DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL MONDAY 5TH OCTOBER 2026 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors T Bennett (Mayor and Chair), L Auletta, C Beavis, J Chinnock, S Collinson, T Cooper, J Cummings, J Hodgson, D Peters, A Presswell, E Price, N Roberts and T Robshaw.

Apologies: Cllrs Hannam, Smallridge and Trant, and District Cllr Allen.

In Attendance: 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.

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 an update on: local government reorganisation; Devon County Council - consideration of investing pension funds into renewable energy, and the implications of a proposed AI data centre in North Devon (water usage, biodiversity, loss of farm land and food security); a planned meeting with Active Travel England; road safety outside St John's Primary School; the next screening of the People's Emergency Briefing in Bridgetown; and engagement with Enforcement about the caravan at the A381-A385 roundabout.

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

c. District Cllr Birch (DCllr) had submitted a report and updated on: working with officers about the three caravans in the town; possible funding for the visitor economy; repair of the slipway; camping and open fires at Longmarsh; and a meeting with KEVICC about the terms of funding provided for the all weather pitch. Cllrs raised concerns about the continued problem with camper

vans parked overnight at Longmarsh and the top of Kingsbridge Hill who do not have toilet facilities.

d. District Cllr Presswell had submitted a report and updated on: the Totnes to Stoke Gabriel cycle path; and health services at Torbay Hospital.

The Council reconvened.

3. CLERK'S QUARTERLY REPORT

To note the Clerk's Quarterly Report for July - September 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 7th September 2026.

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

To note the following minutes:

b. Council Matters Committee 14th September 2026.

Noted.

c. Planning Committee 21st September 2026.

Noted.

d. Town Matters Committee 28th September 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 7th September 2026.

No matters arising.

b. Council Matters Committee 14th September 2026.

Item 7. Fixed Assets Policy - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Fixed Assets Policy is adopted.

Item 8. Pay Policy - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Pay Policy is adopted.

c. Planning Committee 21st September 2026.

No recommendations.

d. Town Matters Committee 28th September 2026.

Item 3b. Economy Working Group: Free Christmas Parking - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously Totnes requests free parking on the 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th December from 1pm – 6pm.

Item 3c. Environment and Public Realm Working Group:

- Plymouth Road Phone Box - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Council installs and maintains two defibrillators – one in the adopted telephone box on Plymouth Road and one on the Follaton Shop (subject to agreement of the shop/building owner); and approval for the purchase of two IPAD SP1 defibrillator and locked cabinet bundles and signage to convert the telephone box, total cost £2575 +VAT.
- Foundry and South West Water - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Council writes to South Hams District Council (SHDC) Environmental Health about the complaints related to these two locations and requesting that they provide sound and noise data collection for both sites. Cllr Robshaw has offered to the draft letter which should be copied to the MP.

Item 5. Burke and Wills Display - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the display remains in situ while further work is carried out, but with the addition of a QR code on the signage linking to a more comprehensive explanation of the cultural sensitivities.

Item 6. Plant-Based Council Catering. It was **RESOLVED** by majority that the policy position on Council catering is amended to: Food for Council functions is locally produced and sustainably sourced, including vegetarian and vegan options.

Item 8. Open Spaces, Sports, Recreation and Wellbeing Plan - It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Town Council write to SHDC to ask for a reconsideration of the £8,817 investment for Elmhurst Park in Bridgetown, and to ask for confirmation of the process for adding or changing projects considered for S106 funding going forward.

6. 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.

7. CONSULTATION ON PLYMOUTH BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE DEVON AND TORBAY COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY AND CONVERSION TO A MAYORAL STRATEGIC AUTHORITY

To consider whether the DTCCA should progress to become a Mayoral Strategic Authority, and the potential benefits and concerns associated with that change.

It was **RESOLVED** by majority to grant delegated authority to the Clerk to respond on behalf of the Town Council, following engagement with members on the content of the response.

8. NEXT MEETING

To note the next meeting dates of Monday 2nd November 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)*

9. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE (Standing Item)

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

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None.

10. COMMUNITY ASSETS

To consider the Community Asset opportunity at Laura House (financial).

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously not to proceed with the purchase of Laura House given the financial risk involved. Members reiterated their commitment to finding a suitable community and youth space in town, and the Clerk was asked to actively pursue other opportunities for future consideration.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Cllr Tim Bennett
Chair

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