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# MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS

# MONDAY 16TH MAY 2022 AT 6.30PM IN THE GUILDHALL

**Present:** Councillors B Piper (Chair), G Allen (left the meeting at 18.55), J Hodgson, P Paine, and E Price.

## Apologies: Councillor M Adams.

## In Attendance: Two members of the public, C Marlton (Town Clerk) & C Bewley (Finance, HR and Lettings Manager).

## 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

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

The apologies were accepted.

*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.

A member of the public raised the condition of the paving stones on the pavement in the Narrows.

The TRESOC (Totnes Renewable Energy Society) Operations Director spoke about Energy Local Totnes, £25k grant funding from Devon County Council to install 250kW of solar panels on roofs in Totnes and to set up an energy club for Totnes. Local consumers pay less than the standard grid price and the generators of the energy are paid slightly more. Energy Local Totnes will be separate from TRESOC and have a local energy adviser. Need a generator with 3 phase supply and are approaching the Town Council to kick off the scheme as there are existing panels on the Civic Hall and the required supply. The Council would need to sign up to Green Energy UK and give up its current export feed in tariff agreement.

The Clerk raised that Transition Town Totnes currently get 40 per cent of the feed in tariff so their views on the proposal would be required. It was **AGREED** that officers will look at the Council’s current energy supplier and contract provisions to compare pricing rates with the Energy Local Totnes proposal.

*The Committee reconvened.*

## 2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**To approve the minutes of 11th April 2022 and update on any matters arising.**

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of proceedings. There were no matters arising.

## 3. BUDGET MONITOR

**To consider the Budget Monitor.**

The Clerk updated that it’s very early in the financial year to comment, £19K has come in from S106 for the green travel role and the cost of building materials has increased and therefore works on Birdwood could increase (but is not reflected at this stage until things become more certain). It was **AGREED** to accept the document.

## 4. INVESTMENT STRATEGY

**To review the Investment Strategy.**

It was **AGREED** to accept the revised Investment Strategy.

## 5. WORKING TIME AND LEAVE POLICY

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

The Clerk explained that the changes were to updates to the COVID isolation guidance and emergency unpaid leave. It was **AGREED** to accept the revised Working Time and Leave Policy.

## 6. ARTS WORKING GROUP

**To** **consider the actions from the Arts Working Group held on 27th April 2022.**

The following actions were considered:

1. Events Grant –the Clerk explained that the remaining funds (£2550) of the community art grants could be reopened for 3 weeks for groups to apply for funding. However, the Community Christmas Workshop and Tuesday Christmas Festival evenings could use further funds than those currently allocated as keeping the market smaller will mean the amount of income will be reduced but organisation costs much the same. It was **AGREED** not to re-open grant funding at this point and if the Clerk receives any applications the proposals will come to a future Council Matters Committee for consideration; and that the £600 in the Arts and Cultural budget remains unallocated.

3. Christmas Festival Evenings - The Clerk will write a brief for the Christmas evenings and get quotes for a provider to oversee the event, bringing quotes to Council Matters in June.

## 4. Civic Hall – the Clerk is waiting for confirmation from South Hams District Council about the uplift for decoration under the Civic Hall.

## 5. Plymouth Road Phone Box – the TMO will paint and lock the box with an invitation for art to be installed within it.

## 7. BUDGET OUTTURN STATEMENT

**To note the budget outturn statement for financial year 2021/22.**

Noted.

## 8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 13th June 2022 at 6.30pm.**

Noted.

T*he 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)*

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

**To consider the bank statements and reconciliations.**

These were reviewed and **AGREED** unanimously.

**10. STAFFING UPDATE (Standing Item)**

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

A verbal update was noted, no decisions were required.

**11. CASTLE MEADOW BOUNDARY**

**To update on the Castle Meadow boundary (legal).**

It was **AGREED** that the livestock fencing will no longer be maintained by the Council as the use of the meadow for grazing has ceased. Following legal advice it was confirmed that the Town Council no longer needs to maintain the livestock fencing. This position would be reviewed if livestock were reintroduced. The Town Maintenance Officer will be asked to inspect said fenceline for deterioration that could cause a health and safety concern.