

MINUTES OF THE PEOPLE COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 13th APRIL 2017 AT THE GUILDHALL OFFICES TOTNES

Present: Cllr T Whitty (Chair), Cllr J Sweett, Cllr K Sermon, Cllr R Vint, Cllr R Hendriksen, Cllr A Simms

In Attendance: Christina Bewley (Deputy Clerk), Cllr M Barker and Press

Apologies: Cllr M Elliot-Smith

Not present: Cllr B Piper

No	Subject	Comments
1	To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Council	The apologies from Cllr M Elliot-Smith were accepted and noted.
<i>The Committee will adjourn for the following item:</i>		
	Public Engagement: 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 reconvene to consider the following items:</i>		
2	To deal with any matters arising from 9 th March 2017.	Minutes agreed. Item 7 – this still needs to go to Full Council. Cllr Whitty feels the Policy needs reviewing. Issues about lighting in the event of a power cut and the need for more keyholders were discussed. It was AGREED that the Policy would be reviewed at the next meeting. Item 9 – various sites around the town have been effected by graffiti. Quick action is needed to cover it up. It was AGREED that the PCSO should be notified, and funding for removing it should be investigated.
3	To inform the Council of the ongoing costs and make a recommendation to the Full Council regarding the Defibrillator and the Community training.	No enclosure provided. The on-going costs were discussed and it was accepted that they are necessary. It was agreed to RECOMMEND to Full Council that the £375 training option is approved.
4	NP and OSSR&WB Policy review – Allotments and designation of green Spaces. Note: OSSR&WB Policy is on the TTC website under the NP section.	Cllr Whitty explained the paper that was provided. He explained that the OSSR&WB Policy needs to be reviewed as it will be incorporated into the Final Neighbourhood Plan document. It was felt that items in the Policy need to be prioritized. Cllr Whitty advised that he is going to update the document to add in new open space areas being created by new developments, and each section will then need to be reviewed prior to pre-consultation.
5	Update on the siting of the Devon Air Ambulance within the Town and the implications for the Town Council.	Following a meeting with Peter Bethel it appears there is no urgency with this as there are surveys that need to be done before it can be progressed. The surveyors' reports will take several months. Borough Park seems to be the best option at the moment. There are greater constraints on the Elmhirst field site.
6	To note funding cuts to	Cllr Vint read out the funding cuts for each school. He advised that he had

	KEVICC and local Schools and the implications for the schools	been contacted by Governors of some of the schools suggesting the Town Council's writes to the Government to object over the funding cuts. It was agreed to RECOMMEND to Full Council that work is carried out with the schools to agree a joint response to send to the Government.
7	Update on 18 th Birthday cards to young people within the town and to consider the proposal to offer the Guildhall for the politics students to hold debates sponsored by the TC.	Cllr Vint advised that SHDC can provide electoral roll access. It was AGREED that Cllr Sweett would continue with investigating how the process could undertaken. The use of the Guildhall by students for political debates was discussed and it was AGREED that ways of promoting this should be investigated.
8	To consider Participatory Budgeting	Cllr Whitty explained the document that was provided. It was AGREED that Cllr Whitty in conjunction with the Town Clerk prepares an initial flow diagram document for the Full Council meeting to propose for presentation at the Annual Town meeting.
9	To consider a Community Engagement Plan	To be carried forward to the next meeting.
10	To consider the input of the Link Councillors whose relevant responsibilities would come under the remit of the committee?	To be carried forward to the next meeting.
11	To consider a Town Charter.	Cllr Piper was not present to give any further information on this issue. Cllr Whitty advised that there is some overlap with the Neighbourhood Plan which is why it has not been progressed previously.
12	To note the South Devon and Torbay Clinical Commissioning Group Stakeholder Briefing No 23 – 7 March 2017.	Noted.
13	The committee will adjourn to visit the Caring Town Information Exchange in the Mansion	Committee adjourned. Cllrs Simms, Vint and Whitty visited the Caring Town Information Exchange in the Mansion with apologies from Cllrs Hendrickson, Sermon and Sweet. They met the co-ordinator Fiona Ward who explained and answered questions about the exchange and its functions. She offered an open invitation to any group of councillors who wanted to visit the exchange and discuss any aspect of it.
14	To diary the date of the next meeting.	Thursday 11 th May at 4pm.

Totnes Town Council.

January 2014

Paper on Community engagement for endorsement by the Town Council at the February Full Council meeting – Working Group of people Committee.

