



AGENDA FOR THE MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL MONDAY 5TH OCTOBER 2026 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 5th October 2026 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.

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 – document attached (page 4)
- d. District Cllr Presswell – document attached (page 10)

The Council will convene to consider the following items:

3. CLERK'S QUARTERLY REPORT

To note the Clerk's Quarterly Report for July - September 2026 (general updates and correspondence). Document attached (page 15)

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 7th September 2026 – document attached (page 29)

To note the following minutes:

- b. Council Matters Committee 14th September 2026 – document attached (page 34)
- c. Planning Committee 21st September 2026 – document attached (page 37)
- d. Town Matters Committee 28th September 2026 – document attached (page 40)

5. 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):

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

- a. Full Council 7th September 2026 – document attached (page 29)
- b. Council Matters Committee 14th September 2026 – document attached (page 34)
- c. Planning Committee 21st September 2026 - document attached (page 37)
- d. Town Matters Committee 28th September 2026 – document attached (page 40)

6. LIST OF MEETING DATES, COMMUNICATIONS POINTS AND LINK COUNCILLOR UPDATES

To note a list of upcoming meeting dates and annual meetings calendar, Council communications points and link Councillor/Councillor representatives on outside bodies updates - document attached (page 44)

7. CONSULTATION ON PLYMOUTH BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE DEVON AND TORBAY COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY AND CONVERSION TO A MAYORAL STRATEGIC AUTHORITY

To consider whether the DTCCA should progress to become a Mayoral Strategic Authority, and the potential benefits and concerns associated with that change – document attached (page 45)

8. NEXT MEETING

To note the next meeting date of Monday 2nd November 2026, 6.30pm public session, 7.00pm formal meeting in the Guildhall.

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.

9. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE (Standing Item)

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

10. COMMUNITY ASSETS

To consider the Community Asset opportunity at Laura House (financial). Hard copy report provided to members.

Agenda produced by:
Catherine Marlton
Town Clerk
30th September 2026

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 2C – District Councillor Birch’s report

John Birch
SHDC Member for Totnes
Report to the meeting to be held on
Monday 5 October 2026

I report on the following

CHANGES IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Government has introduced a National Scheme of Delegation for planning functions, under the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 and the Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026.

The new arrangements come into force on 31 October 2026 and require specified categories of planning applications to be determined by officers. Other specified applications will be subject to a presumption of officer determination unless the statutory requirements for referral to a planning committee are satisfied.

The Government’s statutory guidance expressly states that existing arrangements whereby ward councillors can require planning applications to be called in for committee consideration will no longer be possible under the National Scheme of Delegation. (GOV.UK)

SHDC recognises the legitimate objective of ensuring that routine and technical planning applications are dealt with efficiently and without unnecessary delay.

However, the Council considers that efficiency and speed must be balanced against the need for local democratic accountability, transparency and public confidence in planning decisions.

The Council is particularly concerned that the removal of the existing ward member call-in mechanism may reduce the ability of elected representatives to ensure that applications raising significant local issues receive appropriate democratic scrutiny.

The Council notes that the new regulations do provide a mechanism through which applications raising a significant economic, social or environmental issue for the local area, or a significant planning matter having regard to the development plan and other material considerations, may be referred to committee.

The Council further notes that the Government is required to undertake and publish a review of the regulations by 31 October 2028, providing an opportunity to assess their effectiveness and consider improvements.

At SHDC’s Full Council meeting held on 24 September 2026 I proposed the following recommendation for Council to adopt

1. To strongly condemn and deplore those provisions of the National Scheme of Delegation which substantially reduce the ability of elected ward councillors to secure democratic consideration of planning applications affecting their communities.
2. To affirm that local democratic accountability should remain a fundamental principle of the planning system, and that elected members should retain a meaningful role in ensuring that significant local planning issues receive appropriate democratic scrutiny.
3. To recognise that South Hams District Council must comply with the 2026 Regulations from 31 October 2026, but to require that the Council's revised Constitution and planning delegation arrangements make maximum lawful use of the discretion available to the Council to preserve local democratic involvement.
4. To require the Executive Member for Planning, the Director of Planning and the Monitoring Officer to report to the Overview and Scrutiny committee before 31 January 2027 on the proposed changes to the Constitution and planning scheme of delegation required to implement the National Scheme of Delegation.
5. To request that the Leader of the Council write to the Secretary of State responsible for planning, expressing South Hams District Council's concern that the new arrangements substantially restrict the ability of locally elected councillors to secure democratic consideration of planning applications.

My recommendation was approved.

SOUTH HAMS IS ONE OF THE BEST IN ENGLAND

South Hams has been named amongst the friendliest places in England. It was ranked second in an index of all 296 local council areas in the University of Oxford's National Conversation Project.

The strength of community life was measured by looking at how often people speak to their neighbours, feelings of loneliness and belonging, pride in the local area and participation in civic life.

Leader of South Hams District Council Dan Thomas: "Anyone who knows the South Hams will understand why it has been recognised this way.

"Yes, we're lucky to have beautiful coast, countryside, villages and towns, but what really makes this district special is its people.

"Across the South Hams, there are so many residents, businesses, volunteers and community groups who quietly go out of their way to help others, welcome visitors and look after the places they care about. That kindness and community spirit is something we should never take for granted.

"To be named the second friendliest place in England is lovely recognition for the district, and it is something everyone who lives and works here can feel proud of."

Totnes has played its part in bringing about this high ranking for South Hams. Our vibrant town is arguably one of the best to live in England because it combines an unusually strong sense of community, exceptional historic character, beautiful countryside, and a genuinely independent local economy.

Totnes has one of the most distinctive historic townscapes in Devon. The Norman castle, medieval High Street, Elizabethan and Georgian buildings and churches give the town a real sense of place added to which the town has an unusually high concentration of independent shops, cafés, restaurants, galleries, food producers and small businesses. This gives it an identity that is quite different from the standardised high streets found elsewhere.

Totnes also has an exceptional number of voluntary organisations, community groups, cultural organisations, churches, societies and local initiatives and it has developed a strong reputation for local and organic food, independent cafés, restaurants, markets and food producers. The weekly market also contributes significantly to the town's atmosphere.

Perhaps the most important factor is that Totnes has not lost its individuality. This, together with a strong sense of community, exceptional historic character, beautiful countryside, and a genuinely independent local economy is a valuable contribution in making our town one of the best places to live in.

SOLAR PANELS ON LEISURE CENTRES

At a recent SHDC Executive meeting the following additional expenditure was agreed in respect of the installation of solar panels on the four Council leisure centres as follows.

1. That an increase to the capital budget for the installation of solar panels on the Council's four leisure centres from £460,000 (as approved on 5 June 2025 Minute E.10/25 refers) to £620,000, be approved
2. That the installation of solar panels on Ivybridge, Dartmouth and Totnes leisure centres be approved following the installation of solar panels on Kingsbridge Leisure Centre; and
3. That the increase in the capital budget of £160,000 be funded from £80,000 from the Climate Change Earmarked Reserve and £80,000 from the Business Rates Retention Reserve

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

At a recent SHDC Executive meeting the Leader of the Council provided an update on recent developments regarding Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Devon. In particular, reference was made to the decision that had been recently taken by Devon County Council (DCC) at its most recent Cabinet meeting (held on 9 September 2026).

The DCC Cabinet decision sought clarification from Central Government as to the precise effect of its 7 September 2026 announcement. In particular, DCC was pressing Central Government to confirm that the LGR proposal for Devon (announced on 16 July 2026) had been withdrawn. However, as Judicial Review proceedings must be brought promptly and, in any event within three months of the decision to be challenged (to preserve its right to challenge the July 2026 decision), DCC had authorised legal proceedings to continue in the event that Central Government either failed to respond promptly or the response was one that was deemed unsatisfactory to DCC.

In response I proposed the following

That the stance taken by Devon County Council at its Cabinet meeting held on 9 September 2026 resulting from the Government's decision to pause implementation and review of its 16 July 2026 decision be supported.

That support for the commencement of judicial review proceedings by Devon County Council in the event of the Government failing to provide Devon County Council with the assurance it has requested in order to preserve its jurisdictional position, be reaffirmed.'

This proposal when put to the vote, was carried.

VISITOR ECONOMY PROJECT

At a recent SHDC Executive meeting Members were presented with a report that set out proposals for providing support to the visitor economy sector in the South Hams.

During debate, the following points were raised:

A Member referenced the excellent service provided by local Tourist Information Centres (TICs) and highlighted the severity of the funding pressures being experienced by a number of them. In response, officers informed that their value was appreciated and work was underway to look at offering small sums of grant funding directly to TICs to support their ongoing work. In light of the commitment to meet with TIC representatives, the lead Member did not rule out the potential for a further report to be presented to a future Executive meeting in respect of the sustainability of local TICs;

In respect of its relevance and linkages to employment, skills and transport, it was felt that the contents of the Business Information Point (BIP) study should be shared with the Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority;

The Executive agreed that

1. That the findings from the Visitor Economy studies produced by Moor Economics and Business Information Point (BIP) be endorsed;

2. That the Head of Place and Economy utilise £20,000 of the £200,000 allocated in the Council Plan, to proceed with the support package submitted within the BIP proposal; and
3. That £40,000 of S106 funding from Langage (earmarked for Economic Betterment) be used to support the new South Hams Visitor Economy Partnership to enable it to deliver activities identified through its work.

