



AGENDA FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE

MONDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 6.30PM IN THE GUILDHALL

There are stairs to the Council Chamber but if any member of the public has mobility issues the Council can relocate to the lower Guildhall.

You are hereby SUMMONED to attend the **Council Matters Committee** on **Monday 14th September 2026 at 6.30pm** in the Guildhall for the purpose of transacting the following business:

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

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair will read out the following statement:

Welcome to everyone attending and observing the meeting.

A reminder that open proceedings of this meeting will be video recorded. If members of the public make presentations, they will be deemed to have consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber attendees are also consenting to being recorded.

This meeting is limited to 90 minutes and therefore members are asked to raise their points succinctly and not repeat the same view expressed by colleagues if it does not add to the debate.

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

The Committee will adjourn for the following items:

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A period of 15 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions or make comment regarding the work of the Committee or other items that affect Totnes.

The Committee will convene to consider the following items:

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 13th July 2026 and update on any matters arising. Document attached [page 4].

3. STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUPS

To consider any budgetary recommendations from the following (documents attached, page 8):

- a. Community Working Group, 8th September 2026.
- b. Economy Working Group, 14th July and 6th September 2026.
- c. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 15th July 2026.
- d. All grant funding recommendations from the Working Group.

4. BUDGET MONITOR

To consider the Budget Monitor. Document attached.

5. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE TENDER SPECIFICATION

To consider the grounds maintenance specification for the Council's tendering of a two-year contract. Document attached [page 10].

6. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

To review the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Document attached [page 12].

7. FIXED ASSETS POLICY

To review the Fixed Assets Policy. Document attached [page 33].

8. PAY POLICY

To review the Pay Policy. Document attached [page 35].

9. HOME WORKING POLICY

To review the Home Working Policy. Document attached [page 38].

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. No document.

*The Committee will be asked to **RESOLVE** to exclude the press and public “by reason of the confidential nature of the business” to be discussed and in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. (CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)*

11. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)

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

12. TOTNES GUIDE

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

13. TRANSPORT FEASIBILITY STUDY

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

14. CIVIC HALL BUILDING MAINTENANCE

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

- a. Green Room roof; and
- b. Gable End structural repair.

15. STAFFING UPDATE

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

- a. Change of hours request; and
- b. Town Maintenance Officer job description and recruitment update.

Catherine Marlton
Town Clerk
9th 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 2 – CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES



DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS MONDAY 13TH JULY 2026 AT 6.30PM IN THE GUILDHALL

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

Apologies: Cllrs J Chinnock, J Hannam and E Price.

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 8th June 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 (document attached):

a. Community Working Group, 29th June 2026.

It was **AGREED** that the remaining Christmas Lights allocation (£7700) in the Community Budget be reallocated to additional funding for: the Christmas Lights Switch on event (£700); and Community Grants (£7000).

b. All grant funding recommendations for the Working Group.

The following grant funding recommendations were **AGREED**:

Applicant	Project	Grant Request (£)	Project Cost (£)	Policy Area	Grant awarded
United Free Church	Baby and Toddler equipment and toys for new play area	£500	£700	Community wellbeing of young families	£500
Individual hosting at United Free Church	Pilot youth group, including development of youth council	£250	£1,175	Community and Young People	£250
Jamming Station	Safe Sounds: Safeguarding, accessibility and SEND work	£1,000	£1,000	Community and Young People	£1,000

Care in Community	CQC registration fee	£1,000	£18,000	Community and Wellbeing	£0
Dartington Recreation Centre	To support the fundraising Extravaganza event	£500	£1,400	Community - Dartington	£0 – outside of the Parish boundary.
The Mansion	Free events for families and children	£850	£1,200	Community and Families	£850
SASHA	Ongoing support for vulnerable women and children	£1,000	£2,427.50	Community wellbeing	£1,000
Playground Arts CiC (Mansion project)	Unwiped: intergenerational cultural/arts project - wellbeing and SEND support	£990	£8,995	Community and the Arts	£660
Totnes Bike Hub	Tea and Tinkering - mental health support	£1,000	£1,840	Community	£1,000
Tony Gee (Telling Tales)	Story telling, arts and cultural project with heritage links	£600	£2,300	Community & Economy/ Events	£600
				TOTAL	£5,860

In addition, it was **AGREED** to award £120 to Totnes Pulse to cover the Civic Hall hire costs for the Volunteer Fair in September 2026.

A review of the grant processes will be carried out as part of the 2027/28 precept and budget discussions.

4. BUDGET MONITOR

To consider the Budget Monitor.

The budget monitor was **AGREED** unanimously.

5. MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS AND BUDGET

To consider the Mayor's engagements since April 2026 and the current budget.

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

6. STRATEGIC FUNDING

To review the applications for Strategic Funding for 2026.

It was **AGREED** that further clarification for the strategic funding grant applications is required before Full Council consideration in September 2026, particularly around service delivery within the Totnes boundary to Totnes residents. Councillors **AGREED** the following questions:

Applicant	Additional information requested
Caring Town	Clarification of detailed workplan, governance arrangements following trustee transition, role description for coordinator/project manager, outputs for the £13,500 earmarked award.
Food in Community	Confirmation of any further secured or pending match funding beyond the £12,000 South Hams District Council contribution, and clarification of whether the £20,100 cost covers the full Totnes-specific delivery

	period only. Confirmation that funding is for the food delivery service element of the operation.
Totnes Caring	Updated position on the projected transport service deficit, confirmed income for the service, and whether a partial award would still allow the Transport Coordinator post/service to operate.
Jamming Station	Confirmation of which income lines are secured, pending or at risk, given the projected shortfall and reliance on some unconfirmed income streams. £1,000 funding already agreed for the current financial year by separate application. Requesting clarification around how many Totnes young people are served and what they pay to attend the sessions, including clarification on the bursary element of the budget.
TRAYE	Total cost of the three projects, current secured/pending funding for each, and confirmation of whether the £12,000 request represents full or partial project costs. Further information needed on the Youth Can Make a Difference element. Request for the number of Totnes children attending the clubs.
Stepping Stones	Confirmation of whether the £5,000 Essential Project is the full cost of the proposed purchase and whether any reduced award would still be viable. Noting funding has already been awarded in this year towards this project.
Citizens Advice South Hams	Confirmation of the match funding position from Devon County Council and South Hams District Council, and whether the St John's outreach can continue if a partial award is made.

7. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

To review the Financial Regulations.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Financial Regulations are adopted.

8. HR POLICY REVIEW

To review the following HR policies following SW Councils advice (documents attached):

a. Working Time and Leave Policy.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the revised Working Time and Leave Policy.

b. Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Neonatal Leave and Pay Policy.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the revised Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Neonatal Leave and Pay Policy.

9. INVESTMENT STRATEGY

To review the Investment Strategy.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the revised Investment Strategy is adopted.

10. RESPONSIBLE AND SAFE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY

To consider the updates to the Responsible and Safe Use of Artificial Intelligence Policy.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the revised Responsible and Safe Use of Artificial Intelligence Policy is adopted and reviewed on a 12-month basis.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 14th September 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)*

12. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)

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

These were reviewed and **AGREED** unanimously.

13. COMMUNITY ASSET

To note an update on Laura House (legal and financial).

Noted.

