**Full Council Monday 15th May 2023 - Clerks Report**

**General update**

* Congratulations to Cllr Allen and Cllr Presswell for being appointed as District Councillors, joining Cllr Birch as our team of three for the next four years.
* We have now officially said goodbye to 6 Councillors who have provided years of public service.
* We welcome three new Councillors, Cllrs Presswell, Cooper and Auletta. We hope to Co-opt three Councillors at Full Council on Monday 15th May from (to date) four applicants.
* Appraisals have been completed for all staff and I have authorised the payment of any annual increments due.
* We have appointed and had a meeting with Miss Ivy to do a post event wash up on the Spring Festival, discuss branding for the Summer Fair and initial discussions around Christmas late nights including encouraging more local traders – further meetings in due course.
* The internal auditor is in all day Thursday 11th May, report to follow as usual.
* I am working with the Governance and Projects Manager on a Scheme of Delegation to present to Councillors in due course.
* I am researching and starting to pull together a plan for a summer consultation to help inform an Autumn priority setting session and the annual budget setting. I am attending training on strategy priority setting on Tuesday 16th May. Suggested branding of ‘Community Conversation’.
* The Artisan Markets are proving very popular and I would encourage Councillors to pop in if they can – second Tuesday of the month. Be prepared to come away poorer as everything is beautiful!
* The Mayor and I have opened, reviewed and scored the Christmas Light Tenders – as per the item in confidential session at Full Council.
* Planning committee is due to be busy (and later than usual) this month so please check the agenda when it is finalised and attend if you wish to hear the presentations in person rather than waiting for the minutes.
* Discussions are ongoing with Ivybridge Town Council regarding the joint Community Fundraiser role, no applicants for interview at the moment.
* We are looking at how to support the Odd Object competition this summer which has previously been popular and could provide a fun free activity for local families and positive business engagement. More information to follow.
* The scaled back second phase of the Wayfinding is inching forwards, further updates on installation dates in due course.
* With the increasing use of the Civic Hall we are having issues with access over the ramp on market days. I have written to SHDC requesting a meeting. I have also chased for an update on the Market Square stair replacement and will update by email when I hear the latest.
* Civic Hall Casual Caretaker – interviews held and individual appointed.
* Local Elections – social media posts to publicise photo ID to vote and details to register for photo ID, postal and proxy votes; update and review of Standing Orders and Cllr Code of Conduct; preparation for Cllr induction.
* Cemetery – 7 internments between Jan-Apr 2023; letters sent to plot holders about objects on the plots Impeding grounds maintenance; we have met with the Cemetery contractor regarding come concerns over consistency of cuts. There is a delay to the agreed biodiversity work due to the contractor due to do the work being injured in an accident – work will resume when possible.
* Community Awards – issuing of letters to those nominated, design of certificates, preparation of medals.
* I had a site meeting with the Duke of Somerset at Eastgate – to confirm our resignation from our lease and share information on possible solutions for existing sub tenants.
* We are taking some advice on our landlord obligations in relation to insurance and overview in relation to Totnes Museum.
* Our scaled back Community Grant application process is now open. I am expecting it to be oversubscribed by a big margin given the Cost of Living requests for support sent to Paige Adams Trust. As we are only running one round this year please help spread the word and message that priority consideration will be given to projects tackling cost of living challenges.
* We are now getting a return on monies moved to Charity Bank and Nationwide and are considering increasing the amounts to maximise the return before transferring back to the current account as needed. Further information to follow in due course.
* Please attend the Annual Town Meeting in the Civic Hall on Wednesday 17th May at 6.30pm – to include the Community Awards.
* Please attend the Mayor Making ceremony on Thursday 25th May 2023 – see emails for event timings and details.
* Huge thank you to the staff team – it has been pretty full on and I’m a bit shell shocked we are in May already!

**Correspondence**

Please note this is not an exhaustive list but details key correspondence and general enquiries.

