



## AGENDA FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE MONDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024 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 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024** at **6.30pm** in the Guildhall for the purpose of transacting the following business:

**Committee Members:** Councillors D Peters (Chair), C Beavis, T Bennett, J Chinnock, J Hannam, J Hodgson and E Price.

### 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 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024 and update on any matters arising. Document attached.

### 3. BUDGET MONITOR

To consider:

- a. the Budget Monitor including the reserves projection. Document to follow.
- b. the purchase of a gazebo for Council events (and what budget should fund this). Verbal update.
- c. an overspend on the Christmas Lights due to infrastructure costs. See budget monitor.

### 4. COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP

To consider the actions from the Community Working Group – point 3: support for Community Transport. Document attached.

5. ECONOMY WORKING GROUP

To consider the actions from the Economy Working Group - point 9: funding for the Christmas window competition for businesses. Document attached.

6. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

To note a Scheme of Delegation for the Council. Document attached.

7. INVESTMENT STRATEGY

To review the Council's investment Strategy. Document attached.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

To review the Equality and Diversity Policy. Document attached.

9. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

To review the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Document attached.

10. PAY POLICY

To review the Pay Policy. Document attached.

11. EXTERNAL AUDIT CERTIFICATE

To note the external audit certificate. Document to follow.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024 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)*

13. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)

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

14. CHRISTMAS MARKET CONTRACT

To consider the contract terms document for the Christmas Markets (commercial). Document attached.

15. CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SHARING WITH THE POLICE

To consider a request for real-time CCTV data sharing with the police (legal). Document attached.

16. STAFFING UPDATE

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

- a. to note a parental leave request.
- b. to consider the approval of professional fees.

Catherine Marlton

Town Clerk

4<sup>th</sup> September 2024

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.





## DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS MONDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2024 AT 6.30PM IN THE GUILDHALL

**Present:** Councillors D Peters (Chair), C Beavis, T Bennett, J Chinnock, J Hannam, J Hodgson and E Price.

**Apologies:** None

**In Attendance:** Member of the public, Cllr Trant and C Marlton (Town Clerk).

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair read a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded.

*The Committee will adjourn for the following items:*

#### PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

*The Committee will reconvene to consider the following items:*

### 2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**To approve the minutes of 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 and update on any matters arising.**

The minutes were **AGREED** unanimously as an accurate record of the proceedings.

*The Committee will adjourn Standing Orders to allow the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of South Hams Community Action to speak.*

### 3. SOUTH HAMS COMMUNITY ACTION

**To receive an update from South Hams Community Action in relation to their Community Grant application.**

The CEO of South Hams Community Action gave an update on their work and specifically in relation to Totnes.

*The Committee reconvened.*

It was **AGREED** to award a community grant of £750.00 to South Hams Community Action.

### 4. BUDGET MONITOR

**To:**

**a. Consider the Budget Monitor including the reserves projection.**

This was considered and **AGREED** unanimously.

**b. Note the Civic Funeral expenditure from General Reserve.**

Noted.

#### **5. MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS AND BUDGET**

**To consider the Mayor's engagements since April 2024 and the current budget.**

These documents were considered and expenditure was noted.

#### **6. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

**To revise Financial Regulations and agree an update to Standing Orders.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the revised Financial Regulations are adopted subject to the proposed amendments given verbally by the Clerk.

#### **7. CEMETERY – MEMORIAL STONE CHARGING**

**To consider a clarification of the fees chargeable for the erection of memorial stones.**

It was **AGREED** that in cases where the Deed of Grant holder lives outside of the Totnes Parish, memorial application fees will be charged at the same rate as the deceased's burial fee for up to three years after the interment was made.

#### **8. INFORMATION AND DATA PROTECTION POLICY**

**To review the Information and Data Protection Policy.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the reviewed Information and Data Protection Policy is adopted.

#### **9. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME**

**To review the Council's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the updated Freedom of Information Publication Scheme is adopted.

#### **10. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

**To review the Complaints Procedure.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the reviewed Complaints Procedure is adopted.

#### **11. VEXATIOUS BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

**To review the Vexatious Behaviour Policy.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the reviewed Vexatious Behaviour Policy is adopted.

#### **12. STAFF LOANS POLICY**

**To review the Staff Loans Policy.**

The Staff Loans Policy was reviewed and **AGREED**.

#### **13. WORKING TIME AND LEAVE POLICY**

**review the Working Time and Leave Policy.**

The Working Time and Leave Policy was reviewed and **AGREED**.

#### **14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall.**

Noted.

*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)*

**15. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)**

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

These were reviewed and **AGREED**.

**16. HONORARY FREEMAN**

**To consider two nominations for honorary freeman awards (personal details).**

It was **AGREED** to defer the matter of the criteria for deciding on nominations to the Community Working Group for further discussion, before a decision can be considered.

**17. EASTGATE SUB LEASES**

**To consider the Eastgate sub leases (financial and contractual).**

The Eastgate sub leases were **AGREED**.

**18. STAFF APPOINTMENT**

**To ratify the appointment of a Town Maintenance Officer (personal details).**

It was **AGREED** to appoint the recommended candidate, subject to references.

**19. STAFF ATTENDANCE**

**To note sickness and overtime balances (personal details)**

Noted.

