

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

**MONDAY 9TH JANUARY 2023 IN THE GUILDHALL**

## Present: Councillors E Price (Chair), G Allen, T Bennett, S Collinson, J Cummings, R Hendriksen, J Hodgson, P Paine and B Piper.

Apologies: Cllrs Adams, Hannam and Webberley, and District Cllrs Rose and Sweett.

Not Present: Cllr Skinner.

## In Attendance: District Cllr Birch and Rose, members of the press and public, C Marlton (Town Clerk), P Bethel (Town Sergeant).

### **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.**

The apologies were received and agreed unanimously. The resignation of Cllr Oliver was noted.

***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 gave a verbal update on her report: Devon County Council (DCC) setting a budget to safeguard social care and services for children; DCC active travel funding award; the bus services in Bridgetown; bike rack proposals; fair trade fortnight; and the next Climate Emergency Working Group.

b. District Cllr (D Cllr) Birch had circulated a report in advance and gave a brief overview of: the Baltic Wharf Boatyard campaign; and St Mary’s Church plan to reduce its carbon footprint.

c. District Cllr Rose had sent his apologies and had not circulated a report.

d. District Cllr Sweett had sent her apologies and had circulated a report in advance.

*The Council reconvened.*

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

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

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

**a. Full Council 5th December 2022.**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes.

**To note the following minutes:**

**b. Planning Committee 12th December 2022.**

Noted.

### **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 5th December 2022.**

No matters arising.

**b. Planning Committee 12th December 2022.**

Item 5 - Neighbourhood Plan.

a. It was **RESOLVED** that the deletion of policy C12 from the Neighbourhood Plan is left to the Examiner.

b. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council works with South Hams District Council to draw up a programme and timeline for engagement on the former Dairy Crest Site.

c. It was **RESOLVED** to include the wording of Policy C12 in the body of text in the Neighbourhood Plan, and that this revised plan is then sent to the Examiner.

### **5. TAX BASE FOR 2023/24**

**To note the tax base for financial year 2023/24.**

The increase in tax base (issued by South Hams District Council) was noted.

**6. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

**To consider a request from the Chamber of Commerce to take on responsibility for the town’s Christmas lights from 2023.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Town Council will take over responsibility for the Christmas lights in the town subject to a breakdown of the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) expenditure and confirmation that the remaining balance will be transferred to the Town Council to help offset costs of providing the Christmas lights going forward.

**7. DRAFT 2023/24 BUDGET**

**To consider a draft budget for 2023/24.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Town Council’s precept increases by 10% on the 2022/23 band D costs, making the total request from South Hams District Council £610,253. The financial year 2023/24 budget was **RESOLVED** unanimously, subject to the precept amount above. The estimated spend from reserve is £186,644. It was noted that cuts will be needed to ensure acceptable reserve levels are maintained in financial years 2024/25 and 2025/26.

**8. CO-OPTION TO COUNCILLOR VACANCIES**

**To consider the applications for the Totnes Town and Totnes Bridgetown Councillor vacancies.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to co-opt Darren Peters (Totnes Town Ward) and Lisa Smallridge (Bridgetown Ward) to the two casual Council vacancies (subject to the signing of acceptance of office and register of interests papers). It was **AGREED** not to recruit the vacancy left by Cllr Oliver at this time due to the limited time left before elections in May 2023.

**9. EXTRAORDINARY MOTION: TOTNES RENEWABLE ENERGY SOCIETY ENERGY CLUB PROPOSAL**

**To consider the Totnes Renewable Energy Society (TRESOC) proposal to involve the Town Council in a Local Electricity Club, discuss the issue, provide the relevant data TRESOC have requested (redacted as appropriate) and take a decision on the proposal if deemed timely.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to overturn the 6-month rule in relation to this matter, instructing the Council Matters Committee to review its previous position on the Energy Club and giving the Council Matters Committee delegated powers to make a decision on behalf of the Council.

**10. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

**To consider the following:**

**a. Cllr Hendriksen’s appointment to the Planning Committee.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept Cllr Hendriksen’s appointment to the Planning Committee.

**b. Cllr Paine’s resignation from the Council Matters and Town Matters Committees.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept Cllr Paine’s resignation from the Council Matters and Town Matters Committees.

**11. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE**

**To consider any changes to the current Councillor representatives to the Chamber of Commerce (currently Cllrs Price and Skinner, proposed Cllr Bennett).**

It was **AGREED** that the two Councillors (Price and Skinner) already appointed as Chamber of Commerce representatives was sufficient. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to appoint Cllr Bennett as a Business and Employment Link Councillor, making the total four.

**12. LIST OF MEETING DATES**

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

Noted.

### **13. NEXT MEETING**

**To note the next meeting date of Monday 6th February 2023, 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.*

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

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

No recommendations.

### **15. COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER**

**To consider a proposal for the Community Fundraiser post (staffing).**

It was **AGREED** to wait to hear from a partner Council on the possibility of a joint role before commencing recruitment for a Community Fundraiser. It was **AGREED** to either advertise for 15 hours a week fixed term for one year or a 30 hour a week joint role, fixed term for one year.

### **16. ELMHIRST PROJECT**

**To consider any budget allocation for legal advice linked to the Elmhirst Site project (commercial).**

The current spend on the Elmhirst project was noted. It was unanimously **AGREED** to let the existing bid stand. It was unanimously **AGREED** that further legal advice should not be required and therefore no further expenditure needs to be authorised. It was unanimously **AGREED** that any discussions with community groups or individuals on how the project could be funded and delivered should remain informal at this time given the commercially sensitive process the Council is in.

Cllr Emily Price

Mayor