



## AGENDA FOR THE MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

MONDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2025 IN THE GUILDHALL

Please note that public question time will be held prior to Full Council from 6.30pm. There are stairs to the Council Chamber but if any member of the public has mobility issues the Council can relocate to the Main Chamber.

You are hereby **SUMMONED** to attend a meeting of the Town Council, on **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025 at 7.00pm** for a maximum of 120 minutes the purpose of transacting the following business:

### 1. WELCOME TO ALL ATTENDING AND OBSERVING

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 120 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.

### 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.

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*The Committee will adjourn for the following items:*

Reports from County and District Councillors:

- a. County Cllr Hodgson – no document.
- b. District Cllr Allen – no document.
- c. District Cllr Birch – no document.
- d. District Cllr Presswell – no document.

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*The Council will convene to consider the following items:*

### 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 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025 – document attached [page 3].

To note the following minutes:

- b. Council Matters Committee 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025 – document attached [page 7].
- c. Planning Committee 17<sup>th</sup> November – document attached [page 9].
- d. Town Matters Committee 24<sup>th</sup> November – document attached [page 11].

### 4. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTERS ARISING REQUIRING A DECISION

To consider any matters arising from the Minutes and to approve any recommendations from Committees (document enclosed, page 14):

*(Please note confidential minutes can be agreed but any discussion must be held in the Confidential session)*

- a. Full Council 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025.
- b. Council Matters Committee 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025.
- c. Planning Committee 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025.
- d. Town Matters Committee 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

#### **5. STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUP UPDATES**

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

#### **6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

To consider giving the Clerk delegated authority to respond to planning applications (informed by Councillor comment) in December/early January should illness affect the Planning Committee in December being quorate or if deadlines for comment fall in early January. Verbal update.

#### **7. LIST OF MEETING DATES, COMMUNICATIONS POINTS AND LINK COUNCILLOR UPDATES**

To note a list of upcoming meeting dates, Council communications points and link Councillor/Councillor representatives on outside bodies updates. Document attached [page 28].

#### **8. NEXT MEETING**

To note the next meeting date of Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026 for Full Council, 6.30pm public session, 7.00pm formal meeting in the Guildhall.

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*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.*

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#### **9. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE (Standing Item)**

To consider any recommendations or matters arising that are considered confidential in nature. No document.

#### **10. CASTLE MEADOW ACCESS**

To note an update on Castle Meadow access (legal). No document.

Agenda produced by:

Catherine Marlton

Town Clerk

26<sup>th</sup> November 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 Council or 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 MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MONDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2025 IN THE GUILDHALL**

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

Apologies: Cllrs Hannam, Robshaw and Smallridge.

In Attendance: Members of the public, District Cllrs Allen and Birch, 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.**

- e. County Cllr Hodgson**
- f. District Cllr Allen**
- g. District Cllr Birch**
- h. District Cllr Presswell**

*It was **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders.*

a. County Cllr (C Cllr) Hodgson updated on: concern at Devon County Council (DCC) about the number of councillors and allocation of divisions proposed as part of local government reform; DCC continuing to pursue the costing of moving to in-house service provision, rather than outsourcing, to save money and improve quality/consistency; a meeting of the Youth Council; the proposal for a pedestrian crossing at the top of Bridgetown Hill which will go to HATOC this week; and plans for the Vire twinning visit over the Remembrance weekend. Cllrs asked about the lack of reference to the Equality Act in road safety legislation; and wheelchairs available for loan from The Mansion. C Cllr Hodgson will circulate her report by email to all members.

b. District Cllr Allen had emailed a report in advance and will pursue concerns about smoke and smells from the industrial estate.

c. District Cllr Birch was present and had submitted a report. He updated on: the potential for a 50-dwelling development at Bowden Pillars, which will be considered a large development requiring public consultation and he will request that the Town Council is a key consultee in this process; and the South Hams District Council (SHDC) local government reform proposals. Cllrs asked: when the car parking charges review will take place; and expressed regret that there was no one agreed proposal going forward to Government from Devon on the question of local government reform, but multiple options.

d. District Cllr Presswell was present and had submitted a report. The Clerk updated on working with Totnes Museum on a heritage survey and remedial works to the fabric of the building.

*The Council reconvened.*

### **3. CLERK'S REPORT**

**To note the Clerk's Report for September and October 2025 (general updates and correspondence).**

Noted. The Clerk updated on the final number of visitors to the Guildhall this season as well as the continued increase in wedding and event bookings.

### **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 6<sup>th</sup> October 2025.**

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

**To note the following minutes:**

#### **b. Council Matters Committee 13<sup>th</sup> October 2025.**

Noted.

#### **c. Planning Committee 20<sup>th</sup> October 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 6<sup>th</sup> October 2025.**

No matters arising.

#### **b. Council Matters Committee 13<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

Item 7. Whistleblowing Policy. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the revised Whistleblowing Policy is adopted.

**c. Planning Committee 20<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

Item 5. Bicycle Racks. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to suggest to SHDC that the best place for an additional bike rack is under the stairs/wall with defibrillator on it in the Market Square. The location on the corner of Castle Street was ruled out as an option. See below:



Item 6. Licensing Issue. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Council writes to SHDC's Licensing Department to formally register a complaint about the 24-hour licence granted to Morrisons Service Station. The letter should express that the granting of this licence correlates to an increase in anti-social behaviour problems in Borough Park and the potential selling of alcohol to underaged persons. There has been an upturn in empty alcohol bottles, broken glass (including on the new skate park area) and littering of Costa coffee cups in the park, of which the latter are only available in Totnes at the Morrisons Service Station. The letter should be copied to the local police and District Councillors.