**20. STAFFING UPDATE**

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

Noted.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm

Catherine Marlton

Town Clerk

July 2024





COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP NOTES – 29<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2024

WG Members – Cllrs Bennett, Hannam, Cooper, Presswell (remote)

Apologies – Cllrs Chinnock and Robshaw

Other attendees – Town Clerk and Cllr Auletta

**1. The following points from the SDG meeting were noted.**

- a. Cllr Bennett has attended a lot of community based meetings and events, including with Stepping Stones and the schools. Lack of secure ongoing funding and the need for services and support being at an all time high was mentioned.
- b. The provision of community services was discussed, including the meeting with Caring Town coming up, the ask from Community Action, Totnes Caring needing support etc.
- c. The importance of the Leisure Centre was discussed, with concerns about the lack of investment and long term security.
- d. A meeting with SHDC's new Community Development Manager has been arranged.

**2. Caring Town Meeting – Cllr Bennett (background documents and email previously circulated)**

Cllr Bennett and Town Clerk fed back. Caring Town are at a crossroads in terms of direction, the current project coming to an end and funding running out. There was some suggestion about the work being brought under the umbrella of Totnes Town Council but concerns were expressed about resources and also neutrality.

**ACTION:** Clerk to email Caring Town to obtain their latest directory and details on the audit of and to request any evidence of need that has been collated.

**ACTION:** An update will be discussed at the September Community Working Group with the matter of commissioning a mapping exercise going to October Council Matters.

**ACTION:** Clerk to email Totnes Caring about their community taxi provision.

**3. Request from Community Action**

Some concerns were raised about a survey creating more evidence of need when the existing Community Transport organisation is under significant pressure and has a challenge to overcome around the recruitment of drivers with licence changes.

**ACTION:** Cllr Bennett and Cllr Hannam to meet with Bob the Bus their current pressures and needs and whether a survey will assist them or add additional work.

**ACTION:** It was AGREED to table the items around requested support after further information has been received from Caring Town and Bob the Bus. It is anticipated that September Council Matters may need to consider this as there is a request for funding support.

**Requested support**

- Agreement that you are willing to participate as a parish council – and the type of support you can offer:
- Providing information on the type of questions you would like to be used within the survey. A meeting will be arranged at a later date to assess the submitted questions, which will then be formulated to ensure they are specific and measurable.

- Support with communicating the online survey to your residents, via social media, newsletters, websites, emails.
- Support with printing – if possible – paper copies. Dissemination to your groups or paper copies placed in locations such as village halls, GP surgeries, community groups or with your community transport services/meals on wheels deliveries (where applicable).
- A funding pledge towards our costs – if possible – which will also enable us to use as match funding with grant funders. Our grant funding applications will be towards the survey work, but also for the subsequent work to meet identified gaps. We are asking for a ‘pledge’ at this stage as work will not start until the late autumn 2024 and continue the early months of 2025.

**4. Community actions of the Strategic Plan (document previously circulated and saved on Sharepoint)**

Noted.

**5. Community section of the Delivery Plan (document previously circulated and saved on Sharepoint)**

Noted.

**6. Community budget.**

Noted.

Community	ORIGINAL	EXPECTED	NOTES
Community Grants	25000	25000	Total spend of £41073. Overspend of £16073 agreed to be taken from the Strategic Priorities budget
Christmas Light Switch On	3000	3000	On target
Christmas Late Nights	14000	14000	On target
Christmas Tree and Town Lights	15000	16025	Expected overspend due to additional infrastructure works required. Will need Council Matters agreement.
Newsletters, annual town meeting and misc	3000	3000	On target
Defibrillators	500	500	On target
Unallocated - £15k transferred from Strategic Priorities	0	13975	Remainder of £15k requiring allocation - covers Christmas light overspend. Ideas include an external audit of provision which would need Council Matters agreement.
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>60500</b>	<b>75500</b>	

**ACTION:** The overspend on Christmas lights will be taken to Council Matters in September as part of the budget monitor.

**Next meeting**

**ACTION:** Clerk to send out a Doodle Poll for end of September.

**Other matters**

- It was noted that the EAT Festival is set to return in September

- Cllr Bennett has volunteered for the Mad Hatters Tea Party on September 8<sup>th</sup> and Cllrs are encouraged to attend
- Cllrs were reminded about the Heritage Festival on 21<sup>st</sup> September.
- **ACTION** – Town Clerk was asked to write to Live West (and potentially Dartington Parish Council) to ascertain the ownership and management of the community hall and play park area at Follaton.
- Cllr Auletta spoke to the issue for the Skate Park and the challenge with raising enough funds to complete the project. Further information will come back through committees as there was a view in the room that the Town Council could be asked to give more money to the project



## Economy Working Group Meeting Notes Tuesday 13 August 6pm in The Guildhall

Working Group: Cllr Roberts (Chair), Cllr Auletta, Cllr Beavis, Cllr Chinnock, Cllr Peters, Cllr Trant

