



## **DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MONDAY 7<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2020 HELD REMOTELY USING ZOOM**

Present: Councillors J Hodgson (Chair), V Trow, M Adams, E Price, C Allford, D Matthews, G Allen, C Luker, P Allford, B Piper, S Skinner, S Collinson, R Hendriksen, L Webberley, A Galvin and P Paine.

In Attendance: C Marlton (Town Clerk), C Bewley (minutes), District Councillor Birch, District Councillor Sweett and 5 members of the public.

#### **1. WELCOME TO ALL ATTENDING AND OBSERVING**

#### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

**To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Council. The Mayor will request confirmation that all Members have completed or made any necessary amendments to their Declaration of Interests.**

No apologies received.

Cllr Collinson declared that she is Chair of Inclusive Totnes in regard to agenda item 6.

***The Committee will adjourn for the following items:***

**Reports from County and District Councillors.**

- a. County Cllr Hodgson – no documents.
- b. District Cllr Birch – document enclosed.
- c. District Cllr Rose – no documents.
- d. District Cllr Sweett – no documents.

*It was **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders.*

b. D.Cllr Birch provided a written report. He responded to a concern raised by a member of the public in the public question time regarding a problem with noise from seagulls on neighbouring roofs. D. Cllr Birch said he had contacted the owners of the properties and they are not willing to take any action for various reason and also that seagulls are a protected species. He has also raised the concerns with SHDC officers to see if there is anything they can do. Cllr Allen asked for a meeting with D.Cllr Birch regarding the Future Forum that is being set up in the hope of getting representation on the Forum from SHDC. D.Cllr Birch agreed. Cllr Trow wanted to point out that whilst there are shops closing there are also new shops opening in the town centre.

c. D.Cllr Rose gave a verbal report. The Business Support Grant made available by the Government is being distributed by SHDC but it is quite a small pot of money. Businesses need to

have had a 50% income loss to qualify for the grant. The SHDC Climate Strategy is going before members next week. Once adopted the performance of the plan will be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel every 6 months. With regards to the Community Forum set up by SHDC to get the opinions of the public D.Cllr Rose put forward a proposal to also have a larger Community Network to feed into that forum which will include all those who wanted to be on the Forum but did not get a place. This was agreed and he will be working with SHDC officer to get it set up. Cllr Allen raised concerns that the panel members for the SHDC Climate Group include business owners who have previously shown no interest in environmental issues whilst other well known local environmental activists did not get a place. D.Cllr Rose felt certain those appointed to the panel have good intentions and also the membership is not fixed, it will be reviewed over time. Cllr Piper asked for an update on the SHDC economic recovery plan structure and whether a strategy group has been established to direct funding to where it is needed. D.Cllr Rose advised that grants are based on businesses making applications. He also advised that SHDC have just appointed an Economic Officer to look at the issues. There are a lot of other groups outside the Council which have been set up to look at regenerative economics.

d. D.Cllr Sweett e-mailed out a written report earlier today. She was aware there were some teething problems with the new rounds for refuse collections. This was settling down but there was a COVID outbreak at the depot that caused problems with a shortage of workers. There was a lot of rubbish in the Civic Hall carpark on Sunday after the market on Saturday. She has asked for her proposal for recycling bins to be put on the agenda in the New Year. There could be problems for Independent shops with supply chains after Brexit. There are currently 3 grant options for businesses. One for businesses that were forced to close and two for businesses that could stay open. Those that could stay open have to prove 50% loss of income to qualify for the grant. SHDC are processing applications quickly. The funding for the SHDC Street Navigator is ending in March and this person has done great work with the homeless so D.Cllr may ask for a letter of support from the Town Council to encourage SHDC to keep the role beyond March. Cllr Piper commented that the SHDC Market Manager should ensure the rubbish is cleared up after each market. He asked if the SHDC COVID Marshalls are able to intervene in slowing down traffic and D.Cllr Sweett advised that they have no powers to do that and are only employed to assist businesses throughout the town. Cllr Luker asked D.Cllr Sweett to submit the request to SHDC for leaf blower to not be used by their grounds maintenance staff as they are not good for wildlife, and also to question how much SHDC allocate to charities each year and whether this money could be better used reducing council house rents and building new council houses. Cllr Allen asked for an update on the property Rainbow View (formerly Parkers Barn). D.Cllr Sweett advised that phase 2 is still pending. Cllr Hodgson commented that they are taking advantage of the changes to the planning laws that came into effect in September.

a. C.Cllr Hodgson sent out a written report this afternoon. At a DCC Council meeting it was agreed that help would be given to provide free school meals and to help the vulnerable over Christmas. They are looking at exemplar towns for good models. There are updates in her report about the work going on to enable visits in care homes, the track and trace system and testing, the annual spending review and support that is coming out for domestic violence. Also the Devon Carbon Plan was launched today. Cllr Allen wanted to say thank you to Graham Walker for collecting and donating £1000 to the Connection Hub.