**6. STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUP UPDATES**

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

Informal updates were given by the Chairs of the Community, Economy and Environment and Public Realm Working Groups which were noted.

**7. ON-STREET PARKING CHARGES INCREASES**

**To consider the increase in on-street parking charges to be implemented by Devon County Council without consultation.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Town Clerk would draft an email to Cllr Thomas expressing disappointment that the Town Council was not consulted or informed ahead of the proposed on-street parking increases. This would have permitted us to respond to misinformation and inform the local community in advance.

**8. BANKING SERVICES IN TOTNES**

**To consider a petition to protect banking services in Totnes.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to sign the petition set up by Caroline Voaden MP calling for a banking hub to be opened in Totnes from January 2026.

**9. COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES**

**To consider appointing Cllr representative(s) to engage with the Totnes Fringe Festival.**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to appoint Cllr Bennett as the Councillor Representative to the Totnes Fringe Festival.

**10. 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.

#### **11. NEXT MEETING**

**To note the next meeting dates of Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025 for Full Council, 6.30pm public session, 7.00pm formal meeting in the Guildhall.**

Noted. It was also noted that there would be informal sessions in December as detailed:

- Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December, 5pm (prior to the Council Matters Committee) to discuss the draft 2026/27 budget.
- Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December, 5pm (prior to the Planning Committee) to consider an informal update on the Marketing and Communications Audit, and potentially any update on the Community Audit.

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*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.*

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#### **12. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE (Standing Item)**

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

None.

#### **13. ELMHIRST PROJECT (Standing Item)**

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

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to remove the standing item from the agenda and programme an item as required when an update is available.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Cllr Tim Bennett  
Chair



**DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS  
MONDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2025 AT 6.30PM IN THE GUILDHALL**

**Present:** Councillors T Bennett (Deputy Chair), L Auletta, C Beavis, J Chinnock, E Price and M Trant.

**Apologies:** Cllr J Hannam and D Peters.

**In Attendance:** C Marlton (Town Clerk).

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chair read a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded. The apologies were accepted.

*The Committee did not adjourn as there were no members of the public present.*

**2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**To approve the minutes of 13<sup>th</sup> October 2025 and update on any matters arising.**

The minutes were **AGREED** unanimously as an accurate record of the proceedings.

**3. BUDGET MONITOR**

**To consider the Budget Monitor.**

The budget monitor was **AGREED** unanimously.

**4. STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUPS**

**To consider any budgetary recommendations from:**

**a. Economy Working Group, 8th October 2025.**

It was **AGREED** unanimously to reallocate the £2,000 for a local/members discount scheme to sponsorship of events that generates economic benefits from the 2025/26 budget.

The Working Group recommendation for the 2026/27 budget was unanimously **AGREED** but it was noted that the December Council Matters Committee will consider this further and make a recommendation to Full Council in January 2026.

**b. Community Working Group 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025.**

It was **AGREED** unanimously to grant the Clerk (in conjunction with the Community Working Group) delegated authority to allocate the remaining £1467 youth provision funding from the 2025/26 budget.

The Working Group recommendations for the 2026/27 budget allocations and moves of underspend to EMR were unanimously **AGREED** but it was noted that the December Council

Matters Committee will consider this further and make a recommendation to Full Council in January 2026.

#### **5. DRAFT BUDGET 2026/27**

**To consider an initial draft Community Development budget for financial year 2026/27.**

The Community Development (non-statutory) budget for financial year 2026/27 as proposed was noted (recommendations considered in items 4a and 4b). It was noted that the Environment and Public Realm Working Group were yet to confirm their 2026/27 budget proposals.

#### **6. COUNCILLOR CO-OPTION POLICY**

**To review the Councillor Co-option Policy.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the revised Councillor Co-option Policy is adopted.

#### **7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall.**

Noted.

*The Committee **RESOLVED** 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)*

#### **8. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)**

**To consider the bank statements and reconciliations for October (financial).**

These were reviewed and **AGREED** unanimously.

#### **9. TOWN-WIDE CCTV**

**To consider an extension of the Council’s existing CCTV provision beyond civic buildings into limited public-space areas within the town centre for crime prevention and public reassurance (legal and financial).**

It was **AGREED** not to progress town-wide provision of CCTV at this time given the costs and complexity of such a scheme.

#### **10. STAFFING UPDATE**

**For any general or urgent updates that required confidential sharing with Councillors (staffing).**

Noted.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm

Catherine Marlton  
Town Clerk  
November 2025



## **DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

### **MONDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2025 IN THE GUILDHALL**

Present: Councillors L Auletta (Chair), S Collinson (from 1905), T Cooper and J Cummings (from 1845).

Apologies: Cllrs Bennett, Collinson (running late due to work) and Hodgson.

Not Present: Cllrs Smallridge and Trant.

In Attendance: Cllr Beavis 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 Auletta read out a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded.

The apologies were accepted.

The Committee adjourned for the following item:

#### **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Cllr Beavis asked for an update on the Rotherfold surface. The Officer explained that this had been reported to South Hams District Council (SHDC) through the official 'report it' tool as well as directly to maintenance and locality officers, and that the square had been pressured washed a couple of days after the issue was reported.

The Committee reconvened.

