



MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL
MONDAY 7TH JULY 2025 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors T Bennett (Chair), L Auletta, C Beavis, J Chinnock, S Collinson, T Cooper, J Cummings, J Hannam, J Hodgson, D Peters, A Presswell, E Price, T Robshaw, L Smallridge and M Trant.

Apologies: Cllr Roberts, District Cllrs Allen and Birch.

In Attendance: Member of the public, 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.

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 not submitted a report and updated on: the Local Government Association Conference particularly insourcing of services; the '20s Plenty Project – a map of the areas proposed will be circulated to all members; the Caring Town Youth Strategy; and the First Responder proposal.

b. District Cllr Allen was not present and had not submitted a report.

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 confirmed that the Hunting Task and Finish Group remit is limited to South Hams District Council land only.

The Council reconvened.

3. CLERK'S REPORT

To note the Clerk's Report for May and June 2025 (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 the Confidential session)

a. Full Council 2nd June 2025.

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

To note the following minutes:

b. Council Matters Committee 9th June 2025.

Noted.

c. Planning Committee 16th June 2025.

Noted.

d. Town Matters Committee 23rd June 2025.

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 the Confidential session)

a. Full Council 2nd June 2025.

No matters arising.

b. Council Matters Committee 9th June 2025

Item 5. Communications and Social Media Protocol. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the revised Communications and Social Media Protocol is adopted.

Item 6. Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the revised Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy is adopted.

c. Planning Committee 16th June 2025

Item 5a – August Meeting. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that delegated authority is given to the Clerk in August to respond to planning applications based on comments from members of the Planning Committee.

d. Town Matters Committee 23rd June 2025.

Item 4b. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 28th May 2025.

Water Meadow: It was **RESOLVED** 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.

Item 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 **RESOLVED** that these items are removed from the delivery plan as they are complete/no longer to be pursued.

6. STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUP UPDATES

To:

a. Receive an update from the Chairs of the Strategy Delivery Working Group Chairs.

Community Working Group – Cllr Bennett confirmed that the next meeting will be held on 15th July 2025 where the community mapping/audit/options document is the priority for discussion before being considered by Council Matters in the Autumn.

Economy Working Group – Cllr Auletta updated on the Community Economic Plan which is still a live consultation. Thanks were extended to Cllr Roberts for all his work on the project. The in-person networking meetings have had mixed success, with the Totnes Cinema event being well attended but the Dartington based one at The Cott less so.

Environment and Public Realm Working Group – Cllrs Auletta and Hodgson fed back on positive site meetings and the undertaking of the biodiversity survey on Castle Meadow. There was informal support for considering areas of planting to encourage biodiversity, initially on Castle Meadow but looking ahead for Borough Park. This will be discussed in a future Working Group meeting.

b. Consider the draft consultant brief for the Strategic Review of Marketing and Communications, Business Support and Tourism Services.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept as drafted the consultant brief for the strategic review of marketing and communications, business support and tourism services.

7. RECESS COMMITTEE

To consider the appointment of a recess committee to meet on 11th August 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint a Recess Committee with full delegated authority of Full Council as proposed. All members are invited to attend with a minimum required of 3 attending to ratify urgent decisions (currently anticipated to be the ratification of two new staffing appointments).

8. COUNCIL GRANTS POLICY REVIEW

To consider the recommendations from the Council Grants Process Task and Finish Group.

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that there is no further allocation of funding at this time, and that this is reviewed when the Community Audit has concluded in the autumn.

9. PLANNING APPLICATION 2929/23/FUL

To consider any amendment to the Planning Committee's comments previously submitted on planning application 2929/23/FUL solar array at Littlehempston Water Treatment Works, should the application go before the South Hams District Council Development Management Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer the exact wording for submission to South Hams District Council to the Planning Committee. However, Full Council **AGREED** the need for the Totnes to Littlehempston cycle path, and any decision by the planning authority to grant permission for the solar development should be on the condition that adequate funding and delivery of this element is secured. It should be noted that Cllr Hodgson abstained from the vote. It was reiterated by members that Full Council

support for the cycle path does not undermine the already submitted concerns about the solar proposal.

10. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

To consider the withdrawal of representatives to Totnes Community Builders (Cllrs Beavis and Price) and provide councillor representatives to The King Edward VI College Site Foundation.

It was **RESOLVED** to withdraw Councillor representation from Totnes Community Builders and that Cllrs Beavis and Price are councillor representatives to The King Edward VI College Site Foundation (The Mansion).

11. LIST OF MEETING DATES AND COMMUNICATIONS POINTS

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

Noted.

12. NEXT MEETING

To note the next meeting dates of: Monday 11th August 2025 for the Recess Committee, 6.30pm public session, 6.45pm formal meeting in the Guildhall; and Monday 1st September 2025 for Full Council, 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.

13. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE (Standing Item)

To consider any recommendations or matters arising that are considered confidential in nature.

None.

14. GUILDHALL COTTAGE

To consider the repairs required and future use of Guildhall Cottage

It was **RESOLVED** to do the essential remedial works required to the Cottage, up to the point Listed Building Consent would be required. The Clerk and TMO will liaise with Cllr Auletta on this first phase. It was accepted that this would result in a significant loss of income that should be reflected in the current year budget monitor and will need to be reflected in future budget forecasts.

15. ELMHIRST PROJECT (Standing Item)

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

None.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Cllr Tim Bennett
Chair