

AGENDA FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE MONDAY 10TH JULY 2023 AT 6.30PM IN THE GUILDHALL

There are stairs to the Council Chamber but if any member of the public has mobility issues the Council can relocate to the lower Guildhall.

You are hereby SUMMONED to attend the **Council Matters Committee** on **Monday 10th July 2023 at 6.30pm** in the Guildhall for the purpose of transacting the following business:

Committee Members: Councillors B Piper (Chair), C Beavis, T Bennett, J Chinnock, J Hannam, J Hodgson, D Peters and E Price.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair will read out the following statement:

Welcome to everyone attending and observing the meeting.

A reminder that open proceedings of this meeting will be video recorded. If members of the public make presentations, they will be deemed to have consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber attendees are also consenting to being recorded.

This meeting is limited to 90 minutes and therefore members are asked to raise their points succinctly and not repeat the same view expressed by colleagues if it does not add to the debate.

To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Council.

The Committee will adjourn for the following items:

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A period of 15 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions or make comment regarding the work of the Committee or other items that affect Totnes.

The Committee will convene to consider the following items:

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 12th June 2023 and update on any matters arising. Document attached.

3. BUDGET MONITOR

To consider the Budget Monitor including the reserves projection. Documents attached.

4. MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS AND BUDGET

To consider the Mayor's engagements since April 2023 and the current budget. Document attached.

5. STAFF ABSENCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

To review the Staff Absence Management Policy. Document attached.

6. HOME WORKING POLICY

To review the Home Working Policy. Document attached.

7. SAVINGS ACCOUNT BALANCES

To note the savings account balances. Document TBC

8. COUNCIL ASSETS AND PUBLIC REALM WORKING GROUP

To note the minutes of the Council Assets and Public Realm Working Group held on 14th June and to consider the recommendations under items 7 and 12. Document attached.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 11th September 2023 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall. No document.

*The Committee 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 by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)*

10. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)

To consider the bank statements and reconciliations for June (financial). Documents attached.

11. STAFF ATTENDANCE

To note sickness and overtime balances (personal details). Document attached.

12. STAFFING UPDATE

For any general or urgent updates that required confidential sharing with Councillors (staffing), including (verbal update):

- a. To consider proposals regarding the Community Coordinator role.

Catherine Marlton

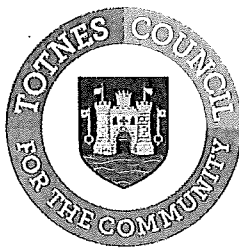
Town Clerk

5th July 2023

USE OF SOUND RECORDINGS AT COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The open proceedings of this Meeting will be audio and video recorded. If members of the public make a representation, they will be deemed to have consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber or Zoom meeting, attendees are also consenting to being recorded.

Televised, vision and sound recordings or live broadcastings by members of the press or public at Council or Committee debates are permitted and anyone wishing to do so is asked to inform the Chairman of the respective Committee of their intention to record proceedings.



DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS MONDAY 12TH JUNE 2023 AT 6.30PM IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors B Piper (Chair), C Beavis, T Bennett, J Chinnock, J Hannam, J Hodgson, D Peters and E Price.

Apologies: None.

In Attendance: C Marlton (Town Clerk) and C Bewley (Finance, HR and Lettings Manager).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair read a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded. The apologies were accepted.

The Committee will adjourn for the following items:

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

The Committee will reconvene to consider the following items:

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 22nd May 2023 and update on any matters arising.

The minutes were **AGREED** as an accurate record of the proceedings.

3. BUDGET MONITOR

To consider the Budget Monitor including the reserves projection

This was considered and unanimously **AGREED**. The Clerk updated on the comments line on the budget monitor and it was noted increased expenditure is likely needed on community consultation/strategic priority setting including the 'Community Consultation', which will be discussed at Town Matters Committee on 26th June.

4. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS

To review the Community Grant applications and make a recommendation to Full Council.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council the allocation of the following grants under the Totnes Town Council Community Grant Applications June 2023:

Applicant	Project	Amount requested	Total project cost £	% of total cost	Cost of Living Relevance?	Committee recommendation	% suggested	Notes/Actions
Stepping Stones (1)	Totnes Food Bank & TQ9 Community Food Club (May 2023-May 2024)	7060	13000	54.3	Yes	3530	50%	Unanimous
St John's Church	Bubbles, Birds & Sewing Bees (Jul 2023 - Mar 2024)	2888	5,300	54.5	in part	722	25%	Unanimous
Totnes Library	Kitchen & Refreshments Offer (Jul - Dec 2023)	1613.41	1613.41	100	in part	1210.05	75%	Unanimous
Totnes Rural Area Youth Engagement (TRAYE)	Bridgetown Youth Club	5,000	5,980	83.6	In part	3750	75%	Cllr Hodgson declared an interest. 2 abstentions on the vote
DYS Space	Subsidising trips for young people over the summer (26 Jul - 31 Aug 2023)	500	700	71.4	In part	500	100%	Unanimous
Citizens Advice South Hams	Totnes Community Outreach Programme (Jul 2023 - Jun 2024)	11938	19476	61.3	Yes	5969	50%	2 against
Totnes Caring	Lunch Club (Jul 2023 - Jul 2024)	13252	20339	65.2	Yes	6626	50%	Unanimous
Transition Town Totnes (TTT)	The Energy Wise Show (Jul - Oct 2023)	2456	3964	62	Yes	0	0	Unanimous. Sustainability Officer to table for consideration via the Climate Change budget
Earthjump CIC	Play on a Shoestring (Jun - Sep 2023)	£1,070.00	£1,070.00	100	In part	£0.00	50%	Unanimous. Cllr Piper will speak to Bridgetown Alive about funding. Administrator to go back and advise that they should approach BA after Full Council
Stepping Stones (2)	Staff Funding for Food Bank and TQ9 Food Club (Oct 2023 - Jun 2024)	£14,529	£20,250	71.7	Yes	0	0	Unanimous.
Chamber of Commerce	Christmas Lights 2023 (Nov - Dec 2023)	2000	2000	100	In part - support to business	0	0	Unanimous. Cllrs Peters, Price and Bennett to discuss with the Chamber.
DRAFT COUNCIL MATTERS MINUTES 12 TH JUNE 2023	Food in Community Cost of living support for struggling households	3527.87	5427.5	65	Yes	2645.9025	75%	Unanimous
Total		65,834.28	99,119.91	66.4		24952.9525		

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 10th July 2023 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall.

Noted.

*The Committee 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 by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)*

6. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)

To consider the bank statements and reconciliations for April (financial).

These were reviewed for May (not April) and unanimously **AGREED**.

7. GREEN TRAVEL S106

To consider the expenditure to date (staffing).

The Green Travel expenditure update was noted.

8. STAFFING UPDATE

For any general or urgent updates that required confidential sharing with Councillors (staffing) including:

a. To review Community Fundraiser recruitment.