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

**To approve the minutes of 20<sup>th</sup> October 2025 and update on any matters arising.**

Subject to amendment (there were no apologies for the October meeting) the minutes were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

#### **3. TREE WORKS APPLICATIONS**

**To make recommendations on the following tree works applications:**

3a. 3267/25/TCA - T1: Plane - crown lift to give 3m clearance by tip-pruning trailing branches only. T2: Beech - crown lift to give 2m ground clearance, to reduce shading of Motte bank and reduce erosion, by tip pruning only. T3: Thuja - crown lift to give 3m clearance. T4: Thuja - crown lift to give 2-3m clearance. T5: Laurel - coppice heavy subsiding limb to north, as shown on photo, and pollard remaining stems at approximately 2-3m. to reduce shading and risk of breaking out. T6: Ash - fell due to Ash dieback. G1: x5 Sycamore and x3 Cypress - growing at bottom of motte, fell to prevent further damage to motte retaining walls. Totnes Castle, Castle Street, Totnes, TQ9 5NU.

Support, subject to: T6 (Ash) – SHDC Tree Officer advice on the condition of the tree as some ash are recovering from die back; if felling is supported then the Committee requests a replacement tree is planted; and G1 (Sycamore and Cypress) – request that suitable replacement trees that will withstand climate challenges are planted at more appropriate locations on the site.

#### **4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**To make recommendations on the following planning applications:**

4a. 3238/25/LBC – Listed Building Consent for repairs to veranda trellis and roof canopy. Northgate Lodge, Castle Street, Totnes, TQ9 5NX.

Support, subject to the view of the Heritage Officer that the proposed lead mopstick details comply with the Lead Sheet Association guidelines.

4b. 3145/25/LBC - Listed Building Consent for change of use to mixed use and alterations to shopfront to allow new access to proposed first floor maisonette, internal refurbishment & rear access stair & garden space. 12 High Street, Totnes, TQ9 5SB.

Support. The Committee expressed its thanks to the applicant and architect for their engagement with the Committee on this application.

4c. 3101/25/LBC - Listed Building Consent for proposed ATM & signage removal for bank closure. 31-33 Fore Street, Totnes. TQ9 5HH.

Comment – whilst the Committee hugely regrets that Lloyds Bank is closing its branch which will also see the removal of an ATM in the town, it doesn't object to the application from the perspective that it will be an improvement to the façade of a listed building.

#### **5. REFORM OF THE LICENSING SYSTEM**

**To consider the Government's recent consultation on 'Reforming the Licensing System' including the NALC response to the consultation (closed 6th November 2025).**

The Committee discussed the consultation and NALC's response, with particular concern expressed about the accessibility of information to the community with the proposed withdrawal of the requirement of licensing applications to be published in local newspapers. It was **AGREED** to monitor outcomes of the consultation.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it displays details of licensing applications on its notice boards and website to ensure ongoing notification and accessibility for the community.

#### **6. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT STEERING GROUP**

**To note the minutes from the Traffic and Transport Steering Group held on 22nd October 2025 and consider any recommendations.**

Noted.

#### **7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Planning Committee – Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall.**

Noted.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm.

Sara Halliday  
Governance and Projects Manager  
November 2025



## DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE TOWN MATTERS COMMITTEE

### MONDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2025 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors N Roberts (Chair), L Auletta (from 18.35), C Beavis, J Chinnock, J Cummings, D Peters, A Presswell and E Price.

Apologies: Cllr Collinson.

Not Present: Cllr Robshaw

In Attendance: Members of the public, 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 Roberts read out a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded.

The apologies were accepted.

The Committee adjourned for the following item:

#### PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Representatives from The Heritage Trust explained the background to the William Wills project, looking to put together a more comprehensive display of information in the area of the current display [outside of the Council Chamber door]. The proposed information will provide a more balanced portrayal of the expedition that reflects the post-colonial environment. The Heritage Trust is also looking to make contact with descendants of the indigenous people in Australia who assisted the expedition and saved one of its members and would like a Cllr to help with this liaison. Cllrs asked: whether the space is sufficient for the proposed new display to cover all the topics that the Trust plans; what would the display look like – it needs to be in keeping with the building; if any other venues for displays had been considered, for example Totnes Museum or the library (which is open all year round).

The Committee reconvened.

#### 2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**To approve the minutes of 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 and update on any matters arising.**

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

Item 3b Public Realm– Planter Audit. It was **RESOLVED** by Full Council to accept the proposed retentions, removals and actions as listed.

Picnic Benches (PRD2.Q). It was **RESOLVED** by Full Council that the Town Council offers two rectangular picnic tables to South Hams District Council (SHDC) to be installed in the vicinity of the skate park, location to be agreed between the Mayor, Skate Park Community Group and SHDC.

XL Bins (PRD2.F). It was **RESOLVED** by Full Council that the two XL heritage bins are installed outside Firefly/Happy Apple on High Street; and to the rear of the Civic Hall.

Item 6 – Universal Toilets. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council writes to South Hams District Council (SHDC) requesting that it considers extending the provision of RADAR keys to transgender people on request.

Item 4. Community Audit Brief. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council commissions the audit and uses a named consultant.

Item 5. Mobility aid warnings for narrow pavements. It was **RESOLVED** by Full Council to place friendly warnings on the planter and bollards, place information on the Town Council website and make a referral to Devon Highways requesting signage.

It was **AGREED** to bring forward item 4.

#### **4. WILLIAM WILLS PROJECT**

**To consider a proposal from the Totnes Heritage Trust to work with the Town Council on a project on William Wills including: updating the information displays in the Guildhall; and forming links with the First Nation Yandruwandha on their descendant's role in the expedition.**

Cllr Price declared a personal interest. The Committee discussed the information that the Heritage Trust members had presented. To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that:

- It supports the proposed update to the Burke and Wills display space, led by the Heritage Trust;
- A nominated Cllr representative works closely with the Heritage Trust on how the display will look and its content, updating Council to ensure that it is in keeping with the building; and
- The nominated Cllr works with the Heritage Trust to liaise with the First Nation people in Australia.

