



DRAFT AGENDA FOR THE MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

MONDAY 8TH JANUARY 2024 IN THE GUILDHALL

Please note that public question time will be held prior to Full Council from 6.30pm. There are stairs to the Council Chamber but if any member of the public has mobility issues the Council can relocate to the Main Chamber.

You are hereby **SUMMONED** to attend a meeting of the Council, on **Monday 8th January 2024 at 7.00pm** for a maximum of 120 minutes the purpose of transacting the following business:

1. WELCOME TO ALL ATTENDING AND OBSERVING

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 120 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.

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 Council will adjourn for the following items:

Reports from County and District Councillors.

- a. County Cllr Hodgson – no document.
- b. District Cllr Allen – no document.
- c. District Cllr Birch – document attached.
- d. District Cllr Presswell – document attached.

The Council will convene to consider the following items:

3. CLERK'S REPORT (Standing Item)

To note the Clerk's Report for December 2023 (general updates and correspondence). Document to follow.

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 4th December 2023 – document attached.

To note the following minutes:

- b. Council Matters 11th December 2023 – document attached.
- c. Planning Committee 18th December 2023 – document attached.

5. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTERS ARISING REQUIRING A DECISION :

To consider any matters arising from the Minutes and to approve any recommendations from Committees (document enclosed):

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

- a. Full Council 4th December 2023.
- b. Council Matters 11th December 2023.
- c. Planning Committee 18th December 2023.

6. DRAFT BUDGET 2024/25

To consider a draft budget set the precept for 2024/25. Documents attached.

7. TAX BASE FOR 2024/25

To note the tax base for financial year 2024/25. Document attached.

8. ISRAEL – GAZA WAR

To consider the following motion (document attached):

That Totnes Town Council calls for an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

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. Documents attached.

10. NEXT MEETING

To note the next meeting date of Monday 5th February 2024, 6.30pm public session, 7.00pm formal meeting in the Guildhall.

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 document.

12. EASTGATE LEASE

To consider an update and wording of the Eastgate lease (legal). Document attached.

13. ELMHIRST PROJECT (Standing Item)

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

Agenda produced by:

Catherine Marlton

Town Clerk

3rd January 2024

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.

John Birch

SHDC Member for Totnes

**Report to the Totnes Town Council meeting to be held on
Monday 8 January 2024**

I report on the following.

Improvements to Caravan Club site given the go ahead.

The SHDC Planning Committee has given the go ahead for the much-needed improvements to the caravan and motorhome site at Steamer Quay, Totnes.

Once the re-development works are carried out the site will be open all year round and not just for a limited season as has been the case in the past..

The re-development works include internal refurbishment of the site facilities block and the installation of solar panels, replacement service points, conversion of existing grass pitches into 47no. all-weather serviced pitches, a new tractor store & prefabricated reception building.

Hopefully the Caravan Club will arrange for the works to commence straightaway so that the improved site is open in Spring of this year.

The improvements have come about as a result of pressure being put on the Caravan Club by SHDC to put forward an improvement scheme for the site. Following a tendering process the Caravan Club submitted a scheme, which was accepted by the planners, and which it will carry out at its own cost.

Dentistry Crisis in South Hams.

At the last SHDC Full Council meeting held on 14 December 2023 Cllr Ged Yardy and I proposed the following motion.

Preamble

There is a growing public healthcare crisis in dentistry in South Hams. Community based NHS dental services are both failing and being withdrawn with patients being unable to access or afford dental care.

At the heart of our community's concern lie the issues of access and affordability. The challenge is to address these issues effectively while maintaining a sustainable and ethical practice model. Patients are primarily concerned with affordability, value for money, and the standard of care they receive.

SHDC is concerned about the health and wellbeing of its residents and this extends to the adverse effects arising out of the local dentistry crisis.

Motion

In a move to address the dentistry crisis it is resolved that the Council encourages the Devon Health and Wellbeing Board and the local MPs to work with local dental practitioners and patients to investigate the setting up of a pilot scheme to provide accessible no-frills dental care for all age groups with the aim of encouraging the relevant NHS services to introduce the scheme across South Hams.

The motion was carried with the full support of Council.

The Fastglobe Appeals

I have sent a letter to the Planning Inspector dealing with the Fastglobe appeals that states inter alia.

"I have been following closely the appeals brought by Fastglobe (Mastics) Ltd resulting from the refusal of its two planning applications for development on the former Dairy Crest site in Totnes. Being a key development site in Totnes as well as South Hams I am keen to see the site realise its full potential for the community.