Officer: Communications and Marketing Manager

1. Detailed discussion of the proposed Community Economic Plan (CEP) Steering Group membership list:
  - The working group agreed to expand the list of businesses involved to include those in Dartington, Longcombe and others surrounding the town including Riverford.
  - Schumacher College, Market Manager at SHDC (representing Totnes Market Traders), and Totnes Independent School to be added to the list
  - Agreed that the focus needs to be on business/economy. Some concern around there potentially being too much community involvement and that businesses need to feel the process is worthwhile or they will not engage. Purpose of plan to be clearly outlined and invitation to take part wording to be agreed. Economy Working Group agreed they will identify what they want to achieve from the consultation and endeavour to steer the process accordingly. Economy Working Group to agree content of invitation email.
  - Suggestion that ambassadors are identified for different areas, eg, High Street, Industrial Estate
  - Agreed that the group will use sharepoint to share and comment on documents
  - After discussion, agreed that the creation of a Business Forum would be an outcome of the CEP process, not run in parallel
  - List of main employers and economic value of sectors, which was previously distributed, to be resent to the working group.
2. Briefing on the work of Visit Totnes. Additional information on Visit Totnes activities and local tourism requested. 'Off the shelf' figures to be sent to group members with more detailed analysis to be created as part of / following the CEP process.
3. Feedback from the Chamber of Commerce meeting shared
4. Economy actions of the Strategic Plan discussed and included debate about which working group should lead on the actions surrounding the market square revamp. Request that this should be taken to the next SDG meeting for agreement about where it should sit.
5. Economy section of any Delivery Plan to be added to agenda for the next meeting.
6. Economic impact of proposed road closure in Spring 2025 to be mitigated through comms (Visit Totnes and Town Council) outlining that the town is still open, highlighting where to park etc.

- Economy Working Group nominee to approach SHDC / District Councillors to see if it is possible for them to offer free parking during road closure
  - Contractors parking in on-road parking spaces – Economy Working Group nominee to speak to contractors to ask them not to park in these spaces
7. Caravan Club site reopening - noted
  8. South Hams Festival proposals discussed. Group would like to proactively show support for locally organised events, such as Carnival and Transition Town Totnes plans for events during the festival period
  9. Agreed recommend to Council Matters Committee to fund a 2024 Business Xmas Window Competition (£675 in 2023).
    - High Street businesses to be informed via Sept/Oct update email from Visit Totnes/Town Council
    - A list of businesses taking part to be created and shared via Visit Totnes/Town Council platforms as an added incentive for businesses to take part.
  10. Cllr Trant explained that Food for Children are interested in engaging with the Town Council – for the Community Working Group
  11. Next meeting pencilled in for 24 September at 6pm. Officer attendance to be discussed with Clerk.



# TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL SCHEME OF DELEGATION

**Drafted: July 2024**

**Adopted:**

**Review date: July 2026**

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## 1. THE POWER TO DELEGATE

1.1 The power to delegate function by local councils is set out in the Local Government Act 1972 S.101 as follows:

- a. that a council may delegate its powers (except those incapable of delegation) to a committee or an officer (not a working group, forum or individual councillor).
- b. a committee may delegate its powers to an officer.
- c. the delegating body may exercise Powers that have been delegated (i.e. Full Council).

1.2 Any delegation to a Committee or the Proper Officer shall be exercised in compliance with the Council's Standing Orders, any other policies or conditions imposed by the Council and within the law.

1.3 The Proper Officer may nominate another named Officer to carry out any powers and duties which have been delegated to that Officer.

1.4 Where officers are contemplating any action under delegated powers which is likely to have a significant impact in a particular area, they should also consult the Members and must ensure that they obtain appropriate legal, financial, and other specialist advice before action is taken.

## 2. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (EXCERPT)

2.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- a. the Council for all items over £10,000;
- b. the Council Matters Committee for items over £5,000; or
- c. the Clerk/RFO for any items below £5,000.

- d. members of the management team for specific budget lines as decided by the Clerk/RFO for any items below £1000.

### 3. DELEGATION TO OFFICERS

3.1 The following matters are delegated to the Council's Officers to make decisions on behalf of the Council. These decisions must be exercised in accordance with the law, the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and any approved policy framework and budget.

3.2 The Council may at any time, following resolution, revoke any delegated authority.

3.3 Officers may decide not to exercise delegated responsibilities and may instead make a recommendation to a Committee or the Council. Similarly, where Officers have no delegated power to make a decision, they report the matter to Committee or the Council for a decision.

#### **Responsible Financial Officer (currently Town Clerk)**

3.4 The Responsible Financial Officer to the Council shall be responsible for the Town Council's accounting procedures in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations in force at any given time.

#### **Proper Officer (Town Clerk)**

3.5 The Town Clerk shall be the Proper Officer of the Council and as such is specifically authorised to:

- a. To receive Declarations of Acceptance of Office.
- b. To receive and record notices disclosing personal and prejudicial interests.
- c. To receive and record notices of requests for dispensations.
- d. To receive and retain plans and documents.
- e. To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council.
- f. To receive copies of by-laws made by the local authority.
- g. To certify copies of by-laws made by the Council.
- h. To sign summonses to attend meetings of the Council.
- i. To arrange insurance.

3.6 In addition, the Town Clerk has the delegated authority to undertake the following matters on behalf of the Council:

- a. The day-to-day operation of services, together with routine inspection and control.
- b. Day-to-day supervision and control of all staff employed by the Council.
- c. The day-to-day administration and oversight for organised events and activities.
- d. Authorisation of routine expenditure within the agreed budget (up to £5,000 unless otherwise resolved by Council).
- e. Emergency expenditure up to £5,000 outside the agreed budget (see Financial Regulations).
- f. Matters and increased expenditure specifically delegated by Council or Committee.
- g. Payment of authorised continuing contracts, including but not limited to monthly salary payments.

### 4. FULL COUNCIL

4.1 The following matters are reserved to the Council for decision, notwithstanding that the appropriate Committee(s) may make recommendations for the Council's consideration:

- a. Approval of the budget.
- b. Setting the precept.
- c. Approval of the Annual Return and Audit of Accounts.
- d. Agreement to write off bad debts.
- e. Approval by resolution, before payment, of any grant or single commitment in excess of £10,000.
- f. Authorisation as to terms and purpose for any application for Borrowing Approval and subsequent arrangements for the loan.



