



## AGENDA FOR THE TOWN MATTERS COMMITTEE

### MONDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2025 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 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025** at **6.30pm** for a maximum of 90 minutes in the Guildhall for the purpose of transacting the following business:

**Committee Members:** Councillors N Roberts (Chair), L Auletta, C Beavis, J Chinnock, S Collinson, J Cummings, D Peters, A Presswell and T Robshaw.

#### 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. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

To elect a deputy chair for the Committee. No document.

#### 3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025 and update on any matters arising. Document attached [page 3].

#### 4. STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUPS

To consider any recommendations and note the minutes from the following (documents attached):

- a. Economy Working Group, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025 [page 5].
- b. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 28<sup>th</sup> May 2025 [page 7].

5. **DEPUTY MAYOR CHAINS**

To consider a request for the Deputy Mayor chains to be removed for the engraving of a name.  
Document attached [page 10].

6. **COMMUNITY COMPOSTING**

To:

- a. Consider the findings of the community composting survey (documents attached, page 10);  
and
- b. Note that the proposed composting site at Follaton House is no longer an option.

7. **LINK COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

To consider introducing link councillor reports as a standing item to the Town Matters agenda. Verbal update from the Chair.

8. **OPEN SPACES, SPORTS, RECREATION AND WELLBEING PLAN UPDATE**

To update on any general matters linked to the Open Spaces, Sport Recreation and Wellbeing Plan (standing item). No document.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To note the date of the next meeting of the Town Matters Committee – Monday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 6.30pm.

Sara Halliday

Governance and Projects Manager

18<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**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 24<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2025 IN THE GUILDHALL**

Present: Councillors J Cummings (Chair), L Auletta, C Beavis, J Chinnock, A Presswell, N Roberts and T Robshaw.

Apologies: Cllrs Collinson and Price.

Not Present: Cllr Peters (apologies received at 6.55pm)

In Attendance: 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.

The apologies were accepted.

### **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no members of the public present.

### **2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**To approve the minutes of 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and update on any matters arising.**

The minutes were **AGREED** as an accurate record of proceedings. Matters arising:

Item 3a – Cistern Street/Bypass. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council writes to Devon County Council and South Hams District Council as detailed.

Item 4 - Great British Spring Clean and Great Big School Clean 2025. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council takes a role of awareness and promotion by providing publicity of the initiatives as detailed.

### **3. STRATEGY DELIVERY GROUP AND WORKING GROUPS**

**To consider the notes and any recommendations from the following:**

#### **a. Community Working Group, 11th February 2025.**

Noted. The Committee discussed updates on the following items: the community co-ordinator role, and asked that this item is included on a future working group agenda; Caring Town; the Pavilions leisure centre; and the Kingsbridge Inn.

#### **b. Economy Working Group, 12th February 2025.**

Noted. The Committee discussed updates on the following items: the REconomy Centre; the CROP project in Dartington; Totnes Castle – had a response been received from English Heritage and a request for a Town and District Councillor meeting with English Heritage; festivals proposed for the town over the summer; the 'locals card'; and any update on the Civic Square paving sets.

**c. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 29th January 2025.**

Noted. The Committee discussed updates on the following items: the Bridgetown Alive request to use the town's bus shelters for maps; permissions for the installation of the mosaic panels and the Council process for agreeing the final placement of the works; Castle Meadow use; and extra-large bins.

**4. DEVON WILDLIFE TRUST – BOWDEN PILLARS FARM PROJECT**

**To consider:**

**a. the inclusion of the Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) Atlantic rainforest project at Bowden Pillars Farm for inclusion in the Open Spaces, Sports, Recreation and Wellbeing Plan;**

The Committee **AGREED** that although the project is some way from permitting public access whilst planting is completed and trees given time to establish, it will be a valuable addition to natural spaces in the town in the future.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Atlantic Rainforest project at Bowden Pillars Farm is added to the Open Space, Sports, Recreation and Wellbeing Plan as an accessible natural space.

**b. in principle support for any signage about the project which DWT may wish to erect in the future.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it supports in principle any future request from Devon Wildlife Trust to erect specific signage on Kingsbridge Hill about the Atlantic Rainforest Project, and that accessible features should be considered (for example an audio description, raised images, braille description).

**5. OPEN SPACE, SPORTS, RECREATION AND WELLBEING PLAN UPDATE**

**To update on any general matters linked to the Open Space, Sports, Recreation and Wellbeing Plan (standing item).**

Cllr Auletta apologised that the mapping work was not yet completed and hoped to bring the map to the next meeting.