In the event of Fastglobe losing its appeals or failing to implement its development within a reasonable period it will be my intention to ensure the Liberal Democrat administration at South Hams honours the election pledge to support the Atmos community project in Totnes and if necessary proceed by way of a Compulsory Purchase Order for the acquisition of the former Dairy Crest site. Such a move will be subject to TCDS obtaining planning permission for its proposed community project.

This will be achieved by bringing forward a motion to Full Council and with the support of my 18 fellow Liberal Democrat councillors I am confident the Council will adopt a policy in respect of the Atmos project as set out in the manifesto and detailed above."

This letter was sent out after discussions and correspondence with representatives of TCDS.

The Appeal hearing has been adjourned until 31 January 2024.

Castle Street highway issue

There is a need for action to be taken to avoid a repetition of the recent incident in Castle Street in which an oversized vehicle damaged the first floor bay window of a residential property at the upper end of the road resulting in its temporary closure.

I have been in correspondence with the owner of the damaged property, and PC Geary who supports the need for action to be taken by DCC, the Highway Authority.

In an email dated 6 December 2023 sent to PC Geary by a DCC Network Coordination Officer it is proposed that the top part of Castle Street be pedestrianised and such a move will require the support of the Town Council.

The Town Council is requested to support such a move and that in doing so informs DCC and furthermore requests that the necessary steps be taken to implement a pedestrianisation scheme.

Cllr John Birch, SHDC Member for Totnes.

1 January 2024

District Councillor Report**for TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL
Cllr Anna Presswell****03/01/2024****Leechwell Responsibility**

The Historic England Inspector is not back until the 4th of January, so by the time of this report being presented. I hope to give you a verbal update as to local historic wells in the south west and how they are managed. We can then consider what might be an agreeable way to manage the upkeep of our historic site.

Dartington Hall

Last month we had another transparent and productive meeting with the new CEO Robert Fedder. I believe a community update on 'all things' Dartington Hall will be presented very soon. We will be meeting with him on a regular basis every few months.

NHS Dentists in Totnes

I've written several lengthy emails to the Local Integrated Care Board or 'One Devon' which their organisation is known as, to get clarity on gaining another NHS Dentist for Totnes. I've since had several lengthy calls, to identify why the huge shortfall, and how the District Council might support. When I thought I'd had a breakthrough, I was only sent further information and links as to the problem, so no progress frustratingly.

But excellent news of a Dartmouth dentist who is working alongside the District Councillor for the area, Councillor Ged Yardy. The 'new practice' aims to fill the gap left by the loss of the NHS service there and surrounding areas, providing accessible dental care for all age groups. It will use a subscription model that covers examination and hygiene treatment as well as preventative care, but the subscription is significantly cheaper than traditional private practices. This is in part due to planning a reduction in fillings by up to 30% over the year from a better hygienic support programme for patients. Plus a 'no-frills' approach to the booking system and examination, and clean. Same quality of work but less time spent allocated, which is usually half an hour in private practice, but is able to be reduced to 15 minutes quite easily without losing quality of treatment delivered.

The salary structure for the dentist remains competitive. The practice will be within a Council owned property. And this pilot business will be trialled over a year then reviewed. If the model works it would be an exemplar to approach local dentist managers in Totnes, or individual dentists who might consider running a practice in a similar vein.

A depressing report on the state of play of NHS Dentistry was going on the BBC News website early December. [NHS dentistry as we know it 'gone for good' - BBC News](#)

Task and Finish Committees

– Fusion, SW Water, St Annes Chapel Social Housing, Yealm Community Energy

I'll be involved with the following four Task and Finish Committees over the next few months:

Fusion - The committee are meeting to formulate questions to put forward to the Fusion representatives when they provide their annual presentation to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 8th February 2024. Fusion has had problems over the last??? and I felt it was important to represent Totnes as having less investment than their other sites, so far. Although this is being addressed with a new vision and building works by this summer, it is important to review, reform and hold them to account re their opportunities to provide successful Leisure centres for our communities.

SW Water and the Environment Agency - To establish SHDC's statutory powers and how they could be implemented, with focus on:

- Bathing Water
- Reservoirs
- Testing procedures
- Climate emergency
- Farming
- Local community help
- Sewage capacity
- New builds

Plus some hugely detailed questions from local water groups – Friends of the Dart and Erme, which we will follow up.

Personally I'm keen for answers over PFAS (per-and poly fluoroalkyl substances) sometimes referred to as 'forever chemicals' because of their persistence in the environment. They are used as water repellents and anti-grease on a number of products.