14. STAFF ATTENDANCE

To note sickness and overtime balances (staffing).

Noted.

15. STAFFING UPDATE

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

Noted.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Catherine Marlton

Town Clerk

July 2026

ITEM 3 – STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUPS

a. Community Working Group, 8th September 2026.

Item 4. Odd Object Competition

To **RECOMMEND** the allocation of £44 additional funding to cover the costs arising from increased participation.

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

No budgetary recommendations.

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

2a – Castle Meadow. To **RECOMMEND** to the Council Matters Committee that:

- the location for the trial area is on the bank to the rear of Alpha Terrace; and
- up to £2000 is allocated for this project from the Environment and Public Realm budget (town centre improvements) and see TTT breakdown of costs below.

	Staff Hours @ £19/hr	
Timeline	Description	Amount (£)
September	Prepping site: mowing, raking, scarifying. 18 hrs	342
September	Running volunteer day: set up, sowing seed, planting plugs. 6hrs	114
March	Prepping for spring planting: Mowing (long cut) and raking 3hrs	57
March	Running volunteer day: set up, sowing seed, planting plugs. 6hrs	114
Ongoing (Sept-Sept)	Maintenance: watering, weeding, monitoring (plants and animals). 20hrs	380
Ongoing (Sept-Sept)	Project coordination: research, planning, creating signage, purchasing, budgeting, admin. 15hrs	285
Materials		
	Description	Amount (£)
	Meadow flower plug plants (300)	364
	Meadow flower seed mix (100g)	36
	Meadow flower and grass seed mix (500g)	25
	Yellow rattle seed (100g)	35
	Brush mower hire	100
	Signage: wood and printing	20
	Horticultural Sand (for seed dispersal) (20kg)	10
	Peat free compost (for firming in plugs) (46litres)	14

	Total	£1896
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2d – Town Maintenance. To **RECOMMEND** to the Council Matters Committee that the Council takes action on graffiti through:

- Officers seeking approval from all utilities companies to be able to clean up their graffitied boxes; and producing a template note that the Town Maintenance Team can put through letter boxes of properties in prominent locations in the town seeking permission to put right the graffiti, preferably with the property providing the paint that matches the existing; and
- The Town Maintenance Team (if permissions are given) removes graffiti from utilities boxes, and on private properties in prominent locations or where the graffiti is racial or political in content.

e. All grant funding recommendations from the Working Group.

ITEM 5 – GROUNDS MAINTENANCE TENDER SPECIFICATION

The Environment and Public Realm Working Group has considered the following and **RECOMMEND** to the Council Matters Committee that the grounds maintenance specification is adopted as drafted to be able to go to tender this autumn.

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL **DRAFT GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SPECIFICATION 2027/28**

The contract is for Grounds Maintenance at Totnes Cemetery and Castle Meadow.

Maintenance shall include the removal from the site of all cuttings which are to be disposed of legally.

Hedge and shrub cutting must comply with seasonal restrictions relating to bird nesting. Grass cutting will include maintaining the grass and any other growth around headstones /monuments/ benches / boundaries to the same height as the surrounding grass. Grass to be cut up to boundary fences or walls.

The Contractor will comply with all relevant Health and Safety legislation in respect of both the Contractor's employees and the general public. Suitable and sufficient risk assessments on all work processes must be provided. Machinery and equipment used must be subject to the necessary servicing and safety inspections.

The Contractor will give consideration to the area of work and noise levels when funerals are in progress and not start before 0800 hours given the proximity of residential properties.

The Contractor must hold adequate and current Public Liability Insurance.

The Contractor must comply with the Council's policy banning any use of Glyphosate on Town Council owned land.

Totnes Cemetery

The Cemetery is shown on the enclosed map A and consists of approximately 7.01 acres.

Grass cutting - 17 cuts per annum, as close to the ground as practicably possible, on the following frequency

- 1 cut in January or February (prior to wild flower blooming)
- 1 cut in March (before Easter or Mothering Sunday if Easter is in April)
- 2 cuts per month April to September
- 1 cut per month October and November
- 1 cut in December by the 15th of the month

Grass cutting to take place only on the perimeter of wild areas on the circle (plus paths through the middle) and on the island containing the Chapel to one mower width.

Raised graves – growth on raised graves to be kept below 30cm as part of the monthly grass cutting schedule.

Garden of Rest – area to be cut/strimmed and grass blown off the memorial stones/tablets.

Hedge cutting – 1 cut per annum. To be cut on internal sides and tops only.

Shrubs and bushes (see plan provided) – to be trimmed/cut back tight once a year between September-November to form rounded shapes and to remove the year's growth.

Roadside dry stone wall bank – to be kept trimmed and tidy on top and both sides. Any shrubs or brambles on the bank or overhanging the wall to be kept trimmed and cleared so as not to cause an obstruction to the public footpath.

Pathways – to be kept clear of any up growing and overhanging vegetation. Weeds to be strimmed. All debris to be blown off paths.

Itemised quote requested for annual maintenance of the Wild Areas on the circle and the Chapel – to be cut back annually in late summer, cuttings left for up to two weeks for seed to drop and then cleared.

Winter leaves and debris from trees to be cleared before Easter and before Christmas.

Castle Meadow

Castle Meadow is shown on the enclosed map B and the hedge runs along Collins Road and Lower Collins Road as highlighted in pink.

Hedge cutting - 1 cut per annum. To be cut on both sides and on top. In the area enclosed by allotments only outside to be cut.

Grass Cutting – 2 cuts per annum of Castle Meadow to be carried out in June and October, [with the exception of the trial area, to be marked by stakes and roped off prior to these cuts – note: this is subject to Transition Town Totnes accepting the offer for a 30x30 area].

Term of contract

The initial contract will be for two ~~the~~ years from 1st April 2027 to 31st March 2029.

If both parties are satisfied with the conduct of the contract during the first two years', the contract will continue into subsequent years with a review after five years.

The Contractor is expected to provide and pay for their own tools, machinery, equipment, materials, transport and support staff.

Either party shall have the right at any time to terminate this contract by giving not less than 3 months' notice in writing to the other party.

Contract monitoring

The contractor will be required to co-operate in meeting with the Town Council's appointed officer to review progress with the contract, and to promptly address any failure in service identified at those meetings. Contract monitoring meetings will be held as required either on site at Totnes Cemetery or in the Town Council offices.

Pricing and payment

The agreed cost of the contract, together with VAT (if applicable), will be paid in equal monthly payments in arrears by the 30th day of the month immediately following the month in which the Services have been performed.