- g. Approval of any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (eg hire purchase or leasing of tangible assets).
- h. Approval of purchase, acquisition by other means, sale, lease or disposal of tangible moveable property £10,000 or over.
- i. Approval of purchase, acquisition by other means, lease, sale or disposal of real property (interests in land).
- j. Approval of changes in earmarked reserves as part of the budgetary process.
- k. Making, amending or revoking Standing Orders, Financial Regulations or this Scheme of Delegation.
- l. Making, amending or revoking by-laws.
- m. Making of orders under any statutory powers.
- n. Matters of principle or policy.
- o. Appointment of Standing Committees.
- p. Appointing Council Representatives to outside bodies.
- q. Confirming the appointment of the Proper Officer (Town Clerk) – all other appointments can be agreed by Council Matters.
- r. Elect Chairs of committee.
- s. All other matters which must, by law, be reserved to the Full Council.

## 5. COMMITTEES

5.1 The following matters are delegated to the Council's Committees to make decisions on behalf of the Council. They must be exercised in accordance with the law, the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and any approved policy framework and budget.

5.2 The Council may at any time, following resolution, revoke any delegated authority.

5.3 Committees may decide not to exercise delegated responsibilities and may instead make a recommendation to the Council. Similarly, where a Committee has no delegated power to make a decision it makes a recommendation to Council.

All Committees are authorised to:

- a. Elect a deputy Chair from within the membership of that Committee.
- b. Approve the Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee.
- c. Spend money from budget headings under that Committee's remit up to the limit of the budget and/or named reserve.
- d. Make recommendations on the budget requirement for the Committee for the coming Financial Year.
- e. Delegate any of their functions to a Sub Committee or Officer of the Council (not a working group, forum or individual Councillor)

## Overview

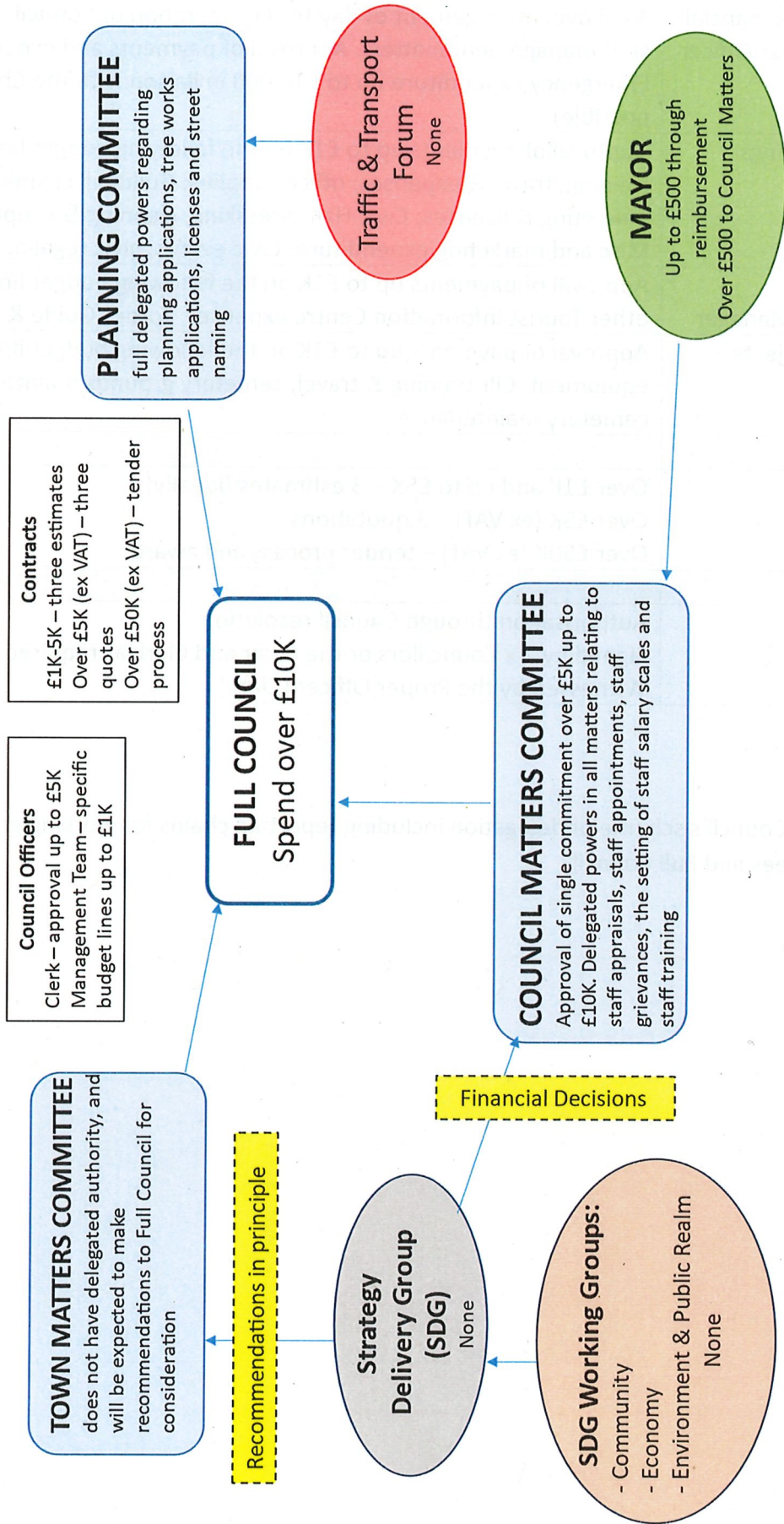
Committee/Working Group	Delegation
Full Council	Detail above.  <b>Approval of single expenditure over £10K.</b>
Council Matters Committee	The Council Matters Committee will act as the Scrutiny Committee of the Council, monitoring the operational, civic, administrative, staffing and financial responsibilities as well as the assets of the Council.  <b>The Council Matters Committee may approve the income and expenditure of the Council on behalf of the Council, within the remit of existing agreed Town Council financial regulations (single commitment</b>