St Ann's Chapel and Housing Offer

This Task and Finish Group will explore in detail the genesis outcomes of the St Ann's Chapel development. The newly finishing development will provide housing for local residents and is owned by South Hams District Council. Eight new affordable homes have been built to assist affordable rented homes in Bigbury. There were over 100 applications locally to be the first tenants. The idea is to retain communities in the South Hams, by providing families reasonable rental prices, to meet our local housing crisis. We will report on the new approach of the South Hams Housing Offer to communities to support affordable rental housing delivery over a greater area for the smaller towns.

Yealm Community Energy

We have awarded a large grant to the Yealm Community Energy Project and will be holding several meetings to update on its impact towards the Climate and Biodiversity goals the council has set – as well as what opportunities and support we can offer similar community energy projects being set up around the South Hams.



Items 4A + 5A

DRAFT 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.

- a. County Cllr Hodgson
- b. District Cllr Allen
- c. District Cllr Birch
- d. 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:

- 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.
- 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



DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS MONDAY 11TH DECEMBER 2023 AT 6.30PM IN THE GUILDHALL

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

Apologies: Cllr Hannam.

In Attendance: Members of the public, Cllrs Auletta, Collinson, Cooper, Cummings and Roberts, 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

12 members of the public attended from the 'Hands Up' charity and expressed their concerns about the conflict between Israel and Gaza. The group called for an emergency meeting to consider a motion calling for an immediate ceasefire. The group explained they had approached the MP to ask for him to table the matter of a ceasefire in parliament but he had refused. Councillors agreed that in the absence of a meeting that the Mayor would urgently action a letter to our MP calling for a ceasefire, getting agreement of fellow Councillors by email. An item will be added to the January Full Council agenda to confirm the corporate position of calling for a ceasefire.

The Committee will reconvene to consider the following items:

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 13th November 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 **AGREED**.

4. DRAFT 2024/25 BUDGET

To consider an initial draft budget for financial year 2024/25. Recommendations to Full Council needed on:

- a) Precept for 2024/25
- b) Annual budget for 2024/25
- c) Anticipated spend from Reserve in 2024/25

The draft budget was presented as per the papers.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that (unanimously AGREED):

- a) Precept for 2024/25 is set at £656,022 (a 7.5% increase). Using the current tax base as indicative that makes the average Band D £220.62 per annum (£4.24 per week).
- b) Budget for 2024/25 is ratified as presented (with the amendment of the updated tax base figures when received from South Hams District Council). These include significant savings on the staffing structure, Visit Totnes work, Civic budget and Mayoral allowance.
- c) Anticipated spend from Reserve in 2024/25 is set at about £120,000 (subject to the minor changes relating to the tax base data).

Further work to allocate the detailed breakdown of the Community Development budget will happen after the Strategic Plan is adopted.

5. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS WASH UP

To consider the Christmas Lights project, its outcome and challenges to inform future years' planning.

The document was noted, and thanks extended to staff. Further detailed discussion should take place in January regarding the 2024 Christmas lights contract, any changes needed to the second year of the Christmas late night events contract and any changes to the Christmas Light Switch On format.

6. COUNCIL ASSETS AND PUBLIC REALM WORKING GROUP

To note the minutes of the Council Assets and Public Realm Working Group held on 21st November and consider the recommendations (items 3, 7 and 9).

Noted. The Clerk clarified a couple of points in the notes for accuracy:

- The Totnes Museum Risk Assessment is actually a very long document with several action points. The document was reviewed, and 6 points were the responsibility of the Town Council as the freeholder and landlord. There are many other points that have been handed to the Museum Trust for action as they fall under their responsibility under the lease terms.
- The Grounds Maintenance contract runs from April to March annually so if we are retendering it would need to be at the start of 2024 not in the spring. It was not long ago that the contract went out to tender and there is no legal requirement to do this annually.

In terms of the recommendations from the notes:

Item 3, Civic Hall Ramp Access – The issue of wheel clamping at the bottom of the Civic Hall ramp has moved on. SHDC as the landowner are implementing a new system of bollards and demarked areas to ensure that free and clear access is maintained, and illegal parking is prevented.

Item 7, St Mary's Church Garden of Remembrance Flag Pole – The allocation of 1 day of officer time to upgrade the flagpole/garden of remembrance area was **AGREED**. It was noted that this asset is not owned by the Town Council.

Item 9, Cemetery Grounds Maintenance – It was **AGREED** to contact the existing contractors to ask for a 2024/25 quote. It was suggested that assuming the quote is reasonable that a tender process could be considered in Autumn 2024, by which time possible costings of running some or all the service in house would have been collated. It also allows time to consider biodiversity management of the site.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 15th January 2024 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)*

8. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)

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

These were reviewed and unanimously **AGREED**.