The update on the Comm fundraiser and difficulties with recruitment was noted - an item will be added to the next Council Matters agenda to identify how to proceed.

Catherine Marlton
Town Clerk
June 2023

Budget Monitor - June 2023	20/21 YEAR END	21/22 YEAR END	22/23 YEAR END	2023/24		Comments	
	Actual 31st March 2021 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2022 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2023 YEAR END	Original Budget	Current Agreed budget		ACTUAL as of 30th June 2023
Administration							
Salaries and pensions for all staff	246894	294138	350889	411865	412023	95618	412023
Staff Training, Travel and Expenses	2287	4244	2988	3500	3500	1615	3500
Staff Recruitment	2575	1930	984	2750	2750	0	2750
Phone and Broadband	2343	2932	2984	3500	3500	627	3500
Office Supplies & Hospitality	1564	1100	1370	2300	2300	267	2300
Photocopier	1496	1536	1575	1600	1600	333	1600
Subscriptions		4463	4191	4400	4400	2458	4400
Professional Fees	7431	53812	15062	10000	10000	960	10000
Insurance		7514	26105	29000	29000	30323	31000
Website and IT		3696	4618	7500	7500	965	7500
Office Equipment	5082	1999	1412	15000	15000	1886	10000
Van Maintenance		258	207	1325	1325	0	1325
TMO Tools and Consumables		1322	1162	1650	1650	707	1650
Miscellaneous Income		-40	-180	0	0	0	0
SUB TOTAL	269672	378904	413367	494390	494548	135764	491548
Civic and Democratic							
Mayoral Allowance	0	557	0	450	450	0	450
Civic and Mayoral Events (expenditure)	743	959	3014	5750	5750	984	5750
Civic Events (income)	0	0	-717	0	0	0	0
Civic Regalia	0	110	212	220	220	95	220
Mayoral Travel	0	7	185	300	300	0	300
Councillor IT equipment	2069	356	14	2500	2500	82	2500
Councillor Training and Travel	1085	210	514	1120	1120	90	1120
Elections	0	9524	0	12000	12000	0	12000
Community Outreach/Christmas	2436	4747	6165	35000	35000	58	56364
Councillor Allowances	3152	2644	1970	7200	7200	0	7200
MOVED TO ADMIN Professional Fees	11092						
MOVED TO ADMIN Subscriptions	3009						
MOVED TO ADMIN Website and IT	293						
SUB TOTAL	23819	19114	11357	64540	64540	1309	85904
Tourism							
ACTUAL as of 30th June 2023							
Expected year end							
Visit Toynes Marketing and event sponsorship	6108	18966	20595	29500	29500	3998	29500
Other TIC expenditure (Post/Phone/Uniform/Utilities etc)	275	306	220	275	275	777	955
Bank Charges/Paypal fees	0	33	4	50	50	0	50
Visit Toynes Guide and Website	3135	12308	9056	6200	6200	-878	6200
Toynes Guide and Website Income	-468	-12283	-10990	-6500	-6500	-137	-6500
Advertising		-3289	-1750	-500	-500	-2620	-2620
SUB TOTAL	9050	16041	17135	29025	29025	1140	27585
Guildhall							
ACTUAL as of 30th June 2023							
Expected year end							
Cleaning	2456	2644	2581	6500	6500	638	6500
Building Maintenance	191	6554	5226	10000	10000	3305	10000
Business Rates	6113	6113	6469	10000	10000	6418	10000
Water	333	269	331	500	500	84	500
Utilities	3894	4801	11603	25000	25000	3138	25000
Equipment Maintenance	1291	5996	2669	1320	1320	1497	1497
Wedding Licence renewals and marketing	0	2434	690	1000	1000	0	1000
Admissions Income	0	0	-2699	-3000	-3000	-1520	-3000
Weddings & Hire Income	-832	-4478	-3550	-3000	-3000	-310	-3000
SUB TOTAL	13446	24333	23320	48320	48320	13250	48497
Civic Hall							
ACTUAL as of 30th June 2023							
Expected year end							
Cleaning and supplies	1226	4605	3835	5500	5500	965	5500

	Actual 31st March 2021 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2022 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2023 YEAR END	Original Budget	Current Agreed budget	ACTUAL as of 30th June 2023	Expected year end
Feed in Tariff	2762	2501	3081	2700	2700	0	2700
Water	1361	1055	1156	1500	1500	0	1500
Utilities	1762	3044	6012	12000	12000	1581	12000
Building Maintenance	2969	13955	6917	60000	60000	1300	60000
Licences	70	70	70	70	70	0	70
Misc & Marketing Civic Hall	0	26	567	750	750	87	750
Equipment Maintenance	3320	4299	2026	20000	20000	2975	20000
Paige Adams Grant towards Caretaking, Cleaning and Management costs	-7500	-30000	-33500	-33500	-33500	0	-33500
Feed in tariff income and Water refund income	-6728	-6304	-7161	-6800	-6800	340	-6800
Equipment sales		-1000	0	0	0	0	0
SUB TOTAL	-758	-7749	-16997	62220	62220	6648	62220
Property Maintenance	Actual 31st March 2021 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2022 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2023 YEAR END	Original Budget	Current Agreed budget	ACTUAL as of 30th June 2023	Expected year end
Guildhall Cottage Maintenance	361	588	341	1000	1000	0	1000
Flat 5a Loan repay	9148	9148	43159				
Flat 5a Maintenance	275	1853	1805				
Guildhall Office Maintenance	309	13	1774	1140	1140	278	1140
Rental Property Management Fees	3127	1487	1599	400	400	176	400
Town Clocks	-3230	198	139	5500	5500	689	5500
Museum Maintenance	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	-1
Museum Rent Income	-3	-3	0	-3	-3	0	0
Eastgate Clock Rental	-10200	-10756	-11700	-12000	-12000	-2925	-12000
Guildhall Cottage Income(€975 a month)	-8340	-8660	-7103				
Flat 5a Rental Income	-6465	-4182	30013	-3964	-3964	-1782	-3961
SUB TOTAL	Actual 31st March 2021 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2022 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2023 YEAR END	Original Budget	Current Agreed budget	ACTUAL as of 30th June 2023	Expected year end
Cemetery	4441	4441	4441	4441	4441	4291	4291
Business Rates	144	173	167	175	175	26	175
Water		706	329	350	350	79	350
Waste collection		20613	14516	25000	25000	2695	25000
Grounds Maintenance (Grass cutting and tree work)	18009		0	500	500	0	500
Works and Maintenance (Memorials, Paths, Fences)	1357	-32	0	20000	20000	0	20000
Chapel	150	0	0	-10000	-10000	-1301	-10000
Cemetery Fees Income	-11435	-12000	-17250	40466	40466	5790	40316
SUB TOTAL	Actual 31st March 2021 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2022 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2023 YEAR END	Original Budget	Current Agreed budget	ACTUAL as of 30th June 2023	Expected year end
Open Spaces	12666	13901	2203				
General Maintenance	80	162	502	550	550	0	550
St Marys Churchyard (Walls and trees)	322	857	5868	3000	3000	-5550	3000
Castle Meadow Maintenance and Water	800	108	45	100	100	29	100
Castle Meadow and allotments income	-208	-200	-200	-200	-200	0	-200
SUB TOTAL	Actual 31st March 2021 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2022 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2023 YEAR END	Original Budget	Current Agreed budget	ACTUAL as of 30th June 2023	Expected year end
Precept and Income	98	104	189	250	250	38	250
Bank Charges	-585280	-545986	-545986	-610253	-610253	-305127	-610253
Council Tax Grant (only guaranteed until 19/20)	-10020		-713			-553	-1500
Investment Income	0	0	0	-100000	-100000	0	-100000
Charity of Paige Adams RATE ABATEMENT	-545202	-545882	-546510	-711503	-711503	-305642	-711503
SUB TOTAL	Actual 31st March 2021 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2022 YEAR END	Actual 31st March 2023 YEAR END	Original Budget	Current Agreed budget	ACTUAL as of 30th June 2023	Expected year end
Community Development	44168	52508	49770	50000	25000	0	25000
Community Grants(incl. S137 Funding)	0	0	13200	0	0	502	410
Community Projects	see below	3720	3234	0	0	-100	0
Neighbourhood Plan	see below	9500	31806	26000	21000	-100	21000
Arts and Culture and Events	see below	see below	75980	73700	13700	-18955	13700
Public Realm and Community Assets Projects							