TOTNES HERITAGE FESTIVAL

The third Totnes Heritage Festival turned out to be a great success for the town. From feedback it would seem that visitor numbers far exceeded those of the previous two years and the drizzly weather did not appear in any way to dampen the spirits of the festivalgoers. By way of example Totnes Castle had over 800 visitors and St Mary's had over 900 visitors.

It would seem that, in addition to all local publicity, registering the festival as part of the national Heritage Open Days this year is probably the main reason for such a boost in those numbers.

I would like to thank the Town Council for all its support and for implementing the street closure which made such a difference and enabled people to mooch up and down in a much more relaxed atmosphere.

Next year's national Heritage Open Days runs from 10-19 September and so, as mid September seems to be a good time for the town's fourth festival and it is being proposed that Saturday 18 September would be the best choice for the 2027 Totnes Heritage Festival.

WORK TO CAR PARKS

As part of SHDC's commitment to improve its assets the resurfacing of three car parks in Totnes will be carried out in October.

Cormac, the council's contractor, has stated that it will commence the resurfacing from the 8th October 2026. The proposed resurfacing works in Totnes are as follows:

Old Market – works to take place from 8th-14th October

HeathWay 1 – works to take place from 13th-15th October

Heathway Permit Holders – will be resurfaced on 15th-16th October. It should be noted that this car park will be used as a compound area throughout the works in Totnes so will be closed from 8th-16th October (10 spaces)

For each proposed works the individual car park will be closed for the dates stated above.

SHDC will ensure that residents are informed as soon as possible and advance warning notices will be placed in the car parks

Cllr John Birch

SHDC Member for Totnes

30 September 2026

District Councillor Report - for Totnes Town Council 29/09/2026

Cllr Anna Presswell

Update on Stoke Gabriel to Totnes Cycle path

I asked for an update on the progress. Here is the response sent from Matt Halkes:

I'm pleased to say that after the summer break (as lot of people were away) the a working party is planned for this coming weekend. This is the planned list of activities

- Shoring up signposts - top of track at Bridgetown side, also at Fleet Mill and cleaning them
- Putting in 2 railway sleepers on each side to mitigate flow of water
- Fill in puddle on Bridgetown side of bridge
- Fill in ditch at end of slope on Bridgetown side, large boulders in hole to stream and then back fill with stones.
- Aggregate over these infill and also along the causeway
- Drainage pipe across the flooded area where the 2 water inlets are
- Encourage water to flow down the west side of the path at the flooded area

As you can see a lot of the work is aimed at achieving the ambition of being able to walk / cycle to Totnes with dry feet / wheels! The aim then is to continue upgrading to make the lane more and more accessible to a wider range of people.

I've cc'd in Chris Mortimer who is Chair of the Stoke Gabriel Cycle Path Group as he may well have some thoughts on the next priorities.

There are 6 regular members of the project group, and each new stage of work they rally another 6-10 keen volunteers.

The Ethical Sustainable Properties (ESP) Skillshare

I visited a property being developed by this CIC at 97 Westonfields, Bridgetown - to get an idea of what exactly the project facilitates, and the scope of courses it runs.

It aims to:

- Adapt properties with reclaimed materials, to allow them to be almost up to Passivhaus standards
- Grow produce to feed the residents year round
- Collects waste water as well as rain water to ensure conservation and ability to maintain healthy vegetables and flushing toilets.
- The house is presently in part powered by recycled solar panels
- The reclaimed materials are to ensure the project demonstrates the lowest carbon footprint and cheapest build.

Group training is held regularly as a weekly skillshare, for anyone wishing to learn and contribute.

The house and outbuilding were impressively insulated and data will be collated throughout the build to evaluate its efficiency.



**Solutions Exist
Join Us!**

**Affordable, highly Sustainable
Homes for Climate Changemakers**

- Weekly Skillshare
- Save with us
- Donate
- Volunteer
- Register 4 housing

join our
WhatsApp
Group



Larch 07749772091 e.s.properties@proton.me



Bike Stands outside Leechwell Gardens

I've had confirmation that new metal bike stands will be provided either in kind with a contribution of £2000 for purchase and installation, or replacement of the stands by SHDC - as they potentially sit within their Car Park – Heath Road.

The team are sending someone out today to see the existing wooden racks and identify if the land is owned by SHDC. Either way the existing bike racks will be replaced.



Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust

There is a lot of negative disinformation around the future of departments and offices within Torbay Hospital. This brief hopefully demonstrates that these rumours are creating unnecessary concern.

District and County Councillor Ged Yardy is a member of the Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust (TSDFT) council of governors - with the executive, non execs and Board. Torbay Hospitals' future is evolving. Please read on....

Fit for the Future: the NHS 10 year health plan for England is based upon 3 key objectives:

- From hospital to community
- From analogue to Digital
- From sickness to prevention

Under the leadership of CEO Joe Teape TSDFT have a new strategy aimed at tackling the challenge given the financial environment.

The plan intends to deliver:

- An end to the 8am phone queue
- Decreased hospital handover delays
- Better dentistry access
- Care closer to home
- Single patient records
- Integrated health care teams

- IT upgrades
- Investing local health care services
- Expanding school mental health support
- Increasing school meals
- Improved engagement in health
- Less admin
- Increased innovation and research

Over recent months we have continued to operate under sustained operational pressure, particularly across urgent and emergency care, driven by demand running well above plan, high bed occupancy and ongoing challenges with patient flow through the acute hospital.

Our priority remains - improving flow through the hospital so patients can be assessed, admitted or discharged more quickly and safely. This includes a strong focus on discharge planning, increased early-day discharges, and embedding new ways of working following the implementation of our electronic patient record. These changes are essential not only to improving performance, but because every delay matters for people waiting for care.

Finance

Financial recovery remains central to planning. TSDFT must deliver a break-even plan while continuing to meet constitutional standards. This will require difficult decisions and strong partnership working across the system.

Infrastructure

The fragility of the Trust's estate continued to be of concern with around £60m of urgent backlog maintenance. £14.2million capital investment is being invested in Emergency Department and the further £2.367million we have secured from the Estates Safety Fund to reduce critical infrastructure risks at Torbay Hospital. This is in addition to the £7.3million received from the Estate Safety Fund earlier in 2025/26.

Digital transformation.

The new electronic patient record (EPR) is now live across our services, marking a significant milestone for both ourselves and for the wider Devon health system. The new system replaces more than 100 separate clinical systems and what was the oldest patient administration system in England.

The Devon EPR brings together patient information in a single digital record, including medications, allergies, test results, imaging, care plans and observations, enabling safer and more joined up care across different settings. The system is being implemented across three NHS Trusts:

- Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust
- University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust (scheduled to go live in July 2026)

The EPR also enables patients to access information about their hospital and specialist community care through MY CARE, complementing the NHS App and supporting greater transparency and involvement in care. People can access MY

CARE online using a tablet or via a mobile phone app from the Apple App Store or Google Play by searching for MyChart and searching for Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust.

Cardiovascular Services

CV services have not changed; the services are open and working as normal and will continue.

Like all parts of the NHS, the Devon health and care system is facing significant financial pressures and, in some areas, challenges around long-term sustainability. Work is therefore underway, led by the ICB, to develop a clinical strategy for Devon, and we are fully engaged in that process through our Chief Medical Officer and Chief Nurse.

At this stage, there are no specific proposals or models to discuss. Any future system-wide models would be subject to formal clinical governance and appropriate public and stakeholder engagement.

The focus as a Trust remains clear: to safeguard services for the population of around 300,000 people we serve, ensuring that care is safe, sustainable and meets local needs. Through delivery of our own strategy, we will continue to support health and care in Torbay and South Devon, including maintaining local employment and career opportunities and our strong relationships with local colleges and universities.

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust reviews future of adult social care partnership

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust has reviewed the future of its longstanding partnership with Torbay Council for the delivery of adult social care, as part of ongoing efforts to ensure services remain safe, high-quality and financially sustainable.

For over 15 years, adult social care in Torbay has been delivered through a Section 75 agreement, which has enabled close integration between health and social care teams. However, the financial context has changed significantly, with the Trust now carrying all the financial risk for adult social care and costs exceeding funding by around £35 million per annum.

Without change, the Trust would ultimately need to reduce NHS services to subsidise adult social care. That was not a position that could be allowed to develop

Following the conclusion of the notice period the responsibility for delivering adult social care will transfer back to Torbay Council, mirroring arrangements already in place across the rest of Devon. The Trust emphasises that any change would be to contractual and financial arrangements, not to the quality or continuity of care.