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

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

**a. Community Working Group, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025.**

Noted.

**b. Economy Working Group, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025.**

Noted. Cllr Roberts gave a quick update on the Community Economic Plan work.

**c. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025.**

Noted. To make the following recommendations from the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025 meeting:

Item 3a – **Notice Board (PRD2.L)**. To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the larger notice board is installed under the Civic Hall on the wall and that the smaller notice board currently on the Civic Hall fire door is relocated to the outer red door to the Council Offices.

Item 3c - **Railway Bridge (PRD2.P)**. To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that TTC officer time is allocated to obtain quotes for painting the railway bridge in two colours (framework in one colour, panels another) which will need to include a pavement/footway closure application.

Item 3d – **XL Bins (PRD2.F)**. It was **AGREED** to forward to District Councillors the latest email requesting permission for the installation of the XL bins and ongoing litter issues outside Happy Apple.

## **5. VIRE COMMITTEE PRESIDENT**

**To consider a request from the Vire Twinning Association for the Mayor to be the president of the organisation and make a recommendation to Full Council.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Mayor becomes the ex officio President of the Vire Twinning Association.

## **6. OPEN SPACES, SPORTS, RECREATION AND WELLBEING PLAN UPDATE**

**To update on any general matters linked to the Open Spaces, Sport Recreation and Wellbeing Plan including an update on the open spaces and greenways maps (standing item).**

Cllr Auletta presented the latest greenways map and asked members to pass any additional path information to her for inclusion. There will be a refresh following comments received from Totnes Ramblers. There was also discussion of re-numbering the greenways serials to correspond to the existing footpaths wherever possible to reduce confusion. The final maps will form an appendix to the OSSRW Plan.

Cllr Presswell spoke about the number of benches on Longmarsh which are well used and the potential for a third bench at the end of the pathway. It was **AGREED** that this should be taken to Berry Pomeroy Parish Council for consideration and that any additional bench should be timber to be in keeping with the existing benches.

## **7. LINK COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

**To consider link councillor reports from Committee members.**

Cllr Presswell updated on a visit to the museum and the condition of the building that is likely to need significant future investment both inside and out.

## **8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Town Matters Committee – Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 6.30pm.**

Noted.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm.

Sara Halliday  
Governance and Projects Manager  
November 2025

## ITEM 4 – RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEE

### **4a. Full Council 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025**

No recommendations.

### **4b. Council Matters 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

Item 6. Councillor Co-option Policy. To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the revised Councillor Co-option Policy is adopted.

Officer note: following comments in Committee, there has been further clarification and examples added into the policy – see amended document on next page.

### **4c. Planning Committee 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

Item 5. Reform of the Licensing System - To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it displays details of licensing applications on its notice boards and website to ensure ongoing notification and accessibility for the community.

### **4d. Town Matters Committee 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

Item 3a. Notice Board. To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the larger notice board is installed under the Civic Hall on the wall and that the smaller notice board currently on the Civic Hall fire door is relocated to the outer red door to the Council Offices.

Item 3c. Railway Bridge. To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that TTC officer time is allocated to obtain quotes for painting the railway bridge in two colours (framework in one colour, panels another) which will need to include a pavement/footway closure application.

Item 4. William Wills Project - To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that:

- It supports the proposed update to the Burke and Wills display space, led by the Heritage Trust;
- A nominated Cllr representative works closely with the Heritage Trust on how the display will look and its content, updating Council to ensure that it is in keeping with the building; and
- The nominated Cllr works with the Heritage Trust to liaise with the First Nation people in Australia.

Item 5. Vire Committee President - To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Mayor becomes the ex officio President of the Vire Twinning Association.



## Councillor Co-option Policy

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TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED DECEMBER 2023

NEXT REVIEW NOVEMBER 2025

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*This policy outlines the process for the co-option of a Town Councillor when a casual vacancy has arisen on the Council and no poll (by-election) has been called.*

*Officer Note: Following discussion of the revised policy at the Council Matters Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> November, further clarification on voting has been added to para 6.1 and examples have been included at Annex D. The new text is in red.*

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The co-option of a Town Councillor occurs when a casual vacancy has arisen on the Council (through resignation or death) and no poll (by-election) has been called by the electorate. There are two different situations when a vacancy arises leading to a co-option: a casual vacancy which can arise under a number of circumstances; and unfilled seats following ordinary elections. See Annex A published by DALC for details.

1.2 It is important that all applicants are treated equally so that the selection process is seen as open, fair and transparent. This policy sets out the process to be followed by Totnes Town Council when co-option is under consideration.

1.3 To ensure that a fair and transparent process is undertaken the procedure set out below will be followed.

## 2. Casual Vacancy

2.1 On receipt of written confirmation from the Electoral Services Office at South Hams District Council (SHDC) that the requisite 10 electors of the Parish have not called for a poll (by-election) within the legally specified time period (currently 14 days) following the publication of the Notice of Vacancy, the Town Clerk is notified by SHDC that the vacancy(ies) may be filled by co-option. The Town Council may then decide if they wish to proceed to co-opt within 28 days or wait for a period of up to 6 months before proceeding. If the casual vacancy can be filled by means of co-option, the Town Clerk will:

- a. advertise the vacancy for 3 weeks on the Council notice boards, ~~and website~~ **and social media channels**, and if considered necessary place an advert in the local press.
- b. advise the Council that the Co-option Policy has been instigated, by sending an email to all Councillors.

