

## AGENDA FOR THE TOWN MATTERS COMMITTEE

MONDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2024 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 **Town Matters Committee** on **Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024** at **6.30pm** for a maximum of 90 minutes in the Guildhall for the purpose of transacting the following business:

**Committee Members:** Councillors J Cummings (Chair), G Allen, J Chinnock, S Collinson, B Piper, E Price, N Roberts and L Smallridge.

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 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and update on any matters arising.  
Document attached.

3. OPEN SPACE, SPORTS, RECREATION AND WELLBEING PLAN REVIEW

To review the following sections of the Council's Open Spaces, Sport Recreation and Wellbeing Plan (documents attached):

- a. Amenity Green Space

b. Parks & Gardens

c. River

4. EMERGENCY PLAN REVIEW

To review the new communications and community preparedness sections in the Emergency Plan. Document attached.

5. ROAD MARKINGS

To consider the visibility of road markings at junctions in the town. Cllr Collinson to give verbal update. Document attached – point 1 of relevance.

6. COMMUNITY AWARD TIMELINE

To note the timeline for the 2024 Community Awards. Document attached.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Town Matters Committee – Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 6.30pm.

Sara Halliday

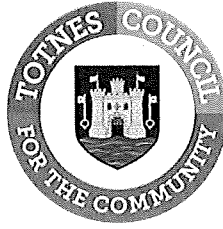
Governance and Projects Manager

24<sup>th</sup> 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 Councillor 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 TOWN MATTERS COMMITTEE

### MONDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors J Cummings (Chair), G Allen, J Chinnock, S Collinson, B Piper, E Price, N Roberts, and L Smallridge.

In Attendance: Cllrs Auletta, Beavis, Hodgson and Presswell, L Ferrier (Marketing and Communications Manager) and S Halliday (Governance and Projects Manager).

#### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

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

There were no apologies.

*The Committee will adjourn for the following items:*

#### PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Cllr Hodgson updated on a letter from a member of the public seeking Council support for a letter that is being drafted to the Dartington Trust trustees. She will invite the individual to Full Council's public question time.

*The Committee reconvened.*

#### 2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**To approve the minutes of 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and update on any matters arising.**

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of proceedings. Matters arising: the recommendations made to Full Council under items 4 (Community Award Policy), 5 (Skate Park Consultation), 6 (Climate and Ecological Emergency Forum), 7 (KEVICC Engagement) and 9 (RNLI Request) were all resolved by Full Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> October. Item 8 – D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorations, will be discussed under item 4.

*It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to enable wider Councillor discussion under Items 3 and 4.*

### 3. OPEN SPACE, SPORTS, RECREATION AND WELLBEING POLICY REVIEW

To review the following sections of the Council's Open Spaces, Sport Recreation and Wellbeing Plan (documents attached):

a. Allotments It was **AGREED** that:

- Cllr Hodgson is asked for her views as the Council representative with the Totnes Allotment Association; and
- The officer will contact the Totnes Allotment Association for information about number of plots, number of vacant plots (if any), waiting list numbers.

b. **Civic Spaces** There was discussion about: whether Steamer Quay should be in the Civic Spaces section; and each of the areas identified. There was a consensus that the Civic Square is a priority for improvements to be made.

c. **Accessible Natural Spaces** This section was not discussed in Committee due to time constraints.

It was **AGREED** that the officer would update the table based on discussions under a and b, the document would be placed in the Councillors shared drive so that individual councillors can make comments on the document direct and review the comments made by colleagues.

### 4. D-DAY 80TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIONS

To consider ideas to commemorate the D-Day 80th anniversary on 6th June 2024, including taking part in lighting a beacon (representing the 'light of peace').

Cllr Presswell outlined some ideas including choirs, engaging with schools and shops to dress up, a map of locations in Totnes that played a role in the build up to D-Day.

*The Committee reconvened.*

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that:

- a. 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, and army and air cadets to see what is possible.
- b. A beacon is lit on Kingsbridge Hill as part of the national commemoration.

### 5. EMERGENCY PLAN REVIEW

To review the Emergency Plan.

It was **AGREED** that the plan would be amended to include sections on communication and community preparedness and be brought back to the January 2024 meeting.

### 6. SHADY GARDEN USE

To consider writing to South Hams District Council about the use of Shady Garden and enforcing its use by those who have booked the space.