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| **Date** | **Name** | **Comments** | **TTC Response** |
| 11/04/2023 | DEFRA | South West Water 'Water Resources Management Plan' Consultation | Wording as agreed by Cllrs. |
| 17/04/2023 | REDACTED | We have recently returned from a holiday in your lovely town. Despite the weather it was teeming with visitors from all over and we thoroughly enjoyed the market, shops, parks and buzz of the town.However, we were shocked by the amount of graffiti all over the place. It was the first thing that hit us on entering the town, on the bridge, every conceivable sign and the appalling telephone box in the high street. It is a wonderful town so we hope you will make every effort to 'tidy it up' and take pride in how it looks to the outsider before the influx of visitors from all over the world during the summer months.And, also, please could something be done about the atrocious potholes!With every good wish for the continued improvements in your town | Thank you so much for your email. I am pleased you had such a nice stay in our town. There was certainly a lot going on last week and it's great to have good feedback about the events and the atmosphere in town. The recent spate of graffiti in town is certainly the worst it has been for some time. You aren't the only people to make a complaint about it and of course it saddens us to see what has happened. Unfortunately, the Town Council is unable to remove graffiti on property that doesn't belong to us so we are advising people to contact the property owners instead. I am also going to lodge a complaint with the police so they know about the complaints we have had.  |
| 19/04/2023 | REDACTED | Black graffiti with no particular message covering the map and information board at the Leisure Centre end of Borough Park. Wondering if it could be removed. First spotted when we ere out on Street Pastor duty on 31/03.Many thanks | Thanks for letting us know about the graffiti. It is such a shame to see so much of it in our beautiful town. I am going to let the police know that we have had a few complaints of graffiti.  Unfortunately, the board you mentioned doesn't belong to Totnes Town Council so we aren't able to do anything about it because it's not our property. It would be worth speaking to South Hams District Council who we think own that board. It would probably be helpful to send them a photograph of it so they know exactly where it is. Reply thanking us received |
| 21/04/2023 | REDACTED | Have a lady moving to Totnes next week from hospital she will need a community rehab referral who so we need to contact please ? Kind regards REDACTED Occupational therapy assistant on Coleridge ward musgrove Park Hospital Taunton Somerset | I've not had an enquiry like this before and it isn't something that would be part of our remit as a town council. If the rehabilitation required is medical, I would suggest contacting one of the two Doctors surgeries: Leatside or Catherine house. If it is more to do with housing, try contacting South Hams District Council. If what is required is social care, this is more likely to come under the jurisdiction of Devon County Council.Sorry I couldn't be of more help. |
| 24/04/2023 | REDACTED | The bench at the top of Moat Hill is collapsing and needs repair or replacement -much needed as wresting g place after climbing the hill | Good Afternoon, Unfortunately this bench doesn't belong to Totnes Town Council so we are unable to have it fixed. We don't think it belongs to SHDC either. If I find out who does own it, I will let you know.  |
| 26/04.23 | REDACTED | Planning Permission complaint - The planter in the wall on South Street. This lady is very upset about the planter which she descibes as an eyesore in a historic wall.  | I explained that we have received a complaint before about the planter but on further investigation we found out that it was put there by transition streets after a consultation with the community and checking with various councillors. |
| 26/04/2023 | REDACTED | Blocking of pedestrian pavement | Thank you for your email. I’m afraid that Totnes Town Council does not have any powers to act in Harbertonford – you would be better placed contacting your Parish Council (try the Clerk at clerk@harbertonparishcouncil.org ) and registering the pavement obstruction with Devon Highways (see their website where you can report issues https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/ ).I have also included County Councillor Jacqi Hodgson in this reply who covers the Harbertonford area and may be able to take your problem forward with Highways. |
| 27/04/2023 | REDACTED | Dear Mayor Price, I’m sure that you will have noticed the unnecessary obstruction, of the Ramparts Walk, with the emptied waste containers. (please see the images attached) It says very little of a town, that relies so much on its visiting trade and tourists, that this can be allowed to happen (collection day should be Tuesday and this is not a single incident – these pictures were taken this morning – Thursday) I hope that this can be sorted out as soon as possible. | Thank you for your email which we have forwarded on to the Mayor. Bins, and their swift retrieval, are a problem across town I’m afraid whether they are blocking pavements or making the town look unsightly, but unfortunately there are no powers that the Town Council has to change this. For those residents that live on Ramparts Walk the Council has allocated a secure area where resident’s bins can be stored, but for those living along Church Close there are no similar facilities. I’m afraid that if residents choose not to reclaim their bin once collections are made on a Tuesday then there is not much we can do, however frustrating it is for us all. |
| 28/04/2023 | Wildanet | Seymour Road Closure | With apologies for the delay in coming back to you. We have consulted with our Councillors and Totnes Town Council has no objection to this being completed before the summer holiday period, outside of half term and not in conflict with other roadworks in Totnes. It must be noted that the bus needs clearance to turn at the junction of Steamer Quay Road in an out of Seymour Road during road works. |
| 05/05/2023 | Various | 5 x letters re removal of plastic vases from cemetery plots |   |
| 10/05/2023 | REDACTED | Can I please ask for an update on the long overdue market Sq makeover? | We have done an interim uplift of the square where we can, painting the bollards etc. We are also looking to put more art into the space but are waiting on planning permissions to get going on that.The square is owned by South Hams District Council and as such we are waiting on some scoping work from them on future use of the square (market layout/vehicular access needed/whether lighting and services should be built in) before anything else can happen. The funding situation is tricky as well - they have funds set aside in a capital improvement pot but it is nowhere near enough with the rising costs of everything.In addition the work has to happen in the low season Jan - March to minimise the impact on the market - and in 2024 parts of the main street will likely be closed for further gas works so it's going to be difficult to add more disruption.So in summary it is still 'on the list' but we are not there yet. Further updates as we get them will be posted on the website and on Facebook.South Hams have just had some significant changes in Councillors due to the elections - it may well be worth contacting your District Councillors to request a further update? Their names are at this link - you might need to wait a few days for emails to be up and running. https://www.southhams.gov.uk/SH-councillors-by-ward  |