9. STAFFING BUDGET

To consider the staffing budget and information on staff roles (staffing and financial).

The staffing budget for 23/24 was noted.

The proposed staffing budget for 24/25 with the reductions as outlined in the report was unanimously **AGREED**. The reduction of approx. £95,000 of savings against the current staffing model was welcomed. It was noted that the overall budget for 24/25 would need to be ratified by January 2024 Full Council.

10. STAFFING UPDATE

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

None.

The meeting closed at 20.30

Catherine Marlton
Town Clerk
December 2023



DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

MONDAY 18TH DECEMBER 2023 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors T Bennett (Chair), G Allen, L Auletta, T Cooper, J Cummings, J Hodgson (arrived 1840) and L Smallridge.

Not Present: Cllr Collinson

In Attendance: Members of the public, Cllr Beavis, C Marlton (Town Clerk).

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

Cllr Bennett read out a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded.

There were no apologies received. [Note: Cllr Collinson had emailed her apologies but due to officer illness this email was only read after the meeting had taken place).

The Committee will adjourn Standing Orders for the following items:

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public and Castle Street resident expressed concerns about the safety of larger vehicles damaging buildings.

A member of the public explained that a public letter to Dartington Trust has been circulated to all Councillors in draft form and the author(s) agreed to forward a final version to the Clerk to send to all Councillors. Given the urgency the Clerk agreed to forward it to all Councillors to ask for individual support/non-support rather than a formal committee and then Full Council consideration.

Four members of the public raised concerns and queries about the South West Water solar panel proposal in Littlehempston, including:

- Why it needed to be 20 acres of prime farming/agricultural land used when none of the existing buildings (including the expansion) have them.
- No formal consultation with South Devon Railway who have operational/safety concerns.
- The visual impact from a large surrounding area.
- Requests that any proposal (or indeed if no proposal is agreed), access over that land to the river is necessary to allow for safety routes from Totnes to Littlehempston and beyond.

The Committee reconvened Standing Orders.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 20th November 2023 and update on any matters arising.

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

3. TREE WORKS APPLICATIONS

To make recommendations on the following tree works applications:

3a. 3894/23/TPO - G1: Scots Pine - x2 crown lift to 5m from ground level, reduce laterally on NE aspect to provide 1m clearance from telephone line, reduce laterally by 1m on SW aspect to reduce overhanging neighbouring boundary to provide more natural light. 5 Redworth Terrace, Totnes, TQ9 5JN.

Support.

3b. 3649/23/TCA – T1: Japanese Maple - crown height reduction by 1-2m, lateral reduction on all sides by 1m, T2: Silver Birch - 2m lateral crown reduction & 3m crown height reduction, T3: Holly - Crown lift to clear the wall. 20 South Street, Totnes, TQ9 5DZ.

The Committee felt it did not have enough information to formally comment. They expressed concerns over the amount of reduction proposed and asked the Tree Officer to visit and review the proposal.

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

To make recommendations on the following planning applications:

Note: Cllrs Allen and Hodgson observes and do not vote on any applications which would potentially be discussed at a Development Management Committee meeting at SHDC.

4a. 2929/23/FUL - Installation of photovoltaic solar arrays together with transformer stations, site accesses, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure and landscaping and biodiversity enhancements. Land at Littlehempston Water Treatment Works, Hampstead Farm Lane, Littlehempston, TQ9 6LZ.

Object. The Committee has the following comments:

- Concerns on lack of flood assessment data.
- Concur with the heritage concerns raised by Heritage England.
- Visual impact from miles around.
- Loss of Grade 3A Farmland.
- Residents concerns.
- The size of the proposal (particularly when existing buildings do not have panels).
- The ecological impact (particularly on sites 5 and 6 which are floodplain grazing marshland as identified by DCC).
- Impact on and lack of consultation with the Heritage Railway.

4b. 3732/23/FUL, 3733/23/FUL, 3734/23/FUL & 3735/23/FUL - Provision of an agricultural storage building and engineering works to create a level yard area. Land at SX 805 583, Ashprington [consulted as neighbouring parish].

Object. The Committee has the following comments:

- Asked for a condition to ensure that year round indoor husbandry of livestock does not occur.
- Concerns about water run off from 4 large buildings is not adequately planned for.
- Concerns on how animal waste/slurry is cleared/stored.
- Increased traffic volume on small road.
- No lighting constraints included.
- No solar use included.
- Request agricultural advisor assessment to ensure the large scale is necessary.

