



## MINUTES FOR THE TOWN MATTERS COMMITTEE

### MONDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors N Roberts (Chair), L Auletta, C Beavis, J Chinnock (from 18.45), S Collinson (from 18.45), D Peters, A Presswell and E Price.

Apologies: Cllr Cummings.

Not Present: Cllr Robshaw

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

#### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

**To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Council.**

Cllr Roberts read out a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded.

The apologies were accepted.

#### PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Representatives from The Mansion explained: the transfer of the building to the community back in 2018; the various activities and groups that the facility supports; the upkeep of a complex listed building and its modern elements; staffing; running costs; and the first renegotiation of rents since 2018. The representatives also raised concerns about the agreement with Devon County Council regarding the library which comes to an end in 2026 and uncertainty on the future of the current arrangement. Cllr Roberts declared a personal interest as a trustee of Transition Town Totnes. Members of the Committee asked various questions, including what The Mansion (or formally the KEVICC Site Foundation) would like from the Council – the response was a Cllr to serve as a trustee on the board (rather than just a link councillor role) and potentially to look at sharing facilities management (for example maintenance). The proposal for a Cllr to serve as a trustee will be added to the next agenda for discussion.

#### 2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**To approve the minutes of 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025 and update on any matters arising.**

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

Item 3.6 – Castle Street. It was **AGREED** to raise with Devon Highways the lack of signage at the bottom of Castle Street warning about the height and width restrictions of the road.

Item 6 – Universal Toilets. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council writes to South Hams District Council (SHDC) requesting that it considers extending the provision of RADAR keys to transgender people on request. It was **AGREED** to reply to SHDC's update to ask how they will publicise their decision through the relevant networks to make people aware of this provision.

Item 8. Transition Town Totnes. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council sends the letter of support as drafted to Transition Town Totnes.

### 3. STRATEGY DELIVERY GROUP AND WORKING GROUP

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

a. Economy Working Group, 13<sup>th</sup> August 2025.

Noted.

b. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 30<sup>th</sup> July and 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

Noted. To make the following recommendations from the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025:

2 – Planter Audit. To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council the following:

a. To retain planters at locations: A (under Totnes Town Centre sign); B (near Dartmouth Inn); 3 (end of Mill Lane); 4 (TTC Coronation Road bus stop); 11 (end of Bank Lane/Fore Street); and 20 (entrance to the Churchill development – see point d below).

b. To remove the planters at locations: 1 and 2 (South Hams District Council (SHDC) Coronation Road bus stops); 5 (Fore Street opposite Seven Stars); 6 (The Plains taxi rank); 7 (St Katherine's Way); 9 (Fore Street/Ticklemore Street); 10 (Fore Street/Bank Lane); 25 (corner of Castle Street/High Street); and 28 (Rotherfold/The Bull).

c. Appearance – remove all blackboards and paint all remaining planters green (suggested shade invisible green) which will remove Visit Totnes and Town Council branding.

d. Planter 20 - depending on discussions of the Town Matters Committee, place a warning sign on the uphill side of the planter warning of the unsuitability of the pavements to mobility scooters and wheelchair users.

e. Relocate two smaller planters (that are in good condition) to the Dartmouth Inn to cluster around the base of the cherry tree.

f. Totnes Gardens – with the removal of the two planters at the bus stops, write to see if Totnes Gardens would be prepared to take on the maintenance of the planters at the Dartmouth Inn and under the Totnes Town Centre sign with the same planting used in planters near the Wills memorial and on the end of Totnes Bridge.

g. Offer number 21 near Footworks to the business and resident or otherwise remove.

h. Write to The Mansion and United Reform Church encouraging them to repaint/use the planters for their own messaging.

3a - Picnic Benches (PRD2.Q). Cllr Auletta updated with the problems that the Tennis Club are experiencing with its wheelchair accessible bench being moved. The officer confirmed the number of benches with backs that are due to be installed by South Hams District Council as part of the project. It was **AGREED** to ask the Environment and Public Realm Working Group to consider purchasing further wheelchair accessible benches for installation near the Skate Park and bench requirements more widely across the town.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it offers the two TTC rectangular picnic tables to South Hams District Council (SHDC) to be installed in the vicinity of the skate park, location to be agreed between the Mayor, Skate Park Community Group and SHDC.

3b - XL Bins (PRD2.F). To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the two XL heritage bins are installed:

- Outside Firefly/Happy Apple on High Street; and

- To the rear of the Civic Hall at the end of the public toilets next to commercial bins, replacing the two bins currently placed on yellow hatched lines in a disabled parking bay.
- And that the Town Council requests that SHDC: provides a commercial waste bin on market days (Friday and Saturday) for trade waste generated by the market traders; and uses the opportunity to remove the redundant post near the parking meter once the two bins are removed to tidy up the area.



#### 4. COMMUNITY AUDIT BRIEF

**To consider the brief for the Community Audit and make a recommendation to Full Council.**

Cllr Chinnock explained the process that has led to the drafting of this Community Audit Brief, which has included inputs from some of the voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations in Totnes. It was felt that reporting of findings by 31<sup>st</sup> December is a tight deadline, but it is accepted that initial findings are required to inform the budget setting process for 2026/27.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that:

- The Council proceeds with the commissioning of the audit; and
- A named consultant is used (Devon Communities Foundation) rather than going to tender and as such seeks Full Council approval for this appointment as a provider of a specialist service and as an agreed exemption to Financial Regulations.

#### 5. MOBILITY AID WARNINGS FOR NARROW PAVEMENTS

**To consider the hazards to mobility aid users (wheelchairs, mobility scooters) using the narrow pavements around Eastgate and how to warn about the absence of suitable dropped kerbs.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that:

- A friendly warning is placed on the side of planter #20 advising of the unsuitability for wheelchair and mobility scooter use beyond this point.
- Vinyl stickers are placed on the bollards at the top of Fore Street as shown along with a message to 'Take Care'.



- c. The Town Council website is updated to advise on the section of Fore Street and High Street around Eastgate that is unsuitable for wheelchair and mobility scooter use.
- d. A detailed referral is made to Devon Highways requesting signage on Fore Street warning of pedestrians and wheelchairs/mobility scooters in the road.

The Committee voted to extend the meeting by 10 minutes.

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

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

Cllr Auletta updated on the work on the map and there was discussion about including the Devon Wildlife Trust project at Bowden Pillars, which it was **AGREED** to retain on the map at the current time. It was confirmed that any updates to the OSSRW tables/information can be made at a meeting as this is a standing item.

#### **7. LINK COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

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

Cllr Price updated on the Heritage Festival on 27<sup>th</sup> September where she will be in the Guildhall. Cllr Roberts updated that it is the Transition Town Totnes Ecohomes Weekend 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> September.

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

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Town Matters Committee – Monday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 6.30pm.**

Noted.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Sara Halliday  
Governance and Projects Manager