

# **MINUTES FOR THE TOWN MATTERS COMMITTEE**

# **MONDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER 2024 IN THE GUILDHALL**

Present: Councillors J Cummings (Deputy Chair), L Auletta, C Beavis, J Chinnock, D Peters, A Presswell, N Roberts and T Robshaw.

Apologies: Cllrs Collinson and Price.

## In Attendance: S Halliday (Governance and Projects Manager).

### **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

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

The apologies were accepted.

*The Committee will adjourn for the following items:*

### **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no members of the public present.

*The Committee reconvened.*

**2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

### **To approve the minutes of 22nd July 2024 and update on any matters arising.**

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

Item 3 – Open Spaces, Sports, Recreation and Wellbeing Plan Review. It was **RESOLVED** by Full Council to adopt the Totnes Town Council Open Space, Sports, Recreation and Wellbeing Plan.

### **3. STRATEGY DELIVERY GROUP AND WORKING GROUPS**

**To consider the notes and any actions from:**

1. **Strategy Delivery Group, 23rd July 2024.**

Noted.

1. **Community Working Group, 29th July 2024.**

Noted.

1. **Economy Working Group, 13th August 2024.**

Noted.

1. **Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 7th August and 18th September 2024.**

Noted. Item 5 – Mosaics from the 18th September 2024 Working Group. To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the mosaics are located at public transport entry points in the town where some overhead protection is afforded:

* 2 x mosaics in Town Council bus shelter on Coronation Road;
* 1 x mosaic in SHDC bus shelter on Coronation Road; and
* 2 x mosaics at the railway station, one on each platform.

This is subject to landowner agreement. The Rotherfold should be kept in reserve as an area to display the mosaics.

### **4. COMMUNITY COMPOSTING**

**To consider a request to support a community composting scheme on Steamer Quay Road and make a recommendation to Full Council.**

The Committee discussed the location of the proposed site and raised concerns about: it being in the flood plain area; on hard surface (and run off into the river); not easy to access without transport; loss of seven parking spaces; whether there is public demand for such a facility; and its proximity to the retirement flats and future care home in terms of aerosol pollutants.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that whilst the principle of community composting is supported, further work is required to determine: public need and support for a facility in Totnes; a suitable, accessible location; how it will be maintained and by who; who has the long-term responsibility/ liability for the facility; and long-term funding arrangements.

### **5. DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL PENSION FUND INVESTMENTS**

### **To consider a motion requesting Devon County Council devest its investments in companies who are selling weapons to Israel and make a recommendation to Full Council.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it fully endorses and supports the principles and the sentiments of the following motion being put to Devon County Council seeking immediate withdrawal of its investments and pension funds in companies selling arms to Israel as these are contributing to the war in Gaza.  We urge Devon County Council to support this motion and adopt an ethical investment policy.

*“Further to withdrawing over £2 million in investments from companies selling arms to Israel. Devon County Council now commits to investigating withdrawing the £84 million that remains invested through its investments and pension funds in such companies, including Rolls Royce (£1,951,241), Barclays Bank (£12,889,533), BAE Systems (£4,969,449), and Babcock (£360,850).*

*Devon County Council seeks immediate withdrawal of these investments, particularly in light of the tragic loss of over 20,000 children in Gaza. Our pension fund should not support activities contributing to such atrocities.*

*Devon County Council seeks to fully divest from these companies and to uphold values of peace, justice, and ethical responsibility.”*

### **6. VE-DAY 80TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIONS**

### **To consider taking part in lighting a beacon (representing the ‘light of peace’) as part of national VE (Victory in Europe) 80th anniversary commemorations on 8th May 2025.**

It was **AGREED** to defer discussion of this item until November when the officer will have more information to share. Cllr Presswell said that she has made a number of useful contacts having arranged the D-Day anniversary events, but any similar VE-Day events would need the appropriate funding.

### **7. SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL GAMBLING POLICY CONSULTATION**

**To consider the South Hams District Gambling Policy consultation and make any recommendations to Full Council.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it supports the proposed policy changes and asks that it includes advertising in public places, for example on bus stops, to ensure gambling advertising is not permitted.

It was **AGREED** that the next Committee will consider the Council’s position on advertising on its bus stops and whether the contract needed revising to prohibit the advertising of gambling, alcohol, smoking/vaping, junk food.

### **8. SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL POLLING STATION CONSULTATION**

**To consider the South Hams District Polling Station consultation and make any recommendations to Full Council [no proposed changes to the current Totnes and Bridgetown locations].**

As there are no proposed changes to polling stations in Totnes and no concerns have been raised, the Committee **AGREED** that there is no requirement to respond to the consultation.

### **9. CHRISTMAS MARKETS AND LIGHTS SWITCH ON UPDATE**

### **To receive an update on the Christmas lights switch-on event, Christmas late night markets and the lantern procession.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it considers taking part in the lantern procession if individual Councillors can commit to: taking part in the procession on 17th December; and carrying out any potential repairs to Pegasus in advance. It was also suggested that Ben Piper is invited to take part in the procession.

The Committee voted to extend the meeting by 15 minutes to 8.15pm.

### **10. OPEN SPACE, SPORTS, RECREATION AND WELLBEING PLAN REVIEW**

**To update on any general matters linked to the Open Spaces, Sport Recreation and Wellbeing (OSSRW) Plan (standing item).**

The officer updated that the comments received from South Hams District Council on the OSSRW Plan will be considered at the November meeting. A Borough Park User Group meeting is arranged for 2nd October and link councillor and councillor representatives have been invited.

### **11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

### **To note the date of the next meeting of the Town Matters Committee – Monday 25th November 2024 at 6.30pm.**

### Noted.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Sara Halliday

Governance and Projects Manager