The Committee voted to extend the meeting until 20.20hrs.

4c. 3416/23/HHO - Householder application for single storey side extension. 33 Westonfields, Totnes, TQ9 5QU.

Comment - Extension should be pushed back behind the façade of the building frontage – in line with other examples in the area.

4d. 2813/23/HHO - Householder application for proposed loft conversion to create additional space (part permitted development). 55 Punchards Down, Totnes, TQ9 5FD.

Comment - Dormer should be set back by 300mm from the gable end and gutter line – in line with other examples in the area, to keep the current form of the bungalow design and to preserve the street scene.

4e. 3857/23/VAR - Variation of condition 1 (approved plans) of planning consent 1614/22/VAR to replace timber cladding with render. Brutus Centre, Fore Street, Totnes.

Support. It was noted this was partly retrospective due to work having started.

4f. 2868/23/HHO – READVERTISEMENT (amended plans) Householder application for demolition of extensions & construction of replacement two storey extension & single storey extension, garage conversion for ancillary accommodation & internal reconfiguration. Beech Hill, Jubilee Road, Totnes, TQ9 5BW.

Support.

5. CASTLE STREET VEHICLE RESTRICTIONS

To consider the problem of large vehicle damage to properties on Castle Street and any recommendation to Full Council.

The Committee expressed concerns about the lack of physical barriers to these vehicles passing through the narrowest section and asked Cllr Hodgson to raise concerns with DCC officers about how to proceed.

6. PENINSULA TRANSPORT STRATEGY CONSULTATION

To consider the Peninsula Transport draft transport strategy and make a recommendation to Full Council [consultation closes on 5th February].

It was **AGREED** to defer discussion to the January Planning Committee. Cllr Auletta agreed to draft some proposed wording ahead of the committee meeting.

7. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT FORUM

To note the minutes from the Traffic and Transport Forum held on 12th December 2023, including a response to the Devon County Council Public Rights of Way Consultation (deadline 22 December 2023).

The minutes were notes and the wording on public rights of way was ratified.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

To note the date of the next meeting of the Planning Committee – Monday 22nd January 2024 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall.

Noted.

C Marlton
Town Clerk
December 2023

ITEM 5 – CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

5a. Full Council, 4th December 2023

No recommendations.

5b. Council Matters Committee, 11th December 2023

Item 4. DRAFT 2024/25 BUDGET - To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that (unanimously AGREED):

- a) Precept for 2024/25 is set at £656,022 (a 7.5% increase). Using the current tax base as indicative that makes the average Band D £220.62 per annum (£4.24 per week).
- b) Budget for 2024/25 is ratified as presented (with the amendment of the updated tax base figures when received from South Hams District Council). These include significant savings on the staffing structure, Visit Totnes work, Civic budget and Mayoral allowance.
- c) Anticipated spend from Reserve in 2024/25 is set at about £120,000 (subject to the minor changes relating to the tax base data).

5c. Planning Committee, 18th December 2023

No recommendations.

Budget Planning - 2024/25			DETAILS	
Administration	2023/24 Current	PROPOSED for 2024/25	Expected year end (as at 30th November)	PROPOSED for 2024/25
	Current Agreed budget			
Salaries and pensions for all staff	412023	386000	386000	365000
Staff Training, Travel and Expenses	3500	3500	3500	4675
Staff Recruitment	2750	2750	2750	3025
Phone and Broadband	3500	3500	3500	3850
Office Supplies & Hospitality	2300	2300	2300	2530
Photocopier	1600	1600	1600	1760
Subscriptions	4400	4400	4400	4940
Professional Fees	10000	10000	10000	11000
Insurance	29000	30902	30902	33982
Websites and IT	7500	7500	7500	8250
Office Equipment	15000	10000	10000	1500
Van Maintenance	1325	1325	1325	1000
TMO Tools and Consumables	1650	1650	1650	1500
Miscellaneous Income	0	-100	-100	0
SUB TOTAL	494548	465327	465327	442922
Civic and Democratic	Current Agreed budget	Expected year end	PROPOSED for 2024/25	
Mayoral Allowance	450	450	450	100
Civic and Mayoral Events (expenditure)	5750	5750	5750	3500
Civic Events (Income)	0	0	-667	0
Civic Regalia	220	220	220	230
Mayoral Travel and Expenses	300	300	300	330
Councillor IT equipment	2500	2500	2500	1500
Councillor Training and Travel	1120	1120	1120	1120
Elections	12000	12000	12000	6000
Councillor Allowances	7200	7200	7200	7800
SUB TOTAL	29540	28873	28873	20580
Tourism, Comms and Business engagement	Current Agreed budget	Expected year end	PROPOSED for 2024/25	
Visit Totnes Marketing and event sponsorship	29500	29500	29500	24150
Other TIC expenditure (Postage, Uniform, Stationery etc)	275	959	0	0
Bank Charges / Paypal	50	50	50	50
Totnes Guide Map	6200	6200	6200	0
Totnes Guide Map advertising income	-6500	-6500	-6500	-10000
Poster and Planter Advertising Income	-500	-3633	-3633	0
SUB TOTAL	29025	26576	26576	14200
Guildhall and offices	Current Agreed budget	Expected year end	PROPOSED for 2024/25	
Cleaning	6500	6500	6500	7150
Building Maintenance	10000	14500	14500	7500
Business Rates	10000	10000	10000	11000
Water	500	500	500	550
Utilities	25000	25000	25000	27500
Equipment Maintenance	3320	3309	3309	1452
Wedding Licence renewals and marketing	1000	1000	1000	2000
Admissions income	-3000	-4760	-4760	-3000
Hire income (weddings, etc)	-3000	-3000	-3000	-3000
SUB TOTAL	48520	52049	52049	51152

