

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

**MONDAY 19TH JULY 2021 IN THE GUILDHALL**

## Present: Councillors B Piper (Chair), M Adams (left in confidential session as minuted), G Allen, C Allford, P Allford, S Collinson, A Galvin, R Hendriksen, J Hodgson, C Luker, P Paine, E Price, S Skinner (left the meeting at 8pm), V Trow and L Webberley.

Apologies: Cllr D Matthews and District Cllr Sweett.

## In Attendance: District Councillors Birch and Rose, members of the press and public, C Marlton (Town Clerk) and S Halliday (Governance & Projects Manager).

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

### **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.**

Apologies were received from Councillor D Matthews and District Councillor Sweett and were accepted by the Council.

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

**Reports from County and District Councillors.**

1. **County Cllr Hodgson**
2. **District Cllr Birch**
3. **District Cllr Rose**
4. **District Cllr Sweett**

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

a. County Cllr (C Cllr) Hodgson updated on the latest HATOC (Highways) meeting where she raised residents parking requests and the installation of pedestrian lights on the north side of Plymouth Road while the Western Bypass works overnight road closure is ongoing. She noted that a number of members of the new Council are concerned about speeding in residential areas and will feed back the comments made during the public session tonight to demonstrate the problems residents are experiencing. Cllr Hodgson has a motion about biodiversity at Council on Thursday. Cllrs asked about pothole problems, illegal camping, and the lack of diversion signs for the Western Bypass closure from the Dartmouth direction and at the bottom of Fore Street which is causing chaos on narrow lanes unsuitable for high volumes of two way traffic.

b. District Cllr (D Cllr) Birch updated that: Churchill Developments has appealed the planning decision on the Brutus Centre (former Co-op site) which is due to be heard in late September, and they have submitted a new application with revised plans for the site; Totnes Community Development Society will give an update on the ATMOS project to opposition Councillors; and waste collections have seen a slight improvement but there are still issues and the Oversight and Scrutiny Committee will discuss the matter further on Thursday.

c. Cllr Rose updated on the Devon Youth Parliament event which all Councillors will be invited to attend. He answered questions about the recycling scheme, in particular assistance for those with mobility issues, and the chances of South Hams District Council opposition councillors getting support for a compulsory purchase order for the ATMOS site.

d. Cllr Sweett was not present and no report was submitted.

*The Council reconvened.*

### **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)***

1. **Full Council 7th June 2021**

The following minutes were considered:

1. Full Council 7th June 2021. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve and sign the Minutes.

**To note the following minutes:**

1. **Council Matters Committee 14th June 2021.**

The following minutes were noted:

1. Council Matters Committee 14th June 2021.

### **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)***

1. **Full Council 7th June 2021.**
2. **Council Matters Committee 14th June 2021.**
3. Full Council 7th June 2021.

No matters arising.

1. Council Matters Committee 14th June 2021.

Item 6 Financial Regulations - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the recommendation.

Item 7 Freedom of Information Publication Scheme - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the recommendation.

Item 8 Information and Data Protection Policy - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the recommendation.

### **PHOTOVOLTAIC PANELS ON THE PAVILIONS**

**To consider a request from Totnes Renewable Energy Society (TRESOC) to support the installation of photovoltaic panels on the Pavilions.**

Cllr Hodgson explained the background to the request. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Town Council supports the bid from the Totnes Renewable Energy Society (TRESOC) for the installation of photovoltaic cells on the Pavilions and requests that South Hams District Council, Fusion and TADPOOL make this possible.

### **KEVICC CONSULTATION**

**To consider the Town Council response to the KEVICC consultation paper.**

The Clerk explained that delegated authority cannot be given to a group of Councillors to respond direct and that time was tight with the consultation deadline of 26th July. It was **RESOLVED** by a majority that: all Councillors to hold a Zoom meeting to draft the Council’s proposed response to advise the Clerk; and that delegated authority is given to the Clerk to circulate for review the drafted response from the Zoom discussion, collate Councillors comments and respond to the consultation based on the views held by the majority of Councillors.