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 2026

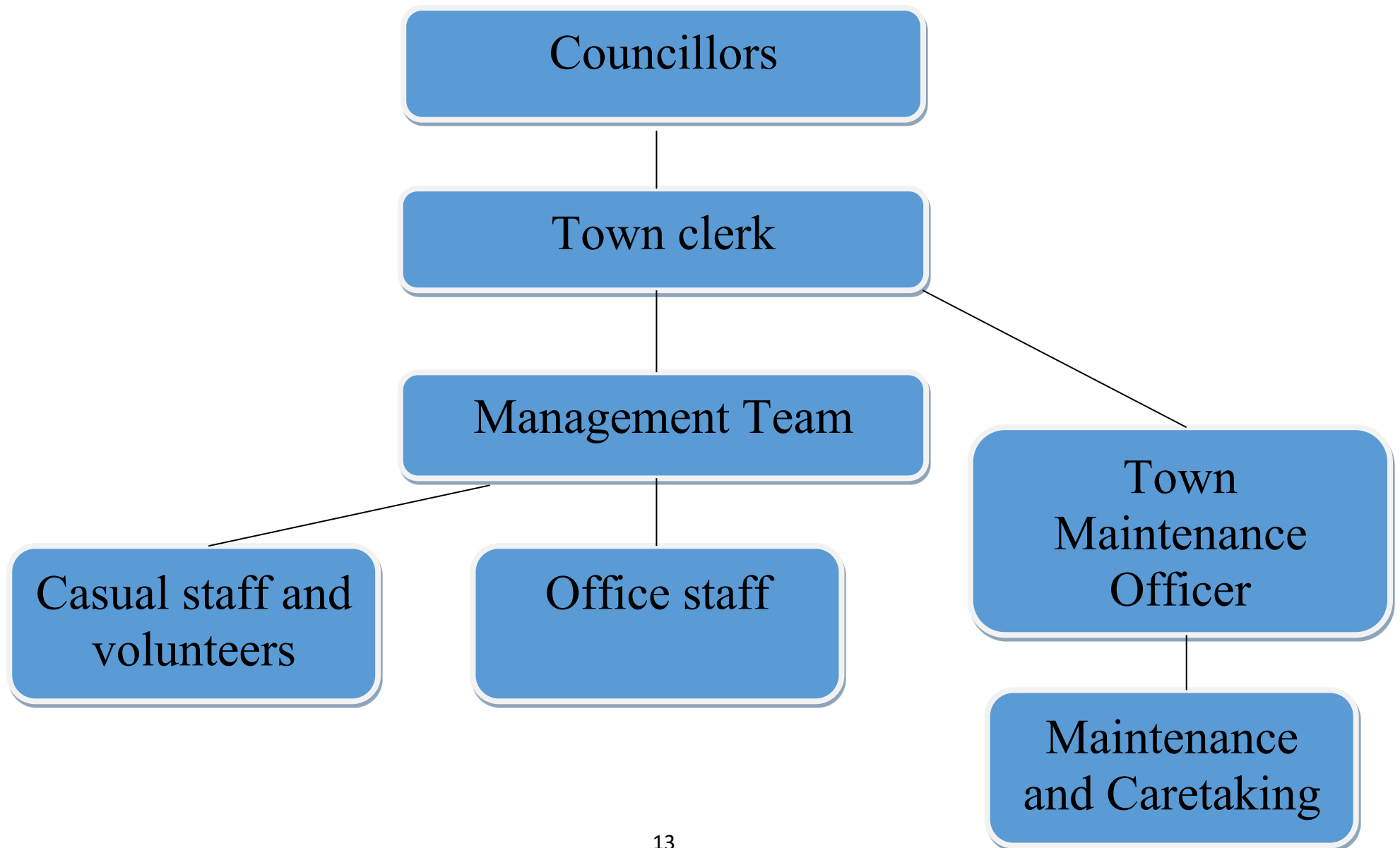
It is our policy to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- *A workplace and work activities that will be safe for our employees, visitors and others who may be affected by what we do.*
- *Safe plant, equipment and systems of work.*
- *Safe use, handling and storage of articles and substances.*
- *Instruction and training for and consultation with our employees.*
- *A safe working environment.*
- *Adequate facilities and welfare arrangements.*
- *Sufficient resources to implement the policy and the assignment of responsibilities.*

Employees are reminded that they have a duty to take reasonable steps for their health and safety and other people who may be affected and to co-operate with arrangements in all matters relating to health and safety.

This policy will be kept up-to-date and reviewed annually.

Health And Safety Organisational Chart



RESPONSIBILITIES

Town Clerk

The Clerk is the designated person with overall responsibility for health and safety within the Council. She will ensure that:

- our Health and Safety Policy is implemented, monitored, developed, communicated effectively, reviewed and amended as required
- suitable and sufficient funds, people, materials and equipment are provided to meet all health and safety requirements
- adequate insurance cover is provided and renewed
- competent persons are appointed to provide health and safety assistance and advice
- an adequate system of maintenance exists and operates to keep premises, plant and work equipment in a safe condition
- statutory examinations are planned, completed and recorded
- there is regular communication and consultation with staff on health and safety issues
- an effective training programme is established to ensure staff are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner
- safe systems of work are developed and implemented
- accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents at work are recorded, investigated and reported
- safety issues raised are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented and communicated to staff
- contractors engaged are reputable, can demonstrate a good health and safety record and are made aware of relevant local health and safety rules and procedures
- effective contingency plans are in place with a designated competent person in charge of the planning and control measures for situations involving imminent danger
- health and safety objectives are set and their achievement is measured and reported annually.

Town Councillors

The Councillors have the ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of Totnes Town Council but discharges this responsibility through the Clerk down to individual managers, supervisors and employees.

The Council has nominated the Clerk to have special responsibility for health and safety.

The Council will ensure that:-

- they provide a lead in developing a positive health and safety culture throughout the organisation.

- all its decisions reflect its health and safety intentions.
- adequate resources are made available for the implementation of health and safety.
- they will promote the active participation of workers in improving health and safety performance.
- they will review the health and safety performance of the Council on an annual basis.

Employees

All employees must:

- take reasonable care of their own safety
- take reasonable care of the safety of others affected by their actions
- observe the safety rules
- comply with the Health and Safety policy
- conform to all written or verbal instructions given to them to ensure their personal safety and the safety of others
- dress sensibly and safely for their particular working environment or occupation
- conduct themselves in an orderly manner in the work place and refrain from any antics or pranks
- use all safety equipment and/or protective clothing as directed
- avoid any improvisations of any form which could create an unnecessary risk to their personal safety and the safety of others
- maintain all equipment in good condition and report defects to their supervisor
- report any safety hazard or malfunction of any item of plant or equipment to their supervisor
- report all accidents to their supervisor whether an injury is sustained or not
- attend as requested any health and safety training course
- observe all laid down procedures for processes, materials and substances used
- observe the fire evacuation procedure and the position of all fire equipment and fire exit routes.

The Town Maintenance Officer must:

- undertake inspections and risk assessments where required and as directed by the Clerk
- be responsible for the Legionella testing in the Council's Guildhall and Civic Hall
- act as Fire Officer for the Council
- take responsibility for ensuring suitable fire safety & emergency procedures are in place for Council buildings
- ensure fire alarm systems are tested and serviced regularly
- where required liaise with the fire alarm service contractor
- ensure all testing and servicing is carried out with the required frequency in the Council's buildings and that fire log books are kept up to date.
- take charge of procedures in the event of an emergency evacuation
- work safely and develop and implement safe systems of work
- report any accidents, ill health and "near miss" incidents at work to ensure they are investigated and recorded
- monitor the Council's buildings and assets to identify any health and safety issues
- keep plant and work equipment maintained in a safe condition
- use personal protective equipment where required
- ensure hazardous substances are stored, transported, handled and used in a safe manner according to manufacturers' instructions and established rules and procedures
- ensure contractors engaged are reputable, can demonstrate a good health and safety record and are made aware of relevant local health and safety rules and procedures

ARRANGEMENTS

Accident Investigation

It is our policy to investigate.