**Community Engagement Plan for Totnes Town Council 2013-2015:
Why have we seen it as a priority to develop and enhance our Community engagement policy? What has changed?**

- The changing economic circumstances have brought about a major shift in the way Local Government needs to work with its communities. DCC and SHDC have considerably fewer resources. More will be expected of us. We need to be closer to the needs and wishes of our community and to actively engage as many as we can in helping to resolve the inevitable challenges ahead
- In times of austerity the Council welcomes the opportunity to work in partnership with individuals and groups in the community who are willing to share their considerable knowledge, experience and skills
- We want to ensure that all of community have access to all of our decision making processes including how we use our precept
- We want to be sure that we have systems in place that enable us to reach out to **everyone, individuals and groups, the softest voices and the loudest and those in between**
- We want to respond to the requests from community groups to work in closer partnership so that town enhancement projects have some legitimacy and are tackling the TC's identified priorities

How has this paper come about?

- The People Committee with the endorsement of Full Council established a working group to develop a draft policy.
- The group has met several times and has generated many ideas. The group has explored a wide range of practical suggestions for how it could enhance its communications and engagement with the community and attempted to assess feasibility and timescales for their implementation.
- To enable the policy to be based on the Town Council's interaction with individuals and groups in the town it devised a series of questions which will help to hold councillors and the Town Council to account for their actions and activities.

Draft Community Engagement Policy

The Statement of Principle:

(this statement describes the beliefs of the Council and drives the policy statements.
It will not change unless the Council's beliefs in its value as a principle changes)

Totnes Town Council believes strongly that in order to function efficiently it must have effective community dialogue and engagement. This principle must be backed by a clear Policy and a measurable set of actions and activities leading to regular reports.

The Policy:

(these policy statements should be regularly evaluated and revised where necessary by the People Committee for endorsement by FC)

It is our Policy to Ensure:

- that best endeavours will be made to inform, involve and include **each individual** in the prioritisation work and decisions of the Town Council
- that best endeavours will be made to inform, involve and include **all groups** in our town in the prioritisation work and decisions of the TC
- that systems and good methods are in place to ensure that the voices of individuals and groups are heard by the TC
- that the TC has systems and methods in place to acquire balanced viewpoints and evidence to support its decision making
- that the role of the Councillor and the Council is clearly communicated in relation to individuals and groups
- that each individual and group has clearly described two way lines of communication with the Council

Questions our community members should ask of us with a suggested set of answers.

(These answers have evolved from the discussions in the working group and their ideas for enhancing what we currently do. Some of them we do already; others suggest a change, in some cases a radical change.

The group has started to cost out and to describe the training or organisational needs of any change.)

How do I get my voice heard?

As an individual:

- I can come to the Guildhall one hour before the Council meeting to talk with Councillor representatives
- I can contact any councillor by email or by using the contact details published
- Councillors will actively seek my views even if I do not wish to attend meetings; this will happen by use of the web, online forums, visible consultation opportunities in easily accessible places around the town and occasional visits to my street by a representative councillor.
- I can speak to any Councillor I meet around the town
- I can raise issues at Public Question Time at the beginning of the Council meetings
- I can attend all public consultations and town meetings and speak or join in the group discussions
- I can attend meetings which will sometimes be held local to me such as in Bridgetown or Follaton
- I can write letters, email or telephone the Council office and expect a response within.....?..hours
- I can attend a number of new opportunities to drop in and give my opinions on major issues of importance for the town

- Respond to online surveys

As a group:

- As for the individual plus:
- We can develop a strong partnership with the relevant link councillor who will take our views directly to committees and/or full council
- Ensure that minutes from our meetings get to all councillors and any key issues acknowledged via the link councillor
- Invite the mayor to our key events and expect attendance from the mayor or a delegated representative
- Attend a number of new listening events set up to encourage interest and engagement in key issues such as the Town/community/neighbourhood plan

What do we expect in response to the voices, viewpoints and ideas from individuals and groups:

- Acknowledgement of that the issues we might raise will be heard in a fair and balanced way
- That the council will follow up key issues by widening the discussion where appropriate and carrying out any necessary research to obtain a balanced view
- That it will use the information that we and others provide to influence its strategic priorities and sue of resources

How do I know what my Town Council is doing?