**6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Town Matters Committee – Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 at 6.30pm.**

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)*

**7. COMMUNITY AWARD SCHEME**

**To consider the nominations for the Community Award scheme individual and group categories, and the Judy Westacott award and make a recommendation to Full Council (personal information).**

The Committee considered the nominations received. A confidential report with the recommendations will go to Full Council for consideration.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Sara Halliday

Governance and Projects Manager

## ITEM 4 – STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUPS

### a. Economy Working Group, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

Working Group: Cllr Roberts (Chair), Cllr Auletta, Cllr Beavis, Cllr Chinnock, Cllr Peters (APOLOGIES), Cllr Price (APOLOGIES)

Officer: Economic Support Officer (KO) and TTC Clerk (CM) (APOLOGIES)

#### 1. Confirm the Chair and Deputy roles

Confirmed that Cllr Roberts will remain as Chair, Cllr Peters will remain as Deputy Chair (confirmed via message during the meeting)

#### 2. To consider what to include within the brief for the Marketing/Comms/Visit Totnes review.

CM supplied the group with an initial brief for the consultancy role, which will review the marketing and comms strategy and implementation for both TTC and VT.

Members have accepted the general principles of the initial brief, but may add some changes once they have had chance to read through it properly.

It was discussed that a consultant would charge roughly £500 per day for the review. Cllr Chinnock estimated the project would be roughly 16 – 20 days worth of work over the 3 month period.

It was therefore **RECOMMENDED** that a budget of £8,000 - £10,000 would be allocated to this role, to go to Full Council on 7<sup>th</sup> July.

#### 3. Update on CEP consultation so far

CEP consultation has gone well so far.

Around 30 people attended last event at Cinema after Cllr Auletta and Cllr Roberts visited the businesses on the industrial estate.

Some feedback regarding issues with landowners and leaseholders whereby landowners are not looking after certain elements of the land / infrastructure which is in turn potentially preventing businesses from expanding.

Discussed Totnes Business Watch - a new group of businesses on Totnes High Street who are using Whatsapp to communicate about shoplifters. Potential to tap into this group and encourage them to do the CEP survey as they may be coming up with similar issues. Same for the licensed pubs in Totnes who also have a Whatsapp group that they communicate on.

**ACTION:** Members to approach the Totnes Business Watch regarding the CEP

**ACTION:** Cllr Roberts to organise with Cllr Robshaw a meeting with Giles Hawkins from The Albert Inn to discuss CEP with local pub landlords.

**ACTION:** Cllr Roberts to invite Cllr John Birch to attend the next EWG meeting.

#### 4. With regards to the CEP, review priorities of the council and summery of previous consultations with residents. Consider information to be shared with SHDC as part of the CEP final projects.

**ACTION:** CM to use local government AI tool to gather specific information from the summery of priorities and consultations regarding Asset and Capital Expenditure. Members would like to see top investment priorities from residents so that it can be fed back to the CEP.

**ACTION:** Cllr Auletta to follow up with Cllr Hodgson regarding contacting Active Travel officers at DCC to approve WSP to complete work on the Bridge feasibility report.

#### 5. Review of the Economy WG budget

The 2024/25 budget was spent as follows:

<b>Economy 24 25 Actual</b>	
Xmas window display competition	550
Midsummer Festival	2500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3050</b>
Underspend of £11,950 on budgeted	

The 2025/26 budget is agreed as follows:

<b>Economy 25 26 proposed</b>	
Community Economic Plan match funding	20000
Xmas window display competition	1000
Business Forum/events	5000
Transport Feasibility Phase 2	10000
Active Travel	12000
Town Centre enhancements and Safety Sinking Fund	20000
Local/members discount Scheme	2000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70000</b>

Potentially  
move to  
EMR

**ACTION:** CM to provide members with more specific information with regards to the budget, and proposed allocation of funds.

#### **6. Update on planned festivals/events**

Midsummer festival is going well, and upcoming Fringe looks to have a full programme of events lined up. Members are pleased with the festivals and the support from TTC.

Discussion of potential policy for seed funding so that future events are able to sustain themselves after initial support.

**ACTION:** Members to meet to discuss funding policy.

#### **7. Update on Civic Square improvements**

Sections of the Civic Square tiles have been replaced. Members are happy with the new style of layout but queried the colour and pointing of the new tiles.