**Sustainability and Green Travel**

* Gardening for Wildlife booklet printed and distributed across town
* Recommended update of Traffic & Transport Policy and Strategy to be finalised by 30th May and sent to Planning on 19th June.
* 30th May, Traffic Steering Group to develop recommendation for s106 response to Baltic Wharf phase 2/3 development.
* E-bike trial - Co Bikes still trying to identify suitable place for a docked station. Start date still unknown.
* Feasibility study for proposed cycle path between Totnes, Dartington Hall, Riverford and Buckfastleigh completed by Sustrans. This will be shared once permission granted.
* Local 'Green Travel Guide' being developed, almost complete.
* E-co cars ownership transfer - currently exploring options for continuation and expansion of the car club. Some (small) potential for Bob the Bus to take it on. Co Cars initially interested but they don't have capacity at the moment.
* Supporting the 20s Plenty for Devon campaign - pushing for DCC to change their default policy on speed limits in residential areas to 20mph (instead of 30).
* South Hams LCWIP in progress - awaiting contact from SHDC/the consultants to input into this.
* In process of developing a climate change policy & strategy for TTC.
* Air quality monitor on High St - installed but awaiting live connection.

**Visit Totnes**

Attached snapshot of webviews, social media exposure and TIC numbers for April 22-March 23

**Cost of Living/TQ9:Together We Care**

The Cost of Living Partnership is made up of a steering group and 34 other local organisations. There are mixture of steering group meetings and larger partnership meetings approximately every month.

* Next meeting date early June - TBC
* Coordinator has recently sent details to the partnership group of funding opportunities, both in Totnes and further afield.
* The number of partners has now increased to 37 organisations and the calendar is incredibly populated, averaging 33 events in a week.
* There’s a range of services and activities available; some are weekly, but organisations are increasingly arranging courses of workshops and one-off events.
* There are ongoing discussions regarding reaching people, particularly those without internet access. Partners are feeding back that word of mouth is often the best way to reach people and we will be designing a poster / flier to go around the town.
* Food, anxiety and depression and not stigmatising people are the most common issues that partners are feeding back on.
* At the most recent Cost of Living Partnership catch-up (which was minimally attended but it landed on a school strike day) the partners present discussed:
* The need for continued collaboration and not duplication of services
* Everyone was receiving more referrals and having to refuse referrals that should be being met by other statutory services.
* Increasing prices affecting organisations’ delivery of services
* Ways to reach out to people that aren’t aware of the services available.
* These issues will be discussed further with more partners and the steering group.
* Stepping Stones Food Bank:
* TQ9 Food Club has gradually increasing numbers and they’re running one off events covering menopause, journal writing, anxiety as well as the regular Vegan Soup lunch.
* They receive referrals and people come through word-of-mouth information. They need more people to attend in order to continue their weekly activities.
* They’re looking for new premises but have discovered the venue they wanted has another applicant interested in it and they need to put in a Change of User Planning application.
* Funding runs out in May
* They will be doing a volunteer drive at the Share Fest and reaching out to larger stores to aim to increase food collection drop off points.
* The CoLP Coordinator attended a training course called *Social isolation and loneliness from the local council perspective.*

**Council Assets**

Events (over and above regulars)

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| **April 2023*** Pollen Tribe Music & Dance
* Young Farmers Performance
* Anthony Mangnall MP Public Consultation Q&A
* Spring Festival TTC
* Wildanet – public consultation
* ShareFest
* Environmental Activist Group Col.lectieu
* Funeral wake
 | **May 2023*** Elections
* Psychic Medium Night
* TAODS 39 Steps Rehearsals and Performance
* Park School Performance
* Annual Town Meeting TTC
* Mayor Making
* Sika Sound Wave Journey
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Guildhall Visitors up to 5/5/23 – 854 visitors

**Town Maintenance Officer/Public Realm**

* Moving the defibrillator and reinstalling in a new heated cabinet is ongoing.
* Outside lockable power point on the Market Square is being actioned for use at events we put on.
* Additional toilet/green room space being finished in the Civic Hall.
* The planters are being inspected ready for a summer tidy up and replanting.
* CCTV is being installed around the Guildhall.
* The painting/prep work for the upstairs office is almost finished. Further work will continue once planning permission is obtained.
* The bunting in town has been erected. We had hoped to erect a summery welcome sign at the bottom of Fore Street but the anchor points need repair before that can happen so we have gone with more bunting which isn’t as tricky from a weight/pressure point of view.
* Residents have now been written to regarding fly tipping and general disorder in the discretionary bin store area owned by the Town Council
* The new garage doors have been installed. The new Bin store doors are being prepared for installation.
* The invasive areas of Ivy have been removed from the back of the Guildhall.

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**Catherine Marlton**

**Town Clerk**

**10th May 2023**