CLERK'S REPORT - July to September 2026

October 2026 Full Council

Overview

The last quarter has been exceptionally busy, despite the usual August recess. Alongside routine Council business, an extraordinary meeting was required and significant officer and member time has been directed towards strategic projects, property and asset matters, community funding, planning policy, organisational resilience and preparations for the final months of the current Council term.

The temporary pause in Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) has continued to dominate sector conversations. While the immediate timetable may have shifted, the underlying pressures on local government finance, capacity, service delivery and democratic representation remain. The Council has therefore continued to engage with surrounding parishes and to explore the potential value of a wider South Hams towns and parishes partnership, focused on resilience, collaboration and a stronger collective voice.

A well-attended Councillor and Clerk Away Day was held on Saturday 26 September. Despite some minor projection difficulties, the day was constructive and useful. It provided space to review delivery against the Strategic and Delivery Plan, discuss LGR, consider future grant arrangements, examine the early budget forecast and staffing resilience, and begin looking ahead to the May 2027 elections.

The next quarter will, as always, be extremely busy in the run-up to Christmas. Preparations are progressing for the Christmas Window Competition, Christmas Lights Switch-On and Christmas Late Night Markets, alongside the budget and precept-setting process, ongoing governance and asset work, and preparations for the 2027 elections and the induction of the next Council.

Meetings and training attended

Excluding weekly staff and management meetings, weekly meetings with the Mayor and monthly team meetings:

<u>July</u>	6 th Ful Council
6 th Museum Trust	8 th SLCC Larger Councils

13th Council Matters
14th South Hams Clerks
15th Heritage Partnership
15th Town Team
16th South Hams Mayor and Clerks premeet
21st Parish Clerk Cluster
22nd South Hams Mayor and Clerks
28th Totnes Parish Area Cluster Event
29th SHDC Meeting – Matthew Hill
29th SLCC Training – Collaboration

August

5th DALC meeting
6th DALC Chief Executive
10th Extra Full Council
11th Long and Shortlisting
11th Tourism meeting
12th Town Team
12th Cultural Assets Consultation
18th Traffic and Transport Forum Chair
18th Museum Trust
25th SLCC Larger Councils

September

1st Initial meeting of the new Devon Unitary
Larger Councils
2nd Community Communications Interviews
7th LGR Pause announcement and
associated briefings

7th Town Team
11th Caring Town
12th Volunteer Fair
14th Parish Cluster Clerks
14th Council Matters
15th SLCC Meeting
16th Internal Budget meeting
17th Cllr Birch
19th Heritage Fair
21st Laura House Site Visit
22nd South Hams Clerks
24th Partnership meeting Salcombe
24th Devon Community Foundation
24th LGR Briefing SHDC
26th Away Day
28th Town Matters cover
29th Heritage Partnership

October 1st SLCC Larger Councils
Okehampton

Clerk general updates not covered elsewhere

- Councillor and Clerk Away Day generally: The Away Day on 26 September was well attended and provided a productive opportunity to step back from routine committee business. Members reviewed progress against current priorities, considered what should realistically be completed before May 2027, identified projects likely to require handover to the incoming Council, and discussed grants, the early budget forecast, staffing resilience and election engagement. This was not a decision making session so anything requiring amendment or resources will be fed back through the committee process.
- Local Government Reorganisation: The temporary pause has created uncertainty rather than removing the need for preparation. Work has continued to maintain dialogue with neighbouring parishes and towns and to consider how local councils can build stronger networks, resilience and collaborative capacity regardless of the eventual model of reform.
- South Hams partnership working: Initial discussions have explored bringing together Totnes, Ivybridge, Kingsbridge, Dartmouth and Salcombe, with links to their surrounding parishes. Potential areas of shared interest include collective advocacy, training, procurement, emergency planning, staff and member support, specialist resources and future neighbourhood governance arrangements.
- Strategic and Delivery Plan: Members used the Away Day to review progress and focus on a manageable number of priorities for the remainder of the term. Major areas include community/youth space aspirations, community building and resilience, economic development, strategic grants, historic assets, the Museum partnership, planning policy, environment and biodiversity, traffic and transport, and community events/cultural offer.
- Future grant arrangements: Members supported in principle a revised three-tier approach for 2027/28, comprising modest enabling budgets for each Working Group, a single smaller-grants programme and a strategic partnership funding programme. Detailed policies, governance arrangements and budget provision will return through the formal committee process.
- Budget and precept: The early 2027/28 forecast was discussed at the Away Day. Detailed budget review will now progress through committee meetings over the coming months, with the Council required to set its 2027/28 budget and precept by January 2027. Forecasts remain provisional while the current financial year is still in progress and a number of service and project assumptions are being refined.
- 2027 elections and member induction: Work will begin to promote the role of town councillor and encourage a broad range of local people to consider standing. Communications will remain politically neutral, focused on the role of the Council and the practical experience of serving the community, and will be planned carefully around the statutory pre-election period. The Councillor induction material is also being reviewed and strengthened for returning and newly elected members.
- End-of-term thank-you event: Rather than holding a traditional Christmas staff and councillor event, the Mayor has suggested a New Year gathering for councillors, staff, partners and guests. This would thank those who have contributed to the Council's work and mark the concluding months of the four-year Council term ahead of the May 2027 elections. Details will be developed separately.

- Community safety: Following representations about anti-social behaviour and anti-social driving, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner confirmed that concerns would be raised with the Chief Constable, local Police Inspector and Roads Policing Team. The response also highlighted the ASB Assertive Outreach Programme and Councillor Advocate Scheme. Continued reporting by residents remains important to help inform police deployment and partnership responses. I am chasing regular meeting dates with the Neighbourhood Team.
- Annual Governance and Accountability Return: Queries were raised during the external audit review regarding evidence of the consideration of the internal auditor's independence. The Council has explained the appointment and annual review arrangements and has challenged the distinction being applied between mandatory requirements and best-practice guidance. DALC has raised the wider concern with national contacts. I will be taking this further with SLCC and DALC in relation to challenging the veracity of this query given it is not a mandatory requirement under audit – and because Clerks nationally are having the same query and take the same view.

Governance and Projects Manager

Governance and policy

- Policies reviewed and referred to Council Matters Committee included the Financial Regulations, Investment Strategy and Responsible and Safe Use of Artificial Intelligence Policy.
- The Councillor Induction document has been reviewed in preparation for the 2027 election year. It will be updated again once the 2027/28 budget, membership, meeting dates and staff information are confirmed.
- An initial internal emergency plan has been drafted for further development and review.
- The Strategic Plan Delivery Objectives continue to be updated with colleague input. A quarterly strategic priorities report was presented to Full Council in September and informed discussion at the Away Day.

Planning policy

- Totnes Neighbourhood Plan: The early publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework materially changed the position previously advised by South Hams District Council. Although proposed minor updates had been prepared, any formal review would now be examined against the revised national framework. The existing Neighbourhood Plan remains in date, but the weight applied to individual policies may vary where they are not compliant with the new framework.
- Local Plan: Councillors worked with officers to prepare the Council's response to the South Hams Local Plan Scoping Consultation, which was submitted on 23 September. The response emphasised Community Infrastructure Levy, sustainable settlement patterns, affordable and appropriate housing, active travel, employment space, town-centre vitality, the historic environment, infrastructure capacity and meaningful community involvement.

Environment and public realm

- The fingerpost from Civic Square to Leechwell Gardens was collected and installed in August.
- A warning sign was installed on the planter opposite the Museum to highlight the narrow pavement. No related incidents involving wheelchair or mobility-scooter users were reported to the Council over the summer.

- **Castle Meadow:** The location and funding for the Transition Town Totnes 30x30 trial meadow area were agreed. Cutting, scarifying and seeding were scheduled for late September/early October, after which the Town Maintenance Team will stake and rope the area and supporting communications will be issued.
- **Bridge Safety Audit:** Further consideration is being given to the tender proposals, with Devon County Council advice awaited. The two tenderers are being asked to keep their quotations open while the programme is reviewed, with the work currently anticipated for spring 2027.

Cemetery

- Between July and September there were six interments, comprising three full interments and three interments of cremated remains. Administration also included one new plot purchase, four memorial applications, three Deed of Grant transfers and a range of grave-location and ownership enquiries.
- Parklife completed the cut-back of the wild areas in August, brought forward because of the prolonged dry conditions.
- The grounds-maintenance specification was agreed by Council Matters Committee in September and has gone out to tender. Bids are due to be considered by Full Council in November so that the outcome can inform the 2027/28 budget.