2.2 Applicants for co-option will be asked to:

- a. submit information about themselves, by way of completing a short application form (see Annex B).
- b. confirm their eligibility for the position of Councillor within the statutory rules, by completing an Eligibility Form (see Annex C).

2.3 Copies of the applicant's application form will be circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk prior to the meeting of the Full Council when the co-option will be considered. The applications forms will be included in the ~~Part 1~~ papers which are made available to the public (with all personal details redacted).

2.4 Following the Full Council decision the newly appointed Councillor(s) will be contacted by the Clerk who will arrange for an induction appointment where Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Register of Interest forms will be completed.

2.5 Canvassing councillors or the members of a committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from appointment.

### 3. Unfilled Seats following an Ordinary Election

3.1 Under the Representation of the People Act 1985 Section 21 allows the elected members, provided there is a quorum (one third of the whole number of members with a minimum of three) to co-opt members to fill the remaining vacancies. This must happen within 35 working days of the date of the ordinary elections - the Council will (or have commenced the process) to fill the vacancy(ies) by way of co-option. The process to follow is as set out from 2.1 above.

### 4. Co-option Process

4.1 Applicants will be permitted to attend the meeting of the Council as members of the public when the co-option is being considered.

4.2 Discussion about the applications will take place in Council session without intervention from the candidates or public. However, if it is necessary for the Council to discuss the merits of candidates and inevitably their personal attributes, this could be considered prejudicial, and if so, the Council could resolve to exclude the members of the press and public.

### 5. Councillors Conflict of Interest

5.1 Declarations of Interest must be made by Town Councillors as each candidate is considered, (for example family ties, friendships, business relationships, etc). This does not prevent Councillors from voting, but a Councillor may exempt themselves from the process if there is considered a serious conflict of interest.

5.2 Where a Councillor feels they have a serious conflict of interest, they must declare this interest and request to be exempt from the co-option process. The Councillor will be invited to leave the room at the commencement of the co-option process, and re-join the meeting once all voting has been completed and decisions made.

### 6. Voting

6.1 Voting must take place in a public meeting and only Councillors present at the meeting may vote. Voting will take the form of a show of hands, with each Councillor having **one vote per round of voting**, with the Clerk to the meeting recording each candidates votes for, against and any abstentions.

6.2 Voting will be according to the statutory requirements, in that, each successful candidate must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting (50% + 1 of the votes available at the meeting).

6.3 If there are fewer candidates than vacancies, each candidate must receive an absolute majority vote of those members present at the meeting to be co-opted (therefore, no majority = no co-option). There is no "co-opted uncontested" provision within the law.

6.4 Where there is the same number of candidates as vacancies, each candidate must still receive an absolute majority vote of those members present at the meeting (therefore, no majority = no co-option).

6.5 If there are more candidates (with a majority vote) than vacancies, then the voting process will take place again to determine the successful candidate(s).

6.6 If there are exactly as many as, or fewer candidates than vacancies, the Town Council may vote on a composite motion, duly proposed and seconded, that all candidates be co-opted.

6.7 The vote will take place as per Standing Orders section 10 'Voting on Appointments':

a. Where two or more persons have been nominated for a position by the Council and none of those persons has an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken.

b. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chair's casting vote.

6.8 If at the end of voting, there is a vacancy where no candidate has received a majority vote, then the vacancy may remain unfilled. The Council will then reconsider at the next suitable Council Meeting what steps they wish to take to continue with the co-option process.

6.9 After the vote has been concluded, the Chair will declare the successful candidate(s) duly appointed. **Examples of how voting will take place can be found in Annex D.**

## 7. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

7.1 Those co-opted must sign a declaration of acceptance of office before they can join any meeting of the Council as a member.

## 8. Term of Office

8.1 A person co-opted to fill a casual vacancy holds office until the person resigns or at the next ordinary elections.

8.2 A co-opted Councillor is not eligible to claim the Councillor allowance. This is national law, not a local rule.

## 9. Notification of Co-option

9.1 The Clerk will notify the Democratic and Electoral Services Team at South Hams District Council of the new member(s) appointment. The new member(s) must complete a Register of Interest within 28 days of being co-opted and prior to taking part in any Council meetings in their Councillor role. These will be sent to the Democratic and Electoral Services Team at South Hams District Council.

**ANNEX A – CO-OPTION (TAKEN FROM THE DEVON ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (DALC) WEBSITE)**

Co-option provides a way for councils to fill those post-election vacancies that might arise on their council following an election, or the casual vacancies that arise after a councillor loses their seat.

**What is co-option?**

Co-option is a process by which a vacant seat on a parish or town council is filled by appointment rather than an election. It is often necessary to ensure a council is fully constituted and able to carry out its duties.

Vacancies can arise for various reasons such as insufficient candidates at an election, resignations and disqualifications. Vacancies which occur due to a councillor's departure mid-term are called casual vacancies.

**Co-option due to insufficient candidates at election**

If following an election the council has less members than seats available, but remains quorate\*, co-options may be required to fill the vacant seats.

*\*A council's quorum is the minimum number of seats a council must have filled in order to carry out its business. This is three, or a third of the total number of seats, whichever is greater (the figure is rounded up where applicable).*

**Is your council inquorate?** If your council is inquorate then you cannot co-opt and we would suggest you contact DALC for guidance.