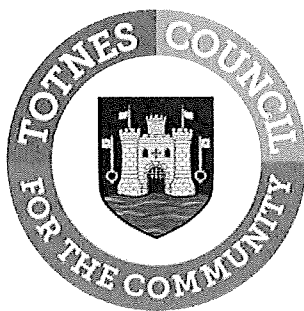
	<p>over £5K up to £10K). The Council Matters Committee has delegated powers to act on behalf of the Council in all matters relating to staff appraisals, staff appointments, staff grievances, staff disciplinaries and dismissals, the setting of staff salary scales and staff training.</p>
Planning Committee	<p>The Planning Committee will consider on behalf of the Town Council any matters, including the physical nature of the town, and anything concerning the quality of life of people who live, work in or visit the town. This will include:  planning applications, tree orders; Neighbourhood Plan; Traffic and Transport; Housing; licensing.</p> <p><b>The Planning Committee has full delegated powers to make a Council decision regarding representations to South Hams District Council or other appropriate bodies on all planning applications in the town unless the Committee decides, following Council guidelines, that the application should be passed to Full Council due to its size, controversial nature or potential effect on local people.</b></p> <p><b>The Committee may also comment on behalf of the Town Council on licenses or street naming if requested to do so.</b></p> <p><b>On all other aspects of its activity, the Committee does not have delegated authority, and will be expected to make recommendations to Full Council for consideration.</b></p>
Town Matters Committee	<p>Town Matters Committee will consider on behalf of the Town Council any matters, excluding the physical nature of the town, and anything concerning the quality of life of people who live, work in or visit the town. This will include: welfare of the elderly and vulnerable; enrichment for children and young people; provision of social, leisure, sporting and recreational facilities; provision of adult education, cultural and library services; employment strategy; tourism development; crime and anti-social behaviour; climate emergency; community arts.</p> <p><b>The Committee does not have delegated authority, and will be expected to make recommendations to Full Council for consideration.</b></p>
Strategy Delivery Group	<p>None. Recommendations with budgetary implications to the Council Matters Committee. Recommendations seeking support/agreement of details to the Town Matters Committee.</p>
Strategy Delivery Working Groups: - Community - Economy - Environment and Public Realm	<p>None. Actions/recommendations to the Strategy Delivery Group for consideration.</p>
Traffic and Transport Forum	<p>None. Advisory group to the Town Council. Any recommendations to the Planning Committee.</p>
<b>Mayor</b>	<p>Civic Budget for: the funding of formal and informal civic events associated with the role of Mayor; civic events supported by the Council; cost of events attended or hosted by the Mayor; supporting the Mayor in raising money for their chosen charity. Appoint a Deputy Mayor.</p>

	<b>Civic Budget - Up to £500 (through reimbursement) with authorisation by the Town Clerk. Amounts of £500 and over need to be agreed by the Council Matters Committee in advance of agreement.</b>
<b>Council Officers</b>	<b>Delegation</b>
Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)/Proper Officer	As above, management of day-to-day operation of Council services and staff management matters. Approval of payments and expenses up to £5K. Emergency expenditure up to £10,000 in liaison with the Chair (if possible).
Finance, HR & Lettings Manager	Approval of payments up to £1K on the following budget lines: staff training, travel & expenses; office supplies; Guildhall cleaning; Guildhall marketing & licences; Civic Hall caretaking, cleaning & supplies; Civic Hall Misc and marketing expenditure; Civic events; civic regalia; mayoral travel.
Marketing & Communications Manager	Approval of payments up to £1K on the following budget lines: marketing; other Tourist Information Centre expenses; Totnes Guide & Website.
Governance & Projects Manager	Approval of payments up to £1K on the following budget lines: Cllr IT equipment; Cllr training & travel; cemetery grounds maintenance; cemetery maintenance.
<b>Contracts</b>	Over £1K and up to £5K – 3 estimates (ideally) Over £5K (ex VAT) – 3 quotations Over £50K (ex VAT) – tender process and award.
<b>Legal Deeds</b>	Authorisation through Council resolution. Signed by 2 x Councillors or the Chair and Clerk as required. Witnessed by the Proper Officer [Clerk]

Chart showing the Council's scheme of delegation including reporting chains for working groups and forums to committees and Full Council.

# TTC SCHEME OF DELEGATION & REPORTING CHAINS





# INVESTMENT STRATEGY

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## TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

May 2024

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Totnes Town Council has adopted the following Investment Strategy, which establishes formal policies and practices for the effective management and control of the Council's investments, and the associated risks, and should be read in conjunction with the Council's Financial Regulations.

### 1. Introduction

In preparing its Investment Strategy the Council is required to comply with the guidance notes issued under Section 15(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 and guidance within 'Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England' Practitioners Guide.