CM is still waiting on SHDC to confirm if any further work will be happening.

**ACTION:** CM to contact SHDC to request that the tiles surrounding the new ones are jet washed to see if they match in colour before doing any further work. Also, to request that the pointing is reviewed.

#### **8. To set the date for the next meeting: August 13<sup>th</sup>, 12.30pm – 1.30pm**

**CONFIRMED** – KO to set up remote joining.

- b. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 28<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

3a. Water Meadow: To **RECOMMEND** to the Town Matters Committee that the Council supports the idea in principle subject to further detail and information. However, the Working Group does have some concern about the salinity of the site and the proximity to the main road for the area's safety for use as a forest garden for school children/young people.

6. Delivery Plan: PRD2.C Longmarsh, PRD2.E Seagull Survey, PRD2.G Entry to Fore Street Sign and PRD2.H Castle Street Bollard – to **RECOMMEND** to the Town Matters Committee that these items are removed from the delivery plan as they are complete/no longer to be pursued.

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM WORKING GROUP NOTES FROM 28<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2025 MEETING**

Present: Cllrs Hodgson (Chair), Auletta, Cooper, Cummings, Peters and Robshaw.

Not Present: Cllrs Collinson and Price.

Also present: Sara Halliday.

**1. To appoint a Chair and Deputy.**

It was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr Hodgson as Chair and Cllr Peters as Deputy Chair of the working group.

**2. To agree the notes of the last Working Group.**

The notes were **AGREED** subject to the correction of a couple of typos. All recommendations to Committee and Full Council have been resolved.

**3. Public Realm (PRD2). To consider the following:**

**a. Water Meadow – a request from a member of the public for support in principle (further detail and information will be required) to the allocation of the Water Meadow off Rowsells Lane to be allocated for young people and forest school type activities.**

To **RECOMMEND** to the Town Matters Committee that the Council supports the idea in principle subject to further detail and information. However, the Working Group does have some concern about the salinity of the site and the proximity to the main road for the area's safety for use as a forest garden for school children/young people.

**b. Forest Garden – consider a request for TTC land for a forest garden.**

It was **AGREED** that the officer will respond to say that Totnes Town Council doesn't have any available land. However, they may wish to approach The Woodland Trust for use of Colwell Wood. Councillors also understand that the agroforestry project at Dartington is still under consideration and is not yet out of lease.

**4. Cemetery (PRD4.J) – to consider the quote received for maintenance of the wild areas (circle and around the chapel of rest).**

To **RECOMMEND** to the Council Matters Committee that Parklife are appointed to carry out the 2 x cuts of the wild areas around the chapel of rest and the circle totalling £1460 +VAT. Parklife are asked to notify the Council of the proposed cut dates so that these can be passed to the Climate Hub for volunteers to help with the raking (and to ensure there are no interments planned).

**5. Budget - To note the budget position for the Environment and Public Realm work (including recent ratifications by Council Matters).**

Noted.

**6. Delivery Plan – any comments, including (document attached):**

It was **AGREED** to move the delivery plan up the agenda for the next meeting to give sufficient time to go through the actions and update accordingly.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- Civic Square (PRD1.A) – it was **AGREED** to get an update from South Hams District Council (SHDC) on what the next steps are for the surface following the trial patches of the stone sets in the Civic Square.
- Litter bins (PRD2.F) – the extra large litter bins are due to be delivered week commencing 9<sup>th</sup> June. It was **AGREED** to look at installing a ‘please do not feed the gulls’ sign that could be fixed in the Civic Square near to one of the new bins [Birdwood House?].
- PRD2.C Longmarsh, PRD2.E Seagull Survey, PRD2.G Entry to Fore Street Sign and PRD2.H Castle Street Bollard – to **RECOMMEND** to the Town Matters Committee that these items are removed from the delivery plan as they are complete/no longer to be pursued.
- Table Tennis Table (PRD2.D) – it was **AGREED** that the officer will contact the SHDC officers to enquire whether the paths in Borough Park will be reconfigured with the installation of the Skate Park and if this would create a tarmacked area near the Tennis Club which could host such a table tennis table.
- Small Roundabout (PRD2.I) and Welcome to Totnes Sign (PRD2.N) – it was **AGREED** that the officer will contact the Highways Neighbourhood Officer for advice on items placed on small roundabout and an installation date for the sign.
- Road Bridge over Railway (PRD2.P) – it was **AGREED** to obtain quotes for painting the road side of the railway bridge and for artwork, alongside any limitations on working in close proximity to the road and the potential requirement, and impact, of pavement closures.
- E-bike bike racks in Shady Garden – concern about the siting and cheap solution that has been installed in the conservation area which also present a trip hazard (the frames are bolted to the paving stones). If these are a temporary solution whilst the trial is ongoing, if the scheme becomes permanent then more appropriate, better-quality infrastructure should be installed by SHDC. An option would be to relocate the bin and put the bikes alongside the left-hand wall of the space.
- Pavement Licences – it was **AGREED** that the officer will check the status of pavement licence applications received through the Planning Committee and will contact SHDC for any tables and seating that appears to be being used without a current licence being granted. The number of A-boards on Fore and High Street was also raised as a concern.

