



AGENDA FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE MONDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2025 AT 6.30PM 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 **Council Matters Committee** on **Monday 8th December 2025 at 6.30pm** in the Guildhall for the purpose of transacting the following business:

Committee Members: Councillors L Auletta, C Beavis, T Bennett, J Chinnock, J Hannam, D Peters, E Price and M Trant.

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. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 10th November 2025 and update on any matters arising. Document attached [page 3].

3. BUDGET MONITOR

To consider the Budget Monitor. Documents attached [page 4a).

4. STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUPS

To consider any budgetary recommendation from:

- a. Economy Working Group, 3rd December 2025. Document to follow.
- b. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 19th November 2025. Document attached [page 5].

5. DRAFT BUDGET 2026/27

To consider an initial draft budget for financial year 2026/27. Document attached and report to follow [page 5a].

6. PAYMENTS TO COUNCILLORS POLICY

To review the Payments to Councillors Policy. Document attached [page 6].

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 12th January 2026 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall. No document.

*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)*

8. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)

To consider the bank statements and reconciliations for November (financial). Documents attached.

9. STAFFING UPDATE

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

Catherine Marlton
Town Clerk
3rd December 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.

ITEM 2 – CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES



DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS MONDAY 10TH 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 13th 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 14th 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 8th 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

ITEM 4 – STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUPS

4b. Environment and Public Realm Working Group - Budget

There was discussion of some anticipated budget allocations in the current financial year that are unlikely to materialise due to ongoing or new works strands at South Hams District Council (SHDC), for example: cut back of vegetation on Vire Island (no planned TTC costs); introduction of segregated waste bins (hold on purchasing more XL bins); and a one-off clean/tidy up of the town (new street cleaning operatives and Localities officer has seen a marked improvement in the cleanliness in the town and responsiveness to problem areas).

To **RECOMMEND** to the Council Matters Committee:

- a. From the 2025/26 budget (£54500) move to Ear Marked Reserves (EMR) the following amounts:
 - £25,000 Public Realm and Street Cleanliness moved to new EMR – Town Improvement Fund
 - £5,000 Town Park/Vire Island moved to new EMR – Town Improvement Fund
 - £7,500 Climate Change projects moved to new EMR – Climate Change Projects

- b. Proposed budget for 2026/27:

Environment/Public Realm PROPOSED 2026/27	
Totnes Gardens	3500
Public Art / Graffiti management	10000
Town Centre Improvements	20000
Heritage Forum / Directory / Grants*	5000
TOTAL	38500

*It was **AGREED** to increase this to £5K from the proposed £2.5K to cover the increased engagement with the Heritage Trust and Totnes Castle.

It was **AGREED** to bring potential Cemetery Wild Area maintenance works back to the January 2026 Working Group, as an April cut will need to be considered before the proposed site visit in March, whereas other proposed work strands can wait until the March Working Group for discussion and recommendations.



Payments to Councillors Policy

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED JANUARY 2025

NEXT REVIEW DECEMBER 2025

This Policy outlines the occasions on which payments may be made to Town Councillors. [Updates in red]

Councillor Allowances

Whilst there is no provision in law enabling town and parish councils to pay individual councillors a wage commensurate with work done by that individual nevertheless the council notes and recognises the time commitment of councillors as well as the many incidental costs they incur in carrying out council business.

Such incidental expenses include: -

- a) the use of their homes.
- b) telephone calls from home landlines and mobile phones.
- c) stationary, printing and IT costs.
- d) use of car, motorcycle or bicycle.

Please note that this list is indicative and not meant to cover every circumstance in which incidental expenses may be incurred.

Totnes Town Council will pay a basic members allowance to elected members intended to compensate for time taken on council business and these incidental costs, except that

travelling expenses incurred on council business as specified below can be the subject of a specific claim.

In order to qualify for this allowance, Councillors must attend 75% of Full Council meetings plus meetings of one committee during the 12 months prior to the payment being made. Councillors who start part way through the year will receive a pro rata allowance assuming they have attended 75% of the meetings as detailed above during their time. Councillors who are not on at least one committee are not eligible to claim this allowance. Also Co-opted Councillors are not eligible to receive this allowance – this is not a local decision and is set down in Regulation 25 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

The levels of allowance paid are agreed by South Hams District Council in accordance with national legislation. The annual permitted allowance for members of Totnes Town Council is ~~£503.10~~~~487.50~~ and this is subject to taxation.

Town Councillors who are members of another local authority and who are entitled to an allowance from that authority should be guided by the Declaration of Interest Guidance in the Council's Code of Conduct.

NOTE: Town Councillors will be required to declare their allowance to HMRC through the Town Council PAYE system.

Rates set by South Hams District Council

Parish Basic Allowance

The formula recommended by the Parish Remuneration Panel at its last meeting calculates an allowance based on a percentage of the district basic allowance (now fixed at £6500 per annum) and the size of the electorate.

Electorate	% of District Basic Allowance	Amount per Councillor
5,001 – 10,000	7.5%	£503.10 487.50

Chairman / Mayor's Allowance

An additional sum will be allocated to a Chairman / Mayor of £100, claimable by receipts. Please see the Civic and Mayoral Budget Policy for details.

Travel Allowance

An elected and co-opted Councillor shall, in addition to their entitlement to a Basic Parish Allowance or Chairman's Allowance, will only in exceptional circumstance be paid a travelling expense in respect of travelling undertaken in connection with the duties and only for journeys outside the parish boundary.

Councillors may be reimbursed for expenses for travel when carrying out duties approved by the council or in connection with the discharge of the functions of the council or any of its committees or working parties. This includes attendance at training courses.

Approval for the attendance at events referred to above must be approved in advance.

Councillors will not receive expenses for attendance at any meeting of Totnes Town Council or work within the parish.

The main rates are:

- a. The council will pay a travel allowance in accordance with the following:
 - Cars: 45p per mile
 - Motorcycles: 24p per mile
 - Public transport: lowest available second-class fare only, ticket receipts required
 - Parking cost: actual cost with receipt

Taxis

In rare cases of urgency where no public transport is reasonably available the amount of the actual fare will be paid. In any other case, the amount of the fare for travel by appropriate public transport will be paid.

Rail Travel

Tickets should be purchased through the office as far in advance as possible to minimise costs. All tickets will be standard class, and Councillors should use any discounts available to them.

- b. Subsistence Allowances

Subsistence is reimbursement from the Council to a Councillor in respect of actual food and drink costs they have incurred during their approved duty. Expenses will not be paid where a suitable meal is provided as part of the event (e.g. at a course or conference).

If a town councillor is away from their usual place of residence for more than four hours, they can claim £10.00 towards their breakfast, lunch and/or evening meal.

In exceptional circumstances, if a Councillor must stay away from home overnight on an approved duty, then dinner, bed and breakfast (at a reasonably priced rate with full supporting receipts) may be claimed.

Where hotel accommodation is essential it will be in a reasonably priced hotel (e.g. Travel Inn or 3 star hotel), and must be booked in advance by the office.

Reimbursement of expenditure

Items required by Councillors to carry out their approved duties must be ordered and paid for through the office in advance of the event.

Councillor Training

All Councillor training will be booked and paid for through the office.

Administration

Claim forms are available from the Finance, HR and Lettings Manager.

In general, appropriate VAT receipts must be obtained for all expenses incurred. Reimbursement of the VAT element, or the entire sum will be withheld in cases where there is no receipt.

Any dispute over claims or reimbursement of expenses will be considered by Full Council.