

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

**MONDAY 4TH DECEMBER 2023 IN THE GUILDHALL**

## Present: Councillors E Price (Chair), L Auletta, C Beavis, T Bennett, J Chinnock, S Collinson, J Cummings, J Hodgson, D Peters, A Presswell and N Roberts.

Apologies: Cllrs Allen, Cooper, Hannam, Piper and Smallridge.

## In Attendance: Members of the press and public, DCllr Birch, C Marlton (Town Clerk) and P Bethel (Town Sergeant).

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

### **2. 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. There were no updates to declarations of interest.

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

**Reports from County and District Councillors.**

1. **County Cllr Hodgson**
2. **District Cllr Allen**
3. **District Cllr Birch**
4. **District Cllr Presswell**

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

a. County Cllr (C Cllr) Hodgson updated on the issue of signage and infrastructure to limit larger vehicle access to Castle Street and she is liaising with Devon Highways officers about the problem. New signage has recently been installed in South Street to address a similar issue.

b. District Cllr Allen was not present and had circulated a report.

c. District Cllr Birch had submitted a report and took questions on the Freeport. He also updated on South Hams District Council allocating a small grant fund for community groups who are developing climate change and biodiversity projects.

d. District Cllr Presswell had circulated a report.

*The Council reconvened.*

**3. CLERK’S REPORT (Standing Item)**

**To note the Clerk's Report for November 2023 (general updates and correspondence).**

Noted.

### **4. 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 6th November 2023.**

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

**b.** **Full Council 27th November 2023.**

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

**To note the following minutes:**

**c.** **Council Matters Committee 13th November 2023.**

Noted.

**d. Planning Committee 20th November 2023.**

Noted.

**e. Town Matters Committee 27th November 2023.**

Noted.

### **5. 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 6th November 2023.**

No matters arising.

**b.** **Full Council 27th November 2023.**

No matters arising.

**c. Council Matters Committee 13th November 2023.**

Item 4. Draft Strategic Plan - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt the following amended timeline:

* 4th December 2023, Full Council – latest draft budget included in Full Council packs for all Cllrs to note (confidential due to staffing information).
* 11th December 2023, Council Matters Committee – to consider the detail of the draft budget, including (in Part 2) a detailed staffing spreadsheet. The Committee will be asked to make a recommendation to Full Council on a budget and precept amount for 2024/25 and any staffing changes proposed. All Councillors are encouraged to attend this Committee meeting but non-committee members will be excluded from the Part 2 section of the debate.
* 8th January 2024, Full Council – to consider the Council Matters recommendations on the budget.
* 15th January 2024, Council Matters Committee – if available, consider a draft Strategic Plan and make a recommendation to Full Council.
* 5th February 2024, Full Council – to consider the Council Matters recommendation on the Strategic Plan.
* 12th February 2024, Council Matters Committee – consider the draft Community Development budget, with a breakdown of detailed allocations that relate to commitments already made and the priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan and make a recommendation to Full Council.
* 4th March 2024, Full Council – to consider the Council Matters recommendations on the Community Development Budget.

**d. Planning Committee 20th November 2023.**

Item 5. South West Water Consultation on Draft Water Resources Management Plan – it was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the following Town Council response is made to the consultation:

Totnes Town Council welcome South West Water's detailed and transparent answers to the initial consultation responses and view as them as a great example of positive engagement and transparency in consultation practice. We recognise that a number of our concerns fall beyond your remit, but we thank you for your candour and the references for further reading on these matters. We are hearted to hear that you are proactively working towards a Biodiversity Net Gain baseline, and lobbying for improved foul water separation, surface water attenuation, and grey waste recycling measures in new developments.

The Council acknowledges that the problem of waste water pollution is outside the remit of this specific management plan consultation, but remains concerned about the current situation of discharges of untreated waste into the River Dart which is unacceptable from both a health and biodiversity perspective. The Council looks forward to hearing SWW’s plans to bring the swiftest possible resolution of this issue.

**e. Town Matters Committee 27th November 2023.**

Item 4. D-Day 80th Anniversary Commemorations – it was **RESOLVED** unanimously that:

1. A small Task and Finish Group is formed of interested Councillors and representatives from Totnes Museum, Totnes Image Bank, Totnes Fashion and Textile Museum, local schools, steam railway, and army and air cadets to see what is possible. The Clerk stressed that this group would need to be Councillor led and administered.
2. A beacon is lit on Kingsbridge Hill as part of the national commemoration.

**6. COUNCILLOR CO-OPTION POLICY**

**To consider a draft Councillor Co-option Policy.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt the proposed Councillor Co-option Policy.

**7. PAYMENTS TO COUNCILLORS POLICY**

**To review the Payments to Councillors Policy.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt the revised Payments to Councillors Policy, subject to the policy being amended to state that only elected Councillors who have attended 75 percent or more of meetings of Full Council and one other committee will be eligible for the annual allowance.

**8. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFERENDUM**

**To note the result of the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum and next steps.**

Noted.

**9. LIST OF MEETING DATES** **AND COMMUNICATIONS POINTS**

**To note a list of upcoming meeting dates, including a revised calendar of meeting dates, and Council communications points.**

Noted. It was **AGREED** that Full Council in June 2024 will be held on 10th June and that no Council Matters Committee will be held in June 2024.

### **10. NEXT MEETING**

**To note the next meeting date of Monday 8th January 2024, 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.*

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

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

No recommendations.

### **12. DRAFT 2024/25 BUDGET**

**To note the latest draft 2024/25 budget with different precept projections (staffing information).**

It was **AGREED** to have an informal session with the Clerk/Councillors as needed from 5.30pm before the Council Matters Committee in December.

### **13. ELMHIRST PROJECT (Standing Item)**

**To consider any update on the Elmhirst Site project (commercially sensitive).**

No further updates to report.

Cllr Emily Price

Chair