No shop water income since 22/23 due to shop closing down

PWLB loan paid off in 22/23
Included in Guildhall Maintenance from 23/24

Only maintaining Eastgate clock from 23/24

Eastgate lease ending 28/9/23
Ceased in 22/23

Covered by grant funding income (see below)

See breakdown below

See breakdown below

	3986	2312	9139	10000	10000	1821	10000
Climate Change/Green Travel							
Public Toilets		0					10000
Caring Town/Totnes Caring services		0					
Citizens Advice Service		see above					
Neighbourhood Plan/Planning.	71413	22938					
Community projects SHARED SPACE and public realm		0					
Community Grants Scheme/COVID 19		see above					
Arts and Culture and Events	0	0					
Heritage Support		0					
Grant Funding/Projects Income	-84500	-34370	-32705	0	-500	-500	PA grant for Easter Festival
SUB TOTAL	£35,067	£56,608	£150,424	£69,700	£17,232	£69,610	
TOTAL	-£187,710	-£47,985	£90,527	£186,644	-£166,276	£113,666	£16864 expected overspend against agreed

Reserves impact	
Total actual general reserves as start of 2023/24	£614,781
Based on the current projected 2023/24 budget, year end reserve estimate	£501,115

	BUDGET	NOTES
2023/24 - proposed		
PUBLIC REALM and COMMUNITY ASSETS PROJECTS	13700	Annual total allocation
Totnes Gardens	-2500	
Replacement plants and repairs to planters over the year	-1200	
Public Seating and benches	-5000	
Planting of flowers/beds/new planters	-5000	
TOTAL	0	

	BUDGET	NOTES
2023/24 - proposed		
ARTS AND CULTURE	21000	Annual total allocation
Christmas late nights	-13000	
Public art	-2000	
Bunting	-3000	
Christmas light switch on	-3000	
TOTAL	0	

	BUDGET	NOTES
2023/24 - proposed		
COMMUNITY OUTREACH	35000	Annual total allocation
Already spent	-59	Town meeting room hire
Civic Square Lights and Trees	-3000	
Christmas lighting	-45000	Based on tenders received
Christmas shop front competition	-675	Agreed FC 3 rd July
Totnes Directory Updates	-2000	
Defibrillator Pads/Serviceing	-500	
Facebook/Comms	-500	
Community Consultation	-4650	Agreed FC 3 rd July - see below
TOTAL	-21364	

ITEM 3

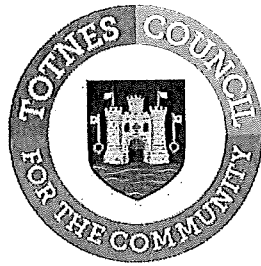
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ITEM 4 – MAYOR’S ENGAGEMENTS AND BUDGET

Date	Event	Venue
April	Opening of Share Fest	Civic Hall
May		
2	Elizabethan Market Opening	Guildhall - Civic Hall
2	Coffee Morning at St Mary's Church	
4	Arts Festival	Totnes Progressive School (event cancelled without notice to us)
13	TAODS - 39 Steps	Civic Hall
15	First Full Council Meeting and Introductory meeting for new councillors.	Guildhall
17	Town Meeting	Civic Hall
25	Mayor Making	Guildhall
June		
11	Prize giving at Totnes and Bridgetown Royal Regatta	Dart Totnes Rowing Club
14	SHDC Mayors & Clerks Meeting	SHDC
21	Cost of Living Cookery Course Graduation	St John's Church 12-1
28	Totnes Hospital League of friends AGM	

Mayoral travel Budget 23/24	
-	-
Allocation	300.00
-	-
<u>Expenditure</u>	0.00
Balance remaining	300.00

<u>Civic Events Budget 23/24</u>	As at 30/6/23
-	-
<u>Emily Price</u>	<u>1/4/23 -</u> <u>14/5/23</u>
-	-
Allocation	693.15
<u>Expenditure</u>	
Elizabethan reception food & wine	11.71
Medals x 20	150.00
Vire gift - wine	20.83
Safety pins & ribbon	2.21
Medal engraving	36.00
Medal boxes x 6	12.07
Bottle bags	7.49
CLLr induction refreshments	59.96
Balance remaining to c/f	392.88
	<u>15/5/23 -</u> <u>31/3/24</u>
<u>Emily Price</u>	
Allocation	5056.85
B/f	392.88
Civic Event income	
<u>Expenditure</u>	
Pizzas	138.50
Bellringing - mayor making	160.00
Buffet food - mayor making	49.85
Flowers - mayor making	41.67
Sandwiches for CLLrs Induction	52.00
Catering - mayor making	216.50
Remembrance Service wreath	25.00
Balance remaining	4766.21
<u>Event costs</u>	
Mayor Making	468.02



ABSENCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED JULY 2021

NEXT REVIEW JULY 2023

1 Introduction

The Council is committed to providing effective, high quality service to all its customers and to optimising the contribution of all employees. As part of this aim, it is essential that all employees are committed to maximising attendance.

The Council is concerned for the wellbeing of its employees and seeks to protect their health and safety by creating a safe working environment. In return, the Council expects all employees to take reasonable care of their own health, seek medical help whenever appropriate, and to attend work when fit to do so.

The Council recognises that genuine medical grounds will occasionally result in employee absence. It is the Council's policy to treat all such sickness absence in a fair, sensitive, and consistent manner across all areas of the workforce.

