



DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE TOWN MATTERS COMMITTEE MONDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER 2026 IN THE GUILDHALL

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

Apologies: Councillor N Roberts.

In Attendance: C Marlton (Town Clerk).

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

Cllr Auletta read out a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded.

The apologies were accepted.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There was one member of the public present.

Community Fridge Proposal

The Committee received a presentation from a member of the public on behalf of a local group regarding a proposal to establish a community fridge in Totnes. The proposal sought support in principle for a community-led initiative aimed at reducing food waste, improving food security, supporting climate action objectives, and strengthening community resilience. The proposal outlined examples of successful schemes operating in Ashburton and Buckfastleigh, together with proposed governance, volunteer, and food safety arrangements. The project envisages a volunteer-led model, operating in accordance with Community Fridge Network guidance and relevant food hygiene standards.

Councillors welcomed the proposal and discussed a range of matters including how the project would complement existing local food support initiatives, potential volunteer capacity, food safety and hygiene requirements, accessibility, security, and possible locations. It was noted that a community fridge differs from existing referral-based food support schemes by being freely accessible to all members of the public and focusing primarily on reducing food waste. Potential locations were discussed, including the Market Square/Civic Hall area, although any proposal would be subject to landowner permissions and further investigation. Members also highlighted the importance of ensuring an adequate volunteer base and considering operational arrangements to minimise risks such as vandalism.

It was agreed that the proposal would be referred to the Community Working Group for further consideration and development before being brought forward to Full Council for consideration of support in principle and any subsequent next steps.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 27th July 2026 and update on any matters arising.

The minutes were **AGREED** unanimously as an accurate record of proceedings. Matters arising:

Item 4. Council Awards - It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a celebratory event replaces the current individual and organisation awards (no change to the honorary freeman or Judy Westacott award); and
- the details are determined by the Community Working Group.

Item 5. Wills Project - It was **RESOLVED** that:

- it supports the submission of a pre-application for Listed Building Consent (with all necessary documents to be prepared by the Heritage Trust) to SHDC to determine what type of display is possible within the Guildhall;
- a Cllr is present at the site meeting with the SHDC Heritage Officer; and
- the preference is for any potential display to be housed in the current Women's Cell or ancillary areas to the main Guildhall and Council Chamber.
- that any proposed display, materials and content/wording would need to be approved by Totnes Town Council,. The Heritage Trust confirmed that this would be required if they are applying for grant funding for the exhibition.

3. STRATEGY DELIVERY GROUP AND WORKING GROUP

To consider any recommendations and note the minutes from the following:

a. Community Working Group, 8th September 2026.

Noted. No recommendations to consider.

b. Economy Working Group, 15th September 2026.

Noted.

It is **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council that Totnes requests free parking on the 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th December 1pm – 6pm (deadline for this response is 10th October).

c. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 16th September 2026.

Noted.

3b. EPR04: Climate and Ecological Emergency – To **RECOMMEND** to the Town Matters Committee that the Town Council approaches Bridgetown Alive! to co-host a screening of the Peoples Emergency Briefing in St John's Church in mid-November (or alternatively January/February 2027). It was **AGREED** to get costings for the hire of St John's Church for a screening and potential dates.

3c. PRD2.J: Plymouth Road Phone Box - To **RECOMMEND** to the Town Matters Committee 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). If the Committee is supportive of the idea, then their recommendation to Full Council should include approval for the purchase of two IPAD SP1 defibrillator [the same model as the two existing TTC maintained defibrillators) and locked cabinet bundles (£1245 +VAT each) and signage to convert the telephone box (£85 +VAT), total cost £2575 +VAT.

It was felt important to do comms on defibrillator locations and consider community training in due course.

6. Delivery Plan Review. Foundry and South West Water - To **RECOMMEND** to the Town Matters Committee that the Council writes to SHDC Environmental Health about the complaints

related to these two locations and requesting that they provide sound and data collection for both sites. Cllr Robshaw has offered to the draft letter following the Town Matters Committee.

4. ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE RANGE EXTENSION CONSULTATION

To consider a proposal to extend the age range of St John's CE Primary School from 4-11 years to 2-11 years and any recommendation for the Council's response to the consultation.

It was unanimously **AGREED** to support this proposal. Given the deadline is before Full Council on Monday 5th October the Clerk will respond accordingly.

5. BURKE AND WILLS DISPLAY

To consider the current Burke and Wills display in the Guildhall.

It is **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council 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.

6. PLANT-BASED COUNCIL CATERING

To reconsider the Council's pledge in favour of plant-based food at Council events.

It was **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council by majority (5 support, 2 abstentions, 2 against), 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.

The Economy Working Group were asked to consider community procurement, particularly around food, at a future meeting.

7. EMERGENCY PLAN

To update on preparation of the Town Council's internal Emergency Plan.

The verbal update was noted. Cllrs Cummings and Robshaw will be attending the Resilience Forum in the Civic Hall on the 22nd October and asked, if possible, that an officer attend.

Please note that spaces must be booked in advance: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/devon-community-resilience-forum-october-2026-tickets-1998950809682>

8. OPEN SPACES, SPORTS, RECREATION AND WELLBEING PLAN UPDATE

To review the projects to identify any potential S106 investment update on any general matters linked to the Open Spaces, Sport Recreation and Wellbeing Plan including an update on the greenways map (standing item).

It was **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council that the Town Council write to SHDC to ask for a reconsideration of the £8,817 for Elmhurst Park in Bridgetown, and to ask for confirmation of the process for adding or changing projects considered for S106 funding going forward.

9. LINK COUNCILLOR REPORTS

To consider link councillor reports from Committee members.

Cllr Price confirmed that work is ongoing with the Heritage Trust to review the Heritage Festival.

The Town Council is collating survey responses and a report will be put to members in due course.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Town Matters Committee – Monday 23rd November 2026 at 6.30pm.

Noted.

The meeting closed at 8:00pm.

C Marlton
Town Clerk
September 2026