

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES 1st February 2021

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM ON MONDAY 1st February 2021 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J Lloyd (Mayor),
Councillors W Battishill, C Booth, D Bradley, A Govier, J Hunt, M Lithgow, M McGuffie, N Powell-Brace, S Pringle-Kosikowsky, J Thorne, V Stock-Williams (in part)

David Farrow (Town Clerk), Annette Kirk (Deputy Clerk), Alice Kendall (Assistant Clerk)

2 members of the press were in attendance.

Also in attendance for a specific agenda item was Sergeant Daniel Bishop

192 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Mayor opened the meeting.

193 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Councillors M Barr, N Smith, R Henley and N Smith.

194 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Govier, Lithgow and Lloyd, and Stock-Williams declared personal interests as members of Somerset West and Taunton Council.

Councillors Thorne, Govier and Hunt declared personal interests as members of Somerset County Council.

Councillor Booth declared a personal interest in item 8a as a member of the SWT Community Chest panel

Councillor Lloyd declared a personal interest in item 12, relating to payments to MTMIT, being a former customer of MTMIT, the Council's IT consultant.

Councillor Thorne declared a personal interest in item 12 relating to payments to MTMIT, being a personal friend of MTMIT, the Council's IT consultant.

Councillor Govier declared a personal interest in item 12, relating to payments to MTMIT, being a customer of MTMIT, the Council's IT consultant.

Councillor Thorne declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 16 as his daughter and her business partner make use of the Pop up Shop.

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195 MINUTES

RESOLVED approve and formally adopt the minutes of the Planning and Full Council meetings held on 11 January 2021.

196 MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor read a report which is attached to the minutes.

197 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE LOCAL POLICING TEAM

Sergeant Daniel Bishop presented his Police report for the previous month which had been circulated in advance of the meeting and is attached to the minutes. The Mayor thanked Sgt Bishop and his team for all that they were doing particularly in relation to managing potential breaches of lockdown requirements.

In response to a question from Councillor Govier, Sgt Bishop advised that he was unaware of any reports of fraudulent phone calls in the town but asked that Councillor Govier pass him any details outside of the meeting.

Councillor Lithgow asked that Sergeant Bishop pass on the Town Council's congratulations to Rob Brown on his promotion to Sergeant and top thank him for all he had done during his time in the town.

198 CLERK'S REPORT

The report prepared by the Clerk had been previously circulated to Councillors and it was so noted.

199 GRANT APPLICATIONS

(a) Rockwell Green War Memorial Institute Club

The Club applied for a grant of £5,000 for a kitchen refurbishment project. The application and supporting papers were circulated by e-mail in December 2020. Since submitting the documents, the Club have also applied to the Community Chest fund at SWT.

RESOLVED to defer this application to the next meeting and that a representative from the Club to attend the Finance meeting to give further information on the application/project.

200 IN LIEU OF PUBLIC SPEAKING TO RECEIVE ANY REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Clerk advised that no representations had been received.

201 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk advised that no correspondence had been received.

202 TO REVIEW ELECTRONIC DECISIONS MADE BY COUNCILLORS

At a Coronavirus emergency meeting on 19th March, Councillors made several proposals that were subsequently approved by full Council. This included electronic voting for decisions about the Council's affairs. A summary report of electronic

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decisions made since the Council meeting of 7th December was attached to the agenda, with the full voting records available on the Council website.

RESOLVED to note and accept the voting report.

203 COUNCIL ACCOUNTS

To note and approve the December bank reconciliation.

RESOLVED to accept the Bank reconciliation.

204 SECTION 106 MONIES RELATED TO CADES FARM DEVELOPMENT

A letter from the Section 106 and CIL Officer with Somerset West and Taunton had been circulated with the agenda.

204 (a) Community Hall

The Town Clerk advised that he had spoken to the Section 106 and CIL officer who had confirmed that the intention was for the land to be transferred to the Town Council to facilitate the building of a community hall/community facilities. He had also spoken at length to the Chair of the Bishops Hull Hub which was overseeing the development of a community hall in a similar context. The identified funding would only be a contribution to costs and fundraising would be required. It was also clear that the project needed to be community led and that there needed to be significant engagement with the community to determine what was required and to inform the design. To meet the requirements of the S106 agreement a contract must have been let to build the facilities within 5 years of the land being transferred.