Christmas lights

- A projection site meeting took place on 21 September to test likely effects, and The Mansion has been updated on proposed installation dates.
- Eastgate arch lights are planned for installation in early October, making use of a road closure and seeking to complete the work before poorer autumn weather.
- The Civic Square lights and Christmas tree are scheduled for installation on 16 November.
- Following a software upgrade, the Twinkly lights on The Plains were illuminated in rainbow colours for Pride weekend, as agreed by Full Council.

Town Maintenance Officer

The quarter began with a prolonged period of hot and dry weather. Grounds work was adjusted accordingly, while substantial progress continued across the Council's historic buildings, cemetery, Civic Hall and Christmas lighting preparations.

- **Grounds and cemetery:** Final summer cuts were completed at St Mary's, Coronation Road and outside the Guildhall before the grass browned in the heat. The cemetery gates were stripped back to bare metal and repainted to a high standard. Grave tops and overgrown areas were tidied with regard to the nesting season, while areas providing blackberries and wildlife food were retained.
- **Civic Hall and Birdwood House:** Long-broken window hinges have been replaced and the windows now operate normally. An inspection and report by B2 Architects has been completed and further detail will be circulated to members in due course. External scaffolding remains on the Civic while contractor arrangements for further works are confirmed.
- **Guildhall and yard:** Riviera Stone completed the Guildhall wall in August, signed off by B2. The former bin shed is being repaired to create a usable space under the certificate of lawfulness.. The under-stairs bin store has also been repaired following previous break-in damage, including fire-resistant measuresto the ceiling.

- Guildhall offices: Work has started on replacing rotten hardwood posts and the cill supporting the roof over the steps to the Clerk's office. External redecoration is continuing, including preparation of cast-iron downpipes. Further work will be needed to investigate and repair leaking cast-iron guttering.
- Guildhall Cottage: Further cementitious materials and wallpaper have been removed. Unsafe electrical items have been taken out and a full rewire is advised if the property is to return to residential letting. A meeting with B2 and the Heritage officer is happening soon to discuss. Vinyl flooring was lifted to expose and dry the damp cement floor. Waste generated by the works has been cleared with assistance from the Fire Station in locating a skip.
- Christmas preparations: Existing lights have been checked, repaired and adapted where possible. Contingency work at the Civic Hall will improve the way the lights are powered. The catenary wire at the Civic Hall requires replacement because of its condition and previous temporary repairs.
- Guildhall roof: The maintenance team reports that progress continues in preventing squirrel access, although monitoring remains ongoing.

Economic Development Officer

CEP

- Draft of the Community Economic Plan has been written by Laura Eames at SHDC. This is going to be reviewed before being launched at a Business Expo event scheduled for the 12th November.

HERITAGE FESTIVAL

- The Heritage Festival was a successful event, with early feedback from both visitors and businesses being largely positive about the festival and the associated road closure. All feedback will be collated in early October, after which a summary report will be produced.

TOTNES BUSINESS FORUM (TBF)

- The TBF has now officially been set up using funds from the EWG, with their soft launch scheduled for the 7th October in the Guildhall.
- Taken from the TBF website: "The Totnes Business Forum is a working group for local business owners who'd rather spend their time making things happen rather than just attending things.... Backed by Totnes Town Council, run by and for local businesses."

Finance and Lettings Officer

Civic Hall updates

The Civic Hall has hosted several successful annual events, including the Ukulele Festival, the CAMRA Beer & Cider Festival and the Totnes Fringe Festival. All three events sold more tickets than last year and continued to grow. CAMRA shared this feedback:

"Hi Becky,

We held our first 'wash-up' last Thursday and can confirm that footfall was up on last year, resulting in an increased profit. We would therefore like to thank you and the team who looked after us and the Civic Hall during our hire period."

August was quiet, but September started very well. Regular groups now use the hall on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Wednesdays are especially busy, with five different hirers. This takes careful planning, but it is working well. We are also pleased to welcome a new youth dance group and a new youth theatre group.

Weekend bookings remain strong, with the hall booked every weekend until Christmas.

Larger commercial events have also been popular. The recent comedy night was a success, and another is planned for December. A concert by internationally known pianist Yann Tiersen sold out.

Upcoming events include Desert Island Tracks with Billy Bragg, Poet Laureate Simon Armitage, and Nubian Twist, who combine Afrobeat, jazz, hip-hop and soul.

Guildhall updates

Visitor numbers are slightly lower than in 2025. This may be because the Guildhall has had to close for weddings and because illness and holidays have made it harder to find enough volunteers. The Heritage Trust has kindly offered to cover Thursday afternoons until the season ends in late October. A cream tea is planned for November to thank all the volunteers who give their time and energy to open the Guildhall to the public. The Heritage Open Day on Saturday was very successful, with more than 300 visitors. Special thanks go to all the members and volunteers who helped. Wedding bookings have increased. There are 24 weddings booked for 2026, compared with 19 in 2025, and eight are already booked for 2027. Estimated wedding income for 2026 is about £7,000.

One couple wrote:

X and I just wanted to say a huge thank you for all your help and information throughout the booking process. The Guildhall is a stunning venue and was perfect for our small, intimate wedding.

While many couples say their wedding day is a blur, I can safely say that ours was the most memorable day of my life, filled with happiness, laughter and love.

Thank you for being part of our special day."

Marketing and Communications Officer

SOCIAL MEDIA – Statistics for the last 90 days

27 June – 24 September 2026

VISIT TOTNES – FACEBOOK

- **Views:** 523,900 [431,363 organic]
- **Interactions:** 8,400 - **up 32.1%** on the previous three-month period
- **Follows:** 443 - **up 19.9%**
- **Link clicks:** 976 - **up 37.7%**

Views are lower than in the previous quarter, which included several unusually high-performing posts, including the Gather chef receiving an award (87.7K views) and the opening of a new Curator branch. The current figures therefore represent a return towards more typical levels following a particularly strong previous quarter.

Engagement remains positive, with interactions, follows and link clicks all increasing compared with the previous three-month period.

The figures in grey show the equivalent statistics for the same period in 2025.

VISIT TOTNES – INSTAGRAM

- **Organic views:** 157,828 - **up 37.06%**
- **Interactions:** 5,759 - **up 15.7%**
- **New follows:** 384 - **up 105.4%**

Instagram has continued to show strong growth across all three measures, particularly in new followers, which have more than doubled compared with the previous period.

The post about the new apothecary was particularly successful, generating more than 8,000 views and demonstrating the continued value of content highlighting new and independent businesses in Totnes.

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL – FACEBOOK

- **Views:** 151,500 - **down 27.1%** on the previous three-month period
- **Interactions:** 1,700 - **down 3.4%**
- **Follows:** 75 - **down 41.9%**
- **Link clicks:** 275 - **down 58.5%**

Figures are lower than in the previous quarter, which benefited from the unusually high reach of the Gather post. Page visits and interactions remain at a broadly steady level.

The results provide a useful baseline for future council communications, with opportunities to increase reach and engagement further through consistent, timely content and greater use of links to relevant council information.

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL – INSTAGRAM

- **Organic views:** 11,844 - **down 16.3%**
- **Interactions:** **up 114.8%**
- **New follows:** 46 - **up 48.3%**

While organic views have decreased slightly, engagement has increased significantly, with interactions more than doubling and new follows increasing by 48.3%.

This suggests that the content is continuing to engage the audience effectively despite the lower overall reach.

WEBSITE VISITORS

Users on our websites: 27 June – 24 September 2026

- **Totnes Town Council:** 16,026 - up from approximately 10,000
- **Visit Totnes:** 39,050 - down from approximately 46,000

Website figures have changed over the last six months following the blocking of bots and other non-genuine traffic, resulting in a more accurate representation of actual users.

The websites remain an important area of potential growth. Increasing the number of links from social media content to relevant website pages should help convert social engagement into website visits.

The current Visit Totnes website also presents opportunities for improvement, particularly around structure, SEO and the accessibility of key information. The new website should provide a stronger foundation in these areas, making information easier for search engines and AI tools to identify, understand and surface.

SUMMARY

During my final weeks in the role, I have focused on ensuring that the Level 3 advertising posts are prepared in advance to support a smooth handover of Visit Totnes. Christmas marketing activity has also been largely organised ahead of the handover.

I have additionally been coordinating the filming of council members, which is scheduled to take place after my departure.

Overall, both social media channels are in a stronger position than when I began, with particularly strong growth across the Visit Totnes Instagram account and increased engagement across several key measures.

There is a strong foundation in place for continued growth, with further opportunities to build reach, engagement and website traffic through consistent content, stronger links between social media and the websites, and the continued development of the new Visit Totnes website.

Priorities for October to December 2026

- Deliver the Christmas Lights installation and Switch-On event, Christmas Window Competition and Christmas Late Night Markets.
- Progress the 2027/28 budget forecast through November or December Council Matters and then January Full Council, including the precept, reserves, community investment, staffing and asset-maintenance assumptions.
- Develop the detailed grants framework and associated governance arrangements arising from the Away Day discussion.