**What is the difference between a post election vacancy and a casual vacancy?**

	<b>Post-election vacancy</b>	<b>Casual vacancy</b>
<b>What is it?</b>	Vacancies immediately following an election due to an insufficient number of candidates nominated.	Vacancies following the departure of a councillor mid-term due to resignation or other reasons, as stated in the Local Government Act 1972 s87.
<b>Do we need to post a notice of the vacancy?</b>	No, the council does not need to post a notice of the vacancy. However we'd still recommend advertising to attract potential candidates (more below).	Councils must contact the district council in the event of a casual vacancy. The council must give notice of the vacancy, displayed in a prominent place in the parish for at least 14 days (excluding bank holidays etc), allowing electors to request a by-election*. If no by-election is requested, the district council will confirm the council may co-opt, at which point you may want to advertise for potential candidates. <i>*by-elections will not be called when a vacancy occurs within six months of an ordinary election.</i>
<b>When do we need to fill the seats?</b>	The council has 35 working days to co-opt from the date of the election. If they do not fill the vacancies within the timeframe, the district council <u>may</u> take action to fill the seats.	There is no statutory deadline, but councils are encouraged to fill its seats as soon as practically possible; the community deserves full representation.

<b>What process should we follow?</b>	If you have an established co-option process, whether that's a written procedure or just precedent, we would advise councils to follow a consistent process for both vacancy types.
<b>Who is eligible to stand?</b>	Anyone wishing to join the council via co-option must be eligible under <a href="#">s.79 of the Local Government Act 1972</a> and not disqualified under <a href="#">s.80 of the Local Government Act 1972</a> . These <a href="#">resources from the Electoral Commission</a> may be helpful.

## Frequently Asked Questions for Casual Vacancies

### **When can we co-opt?**

With casual vacancies; when a councillor resigns or loses their seat (Local Government Act 1972 s.80) during the term of office, you will need to inform the district council. They will give you a notice of vacancy, which lets members of the public know that a vacancy has arisen and gives them the opportunity to request a by-election. If a by-election is requested by 10 or more electors, then the district council will proceed. Otherwise, they will let you know that you are now free to co-opt and you can start your co-option process.

If the casual vacancy has arisen within 6 months prior to an ordinary election (next elections will be in 2027!) then the council does not need to contact the district council and does not need to co-opt (although can still do so if they wish!).

### **Do we have to advertise vacancies?**

We recommend advertising vacancies and encouraging people to come forward; this is different from the statutory notices for casual vacancies where by-elections may be called. Advertising widely through a variety of mediums, increases the chance of the council having a choice of candidates and allows the council to be sure it has got the best representatives for the community.

### **When can we advertise?**

With casual vacancies, you can start advertising when the district council has told you that you can go ahead and co-opt since no by-election has been requested.

### **What is the co-option process?**

There is no statutory procedure for how councils undertake their co-options. It is advisable to have an agreed procedure to ensure fairness, transparency and consistency. NALC would suggest that you get candidates to confirm their eligibility in writing; you may need to investigate or obtain evidence if that is challenged.

There are a range of ways that councils can find out more about proposed candidates including:

- Application form – asking candidates to complete an application form, perhaps giving more information about themselves
- Interviews – either with the full council or with a committee of the council (only the full council can make the decision to co-opt)
- Written statement – ask candidates to submit a written statement explaining what they would bring to the council
- In-person statement – ask candidates to address a meeting of the council explaining what they would bring to the council

Whatever you choose, the process must be open to all eligible candidates. Consistency will be key and ensures that all candidates are treated fairly.

### **Who makes the decision about co-option?**

Only the full council can make the decision about who to co-opt; it cannot be delegated to either a committee or to an officer of the council. If the council is inquorate then it will not be able to co-opt and will need to contact the district council for support.

### **How do we vote on co-options?**

Voting, as with all council decisions, is by show of hands unless the council has provided otherwise in their standing orders. Secret ballots may only be used if standing orders allow for them.

It is difficult to justify the need to exclude the press and the public (including the candidates) while a council makes its decision on who to co-opt; choosing a public representative is expected to be a public and transparent affair. Therefore co-options should not be considered in confidential session.

### **If we only have one candidate for a vacancy, do we have to accept them?**

It is NALC's view that where there is the same number, or less, of candidates than there are vacancies, then they shall be co-opted on to the council. If the council is concerned about lack of choice, then advertising a vacancy widely within the community may be helpful.

### **We have more candidates than vacancies, how do we choose?**

By referring to the information from the candidates application forms, interviews and/or presentations, the council can determine which individual(s) will be best suited for the council in a consistent and fair manner.

When voting there must be a clear majority for a candidate(s) in order to co-opt. Where there are three or more candidates for one seat and a vote is tied, the candidate with the fewest votes shall be removed from consideration and the vote repeated until a majority can be achieved.

### **The Council doesn't like an applicant, can we reject them?**

It is NALC's view that if an eligible person has come forward for a vacancy, then they shall be co-opted to the council. If they had nominated themselves in an uncontested election they would have had gained the seat, so it's difficult for the council to refuse an eligible candidate and will likely be subject to challenge if they do so.

### **What if we cannot find any candidates?**

With post-election vacancies, if the power of co-option is not used within 35 working days of the election then the principal authority (the district council) has powers to step in to fill the vacancies. This might include holding a further election (at cost to the council) or may involve other acts such as appointing temporary councillors, or requiring that you post a notice of vacancy to allow a by-election to be requested. Your district council will be able to advise at the time.

With casual vacancies, we'd recommend trying again until you are able to fill those seats. Perhaps try a new approach; more advertising or reaching out directly to people who might be interested.

### **What happens after a co-option?**

Just like elected councillors, co-opted councillors must sign a declaration of acceptance of office at or before their first meeting, and must submit their register of interests within 28 days of their co-option. It is advisable that co-opted councillors do not take office until the end of the meeting at which they are appointed.