The Council must balance the sensitive management of genuine individual sickness against its need to be publicly accountable for its resource allocation and, as such, cannot sustain high levels of sickness absence. Action will therefore be taken to address recurrent short term sickness or extended periods of absence as appropriate.

1.1 Aims

In order for the Council to meet its responsibilities, it will ensure that:

- It provides a supportive environment for those employees affected by ill-health;
- Managers and employees adhere to this policy and procedure; and
- Levels of sickness absence are the subject of routine monitoring.

1.2 Responsibilities

The onus for attending work on a regular basis and for reporting absence in accordance with the Council's agreed procedures rests with the employee. It is also an employee's responsibility to appropriately detail any periods of absence on their record of hours worked.

The responsibility for recording, monitoring, and managing absence on a day-to-day basis lies with the Town Clerk. It is therefore essential that they ensure that all employees are aware of the Council's Absence Management Policy and Procedures.

1.3 Reporting

Employees who are unable to work due to illness/injury must contact the Town Clerk or their Line Manager by telephone or e-mail as soon as possible or arrange for someone else to do this on their behalf. This should be no later than 09.30 on the first day of absence or the nearest working day. The employee should provide some indication of:

- The nature of the absence;
- The date the injury/illness began (including weekends and holidays);
- The expected duration of the absence; and
- Whether there are any immediate work commitments that need completing/reassigning during the absence.

If the Town Clerk is unavailable, the employee should ensure that contact is made with one of the management team.

The employee must maintain contact with his or her Line Manager during any period of sickness absence lasting longer than one day, so that the Line Manager is aware of any progress and the expected date of return to work. If the employee is unable to do so, they must arrange for someone else to do this on their behalf.

Failure to follow the sickness reporting process might lead to the absence from work being considered as unauthorised, resulting in loss of pay and possible disciplinary action.

2 Certification

Where the absence is for a period of up to seven days (inclusive of weekends) and not covered by a doctor's certificate, the employee will be asked to complete a self-certification form on their return to work.

If the absence exceeds seven days – and the employee has not already done so – the employee should provide a doctor's certificate for the remainder of the absence. The employee will need to ensure that there is always a current certificate. The doctor's certificate ('fit note') will include whether or not the employee needs to see a doctor again before returning to work.

If the doctor's certificate states that the employee "may be fit for work", the employee should inform the Town Clerk immediately. They will discuss with the employee whether there are any additional measures that may be needed to

facilitate the return to work, taking into account the doctor's advice. This may take place at a Return to Work Interview or an Absence Review Meeting. If appropriate measures cannot be taken, the employee will remain on sick leave and the Town Clerk will set a date to review the situation.

3 Return to Work Meetings

When the employee returns to work after any period of absence, their Line Manager will arrange to meet with them. This meeting will occur on the first day back or as soon as possible. The purpose of this meeting is:

- To provide an opportunity for the Line Manager to check that the employee is fit enough to return to work;
- To give the employee an opportunity to voice any concerns that they may have and/or to identify any domestic, welfare, or work-related problems in an appropriate forum;
- To ensure that the employee is aware of work-related matters that have occurred during their absence; and
- Fill out the Sickness Declaration Form.

4 Miscellaneous

It is important that the employee complies with these procedures so that:

- The Council can be aware of any potential problems and provide assistance to the employee where necessary; and
- Any sick pay to which the employee would otherwise be entitled is not withheld or refused.

Records retained in respect of sickness absence will be treated with sensitivity and confidentiality at all times, in accordance with the provisions of prevailing Data Protection legislation. The employee is entitled to access their records on request.

The maximum entitlement to occupational sick pay is:

During 1st year of service:

one month's full pay and (after four months' service) two months' half pay.

During 2nd year of service:

two months' full pay and two months' half pay

During 3rd year of service:

four months' full pay and four months' half pay

During 4th and 5th years of service:

five months' full pay and five months' half pay

After 5 years' service:

six months' full pay and six months' half pay.

5 Frequent Intermittent Absence

In addition to the Return to Work interviews after all periods of absence, the Council will institute a more formal review of attendance records and reasons for absence with an employee if there has been either

- a. four episodes of absence or
- b. a total of 10 days' short-term sickness absence

within the last 12 months.

The relevant manager will arrange an Absence Review Meeting to meet with any employee whose absence record matches or exceeds the above criteria.

During the meeting, the manager should draw the employee's attention to their poor attendance record and the problems that their absences are causing for the Council and other employees. Where no underlying medical condition is disclosed, the employee will be advised that their attendance record will be monitored (over a period of not less than 3 months) and that significant improvement will be required. In addition, employees will be warned that if no such improvement is forthcoming, serious consideration will be given to reviewing their employment situation. This will be confirmed in writing.

Return to Work interviews will continue to be carried out following any absences that occur during this monitoring period. These interviews afford the manager the opportunity to remind the employee of the Council's concerns.

If no significant improvement in attendance is demonstrated after the period of monitoring has elapsed, a further Absence Review Meeting will be arranged. At this meeting, the employee will once again be reminded of the problems caused by the absences and asked if they wish to disclose any underlying medical condition or problem of which the manager is unaware. If such a condition is disclosed, a medical referral should be arranged. Where no underlying medical condition exists, the employee should be told that their attendance record will be subject to a further period of monitoring (of not less than 3 months) and that their employment may be terminated if the required improvement is not effected. Employees have the right to be accompanied to this meeting by a trade union representative or a work colleague.

Employees whose levels of attendance improve satisfactorily during periods of informal or formal monitoring will be reminded that they will be expected to maintain these levels of attendance. Failure to do so will result in further monitoring or the initiation of formal action.

Where an employee's attendance has not improved to the required level, an Attendance Hearing will be arranged (see Section 8) to consider whether or not the employee should be dismissed.

6 Long-Term Absence

All cases of long-term absence will be treated sympathetically and every assistance will be given to the employee to return to work. The Council will maintain contact with the employee and advise them that they should keep the Council informed of developments relating to their medical condition. The Council will hold Sickness Review Meetings with the employee during their absence, as appropriate, to: keep up to date, review the on-going absence, and offer support to the employee where appropriate.

In order to ensure that the Council has access to guidance and advice in respect of the best course of action to follow in relation to such cases of absence, employees who have been absent for a continuous period of four weeks might, depending on the nature of the absence in question, be referred to an Occupational Health Physician. Where the Occupational Health Physician makes a recommendation that might affect the employee's continued employment, the relevant manager will hold an Absence Review Meeting with the employee to discuss the alternative options. Employees may wish to have the support of a trade union representative or a work colleague present during such a meeting, and this should be positively encouraged.

Where a return to work following a period of prolonged absence might be facilitated by temporary redeployment or phased re-introduction (e.g. job sharing or part-time working) an employee can discuss these options with their manager and, if such measures are appropriate, the Council will ensure that the support mechanisms necessary for this to occur are provided. Such arrangements will be for a defined period and will be subject to joint review.