- Continue work on Laura House/community hub options, asset management and the Museum partnership, subject to Full Council direction.
- Progress the cemetery grounds-maintenance tender for Council consideration in November.
- Continue engagement with neighbouring towns and parishes on LGR, local resilience and the potential South Hams towns network.
- Develop politically neutral communications to explain the 2027 elections, encourage community participation and support prospective candidates, while planning carefully for the pre-election period.
- Complete the review and strengthening of councillor induction materials and begin planning the new Council's induction programme.
- Develop proposals for a New Year thank-you event for councillors, staff, partners and guests, recognising the work undertaken during the current Council term.

General correspondence: July to September 2026

Date	Contact method	Details	Response
01/07/2026	Phone	Resident of Bridgetown phoned to enquire why TTC had not changed the clock at St John's Church.	Informed that TTC is not responsible for maintaining the clock at St John's Church.
02/07/2026	101	TTC reported graffiti on the Civic Hall to Neighbourhood Policing Team and on 101.	
02/07/2026	In person	Enquiry about ownership of the land outside the Dartmouth Inn and loud late-night noise from the area where the tables are located.	Referred to SHDC.
07/07/2026	Email	Totnes Allotment Association – issues with pheasants.	Full Council decision regarding the request to cull the birds.
07/07/2026	Email	Report of antisocial behaviour involving excessively loud motorbike noise on Fore Street during early mornings and late nights.	The Clerk replied, asking for the information to be shared with the Neighbourhood Policing Team.
08/07/2026	Email	Enquiry from parent regarding summer holiday childcare funding for working parents.	A list of summer holiday care collated and provided to the parent as well as sharing on the TTC website and socials.
09/07/2026	Email	Response from the Dart Harbour Master to TTC's comments on the Dart Harbour Masterplan consultation.	
09/07/2026	Email		Approval for Transition Town Totnes's 30x30 trial area in Castle Meadow.
14/07/2026	Email	Support for Arts Council England and Devon's councils in mapping cultural assets.	Response sent.
14/07/2026	Email	Enquiry from parent about childcare funding over summer holidays.	Directed to website and socials.

17/07/2026	Email	Enquiry about the possibility of volunteering over the summer to gain work experience.	Directed to SHDC or DCC councillors.
20/07/2026	Letter	Concern over weeds around Plymouth Road area. Request for them to be cleared.	No return address to send reply.
20/07/2026	Phone	Enquiry about road closures around Moat Hill.	Directed to Wales and West for more information.
21/07/2026	Facebook	Concern over lack of HAF funding for children and families in the Bridgetown area. Request for TTC to look into this in future.	Sent to Clerk
21/07/2026	Phone	Enquiry about the Arts Link Councillor and how arts activities are coordinated in the town.	Directed to Arts Link cllr
21/07/2026	Email	Request for parking enforcement around the Station area particularly on the double yellow lines and near the zebra crossing.	Directed to the DCC report a problem page.
29/07/2026	Phone	Enquiry about the pontoon at the wild swimming spot above the weir and an overgrown hedge nearby.	Directed to SHDC regarding the hedge and Cllr Allen regarding the swim spot.
29/07/2026	In person	Report from a local business owner that the Cistern Street area was particularly smelly.	Asked to report the issue to SHDC.
29/07/2027	Email	Notification of an abandoned tent in the cemetery.	Town Maintenance Team checked.
30/07/2028	Email	Request for a table tennis table to be installed behind the Pavilions, with a £1,000 donation offered towards the cost.	Advised of the OSSRW plan and priorities for spending on Borough Park.
30/07/2029	Email	Report from TTC to SHDC of overflowing bins outside the Guildhall and in North Street Car park.	Localities officer responded to TTC to say they will get on to the issue.
30/07/2030	Email	Report from a local business owner that the streets were dirty and smelly, including the area from Heath's Nursery to the Civic Hall car park.	Directed to SHDC to report the issue.
03/08/2026	Letter	Complaint about the cemetery.	Governance and Projects manager to check with maintenance team.
03/08/2026	In person	Enquiry about coach parking for an event.	Details of Steamer Quay car park provided.
03/08/2026	Phone	Enquiry about when the Lantern Festival is happening.	Date given.
05/08/2026	Phone	Planning Enforcement and Environmental Health Enquiry.	Directed to SHDC.
05/08/2026	Phone	Enquiry about the EAT Festival.	Details provided.
10/08/2026	Email	Request for Friday and Saturday road closures on the High Street.	Informed that the roads are managed by Devon County Council Highways, but TTC will have some road closures next year for Stroll and Shop days.

10/08/2026	Phone	Contact for River Dart boat requested.	Information provided.
11/08/2026	Letter	Letter sent to CCllr Hodgson regarding proposed 20 mph areas in Totnes.	
11/08/2026	Letter	Letter sent to the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding antisocial behaviour in Totnes.	
11/08/2026	Phone	Information about parking for Dart railway.	Information provided.
11/08/2026	Email	Query about whether Longmarsh car park would be closed during the EAT Festival.	Directed to SHDC, which manages the car parks.
12/08/2026	Email	Query about who owns a tree which needs trimming back.	Directed to DCC.
13/08/2026	Email	Suggestion for an inclusive Union Jack flag to be flown in Totnes.	Replied to explain that the Union Flag is flown only on a few selected days.
13/08/2026	Email	Report of a homeless person in Ancient Lane, between Lansdowne Park and Home Reach Avenue, presenting a potential fire risk.	Referred to SHDC's rough sleeper service and reported to the Neighbourhood Policing Team. A local PCSO is making contact with the member of the public.
17/08/2026	Phone	Query as to why Fore Street is closed but with no notification on website.	Advised to contact highways and TTC will do the same.
17/08/2026	Email	Query as to why Fore Street was closed without notification on the website.	Informed that a Highways officer had confirmed there was no recorded road closure and would investigate the issue the following afternoon.
17/08/2026	Email	Concern over the large weed growing out of the Eastgate arch.	Asked to contact the Duchy of Somerset office as it is their property.
17/08/2026	Letter	Concern over weeds around Plymouth Road area. Request for them to be cleared. Request for a supermarket on the old Dairy Crest site.	No return address to send reply.
18/08/2026	In person	Request from a resident to check CCTV following a break-in or possible urban explorer entering a property in Church Close.	Police came to check CCTV
18/08/2026	Emails	Caroline Voaden MP – constituent enquiry about burials near a watercourse in Totnes Cemetery.	Replies provided with details addressing the follow-up questions.
19/08/2026	Email	Notification from CM allotments that there is still a pheasant issue.	
19/08/2026	Email	Concern over the state of the Falcon Park site.	Referred to councillor for Collaton St Mary ward.
20/08/2026	Email	Tourism Enquiry - Round Robin.	Details given.
20/08/2026	Email	Enquiry about verge management and the use of pesticides.	Informed that TTC does not use glyphosate on any Town Council land, but the verges are the responsibility of DCC Highways.

21/08/2026	In person	Resident of Church Close expressed concern about young people gathering and trying to enter the old dentist building, with repeated incidents.	Put in touch with the PCSO and advised to dial 999 if they think a break-in is in progress.
25/08/2026	Phone	Tourism Enquiry - Accommodation.	Advice given
29/08/2026	Email	Lifebuoy reported as removed and hidden in bushes.	Reported to SHDC.
31/08/2026	Email	Parklife - rain gardens.	Replied suggesting contacting DCC, SHDC or Totnes Gardens.
01/09/2026	Email	Report from MoP about loose stones up at the Market Square being thrown around by young people.	TMO responded to say he would clear up to make safe and report to SHDC.
01/09/2026			Informal comments to Acorn regarding the Baltic Wharf update to the Planning Committee.
02/09/2026	Email	Council comments on Follaton Oak which has detrimental impact on house buyers.	Replied to say document will be removed from website to avoid further unfounded damage.
02/09/2026	Email	MP's reply to enquiry about the future of the MOD Drill Hall building.	
04/09/2026	Email	DCC - road closure for Remembrance?	Replied to say not required and no parade.
07/09/2026	Email	Report of an increase in graffiti in the town.	Informed that the Town Maintenance Team removes graffiti from TTC property and reports new graffiti to the Neighbourhood Policing Team. Councillors have scheduled a discussion about graffiti on property not owned by the Town Council.
07/09/2026	Phone	Report of an animal welfare issue.	Directed to SHDC.
11/09/2026	Letter	Expression of concern about the KEVICC field and the lack of football/recreation space in the town.	Advised to contact PCSO.
14/09/2026	Email and in person	Concern about possible breaches of planning permission at an establishment in town.	Advised to contact SHDC.
15/09/2026	Phone	Enquiry about disabled access in town on Heritage Day with the road closure.	Advised about closest disabled access or drop off access to the cinema.
16/09/2026	Phone and email	Concern about large, heavy vehicles regularly using the Old Bridge.	An email was sent to the Traffic and Transport Forum, and the resident was advised to report the issue to DCC.
17/09/2026	Email	Coronation Road bus shelter opposite Town Mill – request for bench seats and no-smoking signage.	Directed to SHDC, as it is their shelter.
22/09/2026	Phone	Tourism enquiry – events taking place around Christmas.	Advice given.
23/09/2026	Online and email	TTC reported graffiti on the Eastgate to Neighbourhood Policing Team and on 101.	

