

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

**WEDNESDAY 18TH MAY 2022 AT 6.30PM IN THE CIVIC HALL**

## Present: Councillors E Price (Chair), G Allen, T Bennett, S Collinson, J Cummings, J Hannam, J Hodgson, B Piper, S Skinner, V Trow and L Webberley.

## In Attendance: 8 members of the public, C Marlton (Town Clerk), L Ferrier (Marketing and Communications Manager) and S Halliday (Governance and Projects Manager).

### **INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR OF TOTNES**

### The Mayor welcomed those present and explained that this is an open meeting of the Town Council and not to be confused with the Town Council Annual General Meeting. The open forum is the opportunity for members of the public to raise matters of interest with the Council.

### **MAYOR’S REPORT ON COUNCIL BUSINESS**

Cllr Price updated on three themes:

a. Traffic and Green Travel Initiatives – Cllr Price explained how that S106 funding from the first phase of the Baltic Wharf development has paid for the employment of a Green Travel Co-ordinator over the past 18 months. This post: has helped Bob the Bus trial a Park and Ride scheme last October; has run the traffic calming in Fore Street survey; has applied for a 20mph speed limit pilot to link up all areas of Totnes; is working on a cycle path from Buckfastleigh to Totnes; and is helping schools with their green travel plans.

b. Public Realm and Open Space Projects – planters have been placed along The Plains, Fore Street and High Street and are maintained by the Council to improve the visual amenity of the town; benches and seating have been installed in Longmarsh and Borough Park; and the first phase of the Wayfinding project will see signage installed in some key positions to aid visitors before the summer.

c. Market Square Project – the Market Square is owned by South Hams District Council. It needs resurfacing and an uplift as agreed a number of years ago. As an interim measure there will be an uplift to the area before the summer season including repainting the bollards and railings, painting and planting underneath the Civic Hall with the installation of two mosaic panels, and repair to some of the surface and benches. Longer term funding is being allocated by SHDC and the Town Council for the major works and redesign which is not expected to start before 2024. In addition, the Council will be submitted plans this summer for the renovation of the Civic Hall annex for a community meeting room and new Council offices, including a redesign of the access ramp. It is hoped that this work will start in 2023.

### **CLERK REPORT**

The Clerk updated on the following:

a. Community Grants – there were two rounds of community grant applications held last year and the first round held in April 2022 which has helped a range of different local organisations and charities. Details are on the display boards.

b. Community Co-ordinator – this is a part-time position which has so far helped local community groups and charities to apply for and receive grants totalling around £545K. Not all grants are successful, but this is a significant amount of funding received for the benefit of the town as a whole. Current work includes support to Caring Town, Jamming Station, Stepping Stones (the food bank), Totnes Arts and pursuing grants for CCTV in the town.

c. Town Maintenance Team – regular work to improve the appearance of the town for example cutting the grass in St Mary’s churchyard, care of the planters, cleaning of various monuments in the town as well as various maintenance tasks in Council owned buildings which has brought an estimated saving of £25-30K.

### **OPEN FORUM**

The following questions and points were made in the open forum (Cllr/officer responses in *italics*):

* Vehicle electric charging units – what size units are being provided as rapid charging points are needed (the one in Morrisons is insufficient). *This is a matter for SHDC who will be installing any charging points in their car parks.*
* Shared space in the high street – this is one thing people are agreed on. *There is a moratorium on shared space following a number of fatalities and the difficulty that those with visual impairments find the lack of a distinct kerb.*
* The Guildhall as a tourist venue – if the Council offices move, will the cells form part of the historic Guildhall or part of a residential unit? *The future use of the existing Council Offices is yet to be discussed.*
* Can funding be found for a defibrillator in the Rotherfold?

KEVICC

* KEVICC field sale – what is going on? *The Council has submitted a bid and is waiting to hear back from KEVICC.*
* Is the local MP on board with the Council’s proposal? *Cllr Hodgson has met with Anthony Mangnall and requested a meeting with the Secretary of State for Education but has yet to hear anything back.*
* Who owns the land behind the progressive school? *There is an error in the mapping – it is owned by the school.*
* KEVICC is changing to an academy – who will get the money and will it be the best deal? *Any funds raised go to the school, not the academy as a whole.*
* Could parents and Councillors arrange a meeting with the Governors to discuss the issues? *Now that the Council has formally made an offer it is difficult legally to engage in informal discussions.*
* Cllr Hodgson said that two things the Council has done well over the past two years are establishing the Covid partnership with local community groups, and work on the Climate emergency who action plan she hopes will soon be completed.
* A statement was made about the Totnes Festival in August.

The meeting closed at 19.40.

Cllr Emily Price

Mayor