In certain cases, the Occupational Health Physician might find that an employee is unfit to perform a particular job but fit enough to undertake other types of work. In such cases, full consideration will be given to the possibility of redeployment into alternative positions. Consideration will also be given to redeployment in cases where work in a particular place poses problems with attendance.

Where an employee remains absent and a return to work is not foreseeable within a reasonable timescale, the Town Clerk will arrange a Final Absence Review meeting (see Section 7), which may lead to an Attendance Hearing (see Section 8) to consider dismissal.

7 Disability and Attendance Management

Only a person who meets the Equality Act (2010) definition "of" disability has the protected characteristic of disability. Totnes Town Council recognises and will support any member of staff who meets the Equality Act (2010) definition of disability and the protected characteristics thereof.

The Equality Act (2010) says that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing.

Long-term means that the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months or for the rest of the affected person's life.

Substantial means more than minor or trivial.

Cancer, HIV infection, and multiple sclerosis are deemed disabilities under the Equality Act 2010 from the point of diagnosis.

Where a person is taking measures to treat or correct an impairment (other than by using spectacles or contact lenses) and, but for those measures, the impairment would likely have a substantial adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities, it will be treated as though it does have such an effect.

Adjustment is a key part of the Equality Act (2010) and can be central to enabling a person with a disability to retain their employment

Totnes Town Council recognises that it may be appropriate to adjust the expected levels of attendance when some, or all, of a staff member's absences are disability related. It also acknowledges that absences related to a staff member's disability still require to be considered and that there are limits to the levels of absence that Totnes Town Council can sustain, even when such absence is because of a staff member's disability. Therefore, reasonable target levels will be set in consultation with the employees own GP and/or an Occupational Health Physician or Medical Practitioner(s) for the purpose of providing information for attendance target setting.

If Teignmouth Town Council needs a report from your GP, the Council will comply with the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988, which requires that: -

- Totnes Town Council obtains your written consent before we contact your GP
- you are given prior access to the report and can refuse the Company access to it if you wish
- you can ask your GP to alter the contents of the report if you feel it is inaccurate
- if your GP does not wish changes to be made, you can ask your GP to attach a statement of your views to the report

However, you should be aware that if you refuse to supply relevant medical information to Teignmouth Town Council, the Council may have no choice but to make decisions based on the information that is available. Therefore, it is in your best interests to disclose medical information.

8 Capability – Ill Health

Where medical advice shows the primary cause of a genuine lack of capability occurs due to incapacity such as ill-health, relating to both physical and mental health issues, pregnancy and other reasons that are clearly covered by Equality Act 2010 the following approach should be followed and exhausted before a final stage capability meeting. This approach should only be used on medical advice: progression through the capability process must be recommended by the individual's GP, consultant or Occupational Health Physician.

To identify the primary cause of incapacity a referral should be made to an Occupational Health Physician, if appropriate. There should also be further advice sought from the staff member's General Practitioner or Consultant dealing with the primary cause of incapacity. This will assist in identifying any reasonable adjustments that may assist the staff member in continuing their employment.

A formal incapacity meeting will be held and will result in a formal investigation by the staff member's immediate line manager and a representative from Totnes Town Councils Personnel Committee and the South West Councils organisation to consider what alternative options (if any) can be put in place to allow the staff member to remain in work.

Where possible, the staff member should be present at this meeting and has the right to be accompanied by his or her Trade Union, or a work colleague. The staff member should be given the opportunity to discuss and input into the meeting and will also be expected to participate fully in investigating what can be done to assist them in continued employment.

There may be an occasion when the staff member is unable, whether as a result of ongoing health issues or other related circumstances, to attend this meeting in person and as such, it may be necessary to arrange for the meeting to be held 'in absentia'. In these circumstances the staff member will be invited to submit a written statement for consideration at the meeting along with any relevant details relating to their circumstances for consideration at the meeting. The staff member may also request that their chosen representation (as outlined above) attends the meeting on their behalf. Totnes Town Council will facilitate this upon receipt of written note of authority from the staff member.

A formal review date should be agreed at this meeting for the outcome to be determined by the immediate Line Manager.

9 Adjustment

When determining a reasonably practicable adjustment, the following areas should be considered;

- how effective the adjustment would be in overcoming the disadvantage?
- how practicable it is to make the adjustment
- the financial and other costs incurred by the employer and the extent of any disruption to activities

- the extent of the employer's financial and other resources
- the availability of financial and/or other assistance in making the adjustment
- the nature of the employer and size of undertaking

10 Final Absence Review Meeting

Prior to dismissal being considered for either frequent intermittent absence or long-term absence, the Town Clerk will meet with the individual to explore whether there are any reasonable adjustments that could be made to enable an employee to remain employed.

Termination of employment may take place where:

- An employee is declared permanently unfit for work;
- An employee is declared medically unfit for their work and alternative employment cannot be found;
- A decision has been taken that the service can no longer tolerate a high level of absence; or
- A decision is taken, within the Council's disciplinary process, that an employee has wilfully abused the sickness absence/payments provisions or absented themselves without permission.

11 Attendance Hearing

To reach a decision about whether dismissal is appropriate, an Attendance Hearing will be arranged. The employee will be invited in writing to attend the hearing and notified of their right to be accompanied by a Trade Union Representative or colleague.

The Hearing Panel will comprise of Personnel Sub-Committee, who will make the decision. The Town Clerk or relevant manager will attend to outline the history of absence and any relevant steps taken and advice received.

All paperwork relating to the hearing will be circulated 5 days in advance of the hearing to all parties attending.

Once the Panel has considered the manager's and employee's cases, and all other relevant information, it will adjourn to make a decision.

The decision of the Panel will be confirmed to the employee in writing within 5 working days. The letter should clearly set out:

1. The Panel's decision:
 - a. If a warning has been issued the timescale for this and the level of improvement required;
 - b. If the decision is not to take action at this point and to review again in a certain time period, the applicable timescale for this; or

- c. If the decision is to dismiss the employee, inform them of their relevant notice period and provide them with any relevant pension information; and
2. The employee's right of appeal.

12 Appeals

Employees have the right to appeal against any decision to issue a formal warning or dismissal under this procedure. If an employee wishes to appeal, they should write to the Town Clerk setting out the grounds of their appeal. This must be done within 10 days of the date of the letter informing them of the outcome of the Attendance Hearing.

Appeals will be heard by a separate panel of members, who will also normally be part of the Council Matters Committee. An appeal hearing will be held where the employee can present their appeal. The Chair of the original panel will also attend to explain the original decision. Witnesses may be called.

Once the Appeal Panel has considered both the employee's appeal and the Hearing Chair's case, and considered all other relevant information, it will adjourn to make a decision.

The decision of the Appeal Panel is final and will be confirmed to the employee in writing within 5 working days. There is no further right of Appeal.

