

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Safety Committee held on Thursday 07 November 2019 in the Council Chamber.

Members: Councillor A Govier (Acting Chairman),
Councillors M Barr, J Thorne, V Stock-Wiliams, J Hunt

Kathryn Hemensley (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies: Councillor M Lithgow, Michaela Greener (Deputy Clerk)

2. Severe Weather Plan 2019/20

Councillor Govier led discussions around emergency arrangements that the Council would put in place to ease hardship for townsfolk in the event of poor weather conditions, particularly ice or snow, over the coming winter months.

The County Council (SCC) had recently advised that they would be filling grit bins this year. All of the grit bins, including those owned by SCC and Wellington Town Council had been checked and emptied of any litter as necessary. It was understood that confirmation of the Town Council's grit requirements had already been sent to SCC by the Deputy Clerk, and this would be checked.

Councillor Barr proposed that the Town Council should purchase an additional supply of grit for use by shopkeepers or other local people, to be stored at the rear of the office.

As in previous years the Committee wished to put on standby Derek Ridgeway, for clearing roads locally should there be significant snowfall. This intention would be notified to the Highway Authority as a courtesy.

Clearance would follow the same approach as in previous years, namely prioritising slopes and hills, or care homes where access was made difficult by snow. A total of £1,000 was available for severe weather operations in the Community Services budget.

Liaison with TDBC Housing Officers based at 28 Fore Street would be maintained during any adverse weather conditions in so their experience and local knowledge could be used to everyone's best advantage.

In order to be winter-ready, it was **RESOLVED** for the following actions to be implemented:-

- (a) subject to the approval of the Highway Authority local contractors be employed by the Town Council to help clear local roads and pavements (see schedule below) that would not be cleared by Somerset Highways. The employment of any such contractors to be dependent upon them agreeing to assist this year, and having adequate insurance which would allow them to clear snow in these areas;
- (b) that an additional supply of grit, 40 X 25kg bags would be ordered in for storage at the rear of the building, to be made available to shopkeepers and local residents to clear their accesses.
- (c) location of the town's grit bins to be reminded to Councillors;

Schedule for clearance

- town centre pavements
- Howard Road at the junction with Brendon Road,
- Church Fields at the junction with Longforth Road,
- North Street Car Park access,
- Wellesley Park at the junction with Ashford Road,
- Rockwell Green, Oaken Ground and the approaches from Westford to the railway bridge.
- Lodge Close
- local care homes
- junction of Priory and Buckwell

3. Other Town Centre Winter-safety Matters

(i) It was considered useful for the office to have a contact list of volunteers around the town who were willing to help out in the case of heavy snow, and which roads they might be able to clear. In previous years there had been a press release asking for volunteers, and this would be repeated, and would include appealing to residents to clear outside their home or to act as good neighbours and help each other out.

(ii) Contingency plans for keeping the Town Council office running during severe weather were also required as none of the current staff were local enough to get to the office if there was heavy snow. The Town Clerk could work from the laptop, which meant that emergency messages could be posted on the website. Councillor Hunt also recommended using facebook to keep residents informed although the Town Clerk advised that the Council's facebook page would not likely be operational at this stage, currently being a work in progress.

Councillor Govier volunteered his services in the case of emergency and Councillor Thorne also felt he would also be able to help as both lived very close to the office. With permission from the landlord the key safe at the rear of the building could be accessed, and the code would be circulated.

(iii) Reference was made to a prior emergency plan drawn up in the event of a town centre catastrophe such as a huge fire or explosion. Recollections concerning the detail of this plan were unclear.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) a business continuity plan would be drawn up with arrangements for the Town Council office to continue in operation in the event of severe weather;
- (b) a list of volunteers would be compiled, with contact details where possible, of those who would be able to assist in the case of an emergency;

4. Snow Warden

In reference to the Offer of SCC to train volunteer snow wardens to represent the town council, no volunteers had come forward from among Councillors. It was agreed to express general interest with SCC with a request for clarification as to the training commitment.

Meeting ended at 7:15 pm