- All accidents resulting in any reportable injury or losses of any assets.
- Accidents, however minor.
- All near-misses.

Accident Reporting

It is our policy to report all serious injuries, industrial diseases and dangerous occurrences.

We will report all notifiable accidents to the enforcing authority.

The Accident Book must be fully completed for all injuries incurred at work, however minor.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse

No alcohol can be consumed on the premises at any time unless as part of a Council arranged social function. Employees should drink alcohol at these events responsibly and ensure they do not drive a vehicle.

Anyone found taking illegal drugs on the premises is guilty of gross misconduct and will be disciplined accordingly.

Asbestos

The Policy of Totnes Town Council is to :-

- Produce and maintain an Asbestos Register that is available to all staff, contractors and property users on request.
- Promote awareness of the hazards associated with asbestos.
- Ensure the Council's Policy conforms to Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2006.

Consultation and Training

Staff meetings will be held regularly. Any items discussed will be noted and where appropriate, actioned.

The Council is committed to providing employees with adequate information, instruction and training. External assistance will be used to provide professional health and safety training if required.

- We will ensure that all newly appointed or promoted staff receive an efficient induction into their jobs.
- We will provide training to increase the productivity and performance of existing staff, ensuring that they are updated in line with new legislative requirements, techniques and technology, and a log of staff training will be maintained.
- Training needs will be reviewed at least once a year.

Contractors

All contractors working on our premises are required to comply with appropriate rules and regulations governing their work activities.

We will ensure that, prior to engaging any contractor, they are competent and that work is carried out safely with full documentation in the form of risk assessments, method statements and insurance provided.

COSHH

We recognise that some substances have the potential to cause ill health and we will introduce measures to identify any such substances our employees, or contractors' staff, use or are exposed to in the course of their work via a COSHH register. Where practical alternatives exist, we will not use harmful substances. Substances that we must use will be assessed and control measures introduced to prevent risk.

Display Screen Equipment

It is our policy to provide a safe and comfortable working environment and we will put in place arrangements and procedures for the assessment of risks from the use of DSE. A user, defined as a person using display screen equipment for a large proportion of their working day, is entitled to free eyesight tests. Please refer to the Staff Handbook for information on arranging this.

Driving At Work

Driving is an integral part to some roles within the Council and has inherent risks associated with it which drivers should be made aware of.

The Council is committed to reducing the risks its staff face or create when driving at work and therefore will :-

- Not put unreasonable time constraints on travel.
- Ensure those driving for business are competent (and where required, authorised) and fit.

Drivers will remain responsible for their safety and must comply with the Highway Code and Road Traffic Act.

It is the responsibility of drivers to inform the Town Clerk of:

- Anything that could affect their driving, e.g. health conditions or injuries, use of prescribed medication.
- Changes to licence such as; limitations, offences recorded, period bans.
- Vehicle defects that affect ability/safety to drive.
- Any accidents/incidents that occurred whilst driving on behalf of the Council.
- Be physically fit and not under influence of any alcohol or drugs that may affect the ability to drive.
- Have had an eye test in the last two years and be using any corrective appliance.
- Adjust their driving position, head restraints and mirrors to ensure maximum comfort and safety.

Whilst driving, drivers must: -

- Drive in accordance with the applicable law and with consideration for the safety of passengers and other road users.
- Remain in control of the vehicle at all times.
- Not smoke in a Council vehicle.
- Only use electronic devices, e.g. mobile phones, satellite navigation, mp3 player, when set up to do so, i.e. using a hands-free device.
- Never use any handheld electronic device, e.g. mobile phone, satellite navigation, mp3 player.

Electricity At Work

All electrical systems on our premises will be inspected to ensure there is no danger.

Portable appliances will be given a thorough electrical test by a competent person at fixed intervals, which reflect the potential risks associated with the class of appliance.

The fixed wiring installation supplying electrical sockets, lighting or other wired in equipment will be inspected by a competent electrician at least every five years.

Any hirer of the premises will be required to produce evidence that electrical equipment being brought on to the premises is PAT tested

Fire Safety

We will put in place arrangements for the assessment of risks from fire and appropriate control measures to minimise the risks identified. These measures will include the following arrangements, procedures and controls.

- Regular inspection of the premises for fire safety.
- Fire extinguishers will be placed at clearly signed fire points.
- Emergency exit routes will be kept clear at all times.

We will

- Provide adequate numbers of fire extinguishers on the premises.
- Ensure that the fire extinguishers are subject to regular maintenance.
- Formulate emergency evacuation procedures which staff will be asked to confirm annually they have read.

First Aid

We recognise our legal duty to make sufficient provision for first aid to employees.

We will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that there are an adequate number of trained first aiders.

In the event of anything other than minor injuries, medical assistance must be sought.

Lone Working

Totnes Town Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risks to their health and safety.

Totnes Town Council will determine, by risk assessment, those activities where work can actually be done safely by one unaccompanied person. This will include the identification of hazards from means of access and/or egress, machinery, goods, substances, etc.

Particular consideration will be given to:

- the remoteness or isolation of workplaces
- any problems of communication
- the possibility of interference, such as violence or criminal activity from other persons
- the nature of injury or damage to health

Information and Training

Employees will be given all necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to recognise the hazards and appreciate the risks involved with working alone.

Employees will be required to follow the safe working procedures devised including:

- when working alone, e.g. in an isolated area a member of the Council is aware of your location and expected time frame necessary to complete the task
- check that work being done has been subject to risk assessment and check the assessment yourself – some work may have been identified as requiring the assistance of a second person or simply prohibited from being a lone working activity

- if possible and arranged beforehand, keep in regular contact with someone else, e.g. use a mobile phone to call into the office every couple of hours indicating your movements
- If there is no mobile phone connectivity then ensure you arrange for an alternative method of checking in i.e. visiting the office, walkie talkie, other
- do not put yourself at risk; if you do not feel safe discuss the situation with the Town Clerk

Certain tasks will not be carried out whilst working alone and these include working at height i.e. from ladders, heavy lifting activities. Further arrangements will be put in place for these activities.

Refer to the Lone Working Policy and risk assessment for further details.

Manual Handling

We will undertake risk assessments in respect of all manual handling operations identified as having a significant risk and will strive to reduce these risks as far as possible.

Training in lifting techniques will be provided for staff involved in all operations identified as having a significant risk.

Noise

Certain activities generate noise such as the use of equipment and machinery however it is the exposure over a long period of time that is most likely to cause harm.

The Council will assess the level of exposure and put the appropriate level of control in place which may include replacing the noisy equipment or it may be a simple of providing ear protection for individuals.

All employees affected by noise will be provided with information, instruction and training

Occupational Ill Health

We will take all reasonably practicable measures to prevent our employees from contracting any occupational diseases.

Where, by risk assessment, it is considered appropriate we will provide health surveillance by qualified medical professionals.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE will be provided where our risk assessments show that a risk cannot otherwise be avoided.

It will only be used where it is not reasonably practicable to modify the activity, the process, or the method of work to prevent risk.

PPE will be maintained and replaced as necessary to ensure its effectiveness. Employees must report loss or obvious defects in PPE as soon as practicable.

