



MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL
MONDAY 2ND JUNE 2025 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors T Bennett, (Chair), C Beavis, J Chinnock, S Collinson, T Cooper, J Cummings, J Hannam, J Hodgson, D Peters, A Presswell, N Roberts and M Trant.

Apologies: Cllrs Auletta, Price, Robshaw and Smallridge, District Cllr Birch.

In Attendance: Members of the public, District Cllr Allen, S Halliday (Governance and Projects Manager).

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.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the apologies. There were no amendments 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 had submitted a report before the meeting and updated on: the new cabinet at Devon County Council (DCC); the successful addition of a DCC policy on including 'Swift Bricks' in all new buildings; the 20's Plenty campaign and the specific requests for areas in Totnes which will go to the Traffic and Transport Forum in July; fostering of children; the youth centre at Rushbrook; and a Climate Hub biodiversity count in Castle Meadow on 24th June. Cllrs asked about: the withdrawal of youth services from Rushbrook, including why this location was chosen, previous use by Lifeworks and the impact this decision may have on them, and if the £11800 of DCC funding is for TRAYE generally or TRAYE provision in Totnes; and in her new role as cabinet member with responsibility for Climate Change and Biodiversity whether this will include the health of rivers and water management.

b. District Cllr Allen was present and had not submitted a report. She updated that she has been

working on individual cases (which are confidential) and the Naturesave Trust.

- c. District Cllr Birch was not present and had not submitted a report.
- d. District Cllr Presswell was present and had submitted a report, and answered a question on the levels of e coli recorded in the River Dart by Friends of the Dart.

The Council reconvened.

3. 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 the Confidential session)

a. Full Council 12th May 2025.

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

To note the following minutes:

b. Council Matters Committee 19th May 2025.

Noted.

c. Planning Committee 28th May 2025.

Noted.

4. 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 the Confidential session)

a. Full Council 12th May 2025.

No matters arising.

b. Council Matters Committee 19th May 2025

Item 7 – Community Grants. See item 6 on the agenda

Item 8 - Investment Strategy. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the revised Investment Strategy is adopted.

Item 13. Castle Meadow. See item 15 on the agenda.

Item 15. Staff Report. See item 14 on the agenda.

c. Planning Committee, 28th May 2025

Item 6 – Kingsbridge Inn. After some discussion about the next steps that the group is planning to take, it was **RESOLVED** by majority that the Council writes a letter of support for this community initiative to secure the Kingsbridge Inn for future generations of residents of Totnes as a community hub/pub.

Item 8 – Traffic and Transport Forum: Bicycle Storage. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Council responds to South Hams District Council's (SHDC) request for input on bicycle storage locations in the town with the following:

- That any bicycle hoops/racks are in keeping with the historic environment of the town and the conservation areas, and that the Town Council is consulted on designs and precise locations.
- That Sheffield Hoops be considered for installation at Market Square (ensuring sufficient space remains for market traders), The Plains, and/or Fore Street.
- The provision of lockable storage in Heath's Nursery Car Park (near the recycling area).

5. STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUP UPDATES

To receive an update from the Chairs of the Strategy Delivery Working Group Chairs.

Economy Working Group – Cllr Roberts updated that the main effort has been on the Community Economic Plan survey and its promotion on market days and with businesses in Totnes and neighbouring parishes.

Community Working Group – Cllr Bennett updated that there had been no meeting in May and that several Cllrs had attended the Youth Strategy meeting last week.

Environment and Public Realm Working Group – Cllr Hodgson updated that the group met last week and discussed: cemetery wild area maintenance; community composting; seagull signage; and that working through the delivery plan will be a focus of the next meeting.

6. COMMUNITY GRANTS

To consider:

a. The Council Matters Committee's recommendation for the awarding of Community Grants for 2025; and

There was discussion about the proposal to allocate £30K from reserves for the Skate Park project and who this money will go to – SHDC or the Totnes Skatepark Community group. Concerns were raised about management and potential cost increases on the delivery of the project. An amendment was proposed, and accepted, to the recommendation to address these concerns and to protect the Council's investment in the project.

It was **RESOLVED** by majority to allocate £30,000 to the Skate Park project (from Earmarked Reserves), on the conditions that:

- It is the payment that ensures the project can be delivered in the coming calendar year and that South Hams District Council bring forward £150,000 of funding;
- Answers to the following questions are received from SHDC:
 - Who will hold this £30k – SHDC or the Totnes Skatepark Community? and
 - Details of the contract including the payment schedule (will it be up front, 50 percent, or staged payment made).

Cllr Bennett explained that the Community Grant applications were once again massively oversubscribed and that four applications that were received after the deadline had been automatically rejected.