- I will be informed through the published agendas and minutes of all council committees and meetings: these will be found on the TC website, on notice boards at.....on facebook??
- A report of TC activities will be in a quarterly newsletter
- Through regular (how many, how often) public meetings which will be an opportunity for me to hear what the TC is doing and to share views and ideas. It will also be a chance for groups to meet up and network

What do my councillors do?

- There will be a role description which will help all of us to understand what they can expect from their councillor
- I can find out through the minutes of meeting, the newsletters and town meetings
- Each Councillor will be a Link Councillor: linked to a key issue, a town group and or a town activity

What does the Mayor do?

- There is a role description which will let everyone know what they can expect from the mayor which is primarily a civic role linking the history of the town with present day
- The mayor's engagements for the month will be published at each Full council meeting for acceptance by the FC
- The mayor will be proactive in offering to attend AGMs and will use that opportunity to ensure that everyone is informed about how they can engage in the work of the council

How can I be involved in how the budget (town precept) is set?

- Through attendance at committee and council meetings and by contacting councillors to suggest spending priorities : NB: All meetings to agree the annual town budget are held in public in January: Prior to these meeting the Operations committee will have reviewed the town's annual expenditure :Councillors put forward their proposals about how to apportion the Town's money in January

How do I know what is going on in my town?

- Through the enhanced use of the website and social media : integrated communications system with the TIC
- More visible TC: consider moving from the Guildhall or find ways of increasing accessibility for all
- From local Radio stations such as Soundart
- Through the quarterly newsletter

How do I get information and advice and the support I need?

- More visible Councillors: regular surgeries, web presence enhanced
- Councillors and Council staff will be better informed about what groups and services exist in the town so that they can pass on information and direct people to local support where appropriate
- Closer links between TC and SHDC and Locality officer from DCC to ensure more effective support is available to all

How can I get involved?

- Attend events, engage online, speak to your councillor, drop in to the events the Council will be holding to listen to your opinion

What can I expect from Town meetings?

- They will be well worth attending as they will help to shape the direction of the town
- At one of these meetings each year there will be a formal report of the work of the Town Council
- I will be made to feel really welcome
- It will be easy for me to have my views heard
- They will be well facilitated and notes will be made and published
- They will be well advertised and there will be a chance for people **to continue to give their views online**

So What Happens Next?

If the Town Council is to meet the expectations of individual residents and of groups in the town as listed above, there needs to be some changes in the current practices of the Council and its Councillors.

What follows is the bare bones of an action plan. In order to implement the policy Council and Councillors will need to consider and undertake the following:

These are some of the recommendations which have been suggested within a detailed Action/implementation Plan; they relate directly to the series of questions set out above that the public might ask. These action points affect the operation and role of Council and Councillors and as such need to be considered and agreed.

There are cost implications but these have been agreed to be included into the current precept ; a large number incur minimal or no costs as they are changes in working practices both in the Council and its administration:

Key Action Points:

- Enhancement and integration of IT facilities
- All Councillors to be trained in use of IT and social media
- Lead Councillors role to become Link Councillors with a job description
- We need to write a role description of a Councillor which emphasises the importance of

Communications

- We need to review the Civic Role of the Council as the face of and contact with the Community
- We need to set up a full council meeting rota and publicise the opportunity to “have your say to a Councillor” on any topic to give open access to any member of the community – listening advice Sessions
- We need to openly discuss the issue of the visibility and accessibility of the current Guildhall base for the Council office and meetings
- We need to establish a working group to oversee the setting up and management of Town meetings and listening events
- Publish a newsletter on a quarterly basis and consider paper and e-newsletters or both!
- Review the use of the Annual Town meetings and have 6 monthly or quarterly meetings.
- Using other buildings around the Town for committee meetings
- Opening up and reviewing Council property for both community use and development for the benefit of the community

Reccomendations:

It is recommended that:

- ❖ Councillors are invited to a single item meeting to enable all to fully understand the implications of the Policy and Actions
- ❖ Councillors are invited to join the working group to develop a full implementation plan with costings and timescale.