Pregnant Females

We recognise that all work involving pregnant women and nursing mothers will need to take into account their physical and psychological capacity.

Employees are reminded that they have a duty to advise their employer as soon as they know they are pregnant.

Risk Assessment

We will carry out suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks to the health and safety of our employees and to others who might be affected by our work activities.

Safety Inspections

Safety inspections will be arranged at appropriate intervals. All safety equipment such as interlocking guards, emergency stops and pressure mats will be regularly tested to ensure effectiveness

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted anywhere within the buildings.

Stress Management

We recognise that stress is an increasing factor in our daily lives.

We will endeavour to increase general awareness of stress and ways to combat workplace stress.

We will take action to prevent workplace stressors and monitor and evaluate stress indicators in our employees.

Where an employee feels under stress they should make their supervisor or manager aware of the situation.

The Indoor Environment

It is our policy to provide a working environment that is safe and comfortable.

The Outdoor Environment

Trees

The Council are responsible for numerous trees situated around the town and acknowledge its responsibility to ensure they are well maintained.

Trees are of great benefit to the Town and the overall risk to human safety is extremely low, however the Council does have a duty of care and will undertake a balanced and proportionate approach to tree safety.

- Independent Inspection – The Council on a regular basis will arrange for all trees under their control to be assessed by a suitably qualified person with expertise in tree management. The Council will react accordingly to the recommendations with regards to tree maintenance.
- Visual Inspection – Depending on the recommendations of the expert report the Council will undertake regular visual inspections at appropriate intervals. The interval will be dependent on condition, location and size of the tree.

All inspections will be documented.

Visitors

Our policy regarding the control of visitors on our premises is that :-

- We must be aware that the visitor is on the premises.
- Visitors are the responsibility of the Council whilst on the premises.

All visitors must comply with any instructions given to them.

Work Equipment

We will, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure that all work equipment is safe and without risk.

To minimise the risk of injury from work equipment we will :-

- Carry out inspections to ensure all safety critical features remain fully effective.
- Ensure that all maintenance procedures are kept up-to-date.
- Provide suitable training.

Young Persons

We will pay special regard to the needs of any young persons by risk assessing the tasks we are asking them to do and take into account their inexperience and immaturity.

Vulnerable Persons

We will pay special regard to the needs of any vulnerable persons, including but not limited to young people, older persons, those with a disability, or others who may require additional support. Where appropriate, we will undertake specific risk assessments to ensure their tasks and working environment take into account any particular needs, limitations, or circumstances, and we will provide suitable oversight, adjustments, or guidance to support their health, safety and wellbeing.

Management arrangements

- Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of the Town Councillors
- Day to day responsibility for ensuring the policy is put into practice is delegated to the Town Clerk
- Our nominated Competent Person is the Town Clerk
- Employees should report any health and safety concerns to the Town Clerk
- The Town Clerk will be responsible for ensuring any risk assessments as required by Regulations are undertaken.
- Action required to reduce or control the risks will be approved by the Town Clerk and Councillors (if required)
- The Town Clerk will be responsible for ensuring that employees are made aware of the findings of the risk assessments and any control measures identified.
- Any defects in equipment, buildings or systems should be reported to the Town Clerk
- The Health and Safety Law Poster is displayed in the Guildhall Office.

General arrangements

- Induction training for new employees is the responsibility of the Town Clerk
- Job training will be co-ordinated by the Town Clerk
- First aid boxes are kept in the Guildhall Offices and the Civic Hall
- Training records are kept by the Finance & HR Manager
- The first aid box is kept in the Guildhall offices corridor
- The Accident Book is kept in the Guildhall offices corridor
- All accidents should be reported to the Town Clerk
- the Town Clerk and the relevant Committee Chairman or Mayor will conduct any accident investigations required
- Emergency escape routes are checked weekly by the Town Maintenance Officer
- Fire safety checks are carried out weekly by the Town Maintenance Officer

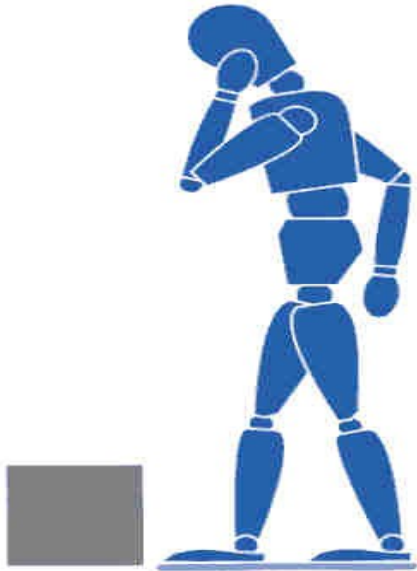
- Fire extinguishers are checked monthly and serviced annually
- The fire alarm is tested weekly by the Town Maintenance Team

Manual Handling

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD HANDLING TECHNIQUE

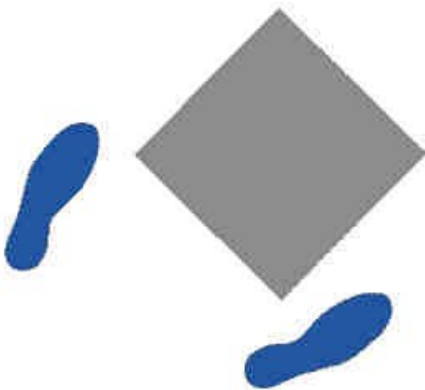
1 Planning

Plan the lift, consider where the load is to be placed, the distances involved, are there any obstructions such as closed doors, is assistance required and can handling aids or equipment be used?



2 Feet

The feet should be positioned apart (shoulder width), one foot ahead of the other in the direction of the intended movement



3 Knees

Adopt a good posture for handling with the knees bent (not squat – don't kneel), in order to gain the most effective power from the thigh muscles

4 Back

The back should be straight - not necessarily vertical (15 - 20°) from vertical is alright, keeping the natural curve of the spine. It may help to tuck in the chin. If necessary, lean forward a little over the load to get a good grip and to keep the centre of gravity over the load.

5 Arms

The arms should be close to the body (nearer the centre of gravity) with the shoulders level and facing the same direction as the hips.



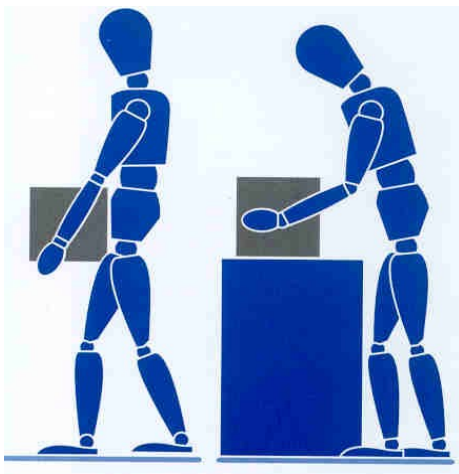
6 Hands

Ensure a firm grip on the load using the roots of the fingers and the palm of the hand. Holding the load this way is also less tiring than keeping the fingers straight.

7 Head

Raise the chin out and up as the lift begins, otherwise this results in round shoulders and a curved spine.

