



DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL MONDAY 6TH JULY 2026 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors T Bennett (Mayor and Chair), L Auletta, J Chinnock, S Collinson, T Cooper, J Cummings, J Hodgson, D Peters, A Presswell, L Smallridge and M Trant.

Apologies: Cllrs Beavis, Price, Roberts and Robshaw, and District Cllr Allen.

Not Present: Cllr Hannam.

In Attendance: Member of the public, District Councillor Birch, C Marlton (Town Clerk) and P Bethel (Town Sergeant).

1. WELCOME TO ALL ATTENDING AND OBSERVING

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Council. The Mayor will request confirmation that all Members have completed or made any necessary amendments to their Declaration of Interests.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the apologies. Cllr Bennett updated a personal interest having become a Caring Town trustee.

The Committee will adjourn for the following items:

Reports from County and District Councillors.

- a. County Cllr Hodgson
- b. District Cllr Allen
- c. District Cllr Birch
- d. District Cllr Presswell

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

a. County Cllr (C Cllr) Hodgson had not submitted a report and gave a verbal update on: impacts of the hot weather on the rail system meaning that services have not stopped in Totnes due to the slope; the proposed pedestrian crossing on Bridgetown Hill; the future of Rushbrook; the community composting project's search for a site; and attending the South West Net Zero Hub in Bristol. Cllrs raised concerns about: the social media reports about Devon Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision; and the gaps in the proposed 20mph scheme in Totnes.

b. District Cllr Allen had not submitted a report and was not present.

c. District Cllr Birch (DCllr) had submitted a report and updated that South Hams District Council (SHDC) now have an agreement in place with tenants and Totnes Renewable Energy Society (TRESOC) about the Steamer Quay units and solar panels. Cllrs asked about: reports of toilet/waste reports at Longmarsh car park; SHDC approaching a community group about the use of S106 funding for various project ideas, rather than consulting the Town Council elected members.

d. District Cllr Presswell had submitted a report and updated on: the GWR conference and the importance of continuing to building that relationship after their change in status, particularly in view of the recent hot weather interruption, services missing Totnes, and the need for the underpass to be progressed; and the new drop in mental health services due to start at the Town Mill.

The Council reconvened.

3. CLERK'S QUARTERLY REPORT

To note the Clerk's Quarterly Report for April – June 2026 (general updates and correspondence).
Noted

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 1st June 2026.

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

To note the following minutes:

b. Council Matters Committee 8th June 2026.

Noted.

c. Planning Committee 15th June 2026.

Noted.

d. Town Matters Committee 22nd June 2026.

Noted.

5. 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 1st June 2026.

No matters arising.

b. Council Matters Committee 8th June 2026.

Item 5. Council's Complaints Policy and Procedure – It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Complaints Policy and Procedure is adopted.

Item 6. Death of a Senior National Figure Protocol - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Death of a Senior National Figure Protocol is adopted.

Item 7. Whistleblowing Policy - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Whistleblowing Policy is adopted without the amendment to widen the remit to include Cllrs (following DALC advice).

c. Planning Committee 15th June 2026.

Item 5. Dart Harbour Port Masterplan Consultation - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to respond to the Dart Harbour Port Masterplan Consultation with the following comments:

Totnes Waterfront:

- Redevelopment of Baltic Wharf – like the Dart Harbour Authority, the Council is also concerned about the reduction in marine employment space in the recent planning application.
- Exhibition/museum space on Steamer Quay – in principle the idea is supported subject to details on design and content if the idea is taken forward.
- Landing Moorings – the pontoons on the leat at Vire Island are supported.
- Longmarsh Pontoon – although this sits outside of the Totnes boundary, a pontoon at the south end of Longmarsh is not supported as it would negatively impact on the special view, tranquillity and wildlife provision in this area. A more appropriate location for consideration would be the basin near the Longmarsh car park.
- Saltmarsh – allocating the fields between the two bridges behind Rowsells Lane for salt marshes is supported.