Totnes Town Council Administrator <administrator@totnestowncouncil.gov.uk>

Fwd: Southbrook School, Exeter & Bidwell Brook, Dartington: Brief Notice

1 message

Totnes Town Council Clerk <clerk@totnestowncouncil.gov.uk>
To: Ruth Robinson <administrator@totnestowncouncil.gov.uk>

19 April 2017 at 15:44

For noting on the People agenda please

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Totnes Town Council - Mayor** <mayor@totnestowncouncil.gov.uk>

Date: Wed, Apr 19, 2017 at 2:26 PM

Subject: Southbrook School, Exeter & Bidwell Brook, Dartington: Brief Notice

To: adamshollytree@btinternet.com, andysimmstotnes@gmail.com, fireflylnm@yahoo.co.uk, ecohenuk@yahoo.co.uk, jacqihodgson@gmail.com, josweett@gmail.com, Kate Sermon <katesermon@hotmail.com>, margietotnes@icloud.com, mark.elliott-smith@hotmail.co.uk, nickhartwilliams@gmail.com, Pip Paine <philippaine@gmail.com>, rayhendriksen@yahoo.com, rjvint <rjvint@icloud.com>, rosieintotnes@gmail.com, tonywhitty@yahoo.com, tq9jude@gmail.com
Cc: clerk@totnestowncouncil.gov.uk

Dear Councillors

Attached for your information and attention.

Kind regards

Mairead

From: School Consultations - Mailbox [mailto:schoolconsultations-mailbox@devon.gov.uk]

Sent: 19 April 2017 12:03

To: undisclosed-recipients:

Subject: Southbrook School, Exeter & Bidwell Brook, Dartington: Brief Notice

Following consultation, we have published a Brief Notice and a Full Proposal, which means we are now in a formal four week representation period, on the following proposals:

Bidwell Brook School

Increasing places from 95 to 110 from September 2017. The proposal is required as there is an increasing demand for places.

Southbrook School

Increasing places from 110 to 120 and changing the age range from 6-16 to 11-16 from September 2017. There is increasing demand for places for children and young people between the ages of 11-16. Southbrook School has not admitted primary age children for many years and so the proposed change to the age range will not affect any existing pupils and will accurately reflect the provision on offer at Southbrook School.

Further information, including the recently published Full Proposals, is available via the DCC consultation website: <https://new.devon.gov.uk/haveyoursay/> please select the 'Education and Schools' category.

We welcome responses on both proposals by the closing date of 5pm on 17 May 2017. You can respond by emailing: schoolconsultations@devon.gov.uk

Kind regards. Shona

Shona Meek

Strategic Planning - Children's Services

Room AB2 Lucombe House

County Hall, Topsham Road

Exeter, EX2 4QD

Tel (01392) 382057

mailto: shona.meek@devon.gov.uk

Please note I work part time: Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

School Place Planning website: <http://www.devon.gov.uk/strategic-planning-pupil-places>

Consultation website: <https://new.devon.gov.uk/haveyoursay/>

School Consultations Mailbox: <mailto:schoolconsultations@devon.gov.uk>

E-mail disclaimer: <http://www.devon.gov.uk/email.shtml>

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Catherine Marlon
Town Clerk
Totnes Town Council



Totnes Town Council Administrator <administrator@totnestowncouncil.gov.uk>

Fwd: China Blue Roundabout

1 message

Totnes Town Council Clerk <clerk@totnestowncouncil.gov.uk>
To: Ruth Robinson <administrator@totnestowncouncil.gov.uk>

26 April 2017 at 14:42

Likely one for the People agenda please

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Diana Cusack** <dianacusack@gmail.com>

Date: Sun, Apr 23, 2017 at 2:18 PM

Subject: China Blue Roundabout

To: vernon <vernong@devon-ceramics.co.uk>

Cc: RobH <robharkness@live.co.uk>, CatherineTown <clerk@totnestowncouncil.gov.uk>, "Cllr R. Vint" <Cllr.Vint@southhams.gov.uk>, DavidChinaBlue <davidc@devon-ceramics.co.uk>

Hello Vernon.....

It saddens me to say that we can no longer undertake maintenance of the Roundabout - the obvious Health and Safety issues have piled up into an insurmountable obstacle, and I can't expect the gang to work over there any longer.

I have discussed this with Rob Harkness at length, and he is in agreement with our group's decision.

He is willing to offer his services ~ as you know he has the skills and all the insurances necessary. I'll leave it to you and he to discuss directly. If you so wish

We remain truly grateful to China Blue for their sponsorship of this great town feature.


Of course, I can elaborate at length, but knowing how very busy you always are - I think the situation is self-evident, but do get back to me if you need further clarification.

I've attached a very few images of the project from 6 years ago through to last week. It's only you and the little green man have stayed looking the same.

Best wishes

Diana

--
Catherine Marlton
Town Clerk
Totnes Town Council

 **Vernon April2017.docx**
924K