Councillors discussed concerns about the development of some areas of the lower school site for housing and the impact on the air quality in the area, and introduced an idea that the Town Council looks at purchasing the site to keep it as a facility for sports, arts and community use, whilst raising the funds required by KEVICC for much needed school improvements. It was **RESOLVED** to continue commercial sensitive discussions in Part 2 of this meeting.

Standing Orders were suspended to allow the KEVICC School Governors to comment. They stated that as residents of the town and with children at the school they want a decision which is good for the school and the town, and they cautioned about setting out a ambitious vision which then cannot be delivered as this will cause divisions in the town which are best avoided.

### **TOWN PLANTERS – PHASE 2**

**To consider the costs for phase 2 of placing planters around the town.**

It was **RESOLVED** by majority to approve the additional planters and their locations.

### **STAFFING POLICIES**

**To consider the following staffing policies:**

**a. Working Time and Leave Policy.** It was **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendation by a majority.

**b. Home Working Policy.** It was **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendation by a majority.

**c. Absence Management Policy.** It was **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendation by a majority.

### **ARTS WORKING GROUP**

**To note the minutes from the Arts Working Group.**

Noted.

### **LIST OF MEETING DATES**

**To note a list of upcoming meeting dates.**

Noted.

### **NEXT MEETING**

**To note the next meeting date of Monday 6th September 2021, 6.30pm public session, 7.00pm formal meeting in the Guildhall.**

Noted.

*The Council 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.*

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

**To consider any recommendations or matters arising that are considered confidential in nature.**

No matters arising.

### **EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

**To consider an application to the Cultural Development Fund for improvements in the town.**

It was **RESOLVED** to submit the Expression of Interest subject to minor amendments to increase the revenue request and cut the character number down to acceptable limits.

### **COMMERCIAL MATTERS**

**To consider the following:**

**a. The cost for a Visit Totnes promotional video.**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendation from the officer and commission the work from Soundview Media.

**b. The tender options for the Christmas Festival nights.**

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the revised tender and go back out to advert as per the timeline.

**c. The request for additional allotment land in Castle Meadow and associated costs.**

It was **RESOLVED** to decline the request from the Allotments Society in light of the need to keep as much open space for public use (not just allotment holders), the need to review maintenance or the entire site and the costs of implementing the scheme.

**d. Giving the Clerk delegated authority to submit the planning application for the Civic Hall Annex conversion (Birdwood House).**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the plan and give the Clerk delegated authority to proceed.

Cllr Adams left the meeting feeling unwell.

**e. The cost of Community Charter facilitation for the Totnes Futures Forum.**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve a £3,000 spend from Community Outreach, noting the likely overspend in this budget line as a result.

### **GENERAL STAFFING UPDATE**

**To consider the following:**

**a. An appointment to the Administrator 1 position.**

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint the applicant recommended by the interview panel (Cllr Price, Clerk, Finance/HR/Lettings Manager), subject to references.

**b. To give the Clerk authority to advertise a vacancy following a resignation.**

The Clerk currently has delegated authority to undertake the recruitment process and therefore this was **noted.**

**c. Absence of staff due to compassionate/sick leave.**

This was **noted.**

**d. To note the casual caretaker vacancy. Verbal update.**

This was **noted.**

**e. A temporary hour change for the Marketing Manager.**

Given the current understaffing and expected staff budget underspend it was **RESOLVED** to allow the Clerk to offer extra hours as needed, assuming it is possible within the set budget.

### **CONTINUATION OF ITEM 6. KEVICC CONSULTATION**

Councillors continued to discuss concerns about the development of some areas of the lower school site for housing and the impact on the air quality in the area, and introduced an idea that the Town Council looks at purchasing the site to keep it as a facility for sports, arts and community use, whilst raising the funds required by KEVICC for much needed school improvements.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Allocate £10,000 spend from Professional Fees budget to cover any project coordination, legal and feasibility work in relation to this project, noting the likely overspend in this budget line as a result.
2. Allocate £1,500 spend from Professional Fees budget to cover any support required for the ACV application, noting the likely overspend in this budget line as a result.
3. Give the Clerk delegated authority to commission the support needed to get a proposal together in time for 15th September 2021 meeting of governors.

Ben Piper

Mayor