	Civic Hall	Current Agreed budget	Expected year end	PROPOSED for 2024/25	
47					
48	Cleaning and supplies	5500	5500	6050	
49	Feed in Tariff	2700	2700	2600	
50	Water	1500	1500	1650	
51	Utilities	12000	12000	13200	
52	Building Maintenance	60000	35000	45000	Current year end includes new boiler which is essential. New roof budgeted for in 24/25.
53	Licences	70	70	70	
54	Misc. & Marketing Civic Hall	750	750	750	
55	Equipment Maintenance	20000	20000	5000	
56	Paige Adams Grant towards Caretaking, Cleaning and Management costs	-33500	-33500	-35000	
57	Feed in tariff income	-6800	-6800	-6500	
58	SUB TOTAL	62220	37220	32820	
59	Property Maintenance	Current Agreed budget	Expected year end	PROPOSED for 2024/25	
60	Guildhall Cottage Maintenance	1000	1000	1100	
61	Property Management Fees	1140	1140	1197	
62	Eastgate Clock (Utilities and Maintenance)	400	1000	1000	
63	Museum Maintenance	5500	5500	6050	Likely to be underspent current year as TMO undertaking regular maintenance.
64	Museum Rent Income	-1	-1	-1	
65	Eastgate Clock Rental	-3	-600	-600	
66	Guildhall Cottage Income (est. £1000 per month)	-12000	-12000	-12600	
67	SUB TOTAL	-3964	-3961	-3854	
68	Cemetery	Current Agreed budget	Expected year end	7.5% precept increase	
69	Business Rates	4441	4291	4441	
70	Water	175	175	193	
71	Waste collection	350	350	385	
72	Grounds Maintenance (Grass cutting and tree work)	25000	25000	27500	Possible to save here in future years by reducing the contract and undertaking work in house - however costings of pros/cons would need consideration.
73	Works and Maintenance (Paths, Fences, etc)	500	500	550	
74	Chapel	20000	20000	2000	£18k over usual maintenance in current year budget for roof repairs as needed.
75	Cemetery Fees Income	-10000	-10000	-12000	
76	SUB TOTAL	40466	40316	23069	
77	Open Spaces	Current Agreed budget	Expected year end	PROPOSED for 2024/25	
78	General Maintenance	550	550	605	
79	St. Marys Churchyard (Walls and trees)	3000	3000	3300	Given recent maintenance work we could underspend here in future years shown - however we have to allow for a contingency given the age of the wall and costs of repairs
80	Castle Meadow Maintenance	100	100	110	Hedge maintenance undertaken by the Cemetery contract. TMO team trim and do other maintenance.
81	Allotments Income	-200	-200	-200	
82	SUB TOTAL	3450	3450	3815	
83	Precept and Income	Current Agreed budget	Expected year end	PROPOSED for 2024/25	
84	Bank Charges	250	250	275	
85	Precept and Income	-610253	-610253	-656022	7.5% increase on last year which is 6.54% to the taxpayer
86	Investment Interest	-1500	-8000	-2500	Variable - depends on interest rates
87	Charity of Paige Adams RATE ABATEMENT	-100000	-100000	0	
88	SUB TOTAL	-711503	-718003	-658247	