Policies

- MP-U8 Liveaboard Vessels – the Council would not be adverse to this possibility if an appropriate location and facilities (water, foul water and refuse removal) could be found.
- MP-U13 and MP-U14 Personal Water Craft and New Technology – the Council is not supportive of business proposals for jet ski or small electric boat hire in Totnes as the river is: too narrow at this point; concerns about noise; jeopardises other river users; and disturbance to wildlife. The Dart Harbour Authority could consider identifying an area for such users such as has been adopted on the River Exe, if it is considered necessary in an alternative location away from the town.
- MP-E7 Planning Policy – strongly support this policy and approach.
- MP-E12 Flooding and Sea Level Rise – there has recently been flooding in Totnes due to spring tides and surface water (Warland), and there is regular spring tide flooding of Steamer Quay Road, Longmarsh and Vire Island.
- MP-C1 Employment - this policy is strongly supported.
- MP-C9 Dart Valley Trail – this policy is strongly supported.
- MP-C10 Protection of Views – this policy is strongly supported.
- MP-C11 Young People Engagement – support this policy. Totnes Town Council is able to provide evidence of deprivation in Bridgetown which should attract funding for schemes to support young people to be safe on and around the river, and education programmes with the schools around respecting the river environment.
- MP-C14 Heritage Harbour Status - this policy is supported.
- Connecting River and Community - the land and river regeneration schemes in Totnes – this aim/aspiration is supported.

d. Town Matters Committee 22nd June 2026.

Item 2. Chair of Committee – It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that Cllr Roberts is the Chair of the Town Matters Committee for 2026/27.

Item 4b. Economy Working Group: Heritage Festival Road Closure - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Council:

- Supports and funds a road closure for the Heritage Festival on 19th September 2026, timings to be confirmed; and
- Collects feedback from the whole community (market traders, businesses/Business Forum, visitors/members of the public) of their experience on the day, with the Economy Working Group to draw up suitable questions to gather the data required to inform the Shop and Stroll project.

Item 4c. Environment and Public Realm Working Group: Castle Meadow – It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that Transition Town Totnes is consulted and offered a trial area in Castle Meadow (in a suitable location) for the 30x30 project.

Item 6. Lamp for Peace and UNICEF Children's Day - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Council uses the lights in the trees on The Plains, alongside social media posts to communicate the reason for the lights on the day or day before the date, for the following events:

- Totnes Pride, 26/27th September 2026 (colour: rainbow)
- Lamp for Peace, 11th November 2026 (colour: red or a flame effect)
- UNICEF World Children's Day, 20th November 2026 (colour: pale blue)
- International Disability Day 3rd December 2026 (colour: purple)
- For the November 2026 events, invite the local schools to draw doves that can be hung in the trees by the Town Council as a way of engaging and educating local children on the significance of these events.

Item 6. Application for an alcohol licence for The Ruby Chinese Takeaway at 5 Christina Parade, Totnes, TQ9 5UU – It was **RESOLVED** by majority that the licence application is supported.

6. CLUSTER ARRANGEMENTS

To receive an update on Cluster work and to consider a formalisation of the Town and Parish Cluster arrangement.

It was **RESOLVED** to formalise the current clustering arrangement, with future additional areas and changes of the geography to be determined following the Government decision on Local Government Reorganisation.

7. RECESS COMMITTEE

To consider the appointment of a recess committee to meet on 3rd or 10th August 2026.

It was **RESOLVED** to give the Recess Committee delegated authority to act on behalf of the Full Council in urgent matters. The core invitee list for this meeting will be the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairs and Deputies of Committees. It was noted that this meeting would only be called for urgent business. The meeting is set for 6.30pm on Monday 10th August 2026, if required.

8. 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.

9. NEXT MEETING

To note the next meeting dates of Monday 7th September 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)*

10. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE (Standing Item)

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

None.

11. GUILDHALL WALL REPAIR

To consider the quotes for the repair of the Guildhall Wall (commercial).

it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to appoint Rivera Stone to undertake the works with the following conditions:

- They complete the specification form or provide the missing information on day rates/contingencies as required
- B2 are appointed to oversee and manage the contract for adherence to best practice.

If these measures add more than £4,000 to the overall cost of the repair and rebuild then the matter will be reviewed by Full Council in September 2026.

12. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

To consider the quotes for a six-month grounds maintenance contract (commercial).

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to appoint Glendale Services to provide interim grounds maintenance services from 1st September 2026 to 31st March 2027 until a new contract is tendered from 1st April 2027.

13. COMMUNITY ASSETS

To consider Community Asset opportunities, including Kingsbridge Inn and Laura House (financial).

Following discussion, the Council:

- **AGREED** that they were not supportive of pursuing the purchase of the Kingsbridge Inn;
- **RESOLVED** by majority to make a conditional offer on Laura House for purchase; and
- **RESOLVED** unanimously to give the Clerk delegated authority to negotiate the conditional offer.

14. CASTLE MEADOW ALLOTMENTS

To consider a complaint from the Totnes Allotment Association regarding the Castle Meadow Allotments (legal).

it was **RESOLVED** unanimously not to give permission to the Totnes Allotments Association to kill pheasants on Castle Meadow as had been requested.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm, with members agreeing to extend the length of the meeting to accommodate all business.

Cllr Tim Bennett
Chair