The clerk should notify the returning officer at the district council that a co-option has taken place as soon as practically possible after the meeting at which they are appointed.

All co-opted councillors should be given the same opportunities in regards to induction and training, as elected councillors.

### **Are co-opted councillors different to elected councillors?**

No; a co-opted councillor will participate in council business in the same way as elected councillors. There are no restrictions to the roles they may perform i.e. membership of committees, election of chairman/mayor etc.

However, co-opted councillors will not count as an 'elected' councillor for the purposes of the General Power of Competence (although councillors appointed at uncontested election will).

For those councils which provide an allowance to their members, **not** including the Chair's Allowance, please be aware that co-opted members are not eligible to receive the allowance.

ANNEX B – CO-OPTED COUNCILLOR APPLICATION FORM

<b>Full Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Telephone Number (s):</b>	
<b>Email Address:</b>	

**Please briefly explain why you are interested in becoming a Town Councillor.**

**Please tell us something about what experience you can bring to Totnes Town Council, for example professional or voluntary/charitable work/roles, previous local government experience, business experience.**

**Please tell us something about skills you can bring to the Council, for example professional qualifications, financial or project management expertise.**

--

**Is there any other information you would like to add in support of your application?**

--

**Are there any questions you would like to ask the Town Council?**

--

Signed: .....

Print: .....

Date: .....

**ANNEX C – ELIGIBILITY FORM**

Are you a British <del>citizen</del> <b>subject, an eligible Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, a qualifying EU citizen or an EU citizen with retained rights</b> <del>citizen of the Commonwealth or citizen of the European Union?</del>	<b>YES/NO</b>
On the 'relevant date' (i.e. the day on which you are nominated or if there is a poll the day of the election) are you 18 years of age or over?	<b>YES/NO</b>

***Please tick those below which apply to you (nb Totnes includes Town and Bridgetown wards)***

I am registered as a local government elector in Totnes; or	
I have, during the whole of the twelve months preceding the date of my co-option, occupied as owner or tenant, land or other premises in Totnes; or	
My principal or only place of work has, during the whole twelve months preceding my co-option, been in Totnes; or	
I have during the whole of twelve months preceding my co-option lived in Totnes or within 3 miles of it.	

Under Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 a person is **disqualified** from being elected as a Local Councillor or being a member of a Local Council if specific criteria are not met:

Are you an employee of Totnes Town Council?	<b>YES/NO</b>
Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order?	<b>YES/NO</b>
Have you within the last five years been convicted of an offence in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine;	<b>YES/NO</b>
Are you disqualified by order of <b>an election</b> court from being a member of a local authority under the Representation of the People Act 1983?	<b>YES/NO</b>
<b>Are subject to the notification requirement of or under Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003?</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>

**Declaration**

I.....hereby confirm that I am eligible for the vacancy of Totnes Town Councillor, and the information given on this form is a true and accurate record.

Signed: .....

Print: .....

Date: .....

## ANNEX D – EXAMPLES OF CO-OPTION VOTES

**Note: to be co-opted, the candidate must receive an absolute majority of the votes available/those present at the meeting, 50 percent plus 1. Voting is by a show of hands with one vote cast by each Councillor in each round of voting.**

### Example - One Candidate for One Vacancy

All 15 councillors are present and eligible to vote in one round of voting. The absolute majority for the candidate to be co-opted is to receive 8 votes (50 percent (7) plus 1). The Clerk asks for those voting in favour of co-opting the candidate, against and abstentions. For example:

Scenario 1 - 8 vote in favour of co-option, 2 against and 5 abstentions = candidate co-opted as absolute majority reached.

Scenario 2 - 6 vote in favour of co-option, 5 against and 4 abstentions = no co-option as no absolute majority.

### Example – Three Candidates for One Vacancy

While there are 15 sitting councillors, only 13 are present and eligible to vote in each round of voting. The absolute majority for the candidate to be co-opted is to receive 7 votes (50 percent (6) plus 1). The Clerk explains that in each round, if more than one round of voting is required, each Councillor has one vote to cast for one of the three candidates. The Clerk will ask for those voting in favour of co-opting the candidate and abstentions, over potentially two rounds. For example:

Scenario 3 – Round 1: 7 votes in favour of candidate A, 3 votes in favour of candidate B, and 3 votes in favour of candidate C = candidate A co-opted as absolute majority reached.

Scenario 4 – Round 1: 4 votes in favour of candidate A, 6 votes in favour of candidate B, and 3 votes in favour of candidate C = no absolute majority reached, the candidate with the fewest votes (candidate C) drops out and a second round of voting is held.

Round 2: 6 votes in favour of candidate A, and 7 votes in favour of candidate B = candidate B co-opted as absolute majority reached.

or Round 2: 6 votes in favour of candidate A, and 6 votes in favour of candidate B, 1 abstention = tie and Chair to have the casting vote.

### Example 3 – Three Candidates for Two Vacancies

All 14 councillors are present and eligible to vote in each round of voting. The absolute majority for the candidate to be co-opted is to receive 8 votes (50 percent (7) plus 1). The Clerk explains that in each round, if more than one round of voting is required, each Councillor has one vote to cast for one of the three candidates. The Clerk will ask for those voting in favour of co-opting the candidate and abstentions, over potentially two rounds. For example:

Scenario 5 – Round 1: 3 votes in favour of candidate A, 3 votes in favour of candidate B, and 8 votes in favour of candidate C = candidate C co-opted as an absolute majority reached.

Round 2: 4 votes in favour of candidate A, 8 votes in favour of candidate B and 2 abstentions = candidate B co-opted as an absolute majority reached.

