

Assistant to the Town Clerk's Report December 2024

For Council Meeting 7th January 2025

1. Key Dates for all Councillors' diaries for this Civic Year;

Friday 11 th April 2025	Civic Ball 2025
Monday 28 th April 2025	Mayor's End of Term Event
Thursday 8 th May 2025	80 th Anniversary of VE Day Beacon
Thursday 15 th May 2025	Grants Presentation Evening

2. Jessie Ann Alford Charity

The Jessie Ann Alford Charity attracted 5 eligible Applications and 1 non-eligible Application this year.

The Trustees agreed a Grant for each of the 5 applicants who met the criteria, and awarded £90 to each.

The cash funds were made available for collection from 9th to 20th December 2024 by each lady, or their representative.

3. Mayor's Annual Christmas Event

On Monday 16th December over 50 Councillors, staff and invited guests enjoyed the Mayor's annual Christmas event. This was an opportunity for the Mayor to thank Councillor colleagues, Officers and staff for their efforts during the year. £ 72 was raised for the Mayor's Charity, The New Tavistock Youth Café.

4. Civic Ball – 11th April 2025

Preparations are now under way for the next Civic Ball, which is due to take place on the date above. Invitations will be issued towards the end of January 2025.

5. Grant Awards

The Council's annual Grant period has now concluded, with over £18,200 being awarded either as cash awards, or 'in-kind' grants for the use of Council facilities. There were 14 successful applications.

The formal Grants Presentation Evening will take place on Thursday 15th May 2025 in the Town Hall, where the successful applicants will receive their cheques.

Further information, and the invitations, will follow in due course.

6. Review of Financial Policies and Procedures

The Financial Administrator is currently reviewing the Council's various financial policies and procedures, in preparation for the Council's review/adoption of the updated documents.

7. Activity Log
 CONFERENCE & TRAINING ACTIVITY LOG
 CIVIC YEAR 2024-2025
 COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE between 26th November 2024 – 6th January 2025;

DATE OF MEETING or TRAINING SESSION	SUBJECT	LOCATION	ORGANISER	COUNCILLORS BOOKED TO ATTEND <i>N.B. Councillors' names in italics indicate that these were a 'no show'</i>
N/a	Introduction to Local Councils	(E-learning)	Via DALC	Cllr R Poppe
N/a	Standards in Public Life	(E-learning)	Via DALC	Cllr R Poppe
2024 – 2025 Civic Year				
15 th January 2025 10.00 – 11.40am	The Role of Internal Audit	Virtual	DALC	None
16 th January 2025 10.00 – 11.40am	Introduction to VAT	Virtual	DALC	None

8. Council Chamber Bookings

Chamber bookings (not including Council Meetings), from 26th November 2024 – 6th January 2025:

- 10 non-chargeable meetings (internal meetings, or a TTC representative attending on behalf of TTC, partner organisations or Mayoral events)
- 0 chargeable meeting/training session
- 0 training sessions (non-chargeable)

9. Property Units Update

Residential – there are currently two vacant residential properties which are being let via Seamoor Lettings in the next Financial Year:

- 1 Market Road – as previously reported, this property was previously being used as a welfare facility during the Town Hall works period and was subject of a recent report (see below).
- 2 Market Road – this unit became vacant on 24th March 2024.

The above properties remain as previously reported and works are being commissioned by the Works Department to prepare them for occupation.

Consideration will shortly be given, through the relevant Committee process, to any designations as appropriate to the occupancy requirements identified by the Council.

Commercial –

- 9 Duke Street – as previously reported, this unit became vacant on 10th June 2024; The above unit is being actively marketed by the Council's Surveyor.

- 12 Duke Street – as separately reported, this property has now returned to the Council’s possession and there will be discussions regarding re-marketing of same in the New Year.
- 15 Duke Street – New tenants moved in on 25th November 2024, and following refurbishment and rebranding works, opened on Friday 13th December 2024.

Note – any further information of a more specific nature as might relate to any particular tenant(s) will need to be picked up under the relevant part of the next section (confidential) of the Agenda.

10. General including ongoing activities in the Admin Office

The Office continues to support the organisation across the range of Civic, administrative, financial and corporate activities.

11. Website & Accessibility update

Booking forms/schedules of charges for various Council activities and other postings are assessed on an ongoing basis and will be updated, where necessary, to ensure compliance with the regulations. Overall site compliance is reviewed annually.

As agreed at Council on 11th June 2024, the Council’s updated website will be provided by the existing Company, Cosmic. This is now being progressed.

12. Legal Services

Arrangements will be made, if necessary, to either re-tender or renegotiate legal services for the Council, in view of the timeframe for current arrangements. A review of present arrangements, including with our provider, will be undertaken to help inform next steps. A meeting with the Council’s current legal providers (Stephens Scown) has been scheduled for early in the New Year.

13. Lettable Properties and Energy Performance

Energy Performance Certificates (EPC’s) and Display Performance Certificates (DPC’s) are in certain circumstances a requirement for the letting of properties. However, the position lacks clarity regarding certain classes of Listed premises. Further information is being sought prior to upcoming changes in minimum thresholds for eligible premises in light of recent Government announcements.

14. Staff Handbook

The Staff Handbook is currently being reviewed to ensure that various sections continue to represent current legal and other relevant standards. Model Policies have been obtained from the Council’s HR Advisors (SW Councils), which will now be tailored to this Council’s requirements. This will be undertaken on a modular basis, with an initial focus on those areas where most change is anticipated.

Report prepared by
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