Cllr Allen updated that South Hams District Council have been made aware of the issue and are dealing with it.

**7. SKATE PARK CONSULTATION**

**To note the outcome of the recent consultation on the location of the Skate Park in Borough Park and next steps.**

Noted. Cllr Allen updated that the new skatepark will need crowdfunding to take the proposed build forward and that the groups who have long been involved in scoping the new skate park design are working together on this.

**8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY FORUM**

**To note the minutes of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Forum held on 17<sup>th</sup> October.**

Noted.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Town Matters Committee – Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 6.30pm.**

Noted.

Sara Halliday  
Governance and Projects Manager



ITEM 3 - OSSRW REVIEW – AMENITY GREEN SPACE, PARK & GARDENS, RIVER,

The Town Matters Committee is asked to review the comments below (dating back to 2017), update or refresh as required and consider any additional information, points or objectives to include which can be incorporated into the wider plan. The detailed information should focus on facilities within the Totnes parish, and then the additional free text box (not part of the SHDC template but helpful for the Council to consider) can be used to record facilities in neighbouring parishes (Ashprington, Berry Pomeroy, Dartington, Harberton and Littlehempston).

For a key of the abbreviations:

B = location in Bridgetown

T = location in Totnes Town

[Officer Note: Key to highlighted text in tables whilst document being reviewed: Text highlighted in: yellow – information from the South Hams OSSR Study JLP Final Document, 2017; blue – SHDC Playing Pitch Strategy action plan dated Oct 2021.; pink – SHDC Officer updates/emails from Sep 2023.]

Type of open space and policy standard	Owners	Quantity shortfalls/deficiencies	Quality shortfalls	Access shortfalls
Parkers Way (B)	SHDC	<p><b>Amenity Green Space</b></p> <p>Purpose: Open grassland providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work and enhancement of residential or other areas. Amenity Greenspace rarely has formal equipment, facilities or even seating. It is within the newer housing estates such as Bridgetown. These areas often provide open space within residential areas but frequently lack a clear use and are often used for informal recreation activities.</p>		
		<p>Comments from existing plan, not site specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Additional amenity Greenspace, where it provides a positive contribution within residential areas, will be required within any new development.</li> <li>- A policy on the long-term maintenance of amenity greenspace will be developed and incorporated into s106 agreements.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments from existing plan, not site specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amenity Greenspaces should serve a positive function and contribute to the quality of the public realm.</li> <li>- Where all new amenity Greenspaces are proposed the priority should be for providing specific community, wildlife and landscape benefit.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments from existing plan, not site specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When new Amenity Greenspace is brought forward it should be easily accessible to as many users as possible. All development designs should include meaningful Amenity Greenspace.</li> </ul>

Type of open space and policy standard	Owners	Quantity shortfalls/deficiencies	Quality shortfalls	Access shortfalls
Elm Walk/Weston Lane (B)	SHDC	0.18 hectares		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create access for all path as part of wider Chicken Run/Bridgetown Corridor plans.</li> <li>- Requires better tree care and maintenance; hedge maintenance.</li> <li>- Potential facility improvements – seating?</li> </ul>
Westonfields (B)	SHDC			
Higher Westonfields (B)	SHDC			
Camomile Lawn (B)	Housing Developer/Mgt Company			
Follaton Community Centre (T)	SHDC			
Follaton Oak (T)	Housing Developer/Mgt Company			
Baltic Wharf (T)	Housing Developer/Mgt Company			
Smithfields (T)	SHDC			
Parkers Way (B)	SHDC	0.43 hectares		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sort out drainage.</li> <li>- Masterplan coming forward from Bridgetown Alive for improvements.</li> </ul>
Information on facilities in neighbouring parishes:				
<b>Parks and Gardens</b>				
<b>Purpose:</b> Accessible, formal, high quality sites designed for recreation and community events.				
Borough Park (T)	SHDC	<p>Comments from existing plan, not site specific:</p> <p>Maintain the extent of existing key parks and gardens within the town and where possible extend them</p>	<p>Comments from existing plan, not site specific:</p> <p>The quality is variable and relates to the local usage and the multifunctional aspect of the largest park – Borough Park. Any new acquisitions</p>	<p>Comments from existing plan, not site specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Undertake reasonable access improvements to make parks and gardens available to all.</li> <li>- Improve linkages to and from parks to allow access for</li> </ul>

