



DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE TOWN MATTERS COMMITTEE

MONDAY 23RD JUNE 2025 IN THE GUILDHALL

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

Apologies: None

Not Present: Cllr Robshaw

In Attendance: C Bewley (Finance and HR Manager).

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

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

There were no apologies.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Cllr Collinson raised the issue of the public and Civic Hall toilet facilities following the Supreme Court ruling on gender recognition under the Equality Act 2010 and how single sex toilets might discriminate against the trans community. Some facilities will need to be made available that are for universal use. One solution would be the use of disabled toilets for both purposes but it was suggested that signage would need changing to show this. This solution could mean more use of disabled toilets that would then not be so readily available for the disabled. Cllr Presswell will consult South Hams District Council to see how they are responding to the ruling. It was **AGREED** that officers contact NALC to see what the advice has been issued and that the item will be added to the next agenda for formal discussion.

Cllrs also raised the issue of camping on Longmarsh and the lack of sanitary facilities there. It was **AGREED** to put this on the next agenda.

2. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

To elect a deputy chair for the Committee.

It was **AGREED** to invite Cllr Robshaw to take the deputy chair role, with Cllr Collinson as a reserve if he declines.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 24th March 2025 and update on any matters arising.

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

Item 4 – Devon Wildlife Trust Atlantic Rainforest Project.

a. It was **RESOLVED** 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. [Note: This has been actioned – new serial F14 - with the website version updated].

b. It was **RESOLVED** 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). [Note: Devon Wildlife Trust have been emailed to update them on this position and Cllr Auletta has been liaising.]

Item 7 – Community Awards. It was **RESOLVED** to agree two winners for the individual award, two winners for the group award and one winner for the lifetime achievement award, as outlined in the confidential report.

4. STRATEGY DELIVERY GROUP AND WORKING GROUP

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

a. Economy Working Group, 10th June 2025.

Noted.

b. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 28th May 2025.

Noted.

3a. Water Meadow: To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council 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 – it was **AGREED** that these items are removed from the delivery plan as they are complete/no longer to be pursued.

5. DEPUTY MAYOR CHAINS

To consider a request for the Deputy Mayor chains to be removed for the engraving of a name.

It was **AGREED** by majority to reject the request for several reasons but principally because it starts a tradition that cannot be maintained due to the finite number of links. However, it was **AGREED** that the Environment and Public Realm Working Group are asked to look at possible options of formally recording deputy mayors (for example a book or a formal listing kept in the Guildhall) as well as the hanging of photos of previous Mayors on the Council Chamber walls.

6. COMMUNITY COMPOSTING

To:

a. Consider the findings of the community composting survey (document attached); and

The Council position is unchanged – it continues to support the idea of community composting in principle but cannot give full support until a viable site has been identified.

Discussions included:

- Alternative composting may be just as attractive for the public and it wouldn't be used much if the site was too remote.
- Concern that the survey showed a low number willing to volunteer with the project so that could make it unworkable.
- The need for the Committee to review the proposal again when the site was found and more detail is provided on how it would work.

b. Note that the proposed composting site at Follaton House is no longer an option.
Noted.

7. LINK COUNCILLOR REPORTS

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

It was **AGREED** that link councillor reports will be added as a standing item to the Town Matters agenda.

8. 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 updated that she has produced a map which shows the open spaces. It was **AGREED** that the table in the plan needs updating as the status of some projects has changed.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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

Noted.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Christina Bewley
Finance and HR Manager