MINUTES FOR THE TOWN MATTERS COMMITTEE
MONDAY 22ND JUNE 2026 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors L Auletta (Chair), C Beavis, S Collinson (from 1840), J Cummings (Chair), D Peters, A Presswell, E Price and T Robshaw.
Apologies: Councillors Chinnock and Roberts.
In Attendance: 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 Cummings read out a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded.

The apologies were accepted.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME
There were no members of the public present.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY

To:

a. Make a recommendation to Full Council for the Chair of the Town Matters Committee for 2026/27 (with immediate effective);
To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that Cllr Roberts is the Chair of the Town Matters Committee for 2026/27.

b. Elect a deputy chair for the Committee (with immediate effect).
Cllr Auletta was elected as Deputy Chair of the Town Matters Committee for 2026/27 and took over as chair for the remainder of the meeting.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 23rd March 2026 and update on any matters arising.
The minutes were **AGREED** unanimously as an accurate record of proceedings. Matters arising:

Item 3. Environment and Public Realm Working Group.
a. the Weir – It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Council writes to the Dartington Hall Trust (copied to Dartington Parish Council and South Ham District Council) to make them aware that some concerns have been raised about the condition of the pontoon and that the Council would be willing to meet someone on site about how to make it safe.

b. Castle Meadow – It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that:

- The Town Maintenance team removes all barbed wire in the meadow as it presents a health and safety hazard to those using the meadow and that a single wire is erected to demark the boundary line; and

- The Council responds to the resident to say that: the barbed wire will be removed; direct access to the meadow via a gate or stile cannot be agreed to due to health and safety concerns; and if they wish to erect a fence inside their boundary line then we advise them to follow any planning permissions required for works in a conservation area (SHDC will be able to advise).

c. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Council writes to the Dartington Hall Trust to see if they have any BNG plans for the estate as the land is included in the Totnes Open Spaces, Sport, Recreation and Wellbeing Plan as a valuable resource in a neighbouring parish.

d. EPR01.3 – National Landscape area – It was **RESOLVED** that the Council writes to Devon County Council (copied to District Councillors) in support of extending the existing National Landscape area along the Dart to include Totnes through to Buckfastleigh as this will bring biodiversity benefits and ensure that suitable mitigation is put in place for future housing number requirements.

Item 4. Public-facing Emergency Plan – It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt the public-facing emergency plan, with Council communications used (website, social media, Totnes Directory 'Totnes Matters' article) to publicise the plan.

Item 5. Climate National Emergency Plant-Based Council – It was **RESOLVED** that food provided for Council functions is locally produced and sustainably sourced, with a balance in favour of vegetarian and vegan options catered for.
Cllr Peters raised concerns about this policy and it was **AGREED** that it would be reviewed by the Committee after six months, with Cllr Peters providing information about local agriculture production.

4. STRATEGY DELIVERY GROUP AND WORKING GROUP
To consider any recommendations and note the minutes from the following:

a. Community Working Group, 14th April and 20th May 2026.
Noted. No recommendations to consider.

b. Economy Working Group, 8th April and 19th May 2026.
Noted. Heritage Festival Road Closure – the benefits and cost of a road closure was discussed, and it was agreed that this trial will help inform the 'Shop and Stroll' proposal. To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that:

- it supports and funds a road closure for the Heritage Festival on 19th September 2026, timings to be confirmed; and
- the Town Council 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.

Shop and Stroll – it was **AGREED** to defer discussion of the 'Shop and Stroll' proposal until the September 2026 meeting when feedback from the Heritage Festival road closure is available to help inform discussion.

c. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 28th May 2026.
Noted. Castle Meadow – To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that Transition Town Totnes is consulted and offered a trial area in Castle Meadow (in a suitable location) for the 30x30 project.

5. RENAMING COLEBROOK COTTAGES AS MILL LANE
To consider a request from a member of the public to rename the section 'Colebrook Cottages' as 'Mill Lane' with appropriate signage.
It was **AGREED** that Cllr Robshaw will discuss this with the Totnes Trust, suggesting that if they wish to pursue the renaming of the area then they need to follow the advice as set out on the South Hams District Council (SHDC) website to: obtain the written confirmation of resident's consent; be prepared to pay the required fees; and then bring the question, with written evidence from householders, back to the Town Council to consider. The Officer will respond to the email enquiry with the same advice.

6. LAMP FOR PEACE AND UNICEF CHILDREN'S DAY
To consider illuminating the five trees on The Plains in support of the Remembrance/Lamp for Peace and UNICEF Children's Day.
To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it 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.

7. LICENSING APPLICATION
To consider the following application for an alcohol licence and make a recommendation to Full Council: The Ruby Chinese Takeaway at 5 Christina Parade, Totnes, TQ9 5UU.
To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the licence application is supported.

8. POTENTIAL LICENSING OF EXTERNAL AREAS OUTSIDE SHOPS 1-4 CIVIC HALL
To consider the potential licensing of the external areas outside of shops 1-4 the Civic Hall on non-market days, and give an informal response.
The Committee **AGREED** in principle with the request for use of the external space under the Civic Hall as identified on the plan provided, to support the shops at 1-4 Civic Hall.

9. 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 greenways map (standing item).
There were no updates.

10. LINK COUNCILLOR REPORTS
To consider link councillor reports from Committee members.
Cllrs Collinson and Peters updated on a meeting held as part of the Dart Harbour Port Masterplan consultation, which is ambitious but sets out the potential of the river area. In relation to Totnes specifically: it was felt that the river could be made more of in the town; there is a level of

deprivation in Bridgetown near the river that could support regeneration funding and environmental education for young people; introduction of small pontoons to provide small boats coming up river a place to moor up and go into the town; aiming for high environmental conditions on the river, for example the Dart swim will begin in Stoke Gabriel this year due to water quality on Totnes.

Cllr Robshaw left the meeting at 7.50pm.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Town Matters Committee – Monday 27th July 2026 at 6.30pm.

Noted. Cllr Collinson gave her and Cllr Chinnock's apologies for the July meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.53pm.

S Halliday
Governance and Projects Manager
June 2026