Commented [1]: Clfr Auleita - accessible natural spaces

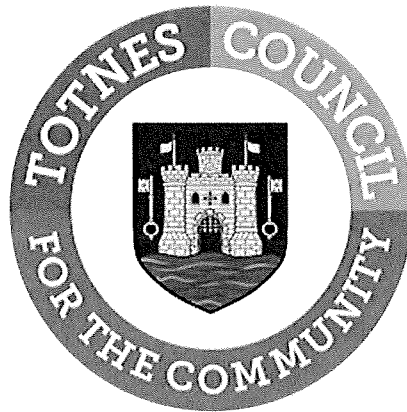


Type of open space and policy standard	Owners	Quantity shortfalls/deficiencies appropriately for the locality they would be in.	Quality shortfalls	Access shortfalls
Leechwell Garden (T)	SHDC (managed by Leechwell Garden Association)	0.27 hectares	through developments, need to ensure that they are appropriate for the locality and the development.	<p>all and connecting with the greenways in the town.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve signage and information and publicity about the existence of and the accessibility of the parks and gardens.</li> </ul> <p>Most recent SHDC Update Sep 2023: Improvements to pathways and entrances, potential changes to management regime to leave some longer areas of grass/wildflower areas.</p>
Vire Island (T)	SHDC	1.04 hectares		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better interpretation/signage at entrances</li> <li>- New play structure plans in place.</li> <li>- Conservation of pool area on hold due to knotweed</li> <li>- Needs work on 'accessible' path</li> <li>- Needs welcome sign with information/interpretation.</li> <li>- New furniture/landscape feature at end of island - welcome to Totnes (by river?).</li> </ul>
Heath Gardens (T)	SHDC	0.07 hectares		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Needs better maintenance to protect £100K community investment</li> <li>- Repair/replace wattle/hurdle fence.</li> <li>- Replant beds with robust plants ie vinca major.</li> </ul>

Type of open space and policy standard	Owners	Quantity shortfalls/deficiencies	Quality shortfalls	Access shortfalls
Shady Garden (Blind Garden) (T)	SHDC	0.01 hectares		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improvement scheme by Totnes Trust recently completed.</li> <li>- Requires better maintenance.</li> </ul>
Moorashes Meadow (T)	SHDC	0.05 hectares		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Signage, information needed.</li> <li>- Site has education potential that could be developed (pond dipping, etc).</li> <li>- Needs better grounds/property maintenance.</li> </ul>
The Lamb Garden (T)	SHDC	0.03 hectares		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No suggested improvements.</li> <li>- Keep paths weed free.</li> <li>- Gates?</li> </ul>
Bellchambers Garden, Totnes Castle/North St (T)	SHDC	0.01 hectares		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better signage, welcome and info.</li> <li>- Better maintenance of grounds and furniture required.</li> </ul>
Coronation Road (T) [This is on the SHDC OSSR map]	TTC			
Follaton House Formal Gardens at rear (T)	SHDC	0.76 hectares		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not welcoming – signage?</li> <li>- Feels like private garden.</li> <li>- Poor maintenance of benches and features.</li> <li>- Poor grounds maintenance.</li> </ul>
Museum Garden (T)	TTC			
<b>River</b>				
<b>Purpose:</b> River Dart, flowing through Totnes providing amenity and sporting facility for the town and encouraging Wildlife and Tourism/Employment.				
<b>River Dart</b>	Dart Harbour Authority Duchy of Cornwall Environment Agency Landowners	Comments from existing plan, not site specific: No identified issues.	Comments from existing plan, not site specific: Need to maintain standards of cleanliness both of the river	Comments from existing plan, not site specific: Where the river is accessible with car parking nearby, the

Type of open space and policy standard	Owners	Quantity shortfalls/deficiencies	Quality shortfalls	Access shortfalls
			<p>and its banks as well as subsidiary streams. Seek to introduce, maintain and improve the standard of associated facilities and safety both in the river and along its banks. Look to co-ordinate management arrangements on both public and privately owned aspects of the river.</p>	<p>provision of this access should be maintained, and where possible, enhanced for all ability use. The identification of footpaths and cycle ways should be signposted and advertised within publications and promoted at appropriate points throughout the town. It should also identify the connectivity of recreational walking around the town with the river footpaths.</p>