The legislation and associated guidance is optional for parish & town councils where investments are not expected to exceed £500,000 and no action is required below £10,000. However, for Councils where the sums involved exceed £500,000, the guidance is mandatory.

The Guidance recommends that a council produces an annual Investment Strategy which sets out its policy for managing the investments and giving priority to liquidity (ensuring the funds invested are available for expenditure when needed) and security (protecting the capital sum invested from loss). It is recommended that this Strategy be approved by the Full Council annually.

### 2. Definitions

Specified Investment - one which is made in sterling, is not long term (less than 12 months) not defined as capital expenditure and is placed with a body which has a high credit rating or made with the UK Government, a UK Local Authority or a parish or community council.

Non Specified Investment – any financial investment that does not meet the criteria to be treated as a specified investment and for which there can be greater risk and where professional investment advice might be required.

### 3. Investment Policy

#### Treasury Management Investments

Totnes Town Council acknowledges the importance of investing any temporary surplus funds held on behalf of the community in a prudent manner. The Council will aim to achieve, first and foremost, security and liquidity whilst seeking the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity.

In accordance with Section 15 (1) of the 2003 Act the Council will have regard to such guidance as DCLG may issue on behalf of the Secretary of State.

For prudent management of its treasury balances, Totnes Town Council will use:

- Deposits with banks, building societies, local authorities or other public authorities which are specified investments.
- Other recognised funds specifically targeted at the Public Sector which are specified investments.
- No investment in stocks or shares, or in non-specified investments.

The choice of institution and length of time which funds may prudently be committed so as not to compromise liquidity will be at the discretion of the Responsible Financial Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Council Matters Committee.

The contribution that these investments make to the objectives of the Town Council is to support effective treasury management activities.

#### Non-financial Investments

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) maintains that the borrowing of monies purely to invest, or lend and make a return, is unlawful and this Council will not engage in such activity.

The Responsible Financial Officer will carry out a risk assessment for any new non-financial investment proposals which will be provided to the Council Matters Committee. The risk assessment will include

- Whether and, if so how, the Council uses external advisors be they treasury management advisors, property investment advisors or any other relevant persons.
- How the Council monitors and maintains the quality of advice provided by external advisors.
- What other sources of information are used to assess and monitor risk.
- Risks associated with the liquidity of the asset and any debt.
- Any risk associated with the investment failing to achieve any expected net profit and the contingency plans for this scenario.

Information about any proposed investment and borrowing will be provided to members by the Responsible Financial Officer setting out any risks and opportunities in terms that a layman would understand to avoid the risk that locally elected members may not always have the background and expertise to understand the risks associated with the decisions that they are being asked to make.

Totnes Town Council will only invest in non-financial investments where a professional assessment has been obtained to confirm that there are reasonable grounds to believe the realisable value of the asset, including the attributable costs of purchase, will exceed the purchase price within 12 months of the purchase.

Borrowing to purchase land and buildings by Totnes Town Council will only be obtained through the Public Works Loan Board.

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Where the Council has borrowed to finance any non-financial investments the Responsible Financial Officer will report the following indicators to the Council Matters Committee annually:

- Loan to Value Ratio
- Investment Cover Ratio (the total net income from property investments compared to the interest expense)
- Gross and net income (The income received from the investment portfolio at a gross level and net level, less costs, over time)

Where there has been a significant change in year on year performance against any of the indicators presented the Responsible Financial Officer should include an explanation to the Committee.

In addition the Responsible Financial Officer will report on any need to realise the capital tied up in the non-financial investments to ensure no capital loss arises.

The Council will review this Strategy annually and reserves the right to make variations to the Strategy at any time, subject to the approval of Full Council.







# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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**TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL**  
**SEPTEMBER 2024**

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## **Our commitment**

The council is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination.

This policy is intended to assist the council to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment.

## **The law**

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, caste and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as "protected characteristics".

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

The council will not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical

features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

### **Types of unlawful discrimination**

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

## **Equal opportunities in employment**

The council will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

### Recruitment

Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

### Working practices

The council will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if the council considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. The council will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. The council will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

### Equal opportunities monitoring

The council will monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

The council treats personal data collected for reviewing equality and diversity in accordance with the data protection policy. Information about how data is used and the basis for processing is provided in the council's privacy notices.

## **Bullying and Harassment**

The council has a separate policy concerning issues of bullying and harassment on any ground, and how complaints of this type will be dealt with.

## **People not employed by the council**

The council will not discriminate unlawfully against those using or seeking to use the services provided by the council.

You should report any bullying or harassment by suppliers, visitors or others to the council who will take appropriate action.

### **Training**

The council will raise awareness of equal opportunities to those likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.

The council will raise the awareness of all staff engaged to work at the council to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the bullying and harassment policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment.

### **Your responsibilities**

Every employee is required to assist the council to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the council for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the council's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

### **Grievances**

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you should use the council's grievance procedure to make a complaint. If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the dignity at work policy.

The council will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be monitored periodically by the council to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.



# HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

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**TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL  
SEPTEMBER 2024**

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

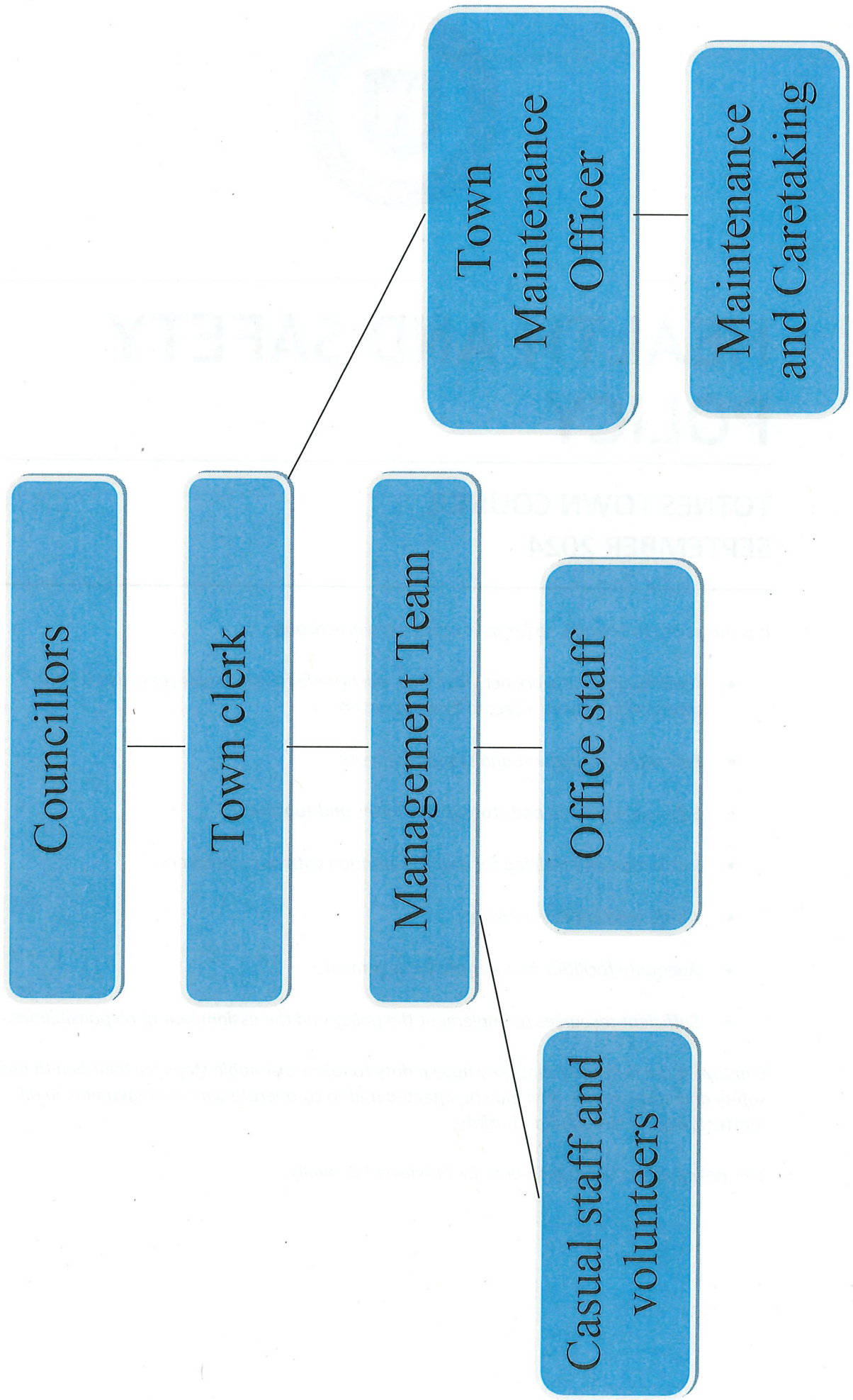
- *A workplace and work activities that will be safe for our employees, visitors and others who may be affected by what we do.*
- *Safe plant, equipment and systems of work.*
- *Safe use, handling and storage of articles and substances.*
- *Instruction and training for and consultation with our employees.*
- *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 he/she 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

### 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 Officer

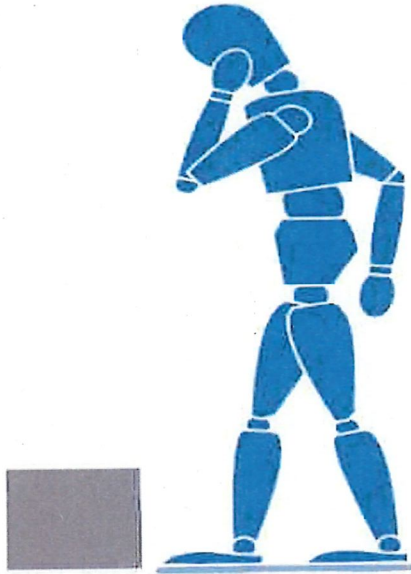


## Manual Handling

### PRINCIPLES OF GOOD HANDLING TECHNIQUE

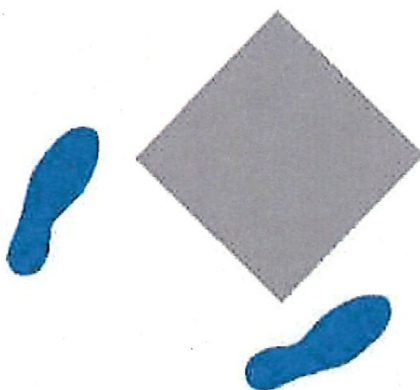
#### 1 Planning

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.