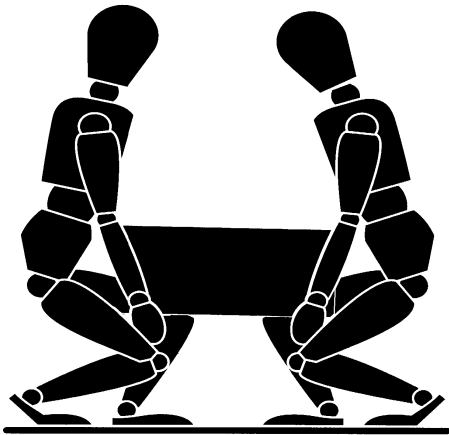
8 Moving the load



- Keep the load as close to the trunk for as long as possible, and where relevant, keep the heaviest side of the load close to the body. Slide the load towards you if required.
- Lift smoothly
- Move the feet not the trunk when turning to the side, i.e., don't twist.
- Put the load down and then slide the load into the required position if necessary.

9 Team Handling

Handling by two or more people may make possible an operation that is beyond the capability of one person, or reduce the risk of injury to a solo handler.



Additional difficulties may arise if team members impede each other's vision or movement, or if the load offers insufficient good handholds. This can occur particularly with compact loads which force the handlers to work close together or where the space available for movement is limited.

When lifting loads at or near floor level is unavoidable, handling techniques which allow the use of relatively strong leg muscles rather than those of the back are preferable, provided the load is small enough to be held close to the trunk. In addition, if the task includes lifting to shoulder height, allow the handlers to change hand grip. Bear in mind, however, that such techniques impose heavy forces on the knees and hip joints which must carry both the weight of the load and the weight of the rest of the body.

The closeness of the load to the body can also be influenced by foot placement. The elimination of obstacles which need to be reached over or into will permit the handler's feet to be placed beneath or adjacent to the load before beginning the manual handling operation.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)/Visual Display Unit (VDU)

Some practical tips:

Getting comfortable

- Adjust your chair and VDU to find the most comfortable position for your work. As a broad guide, your forearms should be approximately horizontal and your eyes the same height as the top of the VDU.
- Make sure you have enough work space to take whatever documents or other equipment you need.
- Try different arrangements of keyboard, screen, mouse and documents to find the best arrangement for you. A document holder may help you avoid awkward neck and eye movements.
- Arrange your desk and VDU to avoid glare, or bright reflections on the screen. This will be easiest if neither you nor the screen is directly facing windows or bright lights. Adjust curtains or blinds to prevent unwanted light.
- Make sure there is space under your desk to move your legs freely. Move any obstacles such as boxes or equipment.
- Avoid excess pressure from the edge of your seat on the backs of your legs and knees. A footrest may be helpful, particularly for smaller users.

Keying In

- Adjust your keyboard to get a good keying position. A space in front of the keyboard is sometimes helpful for resting the hands and wrists when not keying.
- Try to keep your wrists straight when keying. Keep a soft touch on the keys and don't overstretch your fingers. Good keyboard technique is important.

Using a mouse

- Position the mouse within easy reach, so it can be used with the wrist straight. Sit upright and close to the desk, so you don't have to work with your mouse arm stretched. Move the keyboard out of the way if it is not being used.
- Support your forearm on the desk, and don't grip the mouse too tightly.
- Rest your fingers lightly on the buttons and do not press them hard.

Reading the screen

- Adjust the brightness and contrast controls on the screen to suit lighting conditions in the room.
- Make sure the screen surface is clean.

- In setting up software, choose options giving text that is large enough to read easily on your screen, when you are sitting in a normal, comfortable working position. Select colours that are easy on the eye (avoid red text on a blue background, or vice-versa).
- Individual characters on the screen should be sharply focused and should not flicker or move. If they do, the VDU may need servicing or adjustment.

Posture and breaks

- Don't sit in the same position for long periods. Make sure you change your posture as often as practicable. Some movement is desirable, but avoid repeated stretching to reach things you need (if this happens a lot, rearrange your workstation)
- Most jobs provide opportunities to take a break from the screen, e.g. to do filing or photocopying. Make use of them. If there are no such natural breaks in your job, your employer should plan for you to have rest breaks. Frequent short breaks are better than fewer long ones.

Ladders and Stepladders

This guidance is to help you:

- know when to use a ladder;
- decide how to go about selecting the right sort of ladder for the particular job;
- understand how to use it;
- know how to look after it; and
- take sensible safety precautions.

When is a ladder the most suitable access equipment?

As a guide, **only** use a ladder or stepladder:

- in one position for a maximum of 30 minutes;
- for 'light work' - they are not suitable for strenuous or heavy work. If a task involves you carrying more than 10 kg (a bucket of something) up the ladder or steps it will need to be justified by a detailed manual handling assessment;
- where a handhold is available on the ladder or stepladder;
- where you can maintain three points of contact (hands and feet) at the working position;

On a **ladder** where you cannot maintain a handhold, other than for a brief period of time, other measures will be needed to prevent a fall or reduce the consequences of one. On **stepladders** where a handhold is not practicable you will need to consider whether it is safe to work or not.

Is it a safe place to use a ladder or stepladder?

As a guide, **only** use a ladder or stepladder:

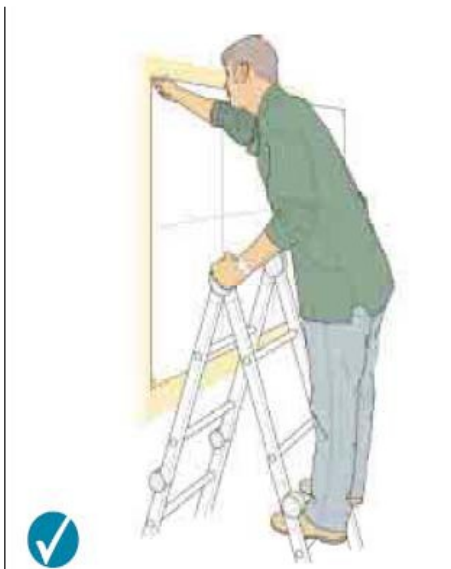
- on firm ground or spread the load (e.g. use a board);
- on clean, solid surfaces (paving slabs, floors etc). These need to be clean (no oil, moss or leaf litter) and free of loose material (sand, packaging materials etc) so the feet can grip. Shiny floor surfaces can be slippery even without contamination;

Never stand ladders or stepladders on moveable objects, such as pallets, bricks, lift trucks, tower scaffolds, vans, stacks of paper or boxes etc. If the ladder or stepladder won't reach, you need to use a more suitable type of access equipment.

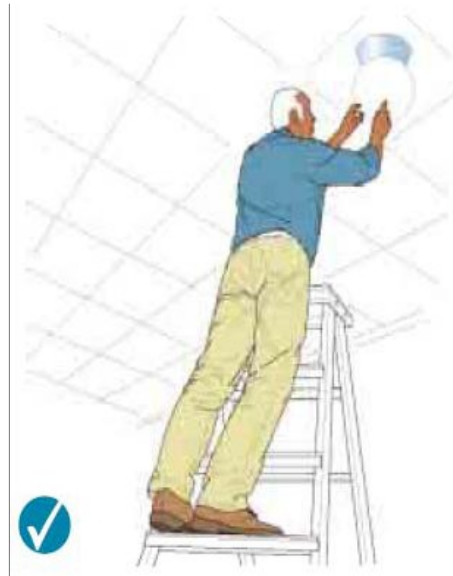
Safety in use – stepladders

On a stepladder **do not**:

- overload it – you and anything you are carrying should not exceed the highest load stated on the stepladder;
- use it in locations where the restraint devices cannot be fully opened. Any locking devices must also be engaged;
- use the top two steps of a stepladder, unless a suitable handrail is available on the stepladder;
- don't use the top three steps of swing-back or double-sided stepladders, where a step forms the very top of the stepladder.