**a. Totnes Climate & Ecological Emergency project meetings (PRD7);**

Cllr Hodgson updated that the Climate Hub is planning a biodiversity count at Castle Meadow on 24<sup>th</sup> June as part of the Big Devon Meadows Count. The results may be helpful in considering options for future use of the meadow. It was **AGREED** that the officer will:

- request that the June maintenance cut of Castle Meadow is postponed until after this date. *[Post meeting note: this has been confirmed for 1<sup>st</sup> July];* and
- check the status of the Council’s public liability insurance for any activity in the meadow.

**b. Totnes Community Composting Scheme (PRD7.C); and**

Cllr Hodgson updated that there will be a presentation from the Community Composting Group at the public session of Full Council on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June.



c. **Consider dates for the future discussion of: EPR01 Vision and improvement strategy for open and blue spaces (for example Castle Meadow, Borough Park, Vire Island, the river); PRD4.E – Cemetery Chapel.**

It was **AGREED** that the officer will send out a Doodle poll for potential site visit dates for Castle Meadow, the Cemetery, Borough Park, and Market Square and the Rotherfold (the latter potentially before the start of the next Working Group).

7. **Town Team Priorities (EPR04 – Safer, Cleaner Totnes) – to note the priorities and progress for street cleaning around to the town to be carried out by SHDC.**

Noted and further update at the next meeting.

8. **Note the date of the next meeting TBC – proposed 4.30pm on Wednesday 16th or 30th July 2025 [23rd is TTF] in the Guildhall.**

It was **AGREED** that the officer will send out a Doodle poll for the Working Group date in July.

Meeting ended at 6.25pm.

S Halliday

Governance and Projects Manager

## ITEM 5 – DEPUTY MAYOR CHAINS

The Committee is asked to consider a request for the removal of the Deputy Mayor chains to enable the engraving of previous post-holder details onto one of the links/discs. The chain has four discs on each side of the fob, so 16 faces in total, of which two have been used to engrave details about the original donation of the chain back in 2000. There are currently no engravings of former deputy mayor details on any of the discs. The proposed engraving is a one-off personal gesture, funded by the individual Councillor (not the Council) and will only be possible while capacity on the chain exists.

## ITEM 6 – COMMUNITY COMPOSTING

a. At Full Council on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025 it was agreed that the results of the Community Composting Survey and proposed site at Follaton House (see item 7b) would be taken to the Town Matters Committee for consideration.

*Officer Note:* The Council's position as agreed by Full Council in October 2024 still stands – the Council supports the idea in principle but further information is required. The survey goes some way to meeting this in terms of providing information, but detail on site location options, maintenance, and funding are still unclear. The extract from the minutes is below:

Item 4 – Community Composting Scheme on Steamer Quay Road. Cllr Hodgson gave an update on the continuing work of the Community Composting Group. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that whilst the principle of community composting is supported, further work is required to determine: public need and support for a facility in Totnes; a suitable, accessible location; how it will be maintained and by who; who has the long-term responsibility/ liability for the facility; and long-term funding arrangements.

b. *Officer Note:* Since the presentation to Full Council on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, the proposed site at Follaton House for the community composting project is no longer viable, see an email from one of the members of the group dated 9<sup>th</sup> June:

“The letter of support that we presented at the Town Council meeting on Monday 2nd June is now somewhat redundant, following a statement from Director - Place and Enterprise [South Hams District Council, SHDC] that there are no available suitable sites at Follaton.

With this in mind, we would still like to ask Totnes Town Council to officially endorse the Community Composting Project.

In spite of the above, SHDC have offered the services of ... (Council's Head of Land and Property) to help to acquire a site and if necessary SHDC have offered to purchase a suitable site if one cannot be found amongst their property portfolio.”