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# MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS

# MONDAY 9TH DECEMBER 2024 AT 6.30PM IN THE GUILDHALL

**Present:** Councillors D Peters (Chair), C Beavis and J Chinnock.

**Apologies:** Cllrs Bennett, Hannam, Price and Robshaw.

**In Attendance:** Cllr Auletta and C Marlton (Town Clerk).

# 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

**2**.  **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**To approve the minutes of 11th November 2024 and update on any matters arising.**

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

**3. STRATEGY DELIVERY WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS**

**To consider any budgetary recommendations from the following:**

**a. Environment and Public Realm Working Group, 27th November 2024.**

Item 2 - It was **AGREED** to spend £300 on the consultation around community composting. The other items of proposed expenditure will be considered as part of the budget discussions in January 2025.

Item 3, PRD2.E – It was **AGREED** to remove the Seagull Survey from the project list.

**b. Community Working Group, 3rd December 2024.**

The spend on 50% of a new generator for Council use was noted.

**c. Economy Working Group, 4th December 20204.**

None.

**d. Councillor Away Day, 30th November 2024.**

The proposals around ear marked reserves and Community Development expenditure will be considered during the budget discussions in January 2025. It was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk would write to the TQ9 Partnership for an indication of further funding needs specifically linked to fuel, food and child poverty.

**4. DRAFT 2025/26 BUDGET**

**To consider an initial draft budget for financial year 2025/26. Recommendations to Full Council needed on:**

**a. Precept for 2025/26.**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the precept is increased by 5 percent, from £656022 to £688823.10. Because of the increase in the tax base (currently in draft form) this represents a 2.15 percent increase for the taxpayer. The Band D would increase from £218.65 to £223.35 per year, an increase of £4.70, which is £0.39p per month.

**b. Annual budget for 2025/26.**

This was deferred to the January Council Matters Committee.

**c. Anticipated spend from Reserve in 2025/26.**

This was deferred to the January Council Matters Committee.

**5. BURIAL AND CREMATION CONSULTATION**

**To consider the Law Commission’s consultation on ‘Burial and Cremation’ in relation to Totnes Cemetery and make any recommendation to Full Council (deadline 9th January).**

It was **AGREED** to give the Projects and Governance Officer delegated authority to draft a consultation response for Full Council to consider.

**6. PAYMENTS TO COUNCILLORS**

**To review the Payments to Councillors Policy**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Payments to Councillors Policy is adopted. The annual allowance for elected members has increased to £487.50 per annum, subject to PAYE and attendance requirements as outlined.

# 7. ASSET TRANSFER POLICY

**To consider a draft Asset Transfer Policy for the Council**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Asset Transfer Policy is adopted.

# 8. RECRUITMENT

# To consider delegated authority for the Clerk in terms of recruitment (subject to checks and references).

It was **AGREED** to give the Town Clerk delegated authority to appoint the Economic Support Officer as recommended by the interview panel, to be held Tuesday 17th December. This is subject to the usual checks and references. If the interview panel do not wish to appoint it was **AGREED** to readvertise the vacancy in January 2025.

# 9. MATERNITY, PATERNITY AND ADOPTION POLICY

**To review the Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave Policy.**

# It was AGREED to adopt the updated Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy.

# 10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 13th January 2025 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)*

# 11. BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS (Standing Item)

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

These were reviewed and **AGREED**.

# 12. IT SOFTWARE

# To consider expenditure on IT software (commercial).

It was **AGREED** to purchase the IT software as detailed.

# 13. GUILDHALL COTTAGE

# To note an update on the Guildhall Cottage (legal).

It was **AGREED** to:

* Replace the bathroom fan as soon as possible.
* Apply for Listed Building Consent to add a fan to the kitchen, ventilation in the chimney and resurfacing the south facing elevation of the building to remove modern paint and replace with traditional materials.
* Defer the 2025 rent review until the listed building consent has been granted and the works completed.
* Write to the tenants to underline some requirements regarding habitation of the property and the monthly rental amount.

# 14. STAFFING UPDATE

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

Noted.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm

Catherine Marlton

Town Clerk

December 2024