23/09/2026	Email	-	TTC Comments on the South Hams District Council Local Plan Scoping Consultation.
23/09/2026	Emails x 2	Support for the Centre premises licence application.	A link to the minutes of the Planning Committee's reconsideration of the original objection was provided.
24/09/2026	Email	MoP who has concerns about the bollards which have been installed on the Market Square.	Directed to SHDC.
24/09/2026	Phone and email	Enquiry about community grant funding and ensuring arts and culture are represented.	Clerk replied to explain the decision making process and thank for suggestions which will be shared with councillors.
25/09/2026	Email	Enquiry about whether buskers are allowed in Totnes.	Directed to the Busking Code of Conduct.
28/09/2026	Email	Local business concerned about the number of homeless people gathering, smoking drugs and behaving intimidatingly outside the shop.	Directed to the Neighbourhood Policing Team and Environmental Health.

Catherine Marlton, PSLCC
Town Clerk



**DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL
MONDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER 2026 IN THE GUILDHALL**

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

Apologies: Cllrs Peters, Roberts and Smallridge, and District Cllr Birch.

In Attendance: District Councillor Allen, 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. Declarations of interests were made at the beginning of the relevant agenda item.

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 had submitted a report and gave a verbal update on: rural deprivation work; GWR timetable changes to avoid cancellations; the Asian hornet risk and how to report sightings; traffic calming and safety measures planned for outside t John's Primary School following accidents; and the date of the next screening of the People's Emergency Briefing.

b. District Cllr Allen had not submitted a report and updated on: announcement of the pause and review of the Government's recent Local Government Reorganisation announcement for Devon; and the condition and access on the Civic Square, asking Cllrs to report any issues to her.

c. District Cllr Birch (DCllr) had not submitted a report and was not present.

d. District Cllr Presswell had not submitted a report and updated on: a briefing being held at St Johns Church about services at Torbay Hospital; Hackney licencing fares will be increasing by approximately 15 percent; and South Hams District Council will take a more active role in animal licencing in the future.

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 6th July 2026.

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

b. Extraordinary Full Council 10th August 2026.

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

To note the following minutes:

c. Council Matters Committee 13th July 2026.

Noted.

d. Planning Committee 20th July 2026.

Noted.

e. Town Matters Committee 27th July 2026.

Noted.

f. Planning Committee 17th August 2026.

Noted.

4. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTERS ARISING REQUIRING A DECISION

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 6th July 2026.

No matters arising.

b. Extraordinary Full Council 10th August 2026.

No matters arising.

c. Council Matters Committee 13th July 2026.

Item 7. Financial Regulations – It was **RESOLVED** that the Financial Regulations are adopted.

Item 9. Investment Strategy - It was **RESOLVED** that the revised Investment Strategy is adopted.

Item 10. Responsible and Safe Use of Artificial Intelligence Policy - It was **RESOLVED** that the revised Responsible and Safe Use of Artificial Intelligence Policy is adopted and reviewed on a 12-month basis.

d. Planning Committee 20th July 2026.

No recommendations (item 5 considered at the Extraordinary Full Council on 10th August 2026).

e. Town Matters Committee 27th July 2026.

Item 4. Council Awards - It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a celebratory event replaces the current individual and organisation awards (no change to the honorary freeman or Judy Westacott award); and
- the details are determined by the Community Working Group.

Item 5. Wills Project - It was **RESOLVED** that:

- it supports the submission of a pre-application for Listed Building Consent (with all necessary documents to be prepared by the Heritage Trust) to SHDC to determine what type of display is possible within the Guildhall;
- a Cllr is present at the site meeting with the SHDC Heritage Officer; and
- the preference is for any potential display to be housed in the current Women's Cell or ancillary areas to the main Guildhall and Council Chamber.

f. Planning Committee 17th August 2026.

Item 6. Local Plan Scoping Consultation – It was **RESOLVED** that the Council submits an email response to the South Hams District Council Local Plan Scoping Consultation rather than directly answer all Commonplace questions. It was **RESOLVED** that the text as circulated is submitted as part of the Local Plan Scoping Consultation. It was **RESOLVED** to give the Chairs of Planning and Governance and Projects Manager delegated authority to strengthen the wording around the adoption of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

5. STRATEGIC PLAN QUARTERLY REPORT

To consider a quarterly report on the Strategic Plan progress.

Noted.

6. STRATEGIC FUNDING

To consider the applications for Strategic Funding for 2026.

Cllr Bennett declared a personal interest as Treasurer for Caring Town and Cllr Hodgson declared as personal interest as Chair of TRAYE.

It was **RESOLVED** by majority to make the following funding awards:

Community Organisation	Funding Awarded	Percentage of Funding Requested
Caring Town	£8,000	100%
Citizens Advice South Hams	£4,577	100%
Food in Community	£9,000	100%
Jamming Station	£8,000	80%
Stepping Stones	£2,500	50%
Totnes Caring	£8,000	100%
TRAYE (Totnes Rural Area Youth Engagement)	£12,000	100%
TOTAL	£52,077	

It was **RESOLVED** by majority to cover the £2,077 overspend on the £50,000 budget from underspend in the Community Working Group budget.

7. SOUTH HAMS HATOC CONSULTATION

To consider the following Traffic Regulation Amendment Order for 'no waiting at any time' at these locations (document attached):

- a. Blackpost Lane
- b. Follaton Bungalows (north side)
- c. Follaton House Access Roads
- d. Higher Westonfields

And:

- e. limited waiting at Follaton Bungalows (south side).
- f. Revoking a previous amendment order for Blackpost Lane no waiting at any time.

Cllr Hodgson declared an interest as a member of HATOC and abstained from voting.

It was **RESOLVED** to support the Traffic Regulation Order for 'no waiting at any times' in the locations outlined.

8. TORBAY LOCAL PLAN

To consider giving the Planning Committee delegated authority to respond to the Torbay Local Plan Regulation 19 Consultation (deadline for comments 24th September 2026).

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to give the Planning Committee delegated responsibility to respond to the Torbay Local Plan consultation.

9. 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.

10. NEXT MEETING

To note the next meeting dates of Monday 5th October 2026 for Full Council, 6.30pm public session, 7.00pm formal meeting in the Guildhall.

Noted.

*The Council **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)*

11. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE (Standing Item)

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

None.

12. STAFF APPOINTMENT

To ratify the appointment of the Community Communications Officer (personal details).

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to ratify the appointment of the Community Communications Officer.

13. GUILDHALL COTTAGE

To consider the quotes for professional fees (commercial).

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to appoint B2 Architects to both write the Listed Building Consent and remedial works specification to allow quotes to be obtained.

14. TOTNES MUSEUM WORKS

To consider a report of works required at Totnes Museum (financial).

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to:

- Approve the new lease arrangements and instruct solicitors.
- Approve obtaining specialist VAT advice.
- Approve appointing B2 Architects to prepare the Listed Building Consent applications, schedules and specifications.
- Approve the progression of the urgent conservation works programme as outlined.
- Approve an exception to financial regulations to allow the appointment of a specialist heritage contractor to undertake the works.
- Approve the total expected project cost of £135K, with a contribution from the Museum Trust by way of a grant. Discussion of funding the remaining overspend of approximately £12K will take place when final costings are known.
- Grant the Clerk delegated authority to proceed.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm, with members agreeing to extend the length of the meeting to accommodate all business.

Cllr Tim Bennett
Chair



**DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS
MONDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 6.30PM IN THE GUILDHALL**

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

Apologies: None.

In Attendance: C Marlton (Town Clerk).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair read a statement about how the meeting would be conducted.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 13th July 2026 and update on any matters arising.

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

3. STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUPS

To consider any budgetary recommendations from the following:

It was **AGREED** to review the authority required for expenditure recommended by the Working Groups.

a. Community Working Group, 8th September 2026.

It was **AGREED** to allocate an additional £44 for the Odd Object Competition.

b. Economy Working Group, 14th July and 6th September 2026.

No recommendations.

c. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 15th July 2026.

Castle Meadow - It was **AGREED** to allocate £2,000 to Transition Town Totnes for the 30x30 project (ground preparation, seeds and plants) and that the area to the rear of Alpha Terrace is used.

Town Maintenance – it was **AGREED** to seek permission from utilities companies for the removal of graffiti and if granted for the Town Maintenance Team to undertake a clean up.

d. All grant funding recommendations for the Working Group.

None.

4. BUDGET MONITOR

To consider the Budget Monitor.

The budget monitor was **AGREED** unanimously.

5. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE TENDER SPECIFICATION

To consider the grounds maintenance specification for the Council's tendering of a two-year contract.

It was **RESOLVED** to tender for the 2-year contract as proposed in the specification. It was noted that submissions will be considered by the November Full Council to enable this to form part of the 2027/28 budget setting process.

6. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

To review the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the revised Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy subject to a minor amendment of wording to the summary of responsibilities around what the Town Councillors/Town Council body corporate are responsible for.

7. FIXED ASSETS POLICY

To review the Fixed Assets Policy.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Fixed Assets Policy is adopted.

8. PAY POLICY

To review the Pay Policy.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Pay Policy is adopted.

9. HOME WORKING POLICY

To review the Home Working Policy.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the revised Home Working Policy.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 12th October 2026 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)*

11. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)

To consider the bank statements and reconciliations for July and August (financial).

These were reviewed and **AGREED** unanimously.

12. TOTNES GUIDE

To consider the quotes for outsourcing the production of the Totnes Guide (commercial).

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to:

- Appoint Left Bridge for one year (to be reviewed) to undertake the production, advertising management, printing and distribution of the 2027 Visit Totnes Guide;
- Ringfence £700 from the Visit Totnes budget as a contingency for additional printing costs as required; and
- Grant the Town Clerk delegated authority to finalize the contract and production timetable.

13. TRANSPORT FEASIBILITY STUDY

To consider the quotes received to undertake a Transport Feasibility Study (commercial).

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to grant the Town Clerk delegated authority to instruct the chosen contractor (Gateway or Waterman) once Cllrs have liaised with Devon County Council and met with the companies. The work will be undertaken in Spring/Summer 2027 to ensure that the study is conducted at a busy time of year and therefore more representative of bridge use.

14. CIVIC HALL BUILDING MAINTENANCE

To consider the quotes received to undertake the following repairs at the Civic Hall (commercial).

It was **RESOLVED** to grant the Town Clerk delegated authority to:

a. Green Room roof; and

Appoint Coyde Construction to undertake the repairs.

b. Gable End structural repair.

Appoint Coyde Construction to undertake the works, subject to checking the remedial works resolve the issues outlined in the structural survey report on the gable end.

15. STAFFING UPDATE

For any general or urgent updates that required confidential sharing with Councillors (staffing) including:

a. Change of hours request; and

The change of hours request was **AGREED** unanimously.

b. Town Maintenance Officer job description and recruitment update

Deferred to the November meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm

Catherine Marlton
Town Clerk
September 2026



DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MONDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER 2026 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors L Auletta (Chair), T Bennett, S Collinson, T Cooper, J Cummings, J Hodgson and Trant.

Apologies: Cllr Smallridge.

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 Auletta read out a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded. The apologies from Cllr Smallridge were accepted.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public, and owner of 'Centre' read out a statement refuting the points made in the Committee's objection to the premises licence for the building, does the Council still wish the application to go to a hearing, and setting out the aims and types of events that the business hopes to provide in the town. Five other members of the public spoke in support of the premises licence application for Centre, the management of the space and the types of events provided.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 17th August 2026 and update on any matters arising.

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

Item 6. South Hams District Council Local Plan Scoping Consultation – It was **RESOLVED** that the Council submits an email response to the South Hams District Council Local Plan Scoping Consultation rather than directly answer all Commonplace questions. It was **RESOLVED** that the text as circulated is submitted as part of the Local Plan Scoping Consultation.

3. TREE WORKS APPLICATIONS

To make recommendations on the following tree works applications:

3a. 2369/26/TPO - TPO 1053; T19 – Lawson Cypress – crown lift to 3.8m from ground level, for vehicle clearance. Totnes Police Station, Ashburton Road, Totnes, TQ9 5JY.
Support.

3b. 2442/26/TCA - T1: Silver Birch - Up to 1.5m lateral reduction on all sides and 2m vertical reduction. Similar to the previous work undertaken to maintain the tree at a reasonable size for the small courtyard garden. 20 South Street, Totnes, TQ9 5DZ.

Object due to insufficient information. The Committee would request that the Tree Officer makes a site visit to inspect the tree.

The Committee **AGREED** to bring forward item 5.

5. LICENSING APPLICATION

To consider the Committee's comments on Premises Licence (supply of alcohol and provision of films (indoor)) for Centre, 3 Birdwood Court, Totnes, TQ9 5SG.

The Committee reviewed the advice received from South Hams District Council Licensing in relation to their previous objections on this application. To the remaining objection on the grounds of Prevention of Public Nuisance – smoking, it was **AGREED** to withdraw the Council's objection subject to the inclusion of the following condition on the licence: "Staff and customers shall not be permitted to smoke or vape on the external landing area of Birdwood Court".

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

To make recommendations on the following planning applications:

Note: Cllr Hodgson observes and does not vote on any applications which would potentially be discussed at a Development Management Committee meeting at South Hams District Council (SHDC).

4a. 2088/26/HHO - Refurbishment and loft extension to existing property. Moonrakers, Totnes Down Hill, Totnes, TQ9 5ES.

Object to the current design due to the mass and bulk (including eaves height) of the proposed roof, and how this would look and reflect light from across the river. However, the Committee does not object to the additional accommodation, which could be achieved through a shallow pitched roof and integrated PV panels.

The Committee also has the following comments on the proposed design:

- Material Palette – in general this is acceptable but it is felt that metal clad walls is not inkeeping and would be detrimental when viewed from across the river, with timber preferred.
- Glazing – there are large areas of glazing on the north west and north east elevations. The impact of light spill on wildlife needs to be considered. Consideration should be given to solar heat gain and the shading of these areas in hot weather.
- External Lighting – there is no mention of any external lighting in the application but it should be conditioned to ensure that any permitted levels are low to reduce the impact on wildlife.

4b. 2298/26/HHO and 2299/26/LBC - Retrospective Application for the installation of one replacement window, one additional window in the attic bedroom, and a rooflight in the attic bathroom. 9 Times Mews, Totnes, TQ9 5HF.

Object. The Committee would welcome the assessment of the Heritage Officer on the following comments on this application:

- Disruption to the design and symmetry of the building - The half-moon window installed on the West gable end is asymmetrical to the ridge line, and the rooflight on the south elevation is not symmetrical between the dormer edge of the roof.
- Half-Moon window – this window has come from a non-domestic building and is too large for the space available on the west gable end.
- Impact of the window designs on the Integrity of the conservation area (which is visible from the Mansion and library) and the unauthorised removal of the historic fabric of the listed building.

4c. 2261/26/HHO - Erect a sauna building within the rear garden. 6 North Castle Mews, North Street, Totnes, TQ9 5NQ.

Comment - the Committee requests that the Planning Officer considers the point of the removal of the permitted development restriction and if this will set any precedent.

4d. 2550/26/VAR - Variation of condition 3 of 1926/25/FUL (Proposed extension to petrol filling station sales building & installation of jet wash facilities). Morrisons Service Station, Station Road, Totnes, TQ9 5JR. Support.

4e. 2374/26/ARC - Application for approval of details reserved by condition 4 (Slates) of planning consent 1636/26/LBC. 4 Leechwell Lane, Totnes, TQ9 5EA.

Comment – the Committee defers to the view of the Heritage Officer.

6. HERITAGE AT RISK REGISTER

To consider any buildings/features in Totnes that should be included in the Heritage at Risk Register.

It was **AGREED** to suggest two buildings for inclusion:

- Malt Mill Barn, Lower Collins Road which is derelict and has cracks in the walls.
- Brunel Pumping Station, Former Dairy Crest site.

It was **AGREED** to share the email about the Heritage at Risk register with the Dartington Parish Clerk to consider buildings in that parish.

7. TORBAY LOCAL PLAN REGULATION 19 CONSULTATION

To consider the Torbay Local Plan 2025-45: Publication Plan (Regulation 19) and any response.

It was **AGREED** that the Council has no further comments to make at this stage in the process.

8. TOTNES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

To note an update on the Totnes Neighbourhood Plan.

Noted.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Planning Committee – Monday 19th October 2026 at 6.00pm in the Guildhall.

Noted.

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.

Sara Halliday

Governance and Projects Manager

September 2026



DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE TOWN MATTERS COMMITTEE MONDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER 2026 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors L Auletta (Deputy Chair), C Beavis, J Chinnock, S Collinson J Cummings, D Peters, A Presswell, E Price and T Robshaw.

Apologies: Councillor N Roberts.

In Attendance: C Marlton (Town Clerk) and one member of the public.

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.

It was **AGREED** to accept Cllr Roberts' apologies..

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There was one member of the public present.

Community Fridge Proposal

The Committee received a presentation from a member of the public on behalf of a local group regarding a proposal to establish a community fridge in Totnes. The proposal sought support in principle for a community-led initiative aimed at reducing food waste, improving food security, supporting climate action objectives, and strengthening community resilience. The proposal outlined examples of successful schemes operating in Ashburton and Buckfastleigh, together with proposed governance, volunteer, and food safety arrangements. The project envisages a volunteer-led model, operating in accordance with Community Fridge Network guidance and relevant food hygiene standards.