It was **RESOLVED** by majority to allocate the following grants under the Totnes Town Council Community Grant Applications June 2025:

Totnes Town Council Community Grant Applications June 2025					
Applicant	Project	Amount requested	Total project cost	AGREED AMOUNT	% of ask
Bridgetown Alive	Sky Rise Festival 12 Jul 25	£4,000	£10,200	£1,500	37.5
Totnes Skatepark Community	Skate Park	£30,000	£320,000	From Earmarked Reserves	
Totnes Heritage Trust	Totnes Heritage Festival 2025 - 27 Sep 25	£600	£715	£600	100
Stepping Stones	Stepping Stones Food & Wellbeing	£19,800	£65,140	£5,000	25.25
Totnes Caring	Volunteer Transport Service 1 Apr 25 - 31 Mar 26	£10,000	£46,241	£5,000	50
Fusion	Warm Spaces Bouncy Fun Oct 2025 - Feb 2026	£2,231	£2,231	£1,500	67.2
3rd Totnes Sea Scouts	Updating 3 rd Totnes Scouts equipment and facilities	£3,000	£10,000	£2,000	66.6
Sasha	Running costs for rent of space, Apr 25 - Mar 26.	£1,000	£2,427.50	£1,000	100
Totnes Bowls Club	Centenary Year - clubhouse refurbishment & provision of equipment for new bowlers	£2,000	£4,000	£1,000	50
Totnes Bike Hub	Tea & Tinkering 1 Sep 25 - 28 Feb 26	£1,600	£3,280	£1,600	100
Fringe Festival	Totnes Fringe Festival 2025 (Jun - end Jul 25, with festival 11-13 Jul)	£3,000	£9,924.20	£1,500	50
Resilient Lives	Pizza Pirates	£1,500	£4,000	£1,500	100
Citizens Advice South Hams	Community Outreach Totnes	£9,519	£19,076	£5,000	52.5
Jamming Station	Next Wave – Music & Mentorship for Young Adults (16–21)	£10,000	£18,500	£3,800	38
Total		£98,250	£511,734.70	£31,000	31.55

b. The grant awarded to Hello Summer for school holiday activities and running the Odd Object competition.

Cllr Bennett updated that there had been some uncertainty about the Odd Object competition when the agenda was produced. However, Hello Summer has confirmed that despite capacity challenges they will deliver the Odd Object Competition in 2025.

c. How and when to consider ad hoc funding requests outside of the grant application timeline and the resource implications.

The Council discussed how requests for funding should be considered outside of the grant application cycle, with a number of ideas put forward including taking some core providers of services out of the application process to fund then separately and looking again at funding a community fundraiser. It

was **AGREED** unanimously to ask the Council Matters Committee to consider setting up a Task and Finish Group to review the process and future options.

7. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

To receive the Internal Audit Report for 2024/25, consider the findings and action plan.

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Internal Audit Report for 2024/25.

8. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

To:

- a. Consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25 by resolution; and**
- b. Chair to sign the Governance Statement.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25, which was then duly signed by the Chair.

9. ACCOUNTING STATEMENT

To:

- a. Consider the Accounting Statement for 2024/25;**
- b. Approve the Accounting Statement for 2024/25 by resolution; and**
- c. Chair to sign the Accounting Statement for 2024/25.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Accounting Statement for 2024/25, which was then duly signed by the Chair and the Clerk to the meeting.

10. FIRST RESPONDER PARKING DISC

To consider a proposal from Cllr Hodgson to introduce a parking disc system (similar to that available to disabled drivers) for first responders.

Subject to an amendment to include retained fire fighters alongside first responders, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to:

- Support CCllr Hodgson's proposal for a new policy at Devon County Council for emergency public service First Responders and retained firefighters to have a vehicle disk that would enable them to park as close as possible to their home as they need to be able to carry heavy equipment to their vehicle as they rush to respond to emergency calls as these vital minutes saved could save lives.
- Write to the local MP with this proposal as this will be an issue which is experienced nationally.

11. THE GROVE SCHOOL CONSULTATION

To consider a consultation on a proposal to extend the age range of The Grove School from 4-11 to 3-11 years of age from September 2025 (deadline for responses 9th June 2025).

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Council responds to the consultation supporting the proposal to extend the age range of the Grove School to 3-11 year olds.

12. LIST OF MEETING DATES AND COMMUNICATIONS POINTS

To note a list of upcoming meeting dates, Council communications points and link Councillor/Councillor representatives on outside bodies updates.

Noted.

13. NEXT MEETING

To note the next meeting date of Monday 7th July 2025, 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.

14. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE (Standing Item)

To consider any recommendations or matters arising that are considered confidential in nature.
None.

15. RECRUITMENT

To consider (staffing):

- a. The job description and timeline for the Assistant Town Maintenance Officer position;**
- b. Councillor appointment to the interview panel; and**
- c. Recruitment timeline.**

It was **AGREED** by majority to return this item to the Council Matters Committee to consider all options based on the additional information received, and to give the Committee delegated authority to make a decision on the way forward.

16. CASTLE MEADOW

To consider legal advice on Castle Meadow access (legal).

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that based on the legal advice received:

- The Council should not sign a Memorandum of Understanding.
- The Council should erect signage, in consultation with residents, asking users of Castle Meadow to be respectful of residents, not to leave litter and that anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Other aspects of the legal advice should be considered by the Environment and Public Realm Working Group as part of work on the future vision for Castle Meadow.

17. ELMHIRST PROJECT (Standing Item)

To consider an update on the Elmhirst project and the delegation of costs associated with the bid process (commercially sensitive).

Cllr Hodgson updated that the Education South West academy trust is committed to ensuring that any money made from sale of land is ringfenced for the KEVICC campus only.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Cllr Tim Bennett
Chair