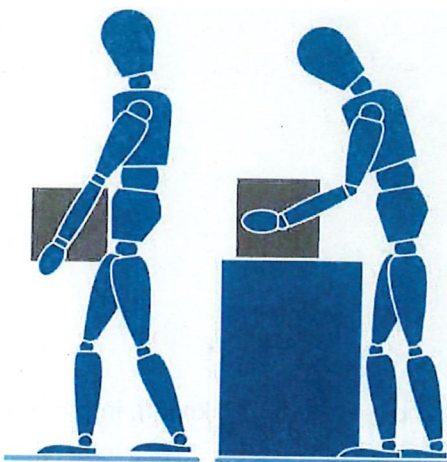
#### 6 Hands

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.

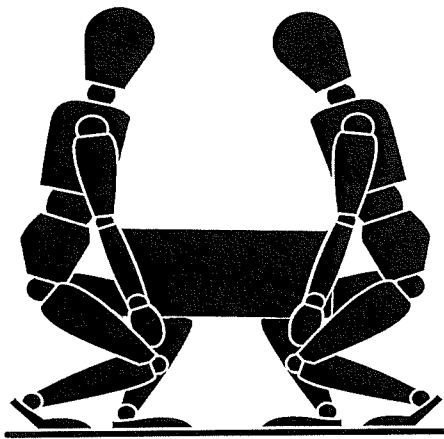
#### 8 Moving the load



- 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:

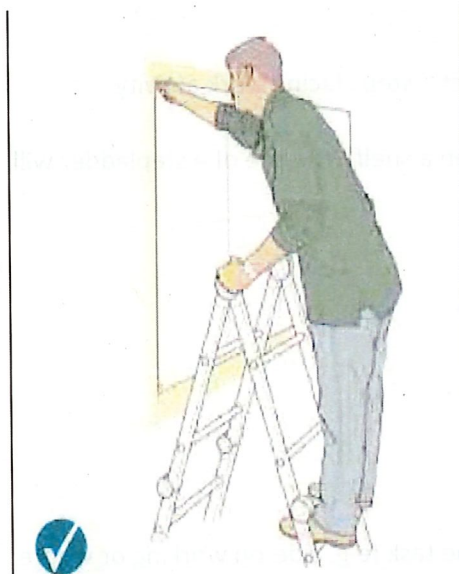
- on firm ground or spread the load (e.g. use a board);
- on clean, solid surfaces (paving slabs, floors etc). These need to be clean (no oil, moss or leaf litter) and free of loose material (sand, packaging materials etc) so the feet can grip. Shiny floor surfaces can be slippery even without contamination;

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.

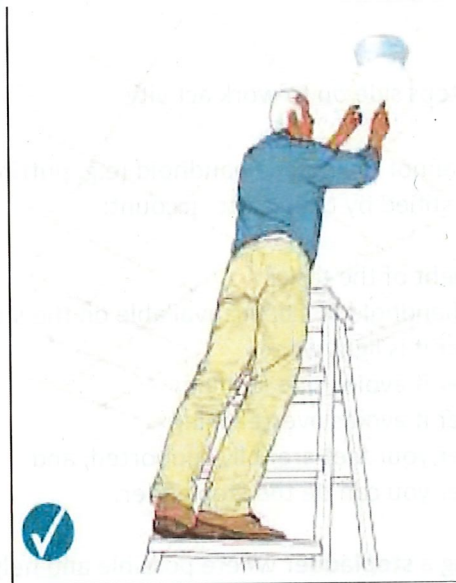
## Safety in use – stepladders

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.



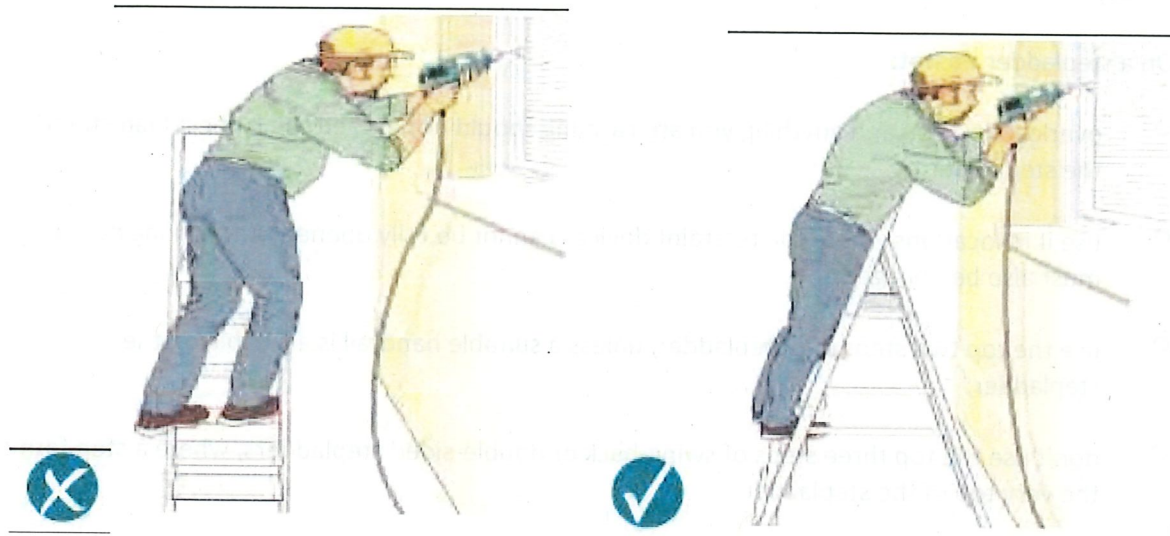
Correct – two clear rungs. Don't work any higher up this type of stepladder.



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'.





# Pay Policy

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## TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER 2024

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*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 1<sup>st</sup> 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