## Emergency Plan

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TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED DECEMBER 2021

NEXT REVIEW NOVEMBER 2023

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*This plan sets out how Totnes Town Council is likely to respond to various emergencies that the town and community might face.*

## Introduction

This Plan has been developed to complement the overall risk arrangements, help maintain critical services during and after any major disruption and promote recovery. The Council is often the most accessible tier of local government and has a role as a community leader, and as such would have a key role in helping the Town deal with and recover from a major emergency. The statutory responsibility lies with Devon County Council in conjunction with various other agencies, including the emergency services and South Hams District Council. The Town Council will support the principal authorities in implementing their Major Emergency Plan and make its resources available to them. The Devon Emergency Planning Service plans can be found at these links:

Response Plan - <https://www.southhams.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-08/DEPS%20Response%20and%20Recovery%20Plan%20Parts%201%20and%202.pdf>

Recovery Plan - <https://www.southhams.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-08/DEPS%20Response%20and%20Recovery%20Plan%20Parts%203%20and%204.pdf>

## Objectives

The prime objective for this document is to identify the resources that are available within the town to support the Emergency Services and Principal authorities. The second objective is to assist other agencies to promote the importance of local emergency planning and to identify means of disseminating relevant information to householders and businesses.

## Who to Contact

In the case of an emergency the first point of contact is 999. If the emergency is related to a need for access to one of the Town Council buildings, i.e. the Civic Hall or the Guildhall then the points of contact are as follows:

1. The Mayor – postholder changes annually, contact information available on the Town Council website, see <https://www.totnestowncouncil.gov.uk/your-council/your-councillors/>
2. The Town Clerk – current postholder Catherine Marlton. Emergency contact information Work – 01803 862147  
Home – REDACTED

Out of office hours, the Clerk (or a member of the management team) will contact officers as required. On discovering or being advised of a disaster which might affect business continuity or a major civil emergency, the member of staff will contact the Town Clerk and/or the Mayor.

The Town Clerk will:

- Ensure all members of staff are contacted, advised of the situation and either put on standby or advised of the action required.
- Convene any necessary meetings of staff and/or Members.
- Consider staff welfare issues and take necessary action.
- Advise statutory authorities (e.g. emergency services, HSE etc) and insurance company as necessary.
- Advise the Mayor by phone where possible.

- Advise other Councillors by e-mail.

### Communications Keeping residents and businesses informed

As appropriate, the Town Council will use its website, social media channels, local media, and relevant email lists to keep residents and businesses regularly informed during a major emergency. This includes where there are weather related issues (for example, when the MET office has issued a red warning for snow, ice, flooding, storms, extreme heat):

- www.totnestowncouncil.gov.uk - the website has a banner facility to enable very important messages to stand out on the homepage.
- Facebook, Instagram, X. Please note, Totnes Town Council will also share information into town-wide Facebook group pages, such as The Totnes Post and Totnesians, where appropriate to maximise reach.
- The Town Council holds an email directory of high street businesses in town, which can be used if appropriate.
- If appropriate, information will also be shared via broadcast and digital media including Devon Live, BBC Spotlight, BBC Radio Devon, ITV Westcountry, and South Hams Today.

The Town Mayor and/or Town Clerk are designated as media spokespeople. All interviews with the media should be carried out by them to ensure message consistency.

The Council's Communications Strategy has more detail, including a crisis communications cascade.

### Community Preparedness

#### Activating emergency access to the Guildhall or Civic Hall

Access will be granted to the Guildhall or Civic Hall by the Town Clerk or Mayor in the case of an absolute emergency and assuming that a keyholder can get to the building without risk to their safety and remain on site to provide the supervision and security as required.

#### Defibrillators

The Town Council owns and maintains two defibrillators in the town – outside the Royal Seven Stars Hotel at the bottom of Fore Street and outside the Visitor Information Point at the Civic Hall on the Market Square. Other units are available in the town but community groups need to ensure these are registered and accredited to ensure that the caller can be signposted to the nearest working unit.

#### Snow and Ice

The Town Council subscribes to Met Office weather updates. In the event of a red alert for snow the Town Council will:

- cancel all public meetings;

- advise staff to remain at home rather than travelling into the office;
- post updates on the website and social media with the latest advice from specialist agencies.