13 Personal, Domestic, or Work-Related Problems

Where an employee reveals that their absence has been a consequence of personal, domestic, or work-related problems, the relevant manager should endeavour to discuss with them any relevant details that they wish to disclose. Although an employee may have genuine concerns about revealing sensitive or personal information, they should be reminded that such matters will be treated confidentially, and that the Council cannot assist them if it is not made aware of the problem. If an employee wishes to discuss matters with someone other than the relevant manager, the Chair of the Personnel Committee can be contacted for a confidential interview.

Once the problem has been clearly identified, appropriate assistance can be offered to the employee. In some circumstances, special leave, temporary adjustments in working arrangements, or referral to specialist agencies may be granted.

14 Alcohol/Drug Dependency

Where an employee discloses that their absences are a consequence of alcohol- or drug-related problems, they will be encouraged to seek help and treatment voluntarily. Employees may be granted, if necessary, leave to undergo treatment and any such leave will be regarded as sick leave within the terms of the Council's sick pay scheme.

Should an employee refuse or discontinue any programme of assistance designed for them, then any unacceptable behaviour or inadequate standard of work will be dealt with on its merits through the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

15 Welfare

If, as a consequence of medically related absence, the relevant manager has any concerns about an employee's ability to undertake the full range of duties and responsibilities associated with their post, consideration should be given to suspending them with pay, or finding alternative duties whilst medical advice is sought from a qualified medical professional or Occupation Health service.

16 Monitoring

Monitoring is an important part of sickness absence. In order for reports to be issued to managers, it is important that all absence from the workplace is reported. All signed absence forms should be returned as soon as possible after the employee's Return to Work Interview has been conducted. The Finance, HR & Lettings Manager will ensure that an absence history is maintained for each employee. These records will provide the base data for the compilation, at regular intervals, of statistics showing the level of sickness absence across the Council.

The sickness monitoring system will also enable the Town Clerk to identify Individual cases where frequent or lengthy absences have occurred, or where patterns of absence have been identified. However, the manager should view such notifications as a secondary means of identifying problems or potential problems.

The manager should ensure that they maintain comprehensive records at all times for each employee in relation to contact during and immediately following periods of sickness absence. These details should be maintained on the employee's personal file and should be treated with sensitivity and confidentiality at all times. Employees will be entitled to access these records on request.

17 Terminal illness

The Town Council promises to support any employee diagnosed with a terminal illness.

Whilst the contractual amount of full paid and half paid sick leave will still apply, the Council will provide as much support as possible to allow the employee to choose their own path in terms of whether they are able to continue working or not.

From the moment of diagnosis of a terminal illness the worry of being dismissed and losing pension related 'death in service' benefits for family members will be lifted.

18 Death in Service

The Town Council recommends that every employee opt into the Local Government Pension Scheme which provides death in service benefits as outlined at the following link. <https://www.lgpsmember.org/arm/already-member-prot.php>

In addition to this the Town Council has insurance coverage for personal accidents during employment. Following such an accident the Town Council will decide how to claim and how the proceeds of the claim should be allocated between the employee/employees family or the Town Council as the employer.

Coverage applies for 24 hours a day, so it does not mean that the incident had to happen to the employee whilst at work.

APPENDIX 1

RETURN TO WORK / ABSENCE REVIEW

* * CONFIDENTIAL * * *

Return to work and absence review interviews must be conducted after every period of absence and during periods of longer term absence.

Date of discussion				
Method of discussion	Face to Face <input type="checkbox"/>	Telephone <input type="checkbox"/>		
EMPLOYEE DETAILS				
Full Name:				
Job Title:				
ABSENCE DETAILS				
Start date of absence				
Date of return				
Reason for absence				
Dates of absences in last rolling 12 month period (refer to managers desktop or local employee file)				
Has the employee been updated on any issues that occurred during his/her absence?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If the period of absence has been long term does the employee require any retraining?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any issues that the employee wishes to raise following their recent absence?				

Does the employee consider themselves to have a disability? Yes No

If yes, please provide an explanation of the disability and if any support is required.

Do any reasonable adjustments need to be considered? Yes No

If yes, please provide details of the reasonable adjustments.

Has the employee received a fit note? Yes No

If yes, are there any recommendations/adjustments to support the employee at work?

Has the employee met the corporate trigger points in a rolling 12 month period?

- 4 or more episodes of sickness
- 10 working days of absence

Trigger points for employees that work fewer than 5 days in a week will need to be pro rata to the number of days.

Yes

If yes, please refer to the absence management policy.

No

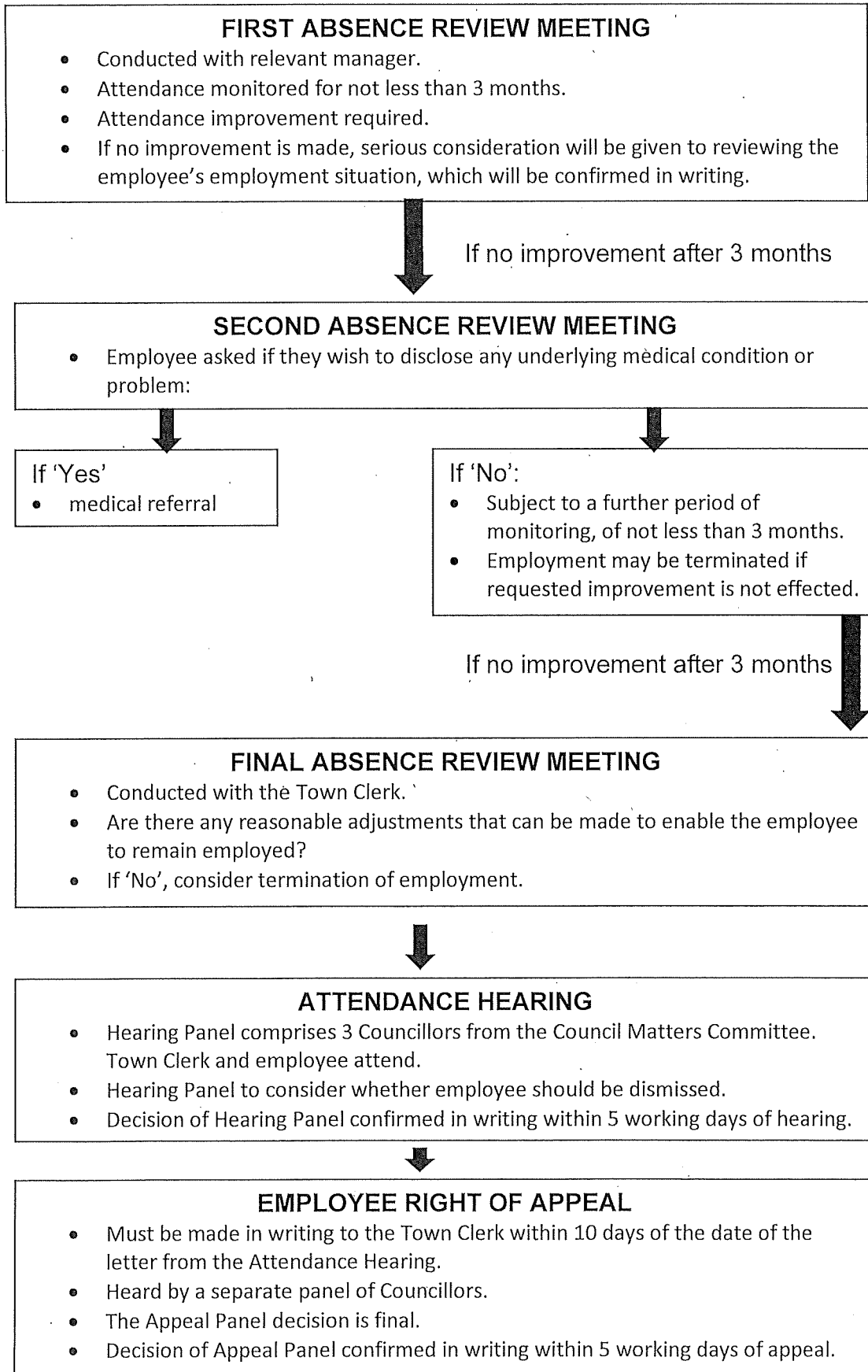
If yes to the above question please state what stage you are up to within the Absence Management Policy.

