an amount equivalent to 1 ½ months of the allocated Civic Budget and Mayoral Allowance Budget for the financial year is allowed and must be agreed in advance with the Town Clerk.

Any surplus at the end of the financial year will not be carried forward.

The budgets must not be in deficit at the financial year end.

Expenditure which is allowed:

A. Mayor's Allowance Policy

The Mayor's allowance, exists to help defray the cost to the Mayor whilst undertaking his/her duties for the civic year. Totnes Town Council is committed to accountability and transparency in respect of all expenditure, including the Mayor's allowance.

Background

Each May, the Town Council elect the Mayor for the ensuing year. The job will entail increased responsibility for the Mayor representing the town at various events throughout the County. As a result it is a likely that there will be increased expenditure and to defray these extra costs a budget is allocated and will be reviewed annually as part of the Council budget procedure. If the Mayor's allowance is not fully spent by the end of the Mayor's term of office, the remainder of the fund will revert to the general reserves.

Permitted expenditure

Whilst representing the town the following list is legitimate expenditure for which there will be reimbursement:

- Mileage to and from events
- Tickets for events
- Raffle/draw tickets
- Donations to charity stalls, etc.

- Reasonable clothing allowance for civic events
- Telephone, stationery and printing
- Costs incurred e.g. hire of a venue, in relation to the Mayor's fundraising events for the Mayor's named charity(s)
- Reasonable expenditure required for performing the Mayor's duties in service of the Town

It is recognised that the Mayor may be accompanied to many formal engagements by his or her spouse or partner. Reasonable expenditure under the above headings in respect of the Mayor's spouse or partner represents legitimate expenditure. It is expected that where possible receipts will support expenditure. Where it is not possible to provide receipts, signed written details must be provided by the Mayor to substantiate the expenditure.

B. Civic Budget

Funding for all the formal and informal Civic events and costs associated with the role of the Mayor during the Mayoral year.

These may include:

- ❖ Mayor Choosing and reception
- ❖ The Civic Service
- ❖ Remembrance Sunday (in conjunction with the British Legion)
- ❖ The Civic Event (Community fundraising event)
- ❖ Events where the Mayor is usually accompanied by the Town Sergeant, such as Totnes Carnival, the annual Orange Race, the opening of the Elizabethan Market.

PLEASE NOTE - Civic Funerals (as and when required) and refreshments at a wake for Honorary Citizens/Freeman of Totnes will be funded from the general reserve up to a value of £1,000.

Civic events supported by the Council involving, but not necessarily arranged by, the Mayor, or agreed Councillors. This expenditure must be agreed in advance by the Mayor.

These may include

- ❖ hosting the Mayor of Vire, to include up to £25 for an award.
- ❖ receptions for Civic visitors
- ❖ hosting small award ceremonies, to include up to £25 for an award (for example Freeman awards)

- ❖ hosting meetings of community groups
- ❖ activities related to the Town Council but not necessarily organised by the Mayor.

The costs of any events held or attended by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor or Councillors deputising in their place in the course of his/her duties in the Mayoral Year.

These may include

- ❖ Christmas reception
- ❖ specific refreshments etc. when organising events at the Guildhall during the year.
- ❖ the incidental costs of attending community and charitable events e.g. purchase of tickets for both the event and raffles
- ❖ charity functions, and to cover any costs when attending functions e.g. the purchase of raffle tickets, collections, etc.

PLEASE NOTE: All use of the Civic Hall must be paid for in full from the Civic Budget to the Paige Adams account. No free use can be granted by the Mayor.

Expenditure which is not allowed :

The Civic budget must not be used to pay for

- ❖ gifts of monies or goods (including flowers) other than to charities. NOTE: Any requests for contributions to groups and charities outside of fundraising must be considered by Paige Adams through the grants process.
NOTE: The policy will allow an exception for the purchase of flowers for incoming and outgoing Mayors and their consorts plus retiring Councillors and staff leavers to the value of £25 per bouquet
- ❖ parking fines
- ❖ social events internal to the Council unless agreed by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor.
- ❖ items normally covered by the Mayoral and Councillor Allowance e.g. costs associated with the use of home as office, personal telephone bills, etc.
- ❖ printing fliers/leaflets/posters etc. other than for civic events covered in B. above.

Reporting and monitoring procedures:

The Mayor is asked to account for his/her spending and to submit these expenses, along with the Mayor's monthly engagements, as a quarterly agenda item to Council Matters Committee meetings:

- All amounts submitted for reimbursement from the Town Council will be signed off and paid according to the Town Council financial regulations.
- Amounts of £500 and over need to be agreed by The Council Matters Committee in advance of agreement. Details of the proposed expenditure will need to be submitted, to ensure contributions and events are in line with Civic function and the Town Council priorities. If agreed it can then be submitted for reimbursement/payment to the Deputy Clerk.

Once 85% spend of the budget is reached the Council Matters Committee must be informed and any future spend must be agreed in advance with the Town Clerk.

Any outstanding civic expenses need to be submitted by the outgoing mayor by the end of June, when the preceding mayor's budget will be closed.