In the event of an amber weather warning or unexpected snowfall the Town Clerk has delegated authority to implement the above actions on a discretionary basis. Councillors and members of staff should not take any risks to travel into the office in the event of severe weather.

If any member of the community wishes to participate in the Snow Warden Scheme please contact the Town Council on 01803 862 147. Further information on the role and responsibilities are found at the following link -

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/communities/opportunities/snow-warden-scheme>

Assistance for Rough Sleepers during cold weather - The Town Council website has contact details for South Hams District Council to get assistance for those living on the streets in cold weather at this link –

<https://www.southhams.gov.uk/housing/housing-support/homelessness/rough-sleepers>

## Flooding

The Environment Agency has installed new flood defences to high risk areas of the town. They have volunteers to manually open and close the gates based on alerts they send out directly.

The Town Council is subscribed to Environment Agency updates and Met Office severe weather warnings and will publish these on social media to inform the community.

Residents and business owners are encouraged to register for updates on flooding directly at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings>

Alternatively you can register your details or cancel your account by calling Floodline: Telephone: 0345 988 1188, 24-hour service

For any serious flooding, or where lives are at risk, please call the emergency services by dialling 999.

Flooding in the road that has been caused by blocked drains or gullies can be reported to Devon County Council Highways on their website.

## Pandemic

The Town Council subscribes to NHS and Public Health England updates and in the event of a pandemic will:

- cancel all public meetings;
- advise staff to remain at home rather than travelling into the office;



- post updates on the website and social media with the latest advice from specialist agencies.
- act as a co-ordinator for various community groups who are able to offer practical assistance.

## Useful Links

South Hams District Council Emergency Planning information

<https://www.southhams.gov.uk/environment-and-nuisance/emergency-planning-and-response/what-councils-role>

Devon Emergency Planning Partnership information

<https://www.depp.org.uk/>

22 January 2024

ITEM 5

## Report to Planning Committee

For circulation due to high pressure on time at meeting.

- From Graham Bennett, Chair of the Totnes & District Traffic & Transport Forum – the Consultative and Advisory Partnership, which reports to the Council's Planning Committee
- The Committee is asked to note the Forum's work and the Forum's AGM on 31 January, to which all are welcome.

Three examples which show the breadth of our work:



- 1.** The Planning Committee has adopted the Forum's updated Traffic, Transport and Pedestrian Policy, with its 'hotspots' map showing problem areas in Totnes. This Policy will provide a point of reference for the assessment of Planning Applications, including future funding opportunities. At the Council Matters Committee on 15 January, Cllr Chinnock mentioned difficulty experienced by people with visual impairment due to feint road markings. The Forum's wish to add a layer to the hotspots map to show accessibility issues such as dropped kerbs was mentioned, and it would be good for feint road markings to be considered for inclusion in that assessment. In the meantime the following link can be used to report specific concerns direct to Devon County Council: [https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/map/map\\_src/drm/](https://www.devon.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem/map/map_src/drm/)
- 2.** We have identified significant traffic & transport challenges from planned developments across Torbay – the population of which is bigger than Exeter in the winter, but nearly as big as Plymouth in the summer. 'Peninsular Transport' advises government on regional transport priorities for investment; so, working with Jacqi as our DCC Councillor, we are engaging with Peninsular Transport to highlight our concerns and to seek their support in addressing them. Luisa's high quality work on this is to be commended.
- 3.** For use by residents and visitors, an updated Green Travel Guide has been published now available on-line at:  
<https://www.totnestowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Green-Travel-Guide-2024.pdf>

### In Conclusion

- The Committee is asked to note this report, plus the invitation to the Forum AGM on 31 January.

## **ITEM 6 - COMMUNITY AWARD TIMELINE**

Nominations for the 2024 Community Award (individual and organisation) will open at the end of January and run until Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March.

A press release has been put on the Town Council website, shared on social media, included in the Council's 'Totnes Matters' article in the February edition of the Totnes Directory and has been sent to the Totnes Times.

The timeline for considering the nominations by the Council is:

17 March – Nominations close.

25 March – Town Matters Committee to consider nominations in Part 2 and make a shortlist recommendation to Full Council.

8 April – Full Council to consider the Town Matters recommendation.

29 May – Individual and organisation awards presented at the Annual Town Meeting (with certificates for runners up).