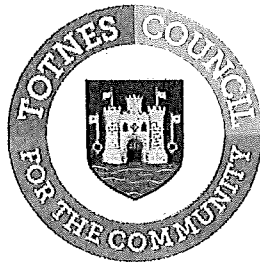
If the employee has triggered and the line manager along with the senior manager's approval have decided not to start/progress with the Absence Management Policy then please document the reasons why.

<p>Has the employee been made aware of future actions in accordance with the Absence Management Policy if they are absent again in the near future?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>No</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Is a referral to Occupational Health required? If yes, please complete the relevant referral form and send it to Occupational Health</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>No</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Details of support offered to employee (actions agreed, including timescales)</p>				
<p>Please include any additional information discussed at the return to work interview</p>				
<p>I understand that this information will be used for the purposes of recording and monitoring sickness absence.</p>				
<p>Signed Employee</p>				<p>Date</p>
<p>Signed Manager</p>				<p>Date</p>

ABSENCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Triggers: 4 episodes of absence or a total of 10 days' short-term sickness absence within the last 12 months.





Item 6

HOME WORKING POLICY

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED JULY 2021

NEXT REVIEW JULY 2023

INTRODUCTION

Totnes Town Council understands that there may be instances when an employee needs to work from home, the Covid-19 pandemic has been an example of this.

In general and depending on the nature of that employee's role the Council may consider occasional home working appropriate.

DEFINITION

Occasional home working is when an employee undertakes some of their duties from home on an ad hoc basis. This is usually planned and may be for complete or part days. Examples of the type of work considered suitable for home working include report writing, preparations for meetings, project work etc. Working from home enables work to be carried out more efficiently in a quiet location and without disruption. It may also prove a more efficient use of time if employees who have been away from their work base for part of day, are closer to their home on their return journey and can complete the working day at home rather than at their normal place of work.

In cases where office facilities are shared, or the employee risks continual interruption, the Town Clerk may agree that an employee can work from home for a short-specified period. This may include agreeing to home working for a fixed period e.g. two weeks as well as shorter ad hoc periods. Managers and employees should be aware of the potential impact home working could have on teams e.g. isolation from the team, and/or Council activities, a reduction in effective managerial support or supervision.

Due to the nature of individual tasks some roles within the Council are not deemed suitable for home working.

CONDITIONS

- Home working arrangements should work for both the Council and the employee.
- Wherever possible requests for home working should be made at least one week before the employee wishes to start the arrangement.
- Risk assessments of the home working environment, in line with legal requirements, must be undertaken.
- Requests will be considered on their own merits, considering resources, impact on colleagues and working relationships.
- When working from home employees are responsible for ensuring they are contactable during normal working hours. This must be via a Council mobile telephone or a work e-mail address.
- As a general rule it is not considered necessary for those working from home to require supplies of stationery etc. Large volumes of printing and collating of documents should be carried out on Town Council premises. Certain circumstances as the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that those working from home will require supplies plus IT support where needed. Arrangements therefore are to be made to support employees in such circumstances.
- Under no circumstances should home working be used as an alternative method of meeting carers needs (i.e. childcare).
- Home working arrangements will be reviewed considering any change of circumstances, whether relating to employee, work they are required to undertake, or the working environment.
- In the event that staff are required to work from home because of government pandemic rules then team meetings will be had by virtual means on a regular basis.

Home working arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis, or sooner if circumstances change.

Employees must be aware that any abuse of the home working arrangement may result in the Council taking disciplinary action.

EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

Health & Safety - In line with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 ("the Act") and their Health & Safety Policy the Council will ensure, as far as reasonably practical, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees, including those working from home.

Insurance - The Council accepts liability for accidents which are proven to have been caused by the authorised use of equipment provided by them in line with any instructions issued.

Data Protection, Security & Confidentiality - Council employees will be instructed that in instances where their colleagues are working from home, they will not

disclose any personal details e.g. telephone numbers to anyone outside of the Council.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY

Health & Safety - Employees are expected to carry out their work in such a way as to ensure, as far as reasonably practical, that there is no risk to health and safety to themselves, members of their family or visitors.

Insurance - Home working may have an effect on domestic insurance policies. Employees wishing to work from home must inform their insurance company of the change in circumstances and the use, and identity, of equipment owned by the Council. An employee's mortgage provider may need to be informed. Employees living in council or privately rented accommodation should notify their landlord and/or examine the terms of their lease. Any equipment belonging to the employee but being used for Council business should be operated in line with any instructions issued. It is reasonable for the Council to assume that this done.

Accidents, Incidents & Dangerous Occurrences - In line with the Council's Accident Reporting Procedure, employees must inform their line manager of any accidents, incidents or dangerous occurrences which take place whilst working at home. The initial report should be via telephone with the appropriate paperwork being completed on the employee's return to the workplace.

Policies and Procedures - All work carried out on Council business is covered by the requirements of the Council's policies and procedures, even if this work is undertaken at home.

Data Protection, Security & Confidentiality - Arrangements for home working should ensure that the employee can maintain the security and confidentiality of documents within the home environment whilst complying with Data Protection legislation and the Council's Confidentiality, Data Protection and IT Usage Policy (employees should be aware that even when using their personal equipment to undertake Council business they must comply with this procedure). Specifically, homeworkers are under a duty to:

- Keep all documentation belonging to us in the locked filing cabinet at all times except when in use,
- Ensure that documents are saved to the server rather than the laptop computer's hard drive.
- If you have a telephone conversation where you are discussing confidential work matters, you should ensure that such calls take place in privacy to avoid inadvertent breach of confidentiality.

Remote Access - Employees who wish to work from home may use remote access to the server subject to the Town Clerk's approval. Employees must not divulge any information held on the database to any third party. All Data Protection, GDPR, security and confidentiality rulings must be adhered to.