Scenario 6 – Round 1: 2 votes in favour of candidate A, 5 votes in favour of candidate B, and 7 votes in favour of candidate C = no absolute majority reached, the candidate with the fewest votes (candidate A) drops out and a second round of voting is held.

Either

Round 2: 6 votes in favour of candidate B, 8 votes in favour of candidate C = candidate C co-opted as an absolute majority reached.

Round 3: 9 votes in favour of candidate B, 5 abstentions = candidate B co-opted as an absolute majority reached.

Or

The Council may vote on a composite motion, duly proposed and seconded, that the two remaining candidates be co-opted which must receive an absolute majority of votes (50 percent plus 1) to be carried.

**ITEM 7 – LIST OF MEETING DATES, COMMUNICATIONS POINTS AND LINK COUNCILLOR UPDATES**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Full Council, 7pm</b>	<b>Council Matters Committee, 6.30pm</b>	<b>Planning Committee, 6.30pm</b>	<b>Town Matters Committee, 6.30pm</b>
<b>December 2025</b>	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup>	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Monday 15 <sup>th</sup>	None
<b>January 2026</b>	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup>	Monday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Monday 26 <sup>th</sup>
<b>February 2026</b>	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Monday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup>	None
<b>March 2026</b>	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Monday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup>

**December**

Full Council – 1<sup>st</sup> December at 6.30pm  
 Economy Working Group – 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 12.30pm  
 Council Matters Committee – 8<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30pm  
 Planning Committee – 15<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30pm

**January**

Full Council – 5<sup>th</sup> January at 6.30pm  
 Council Matters Committee – 12<sup>th</sup> January at 6.30pm  
 Community Working Group – 13<sup>th</sup> January at 6pm  
 Planning Committee – 19<sup>th</sup> January at 6.30pm  
 Environment and Public Realm Working Group – 21<sup>st</sup> January at 4.30pm  
 Town Matters Committee – 26<sup>th</sup> January at 6.30pm  
 Traffic and Transport Forum and AGM – 28<sup>th</sup> January at 6.30pm

**February**

Full Council – 2<sup>nd</sup> February at 6.30pm  
 Council Matters Committee – 9<sup>th</sup> February at 6.30pm  
 Civic Service – Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February at 11am (St Mary’s Church)  
 Planning Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> February at 6.30pm

**March**

Full Council – 2<sup>nd</sup> March at 6.30pm  
 Council Matters Committee – 9<sup>th</sup> March at 6.30pm  
 Planning Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> March at 6.30pm  
 Environment and Public Realm Working Group – 18<sup>th</sup> March at 4.30pm  
 Town Matters Committee – 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 6.30pm

**May 2026**

21<sup>st</sup> May – Mayor Making (morning)  
 28<sup>th</sup> May - Annual Town Meeting, 6pm in the Civic Hall.

**Communications Points – please check the Totnes Town Council ‘News’ page** Further verbal updates to be given by the Clerk at the meeting.

## **Link Councillor/Councillor Representative on Outside Body Updates**

### **Cllr Auletta**

#### OSSRW (Open Spaces, Sports, Recreation and Wellbeing)

- Correspondence with Totnes Ramblers on footpaths in town for OSSRW map and revisions to that.
- Meeting with a group including TTT members re potential sites for 30x30 biodiversity planting.

#### Heritage

- Meeting with Conservation Officer re works at Guildhall Cottage

#### Traffic and Transport Forum

- Meetings with Chair and other members to discuss ideas about High Street and Bridge, and also with DCC to discuss consultant appointment. DCC are to undertake a manual traffic count on the bridge.
- Attended Active Travel webinar on critical safety issues guidance for cyclists and also a DALC Traffic webinar with DCC.
- Meeting 2 cyclists about a Totnes to Paignton route (with D Cllr Presswell in view of the recent meeting she organised to assist Stoke Gabriel cyclists)

### **Cllr Peters**

Notes from Dart Harbour Communities Group meeting, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2025

- SHDC are leading a campaign to register ancient, veteran or significant landscape trees. This is being carried out by local tree wardens.
- The harbourmasters plan is still open for comments on the Dart Harbour authority website.
- The Harbour Authority are going to start marketing the harbour as a destination (numbers of visitors was about the same as last year despite the excellent weather) They are going to use the strap line "One river eight destinations" and encourage people to explore the full length of the Dart and Towns and villages. Probably a good one to link in with (Kayleigh)
- There is now a bathing water quality indicator outside the rowing club. The EA and Harbour master recommended that the Drat swim was cancelled due to the extremely poor bathing water quality at Totnes following the end of August downpours.
- The EA talked briefly about the River Dart catchment partnership who are trying to get a lottery grant. Does anyone have any dealings with them, or know who is involved?
- EA also mentioned the Southwest water "better Futures Fund" which is open to community groups involved with Health and wellbeing. I was thinking that we could try applying with Dartington Trust to repair/upgrade the pontoon above the weir.
- The National landscape officer reported briefly on the Saltmarsh regeneration at Longmarsh and potential future projects at Stoke Gabriel and a sea grass regeneration scheme close to Dittisham.
- I asked the EA about the continuing poor bathing water quality at Totnes and the link to the upstream treatment facility at Buckfastleigh. He said that rural treatment plants don't have the same level of filtration and treatment as urban facilities, i.e. the Littlehempston works, and that investment in the buckfastleigh plant will be happening. He was also keen to point out that bathing water quality was measured at a far higher level than levels for purely ecological purposes due to bacterial requirement for the former. So probably a good idea to identify more recognised bathing spots above the weir.

- He also said that water companies are going to have to invest billions over the next five years to improve/ resolve outflow issues (so expect bills to keep going up).