Correct – two clear rungs. Don't work any higher up this type of stepladder.



Correct – 3 clear rungs, do not work any higher on this type of stepladder

When using stepladders, avoid work that imposes a side loading, such as side-on drilling through solid materials (e.g. bricks or concrete), by having the steps facing the work activity. Where side-on loadings cannot be avoided you should prevent the steps from tipping over, for example by tying the steps to a suitable point, or you should use a more suitable type of access equipment.



Incorrect – steps side on to work activity



Correct – steps facing work activity

Where you cannot maintain a handhold (e.g. putting a box on a shelf), the use of a stepladder will have to be justified by taking into account:

- the height of the task;
- a safe handhold still being available on the stepladder;
- whether it is light work ;
- whether it avoids side loading;
- whether it avoids overreaching
- whether your feet are fully supported; and
- whether you can tie the stepladder.

Consider tying a **stepladder** where possible and helpful to the task (e.g. side-on working or where two free hands are needed). Stepladders should not be used for access to another level unless they have been designed for this.

Is the ladder or stepladder safe to be used?

You must check that the ladder or stepladder is in a safe condition before using it (a daily pre-use check). As a guide, **only** use ladders or stepladders that:

- have no visible defects.
- have a current detailed visual inspection (look for an inspection label).
- are suitable for work use. Use Class 1 or EN 131 ladders or stepladders at work because domestic (Class 3) ones are not normally suitable for use at work;
- have been maintained and stored in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Also, you must always use a non-conductive ladder or steps for any necessary live electrical work.

Pre-use checks

Look for obvious visual defects before using a ladder or stepladder. Check that:

- all the ladder feet are fitted;
- the feet are in good repair (not loose, missing, splitting, excessively worn, secure etc);
- the feet are clean - the feet should be in contact with the ground. Ladder feet should also be checked when moving from soft/dirty ground (e.g. dug soil, loose sand/stone, a dirty workshop) to a smooth, solid surface (e.g. paving slabs), to ensure the foot material and not the dirt (e.g. soil, embedded stones or swarf) is making contact with the ground;
- all the screws, bolts and hinges are secure;
- on a stepladder, that the “spreaders” on the ladder can be locked into place.
- There are no other obvious signs of damage such as cracks.

If you find a problem, DO NOT USE the ladder. It should be repaired (if practicable) or destroyed.

Storage

When storing ladders and stepladders, store them in a well ventilated area to prevent sagging and warping. Store straight ladders in flat racks or on wall brackets, don't hand them from the rungs. Store step ladders in the closed, vertical position.

The information in this Guidance is based on the HSE leaflet 'Safe use of ladders and step ladders'.



Fixed Assets Policy

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

REVIEW SEPTEMBER 2026

NEXT REVIEW DATE – SEPTEMBER 2029

1. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This Policy sets out the requirements for the identification, recording, valuation, management, and control of the Council's fixed assets. It ensures compliance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, Proper Practices (JPAG guidance), and the Council's Financial Regulations.

2. DEFINITION OF A FIXED ASSET

A fixed asset is any tangible item owned or controlled by the Council that has a useful life of more than one year and is used to deliver services or support Council functions.

3. ASSET REGISTER

The Council shall maintain a Fixed Asset Register which records all assets owned or controlled by the Council and is reviewed at least annually. The continued existence of assets shall be verified annually.

4. SCOPE

In order to ensure transparency and reasonableness, the following items are included in the Council's asset register, whether purchased, gifted or otherwise acquired, together with their holding location:

- land and buildings held freehold or on long term lease in the name of the Council;
- assets estimated or known to have a minimum purchase or resale value of five thousand pounds;
- community assets;
- vehicles, plant and machinery;
- assets considered portable, attractive or of community significance;

- assets held in trust.

The values indicated in the asset register will inform the 'total fixed assets' section of the Annual Return with the exception of assets held on trust.

The following items fall outside the definition for inclusion and are, therefore, excluded from the Council's asset register:

- land and buildings held on short term lease or rented;
- land and buildings maintained or serviced but not owned by the Council;
- assets rented by or loaned to the Council;
- stock items intended for resale;
- stationery and other consumable items;
- boundaries of land owned (e.g. fences, hedges and gates);
- floor or land surfaces and drainage;
- plants and trees;
- assets with a purchase or resale value of less than five thousand pounds (other than items listed as for inclusion on the asset register);

4. VALUATION OF ASSETS

Assets are recorded at cost where known. Where it is not possible to trace the purchase price of the asset, the insurance valuation should be applied.

Gifted or transferred assets are recorded at a nominal value (e.g. £1).

The Council adopts a consistent valuation method and does not apply depreciation under JPAG guidance.

5. ACQUISITION OF ASSETS

All asset acquisitions must comply with the Council's Financial Regulations and procurement requirements, with Council approval required for significant purchases.

6. DISPOSAL OF ASSETS

Assets may only be disposed of with Council approval. The Asset Register must be updated upon disposal.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CONTROL

The Council will ensure adequate insurance, proper maintenance, and secure storage of assets.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Responsible Financial Officer maintains the Asset Register and ensures compliance. The Council approves acquisitions and disposals and reviews the policy.



Pay Policy

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

REVIEW SEPTEMBER 2026

This Policy helps the Council to make best use of its Council Resources.

Councillors and staff must be committed to the policy in order for it to succeed, so they must be aware of its aims and objectives and their role within it.

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the aim of the Council to ensure that all employees or job applicants are assessed fairly and remunerated according to the skills required to undertake the role and the level of responsibility associated with the post.

All working practices and recruitment procedures will be reviewed at least annually to ensure that individuals are paid on the basis of their merits and abilities.

The Council undertakes to pay at least the Living Wage to all employees.

PRINCIPLES

- a. To make full use of the talents and abilities of all staff.
- b. To attract and retain good quality staff.
- c. To provide training and development for all the staff.
- d. To maintain an equality of pay scale differentials.

ASSESSMENT OF PAY SCALE

The Council will: -

- Review each job description at least every other year.

- Undertake an Appraisal in line with the Council's Appraisal Policy.
- Follow the pay scales agreed and laid down by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services – National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of Service.
- Assess and compare similar jobs within the sector to ensure that the pay rates set are in line with other Councils.

Evaluation

The Council has set a base line of job descriptions and pay scales for its current employees. These pay scales have been assessed and compared with other jobs in the sector to ensure that they are generally in line with other pay rates.

The Council evaluation process will use the following guidelines and rules:

- Any re-evaluation exercise will be undertaken with a clear and systematic approach.
- An assessment will be undertaken to ascertain whether significant aspects of an employee's work has changed.

The concomitant factors arising are that the employee may:

- No longer be adequately remunerated for the skills they are required to deploy.
- Require new skills.
- Require an assessment of work/life balance and that:
 - there may be the possibility of additional staff having to be employed and with specialist skills as well.
 - the current post holder is leaving and a new and accurate job description has to be designed for interview and contractual purposes.