Expenses – any home working should be short-term and therefore employees are not entitled to claim home working incidental costs such as for broadband, lighting

and heating. The Town Clerk has discretion to approve expense claims for consumables such as printer ink, printer paper and stationery that cannot be sourced from the office.

EQUIPMENT

The Council has 2 laptops which can be used for short-term homeworking.

Staff must ensure the equipment is stored securely at all times when it is taken away from the Council premises and is not used by anyone who is not a Council employee. The equipment should not be connected to any devices that could introduce viruses.

The laptop computer and other equipment provided by us must be used only for work-related purposes.

If any equipment owned by the Council is subsequently lost or damaged by an employee that employee will be expected to pay for its replacement.

03/07/2023

Totnes Town Council Current Year

13:50

Receipts and Payments Summary - Cashbook 6

CHARITY BANK

Current Month is: 3

	<u>Receipt Totals</u>	<u>Payment Totals</u>	
Month 2	328.76	0.00	
<hr/>			
Total Receipts / Payments	328.76	0.00	Closing Trial Balance
Opening Balance	80,352.73		<hr/>
Closing Balance		80,681.49	80,681.49
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	80,681.49	80,681.49	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	

06/07/2023

Totnes Town Council Current Year

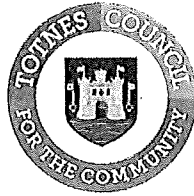
11:09

Receipts and Payments Summary - Cashbook 7

NATIONWIDE BS

Current Month is: 3

	<u>Receipt Totals</u>	<u>Payment Totals</u>	
Month 2	100,266.37	0.00	
Month 3	100,994.69	0.00	
<hr/>			
Total Receipts / Payments	201,261.06	0.00	Closing Trial Balance
Opening Balance	120,031.07		<hr/>
Closing Balance		321,292.13	321,292.13
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	321,292.13	321,292.13	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	



**DRAFT COUNCIL ASSETS & PUBLIC REALM WORKING GROUP NOTES
TUESDAY 14TH JUNE 2023, 12PM**

Present: Cllrs Presswell (Chair), Auletta, Hodgson, Peters, Piper & Price.

Absent: Cllr Collinson

Officers: Town Clerk, Finance HR & Lettering Manager, Governance and Projects Manager, Marketing & Communications Manager.

1. Public invitee - Sue Holmes re the Lamb Garden.

Sue Holmes updated the working group about the problems with anti-social behaviour that the Lamb and Leechwell Gardens are experiencing including syringes placed in flowerbeds, drinking, dog fouling and human waste which is a public safety issue. The installation of CCTV was discussed in order to record the incidents and individuals involved as well as acting as a wider deterrent.

Actions:

- a. Sue Holmes to log all incidents with the police so that the body of evidence of anti-social behaviour is captured.
- b. Clerk to contact the police to alert them to the issues in these areas.
- c. Town Maintenance Officer (TMO) to get rough quotes for the installation of CCTV at the Lamb Garden and Leechwell Garden.
- d. Cllr Presswell to speak to South Hams District Council (SHDC) Officers about the public safety/environmental health implications.

2. To elect a Chair for the working group.

Cllr Presswell was unanimously elected as Chair of the Working Group.

3. To note the minutes of the last meeting and any matters arising.

Noted.

4. To consider a proposal for the entry to Fore St sign.

The Clerk presented a suggestion for the Council-Chamber of Commerce agreed improvements to the 'Totnes Town Centre' sign on the Plains, which it is hoped will deter fly posting and people chaining bikes to the posts.

Action: Clerk to obtain costs for a metal work design to sit above the existing sign and for a planter.

5. To consider clearing the drains on Fore Street.

It was **AGREED** to defer this item until the next meeting as there are concerns that this is a Devon County Highways responsibility.

Action: Cllr Hodgson to raise the issue with DCC and say that the condition of the drains is unacceptable.

6. Update on Civic Hall improvements and grant applications.

The Finance HR & Lettings Manager updated planning approval had been received to install the additional internal and external fire doors in the Civic Hall. Grant funding was being applied for a mobile wheelchair lift to enable access onto the stage. There was discussion about the siting of the lift and whilst Cllrs are supportive of obtaining a lift to improve accessibility they expressed concern that removal of a set of stairs onto the stage could impinge on the use of the space by performers. One suggestion was to store the lift (once procured) in the Mural Room when not requested for use by hirers.

7. To consider how to proceed with the Civic Hall steps entrance.

The Finance HR & Lettings Manager explained how planning permission has been received for replacing the step access doors to match those on the ramp access, with quotes of £7600 to complete the work. With the fire door installation works incurring a cost it is suggested that an interim measure would be to paint the doors grey to match those at the ramp entrance and replace the doors at a later date.

To **RECOMMEND** to the Council Matters Committee that the Civic Hall doors access via the step are painted grey, rather than replaced at this time.

8. To note an update on the Museum Fire Risk Assessment.

The Finance HR & Lettings Manager updated that the Fire Risk Assessment from the Museum has been received, elements connected to the safety of the building are not significant and that the TMO will work on the areas that have been identified.

9. To note an update on the final Wayfinding phase.

The Marketing & Communications Manager explained that there had been some delays but that the new sign for near the Town Mill, at the end of the Coronation Road bus stop and in the Market Square (end of Birdwood House) should be delivered in June and installed as soon as possible by the SHDC Depot Team. It is hoped that the remaining totems will be installed before August; again this is dependent on the SHDC Depot Team capacity.

10. To note an update on the Market Square - Arts project and Mosaic panels.

The Arts and Events Working Group will receive an update on the Civic Hall project in July. Details and drawings of the metal fixings for the five mosaics are awaited before a listed building consent application can be submitted for their fixing alongside Birdwood House along the ramp.

11. To discuss the Cemetery maintenance contract adherence and ParkLife biodiversity project.

The Governance and Projects Manager updated that there have been issues with the grounds maintenance being provided by Glendales which is being closely monitored and

raised with the contractor. Parklife have removed grass and sown seed on part of the circle however, the area around the Chapel remains untouched (they were going to cut back some of the grass). Cllr Hodgson suggested the bird boxes could be installed on the chapel/in the cemetery and this will be added to the next agenda. The Officer suggested that the next Working Group incorporate a site visit to the cemetery (open to all Cllrs) to help inform these discussions.

Action: to consider bird box placement in the cemetery at the next Working Group.

12. To review Cemetery Regulations to include the size of memorial stones.

To **RECOMMEND** to the Council Matters Committee that section 7b of the cemetery regulations is amended to read (additional text in **bold**):

A memorial stone, cross or monument at the head of the grave should not exceed 4' 2'6" in width and 3' in height for stones or 4' for crosses should be made from permanent material, such as wood, metal or stone. **Exceptions may be made following Council Committee consideration.** All memorials should be compliant with BS8415 2018.

13. Date of next meeting: 19th September 2023, 12.00pm

Noted.