Non statutory - Community Development		Current Agreed Budget	Expected year end	PROPOSED for 2024/25
89	Community Outreach and Christmas	35000	57306	
90	Community Grants: Cost of Living	25000	24953	
91	State Park	0	502	
92	Arts, Culture and Events	21000	21050	194000
93	Public Realm and Community Assets Projects	13700	10136	
94	Climate Change/Green Travel	10000	10000	
95	Additional of a grounds and Maintenance role	0	0	
96	Grant Funding/Project Income	0	-3210	0
97	SUB TOTAL	£104,700	£120,737	£194,000
98	TOTAL	£96,802	£52,584	£120,457

To be split between strategic plan priorities

Included in non statutory section of budget for future allocation

Represents a spend from reserves to bring them under 12 months operating costs as a maximum

Please note these are based on an increased tax base confirmed by SHDC - uplift of 26.83

Band D rate	£218.65
Change per year	£13.42
Change per month	£1.12
Change per week	£0.26

This is 6.54% increase on 2023/24

Current rate of Consumer Price Index October 2023	4.7%	Office of National Statistics
Current rate for Retail Price Index October 2023	6.1%	Office of National Statistics
Forecast rate of inflation for 24 25	2.8% - 3.1%	Office for Budget Responsibility and Bank of England

Total reserves at the start of 2023/24	£614,781	
Total estimated reserves at end of 2023/24	£562,197	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Estimated reserves at end 2024/25 with 7.5% precept increase	£441,740	£194,000

Examples of items under the Community section for allocation	Officer notes
SUSTAINABILITY	
Green Travel/Sustainability Officer (24 hrs pw) STAFF MEMBER	Could consider not employing or reducing hours
Climate Change and Green Travel Implementation	Recommended for inclusion (minimum of £3095 should be ring fenced as remaining from S106)
Additional Climate Change and Biodiversity spend	
SUB TOTAL	
ARTS AND CULTURE	
Bridgetown Alive request	Could consider with other community grants
Tones Festival Request	Could consider with other community grants
Public Art	Could defer
Training for road closures	Could defer
Heritage projects	D Day or VE day planning, Heritage Forum work
SUB TOTAL	
COMMUNITY GRANTS	
COMMUNITY GRANTS - 2 rounds or split into categories	Not statutory but hugely oversubscribed and could be categorised for different priorities
TRAYE request	Could be considered with other community grants
SUB TOTAL	
PUBLIC REALM AND TOWN APPEARANCE	
Part time Maintenance Officer (18 hours pw) STAFF MEMBER	New role - need is there for more support, further work to be done on detail
Tones Gardens	Recommended for inclusion
Benches and Bins	Could defer
Implementation of OSSR	Used for match funding?
Planter maintenance and rationalisation	Recommended for inclusion
SUB TOTAL	
COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND CHRISTMAS	
Christmas Light Switch On	Recommended for inclusion, hugely popular.
Christmas Markets	Must continue for this next year - under contract
Christmas Tree and Christmas Lights	Erecting existing - recommended for inclusion
Refurbish Cross Street 'Welcome to Tones sign'	Recommended for inclusion
Christmas lights competition	£750
Newsletters and mailings out and Annual Town Meeting	Recommended for inclusion
Community Fundraiser role (15 hours pw) STAFF MEMBER	Could consider non employment and supporting existing roles in place
Defibrillator pads and servicing	Recommended for inclusion
Participatory budgetting?	Could defer to 23/26
Future opportunities - projects and community spaces	Probably not sufficient for larger projects
SUB TOTAL	
TOTAL ESTIMATED	
Clerk recommendation as a minimum	Please note this does not include other new ideas from the strategic priority setting process such as business support, public realm improvements, health and wellbeing audit.... Etc
Clerk suggested on top of above	The lines in red indicate ongoing projects, long standing funding arrangements, contractual obligations and relate to assets we own.
Recommendation of the Clerk - not binding	Community Grants could cover TRAYE, arts and events, climate change and sustainability as well as Cost of Living support

Select your parish from the drop down list:

Tothnes

Please enter your budget requirement (precept) for 2024/25 in the yellow box below

[Empty yellow box for budget requirement]

Parish Precept 2023/24 (for illustrative purposes only)		
Number of Band D equivalent properties	Parish Band D Rate	Precept
2,973.55	£205.23	£610,253

Taxbase for 2024/25 (the number of properties over which Council Tax is charged)	
Taxbase for 2023/24	2,973.55
Changes to taxbase in 2023/24	26.83
Taxbase for 2024/25	3,000.38