In assessing the Pay Scale criteria the Council will be mindful of the following:

Jobs as defined by Job Descriptions need to be taken into account.

- A framework needs to be established, but it must be reviewed in the light of structural changes in the work of the Council.
- Only objective criteria can be used.
- Sound judgement must be exercised in the process of analysing information and making comparisons against benchmarks established.

Methodology

The evaluation will cover the entire staff:

- The key points to be used in the evaluation will be identified.
- The job and the role will be analysed.
- The relative value of the jobs and roles will be established on a weighted scale.
- Development needs will be identified and programmed.
- Staffing levels will be projected.

- The appropriate reward levels decided.

Framework

The Council will use the Profiles drawn up by the Society of Local Council Clerks and the National Association of Local Councils in the National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of Service. These profiles will be used as a framework for assessing all posts, including the Town Clerk.

There can be a right of appeal against any decisions which will be undertaken through the Grievance Procedure of the Council.

Training/Development

All staff will have access to training and development opportunities, which will be taken into account when assessing pay scales. This will be assessed on the level of achievement and the relevance of the qualification to the role being undertaken.

Pay Structure

The Council uses the NALC and SLCC recommended salary scales adjusted for a FTE working week of 35 hrs. In exceptional circumstances, for example for retention reasons, employees may be awarded accelerated salary progression at the discretion of the Council. Each member of staff will receive a salary increment annually assuming the successful completion of their appraisal, back dated to 1st April of that year, until the top of their salary scale is reached.

The Law

The policy will be implemented within the framework of the relevant legislation, which includes:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995



HOME WORKING POLICY

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL REVIEW SEPTEMBER 2026

INTRODUCTION

Totnes Town Council understands that there may be instances when an employee needs to work from home, the Covid-19 pandemic has been an example of this.

In general and depending on the nature of that employee's role the Council may consider occasional home working appropriate.

Any agreed regular home working will be subject to business need, outlined in the job description for the role and kept under review.

DEFINITION

Occasional home working is when an employee undertakes some of their duties from home on an ad hoc basis. This is usually planned and may be for complete or part days. Examples of the type of work considered suitable for home working include report writing, preparations for meetings, project work etc. Working from home enables work to be carried out more efficiently in a quiet location and without disruption. It may also prove a more efficient use of time if employees who have been away from their work base for part of day, are closer to their home on their return journey and can complete the working day at home rather than at their normal place of work.

In cases where office facilities are shared, or the employee risks continual interruption, the Town Clerk may agree that an employee can work from home for a short-specified period. This may include agreeing to home working for a fixed period e.g. two weeks as well as shorter ad hoc periods. Managers and employees should be aware of the potential impact home working could have on teams e.g. isolation from the team, and/or Council activities, a reduction in effective managerial support or supervision.

Due to the nature of individual tasks some roles within the Council are not deemed suitable for home working.

CONDITIONS

- Home working arrangements should work for both the Council and the employee.
- Wherever possible requests for home working should be made at least one week before the employee wishes to start the arrangement.
- Risk assessments of the home working environment, in line with legal requirements, must be undertaken.
- Requests will be considered on their own merits, considering resources, impact on colleagues and working relationships.
- When working from home employees are responsible for ensuring they are contactable during normal contracted working hours. This must be via a Council mobile telephone or a work e-mail address.
- As a general rule it is not considered necessary for those working from home to require supplies of stationery etc. Large volumes of printing and collating of documents should be carried out on Town Council premises. Certain circumstances such as the Covid-19 pandemic have demonstrated that those working from home will require supplies plus IT support where needed. Arrangements therefore are to be made to support employees in such circumstances.
- Under no circumstances should home working be used as an alternative method of meeting carers needs (i.e. childcare).
- Home working arrangements will be reviewed considering any change of circumstances, whether relating to employee, work they are required to undertake, or the working environment.
- In the event that staff are required to work from home because of Government pandemic rules then team meetings will be had by virtual means on a regular basis.

Home working arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis, or sooner if circumstances change.

Employees must be aware that any abuse of the home working arrangement may result in the Council taking disciplinary action.

EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

Health & Safety - In line with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 ("the Act") and their Health & Safety Policy the Council will ensure, as far as reasonably practical, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees, including those working from home.

Insurance - The Council accepts liability for accidents which are proven to have been caused by the authorised use of equipment provided by them in line with any instructions issued.

Data Protection, Security & Confidentiality - Council employees will be instructed that in instances where their colleagues are working from home, they will not disclose any personal details e.g. telephone numbers to anyone outside of the Council.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY

Health & Safety - Employees are expected to carry out their work in such a way as to ensure, as far as reasonably practical, that there is no risk to health and safety to themselves, members of their family or visitors.

Insurance - Home working may have an effect on domestic insurance policies. Employees wishing to work from home must inform their insurance company of the change in circumstances and the use, and identity, of equipment owned by the Council. An employee's mortgage provider may need to be informed. Employees living in council or privately rented accommodation should notify their landlord and/or examine the terms of their lease. Any equipment belonging to the employee but being used for Council business should be operated in line with any instructions issued. It is reasonable for the Council to assume that this done.

Accidents, Incidents & Dangerous Occurrences - In line with the Council's Accident Reporting Procedure, employees must inform their line manager of any accidents, incidents or dangerous occurrences which take place whilst working at home. The initial report should be via telephone with the appropriate paperwork being completed on the employee's return to the workplace.

Policies and Procedures - All work carried out on Council business is covered by the requirements of the Council's policies and procedures, even if this work is undertaken at home.

Data Protection, Security & Confidentiality - Arrangements for home working should ensure that the employee can maintain the security and confidentiality of documents within the home environment whilst complying with Data Protection legislation and the Council's Confidentiality, Data Protection and IT Usage Policy (employees should be aware that even when using their personal equipment to undertake Council business they must comply with this procedure). Specifically, homeworkers are under a duty to:

- Keep all documentation belonging to us in the locked filing cabinet at all times except when in use,
- Ensure that documents are saved to the server rather than the laptop computer's hard drive.
- If you have a telephone conversation where you are discussing confidential work matters, you should ensure that such calls take place in privacy to avoid inadvertent breach of confidentiality.

Remote Access - Employees who wish to work from home may use remote access to the server subject to the Town Clerk's approval. Employees must not divulge any information held on the database to any third party. All Data Protection, GDPR, security and confidentiality rulings must be adhered to.

Expenses – any home working should be short-term and therefore employees are not entitled to claim home working incidental costs such as for broadband, lighting and heating. The Town Clerk has discretion to approve expense claims for consumables such as printer ink, printer paper and stationery that cannot be sourced from the office.

EQUIPMENT

The Council has 2 laptops which can be used for short-term homeworking.

Staff must ensure the equipment is stored securely at all times when it is taken away from the Council premises and is not used by anyone who is not a Council employee. The equipment should not be connected to any devices that could introduce viruses.

The laptop computer and other equipment provided by us must be used only for work-related purposes.

If any equipment owned by the Council is subsequently lost or damaged by an employee that employee will be expected to pay for its replacement.

ITEM 10 – PENSIONS POLICY

ITEM 11 – EXTERNAL AUDIT CERTIFICATE