



MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS MONDAY 12TH JANUARY 2026 AT 7.00PM IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors D Peters (Chair), L Auletta, C Beavis, T Bennett and J Chinnock.

Apologies: Cllrs J Hannam, E Price and M Trant.

In Attendance: Cllr Cummings, C Marlton (Town Clerk).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

The Committee adjourned for the following item:

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

The Committee reconvened.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 8th December 2025 and update on any matters arising.

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

3. BUDGET MONITOR

To consider the Budget Monitor.

The budget monitor was **AGREED** unanimously.

4. MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS AND BUDGET

To consider the Mayor's engagements since October 2025 and the current budget.

The Mayor's engagements and budget was **AGREED** unanimously.

5. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

To consider the executive summary and recommendations from the Marketing and Communications Audit.

It was **AGREED** that:

- The Clerk will present a report to the February Council Matters Committee that outlines the next steps and costings required to implement the recommendations set out in the report;
- The Executive Summary will be sent to Full Council in February to note at this time; and

- A meeting of members and relevant members of staff will be arranged to discuss the formation of a Communications Strategy.

6. SAFEGUARDING POLICY

To review the Safeguarding Policy.

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

7. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USE POLICY

To consider an Artificial Intelligence Use Policy for the Council to adopt.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Responsible and Safe Use of AI policy is adopted.

8. MEMBERS IT AND DATA PROTECTION POLICY

To consider a Members IT and Data Protection Policy.

Subject to a minor amendment, to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Members IT and Data Protection Policy is adopted. A training session will be provided for members on the policy at 6pm prior to Full Council in February 2026.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 9th February 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)*

10. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)

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

These were reviewed and **AGREED** unanimously.

11. ELIZABETHAN HOUSE SURVEY [TOTNES MUSEUM]

To consider a survey of the Elizabethan House (commercial).

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Clerk proceeds as outlined, engaging with the Museum Trust to plan stage one works. It was noted that detailed financial implications will come back through this Committee in due course.

12. INVOICE FOR TOWN COUNCIL LANTERN

To consider an invoice received for work on Totnes Town Council’s lantern, Pegasus, prior to the Lantern Procession in December 2026 (financial).

Cllr Bennett declared a personal interest and abstained from the vote. The retrospective invoice for works was considered. It was **AGREED** by majority that the invoice should not be paid given it is outside of Financial Regulations and would be Ultra Vires. However, an email of thanks, outlining the return of the hardware and offering the gifting of the lantern sculpture, and a personal gift would be given with no use of public funds.

13. STAFF ATTENDANCE

To note sickness and overtime balances (staffing).

Noted.

14. STAFFING UPDATE

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

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that an adjustment be made to the use of paid staff for the administration of Full Council meetings, from April 2026 onwards.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Catherine Marlton

Town Clerk

January 2026