Councillors welcomed the proposal and discussed a range of matters including how the project would complement existing local food support initiatives, potential volunteer capacity, food safety and hygiene requirements, accessibility, security, and possible locations. It was noted that a community fridge differs from existing referral-based food support schemes by being freely accessible to all members of the public and focusing primarily on reducing food waste. Potential locations were discussed, including the Market Square/Civic Hall area, although any proposal would be subject to landowner permissions and further investigation. Members also highlighted the importance of ensuring an adequate volunteer base and considering operational arrangements to minimise risks such as vandalism.

It was agreed that the proposal would be referred to the Community Working Group for further consideration and development before being brought forward to Full Council for consideration of support in principle and any subsequent next steps.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 27th July 2026 and update on any matters arising.

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

Item 4. Council Awards - It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a celebratory event replaces the current individual and organisation awards (no change to the honorary freeman or Judy Westacott award); and
- the details are determined by the Community Working Group.

Item 5. Wills Project - It was **RESOLVED** that:

- it supports the submission of a pre-application for Listed Building Consent (with all necessary documents to be prepared by the Heritage Trust) to SHDC to determine what type of display is possible within the Guildhall;
- a Cllr is present at the site meeting with the SHDC Heritage Officer; and
- the preference is for any potential display to be housed in the current Women's Cell or ancillary areas to the main Guildhall and Council Chamber.
- that any proposed display, materials and content/wording would need to be approved by Totnes Town Council. The Heritage Trust confirmed that this would be required if they are applying for grant funding for the exhibition.

3. STRATEGY DELIVERY GROUP AND WORKING GROUP

To consider any recommendations and note the minutes from the following:

a. Community Working Group, 8th September 2026.

Noted. No recommendations to consider.

b. Economy Working Group, 15th September 2026.

Noted.

It is **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council that Totnes requests free parking on the 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th December 1pm – 6pm (deadline for this response is 10th October).

c. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 16th September 2026.

Noted.

3b. EPR04: Climate and Ecological Emergency – It was **AGREED** that the Town Council approaches Bridgetown Alive! to co-host a screening of the Peoples Emergency Briefing in St John's Church in mid-November (or alternatively January/February 2027). It was **AGREED** to get costings for the hire of St John's Church for a screening and potential dates.

3c. PRD2.J: Plymouth Road Phone Box - To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Council installs and maintains two defibrillators – one in the adopted telephone box on Plymouth Road and one on the Follaton Shop (subject to agreement of the shop/building owner). If the Committee is supportive of the idea, then their recommendation to Full Council should include approval for the purchase of two IPAD SP1 defibrillator [the same model as the two existing TTC maintained defibrillators) and locked cabinet bundles (£1245 +VAT each) and signage to convert the telephone box (£85 +VAT), total cost £2575 +VAT.

It was felt important to do communications on defibrillator locations and consider community training in due course.

6. Delivery Plan Review. Foundry and South West Water - To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Council writes to SHDC Environmental Health about the complaints related to these two locations and requesting that they provide sound and noise data collection for both sites. Cllr Robshaw has offered to the draft letter following the Town Matters Committee. This letter should be copied to the MP.

4. ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE RANGE EXTENSION CONSULTATION

To consider a proposal to extend the age range of St John's CE Primary School from 4-11 years to 2-11 years and any recommendation for the Council's response to the consultation.

It was unanimously **AGREED** to support this proposal. Given the deadline is before Full Council on Monday 5th October the Clerk will respond accordingly.

5. BURKE AND WILLS DISPLAY

To consider the current Burke and Wills display in the Guildhall.

It is **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council that the display remains in situ while further work is carried out, but with the addition of a QR code on the signage linking to a more comprehensive explanation of the cultural sensitivities.

6. PLANT-BASED COUNCIL CATERING

To reconsider the Council's pledge in favour of plant-based food at Council events.

It was **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council by majority (5 support, 2 abstentions, 2 against), that the policy position on Council catering is amended to:

Food for Council functions is locally produced and sustainably sourced, including vegetarian and vegan options.

The Economy Working Group were asked to consider community procurement, particularly around food, at a future meeting.

7. EMERGENCY PLAN

To update on preparation of the Town Council's internal Emergency Plan.

The verbal update was noted. Cllrs Cummings and Robshaw will be attending the Resilience Forum in the Civic Hall on the 22nd October and asked, if possible, that an officer attend.

Please note that spaces must be booked in advance: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/devon-community-resilience-forum-october-2026-tickets-1998950809682>

8. OPEN SPACES, SPORTS, RECREATION AND WELLBEING PLAN UPDATE

To review the projects to identify any potential S106 investment update on any general matters linked to the Open Spaces, Sport Recreation and Wellbeing Plan including an update on the greenways map (standing item).

It is **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council that the Town Council write to SHDC to ask for a reconsideration of the £8,817 for Elmhurst Park in Bridgetown, and to ask for confirmation of the process for adding or changing projects considered for S106 funding going forward.

9. LINK COUNCILLOR REPORTS

To consider link councillor reports from Committee members.

Cllr Price confirmed that work is ongoing with the Heritage Trust to review the Heritage Festival. The Town Council is collating survey responses and a report will be put to members in due course.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Town Matters Committee – Monday 23rd November 2026 at 6.30pm.

Noted.

The meeting closed at 8:00pm.

C Marlton
Town Clerk
29th September 2026

ITEM 5 - RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEE

5a. Full Council 7th September 2026

No recommendations.

5b. Council Matters Committee 14th September 2026

Item 7. Fixed Assets Policy - To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Fixed Assets Policy is adopted.

Item 8. Pay Policy - To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Pay Policy is adopted.

5c. Planning Committee 21st September 2026

No recommendations.

5d. Town Matters Committee 28th September 2026

ITEM 6 - LIST OF MEETING DATES, COMMUNICATIONS POINTS AND LINK COUNCILLOR UPDATES

Month	Full Council, 7pm	Council Matters Committee, 6.30pm	Planning Committee, 6.30pm	Town Matters Committee, 6.30pm
October	Monday 5 th	Monday 12 th	Monday 19 th	None
November	Monday 2 nd	Monday 9 th	Monday 16 th	Monday 23 rd
December	Monday 7 th	Monday 14 th	Monday 21 st	None

October

Full Council – 5th October at 6.30pm

Community Working Group – 8th October at 3.00pm

Council Matters Committee – 12th October at 6.30pm

Planning Committee – 19th October at 6.30pm

November

Full Council – 2nd November at 6.30pm

Economy Working Group – 3rd November at 2.00pm

Council Matters Committee – 9th November at 6.30pm

Planning Committee – 16th November at 6.30pm

Environment and Public Realm Working Group – 18th November at 4.30pm

Town Matters Committee – 23rd November at 6.30pm

Christmas Lights Switch On – 24th November 3.00-6.00pm

December

Full Council – 7th December at 6.30pm

Council Matters Committee – 14th December at 6.30pm

Planning Committee – 21st December at 6.30pm

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

Link Councillor Updates

ITEM 7 - CONSULTATION ON PLYMOUTH BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE DEVON AND TORBAY COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY AND CONVERSION TO A MAYORAL STRATEGIC AUTHORITY

Town and Parish Councils are being encouraged to take part in a public consultation on the future of the Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (DTCCA). The consultation is centred on two important questions:

1. Whether Plymouth City Council should become a constituent member of the DTCCA, and the potential benefits and concerns associated with that proposal.
2. Whether the DTCCA should progress to become a Mayoral Strategic Authority, and the potential benefits and concerns associated with that change.

The consultation opened on 16 September and closes on 28 October 2026. It is being run jointly by both Plymouth City Council and Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (DTCCA), and it covers the whole of Devon, Torbay and Plymouth.

The Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority was established in 2025 to enable councils to work together on issues that extend beyond individual council boundaries. Devon County Council and Torbay Council are currently constituent members, while Plymouth City Council is not. The proposal being consulted on would give Plymouth the same representation and voting rights as the existing members.

The consultation also seeks views on whether the Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority should seek to become a Mayoral Strategic Authority.

A Mayoral Strategic Authority would be led by a directly elected Mayor, with responsibility for devolved strategic powers and funding relating to areas such as transport, skills, economic development, housing and strategic planning. Local councils would continue to operate as they do now, retaining responsibility for local services and decision making. The consultation seeks views on both the potential benefits and any concerns associated with this change.

A questionnaire and more information on the proposal is available here:

<https://devolutionindevon.commonplace.is/>

Responses would be reported to Plymouth City Council and to the Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority in November 2026, before either body takes a decision. A formal proposal would only go to Government if both consented, as well as decisions that will be required from Devon County Council and Torbay Council, as the existing constituent councils.