*The Council reconvened.*

### **3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**To approve and sign the minutes of the following Meetings:**

***(Please note confidential minutes can be agreed but any discussion must be held in Part 2)***

- a. Full Council 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020 – document enclosed.
  - b. Council Matters Committee 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – document enclosed.
  - c. Town Matters Committee 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – document enclosed.
  - d. Council Matters 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 – document enclosed.
  - e. Planning Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 – document enclosed.
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- a. Full Council 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020 – see minutes of the reconvened meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
  - b. Council Matters Committee 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – see minutes of the reconvened meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
  - c. Town Matters Committee 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – see minutes of the reconvened meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
  - d. Council Matters 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 – document enclosed.  
It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes.
  - e. Planning Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 – see minutes of the reconvened meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

### **4. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTERS ARISING**

**To consider any matters arising from the Minutes and to approve any recommendations from Committees:**

***(Please note confidential minutes can be agreed but any discussion must be held in Part 2)***

- a. Full Council 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020 – document enclosed.
  - b. Council Matters Committee 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – document enclosed.
  - c. Town Matters Committee 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – document enclosed.
  - d. Council Matters 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 – document enclosed.
  - e. Planning Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 – document enclosed.
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  - c. Town Matters Committee 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 - see minutes of the reconvened meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
  - d. Council Matters Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 – see minutes under the confidential section of the meeting.
  - e. Planning Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 - see minutes of the reconvened meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

### **5. ELECTION OF MAYOR AND CHAIRS OF COMMITTEE**

**To elect a Mayor and chairs of the Council Matters, Town Matters and Planning Committees for 2021. To nominate councillors to Committees and Link Councillors positions from January 2021. Document enclosed.**

See minutes of the reconvened meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

## **6. ROAD CLOSURE**

**To consider the reinstatement of the Saturday morning road closure of upper Fore Street and High Street on 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> December 2020. To note the Devon Communities Together interim report on the town centre survey responses to date. Document enclosed.**

The Clerk advised the Chair that Councillors may want to include the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2021 in the considerations as the next Full Council meeting is not until the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

Cllr Adams proposed that the road is left open until the Full Council meeting in January when the final report from the consultation is available. Cllr C Allford seconded the proposal. Cllr Adams requested a recorded vote.

Cllr Hodgson advised that the first vote needs to establish whether to discuss closing the road for just two Saturday or all 5 Saturdays between now and the next Full Council meeting.

Cllr Piper advised that only Police trained marshalls can stop and re-direct traffic which is one of the Chamber of Commerce's suggestions as an alternative to the road closure.

The benefits and disadvantages of closing the road on Saturday mornings were discussed.

Cllr Hodgson requested a suspension of standing orders to ask a question to members of the business community. The suspension was approved. Cllr Hodgson enquired whether shops are opening the Sundays before Christmas. Cllr Hodgson was advised that many will be opening. The meeting was reconvened.

Cllr Hodgson put forward an amendment to the proposal that the road closures are carried out 9am – 1pm on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December, Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December, Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January and Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January. Cllrs Collinson and Allen seconded the proposal.

The issue of how quickly marshalling could be arranged for any road closures that are agreed was discussed. The Clerk confirmed that it is unlikely that marshalling to re-direct traffic could be arranged before the next FC meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> January.

Cllr Price proposed that the Town Council seeks to set up a marshal system to stop cars and encourage access only use of the High Street instead of having road closures.

Voting for Cllr Hodgson's amendment gave 9 for and 7 against making the amendment the substantive motion.

Voting on the substantive motion was carried with 8 for (Cllr Skinner, Cllr Allen, Cllr Collinson, Cllr Piper, Cllr Hodgson, Cllr Price, Cllr Hendriksen, Cllr Trow), 7 against (Cllr Matthews, Cllr Adams, Cllr Luker, Cllr C Allford, Cllr P Allford, Cllr Paine, Cllr Galvin) and 1 abstention (Cllr Webberley).

## **7. STAFF APPOINTMENT**

**To ratify the appointment of the Town Maintenance Officer (should a successful candidate be recommended by the interview panel).**

No appointment was made. The position will be readvertised.

## **8. NEXT MEETING**

**To note the next meeting date of Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020, 6.30pm public session, 7.00pm formal meeting.**

See minutes of the reconvened meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

The Council **RESOLVED** 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.

#### **9. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE (Standing Item)**

**To consider any recommendations or matters arising that are considered confidential in nature regarding the staffing restructure from the Council Matters Committee. Documents to follow.**

The minutes of the Council Matters Committee of 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 were unanimously AGREED and it was **RESOLVED** to accept and sign them.

All decisions taken under delegated authority at the 23<sup>rd</sup> November meeting were noted.

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to agree the following recommendations:

- a) The job descriptions and revised staffing structure should commence from January 2021, subject to minor amendments discussed by Council Matters and implemented in the final documents circulated.
- b) The job share request for Administrator 2 should be ratified.
- c) The Events Officer role be made redundant as of 20th December 2020 with some enhancement to final pay.
- d) That pay protection be offered until 20th March 2021 for the two staff members impacted.
- e) The internal promotion of the Governance and Projects Manager be agreed subject to the successful interview process.
- f) That the Town Clerk is given delegated authority to make the pay offer for the Governance and Projects Manager within the salary scale identified.

#### **10. RECRUITMENT TIMELINE**

**To consider a timeline and advert for a job share advertisement for the new Administrator 2 role as per the restructure. Documents enclosed.**

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to accept the proposal. It was agreed that the closing date could be extended to ensure the right fed of candidates to interview.

#### **11. TOWN CLERK**

**To note a confidential update. Verbal update.**

This was noted. The Town Clerk was offered compassionate leave as required.

#### **12. LEGAL MATTER**

**To consider an update on the Morrison’s alcohol licensing application. Documents enclosed.**

See minutes of the reconvened meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

Jacqi Hodgson

Mayor