Councillor Battishill advised the Council that he had done some preliminary work in seeking views on what was needed and there was no clear consensus at this stage with some residents wanting a shop, some a hall and some not wanting anything. He also updated the Council on residents' concerns around the management of the estate and the need to pay £180 fee to the management company.

Councillor Thorne expressed concern that SWT were passing responsibility to the Town Council for the project when it was better equipped to deliver it.

Councillor Hunt asked that consideration be given to what sport pitch provision could be made as part of the development.

It was agreed that this was an exciting opportunity for the estate and surrounding areas.

RESOLVED to agree in principle to the transfer of the land and associated funding subject to further discussion with SWT regarding timescales for decision making and to allow more comprehensive community engagement. The Town Clerk will liaise with Councillor Battishill about how to take this forward.

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204 (b) Provision of Sports/Playing Pitch Facilities

It was noted that SWT was seeking clarification in relation to how this funding was to be used. It was also noted that it had been reported in the previous weeks Wellington Weekly that the football club was moving forward proposals to relocate a pitch to the Longforth Road estate area and concerns were raised that this had not been discussed more widely.

Councillor Govier advised that he had been discussing this with the football club and the key issue was about trying to resolve the issues caused by the football and cricket clubs sharing the same ground. He also advised that the cricket club had approached him to see if too could access some of the S106 funding to help fund the installation of new nets.

RESOLVED for the Town Clerk to convene a meeting of the Playing Pitch Strategy Group to discuss respective plans and to report back to the Council to enable a response to be sent to the Section 106 CIL Officer.

205 TO REVIEW COUNCIL OPERATIONS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF CORONAVIRUS-RELATED WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

It was noted that the following meeting dates had been agreed by their Committees/groups;

- Staffing & Resources – 27th January 2021 – 2.00pm
- Wellington Network Partnership – 10th February 2021 - 6.30pm
- Allotment Committee Meeting – 15th February 2021 – 6.00pm
- Town Centre Committee – 24th March 2021 – 10.30am
- Environment and Open Spaces Committee – 14th April – 6pm

206 FEEDBACK FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

The Committee met on Tuesday 19 January 2021 and the minutes of the meeting had been circulated previously and were noted. Councillor McGuffie updated the Council on the work of the Committee.

RESOLVED That the Council accept the transfer of the land for the Dormouse Wood as set out by CG Fry in its paper dated 18 January 2021 with a commuted sum of £50,000 being given to the Council for ongoing maintenance and support subject to Heads of Terms being agreed.

207 FEEDBACK FROM THE TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE

The Committee met on Wednesday 20 January and the minutes of the meeting had been circulated previously and were noted. Councillors Lloyd and Lithgow updated the Council on the work of the Committee.

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RESOLVED that the Council agree to amend the application system for Christmas bookings for the last two weeks in November and all weeks in December as follows:

- Applications to be submitted before 31st August.
- Each application will be numbered as received.
- Drawing numbers which are then matched to the application.
- Deposits to be paid within two weeks of allocation to secure booking.
- Bookings to be limited to two weeks in the 6 weeks to Christmas unless applications allow otherwise.

208 FEEDBACK FROM THE STAFFING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Committee met on Wednesday 27 January (not the 25th as detailed on the agenda) and the minutes of the meeting had been circulated previously. Councillor Lloyd updated the Council on work of the Committee.

208 (a) TO CONSIDER THE REPLACEMENT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL PHONE SYSTEM

The Councillor Lloyd and the Town Clerk outlined the reasons for needing to update the Councils phone system.

RESOLVED to agree to purchase a replacement phone system for the Town Council from Taurus Clearer Communications

208 (b) TO CONSIDER EXCLUDING THE PRESS AND PUBLIC TO ALLOW CONSIDERATION OF A CONFIDENTIAL STAFFING MATTER

RESOLVED that under Section 1 Item 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting to allow discussion of confidential staffing matters.

208 (c) PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TOWN COUNCIL STAFFING STRUCTURE

The Town Clerk explained the rationale for proposing a change to the Councils staffing structure based on his paper presented to the Staffing and Resources Committee

RESOLVED that:

1. The post of Assistant Clerk be redesignated to a Deputy Responsible Financial Officer/Assistant Clerk and regraded in accordance with the recommendation from the Somerset Association of Local Councils.
2. The current Assistant Clerk postholder be slotted into this redesignated post and
3. Instead of recruiting a second Assistant Clerk recruit an Administrative assistant/Apprentice at an appropriate time when the office is being utilised.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

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Councillor Janet Lloyd Mayor