Nb. This is not a monetary value

As advised, CTSG is no longer payable

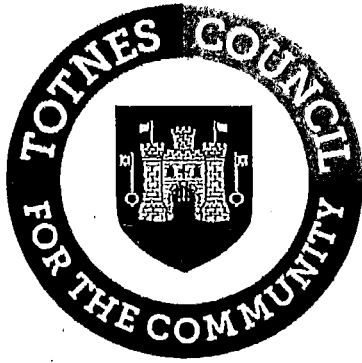
The Band D parish rate will be: £0.00
 This is an increase/(decrease) of: (£205.23) or -100.00%
 (in comparison to 2023/24)

To use:

- (i) select your town/parish from the drop down menu in the green box - this will populate the 2023/24 precept box and the tax base for 2024/25
- (ii) enter a precept value in the yellow box to show the Band D parish rate and the increase/decrease as compared to 2023/24.

2025

ITEM 7

**TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL**

The Guildhall Offices

5 Ramparts Walk

Totnes

Devon TQ9 5QH

Tel 01803 862147

Fax 01803 864275

Email

Website www.totnestowncouncil.gov.uk

15 December 2023

Dear Anthony,

We are writing to you as Totnes Town Councillors to express the outrage we are all feeling over the appalling events taking place in Gaza and to ask that you call on the UK Government to do everything in its power to secure an immediate ceasefire and work towards a peaceful settlement of this conflict.

The killing and kidnapping of Israeli citizens by Hamas have rightly sparked global outrage and have been called out by Human Rights Watch and others as war crimes. But with the wholesale destruction of entire towns and cities, the bombardment of civilian targets, the forcible transfer and indiscriminate slaughter of the civilian population and obstruction of humanitarian aid, there is widespread consensus that war crimes are also being committed in Gaza. The atrocities committed by Hamas do not justify the collective punishment and other violations of international humanitarian law by the Israeli Government against the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza; international law is clear on the fact that violations by one party to a conflict can never justify violations by another.

Furthermore, it is clear that the Israeli Government's extreme and disproportionate aggression against Gaza's civilian population will only fuel continuing grievance and violence for decades to come and will ultimately achieve nothing for Israel's stated aim to destroy Hamas.

There is simply no credible self-defence justification, in legal or strategic terms, for Israel's continuing perpetration of war crimes against Palestinians.

As Totnes Town Councillors, we call on the UK Government to halt any exports of weapons from the UK to Israel, and to press all parties to the conflict to agree: (i) to an urgent permanent ceasefire in Gaza, Israel and the rest of Palestine and to make every effort to resume the peace process; (ii) to guarantee that international humanitarian law is upheld and that civilians are protected in accordance with those laws; (iii) to ensure that civilians have access to humanitarian support, including unfettered access of medical supplies, food, electricity, other fuel and water.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emily Price'.

Cllr Emily Price, Mayor of Totnes

ITEM 9 – LIST OF MEETING DATES AND COMMUNICATIONS POINTS

Month	Full Council, 7pm	Council Matters Committee, 6.30pm	Planning Committee, 6.30pm	Town Matters Committee, 6.30pm
January 2024	Monday 8 th	Monday 15 th	Monday 22 nd	Monday 29 th
February 2024	Monday 5 th	Monday 12 th	Monday 19 th	No meeting
March 2024	Monday 4 th	Monday 11 th	Monday 18 th	Monday 25 th

Arts and Events Working Group (12pm in the meeting room) – 17th January 2024 and 20th March

Council Assets and Public Realm Working Group (12pm in the meeting room) – 21st February 2024 and 17th April

January

Full Council – 8th January at 6.30pm
 Council Matters Committee – 15th January at 6.30pm
 Arts and Events Working Group – 17th January at 12.00pm
 Planning Committee – 22nd January at 6.30pm
 Town Matters Committee – 29th January at 6.30pm
 Traffic and Transport Forum AGM and meeting – 31st January at 6.30pm

February

Full Council – 5th February at 6.30pm
 Council Matters Committee – 12th February at 6.30pm
 Planning Committee – 19th February at 6.30pm
 Arts and Events Working Group – 21st February at 12.00pm

March

Full Council – 4th March at 6.30pm
 Council Matters Committee – 11th March at 6.30pm
 Planning Committee – 18th March at 6.30pm
 Arts and Events Working Group – 20th March at 12.00pm
 Town Matters Committee – 25th March at 6.30pm

June Full Council – 10th June, and no Council Matters in June. An updated meeting calendar has been circulated to all Councillors.

Council Communications Points

Fore Street and Station Road road closure for Wales and West Utilities gas works – if you are asked about this by any residents, please direct them to the contact number on the road closure notice for WWU 07773 820860.

WB 27

