



DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL MONDAY 10TH AUGUST 2026 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors T Bennett (Mayor and Chair), L Auletta, C Beavis, J Chinnock, S Collinson, T Cooper, J Cummings, J Hannam, J Hodgson, D Peters, A Presswell, E Price, N Roberts, T Robshaw, and M Trant.

Apologies: Cllrs L Smallridge.

In Attendance: Members of the public, C Marlton (Town Clerk).

1. WELCOME TO ALL ATTENDING AND OBSERVING

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Council. The Mayor will request confirmation that all Members have completed or made any necessary amendments to their Declaration of Interests.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the apologies. There were no amendments to Declarations of Interest.

3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

To consider the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) announcement, its implications for Totnes and any representations that the Council may wish to make.

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to hear views from the public. Members of the public expressed serious concerns about having the top of Bridgetown (that falls within the Berry Pomeroy Parish) in a separate unitary authority, including: work on cycle path connections; the river; impact on community and voluntary services; healthcare; and a survey collated by Bridgetown Alive!

It was **RESOLVED** to return to Standing Orders.

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously that Totnes Town Council do not support the proposal outlined for Devon as decided by government. It was **RESOLVED** to hold further conversation on the detail of the Town Council response in confidential session (detail below).

SEE ALSO "6" OVER

4. PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

To consider the recommendation from the Planning Committee, 20th July 2026 about the proposed 20mph areas in Totnes.

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to write to County Cllr Hodgson to:

- Welcome the proposed changes from 30mph to 20mph from the foot of Bridgetown Hill into Bridgetown to The Plains;
- Express concern that Plymouth Road is not included in the proposed changes to 20mph given the number of accidents on the road between Follaton Cross and the Western bypass; and

- Express concern that Barracks Hill to Cott Road is not included for a reduction in speed limit to 20mph. Whilst outside of the parish boundary, Barracks Hill is regularly used by pupils walking to school at KEVICC and as a walking route to Dartington, and improving the safety of this road is important.

5. REPRESENTATIONS TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

To consider writing to the Police and Crime Commissioner to raise concerns about persistent anti-social behaviour in the town.

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to send a letter from the Town Council to the Police and Crime Commissioner as drafted by Cllr Peters.

6. NEXT MEETING

To note the next meeting dates of Monday 7th September 2026 for Full Council, 6.30pm public session, 7.00pm formal meeting in the Guildhall.

Noted.

*The Council **RESOLVED** 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)*

Confidential debate reference LGR and boundaries ensued.

SEE ALSO '3' OVER

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to give delegated authority to the Town Clerk to:

- Write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP, copied to Caroline Voaden MP. The letter drafted and circulated by Cllr Chinnock would be strengthened to reflect the decision by South Hams District Council in their recent consideration of the government decision.
- Write to the local MP, Parish, District and County Councils asking them to advocate for amending the Unitary boundary as proposed between Totnes and Berry Pomeroy to ensure that the top of Bridgetown Housing estate is included in the Devon side of the split, and therefore retaining community cohesion and making service delivery more practicable.
- Write to DCC and SHDC supporting the judicial review of the government decision.
- Draft and circulate to all members a public statement on the debate and decision of Full Council as outlined above.

7. GUILDHALL COTTAGE GARAGE

To ratify the terms of the Guildhall Cottage Garage transfer (legal).

it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to ratify the terms of the Guildhall Garage transfer, and the deed was signed by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and witness by the Town Clerk (and Proper Officer as per Standing Orders).

8. GUILDHALL HIRE

To consider the quotes for a six-month grounds maintenance contract (commercial). To consider waiving the fee for Guildhall hire as part of the Heritage Festival (financial).

Cllr Auletta declared a personal interest and left the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to waive the hire fee of the Guildhall for the Heritage Festival event.

OKEHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON 27th July 2026

160.3 On the proposition of Cllr Bird, seconded by Cllr Fisher it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the **Property Committee** meetings held on 10th November and 1 December 2025, 2nd February and 18th May 2026.

161. Full Council Meeting Minutes

On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded by Cllr Richards it was **RESOLVED** to receive, approve and sign the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 29th June 2026.

162. Projects and Consultations

162.1 Local Government Reorganisation

Cllr Leech declared a personal interest being a Member of WDBC

The Government announcement that Devon would consist of 4 Unitary Councils with elections scheduled for May 2027 ahead of vesting day when the new councils to begin delivering services in April 2028 was debated. Comments included:

- That the Okehampton Cluster Group all appeared to have concerns
- That the Government criteria had specified that Districts and Boroughs could not be split
- OTC could not fund a judicial review, but could support upper tier authorities by letter
- The Government's decision did not reflect criteria set by government
- The Devon Coast and Country Unitary will have no economic centre, it will be a Unitary with sparsity density which is more expensive to deliver services within.
- A group was considering setting up a crowdfunding page to fight for a judicial review
- The independence of a judicial review was queried

On the proposition of Cllr Cummings, seconded by Cllr Yelland (1 abstention) it was **RESOLVED** that a letter be sent to the Leader of WDBC and DCC, to be copied to the Minister of Local Government and MP. The letter would outline the Councils' support of a judicial review should either WDBC or DCC wish to commence the process. Clerk to consult with Cllrs Cummings and Yelland.

On the proposition of Cllr Richards, seconded by Cllr Fisher (2 abstentions) it was **RESOLVED** to also write to the Minister of Local Government expressing the councils' displeasure with the decision as it was not considered to be in the best interest of residents. Clerk to consult with Cllrs Cummings and Richards.

162.2 Community Governance Boundary Change

Cllr Leech, also a Member of WDBC declared a personal interest in this item of business and thanked the WDBC Officer for her work on this.

On the proposition of Cllr Cummings, seconded by Cllr Fisher it was **RESOLVED** that the Draft Order was consistent with the outcome of the review.

162.3 Neighbourhood Plan

On the proposition of Cllr Cummings, seconded by Cllr Richards it was **RESOLVED** to approve the application statement for submission to WDBC.

162.4 Emerging Dartmoor Local Plan 2026

Cllr Marsh reported that she had attended the Dartmoor National Park Forum on 24th July.

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded by Cllr Cummings it was **RESOLVED** that Councillors send their comments to the Clerk by 14th August for collation and submission by the consultation closing date of 23rd August 2026.

163. Policies and Documents

On the proposition of Cllr Richards, seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** that Cllrs Leech, Marsh and Officers further review the Allotment Policy and Application form for reconsideration of the Council at an additional meeting in August.