

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Wellington Town Centre Committee held on 20th January 2021 via Zoom at 10.30am

Present: Councillors M Lithgow (Chair), J Lloyd, M McGuffie, J Thorne. S Pringle-Kosikowsky,
Richard Coupe, Sharon Davis, Keith Wheatley. Donna Musson
Annette Kirk – Deputy Town Clerk
Dave Farrow – Town Clerk
Alice Kendall – Assistant Clerk

1. Apologies

None received.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Thorne – Personal Interest in Agenda Item 3: Election of non-council member Donna Munson, Rule 7 Bistro – regular customer and friend.

Prejudicial Interest in Agenda Item 6: Pop Up Shop – Christmas booking recommendation as his daughter is a user of the Shop at this time of year.

Councillor Lloyd – Personal Interest in Agenda Item 3. Election of non-council member Donna Munson, Rule 7 Bistro – regular customer and friend

3. CO-OPTION OF NON-COUNCIL MEMBERS TO THE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED to co-opt Donna Musson to the Committee

4. IN LIEU OF PUBLIC SPEAKING TO RECEIVE ANY REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF PUBLIC

No written representations had been received.

5. WELLINGTON FOOTFALL COUNTER

- The Footfall Counter is positioned on the lamp post at the entrance to Squirrel Court
- Somerset West & Taunton District Council will pay for the first year of monitoring. Wellington Town Council to meet the cost of £75 per annum thereafter.
- Footfall Counter covers Fore Street, both sides of the street up to the Iron Duke
- Footfall Counter figures given by all towns at SWT's Opening of the High Street weekly meeting

6. POP UP SHOP

- An update report was circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting. The Assistant Clerk gave a report that due to Covid-19 lockdown, the next booking will be third week of February 2021 subject to current Lockdown Restrictions being lifted.
- Proposal for a fairer “application system” for Christmas Bookings for the last two weeks in November and all weeks in December:
 - 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 bookings.
 - Bookings to be limited to two weeks in the 6 weeks to Christmas unless applications allow otherwise.

RECOMMENDATION: To amend the “application system” for Christmas Bookings for the last two weeks in November and all weeks in December:

7. RETAIL PREMISES

- Notes from KW were circulated to the committee prior to the meeting
- KW gave a report on the idea of establishing a co-working space in one of the town centre’s empty retail premises.
- KW suggested that the TCEHF (Town Centre Emergency High Street Fund) to support the pilot scheme
- Further work to be done on finding suitable premises. Suggested premises: Tui Shop, Shaul’s Bakery and Barclays
- Mark Wathen Economic Development SWT to find funding to support a feasibility study for the initiative
- Concerns were raised over how this was going to be managed, including: security, cleaning, running costs etc.,

RESOLVED: For the Committee to continue discussions with Mark Wathen, Economic Development, SWT to fund and complete the feasibility study on the need/demand for a co-working space in the town

8. PROMOTIONAL SPACE/STREET TRADING CONSENTS

- Email circulated from John Rendell Specialist – Licensing, Somerset West and Taunton Council re: Changes to Street Trading Consents was noted by the Committee

- The Deputy Clerk informed the Committee that she had a conversation with Steve Deakin, Parking Manager, Somerset County Council regarding the Council taking over the full management/control of the parking layby in front of the old post office. He recognised that this needed to be addressed following the amount of enquiries for the area leading up to Christmas. He said there was no policy in place and he would speak to colleagues and come back to us.

RESOLVED: That Council Officers to continue negotiations with Steve Deakin, Somerset County Council to take over the management of the parking layby in front of the old Post Office.

- Eat Festival Application received to hire the Promotional Space on 4th September 2021

RESOLVED: To accept the Eat Festival Application to use the Promotional Space Area on 4th September 2021

9. FARMERS MARKET

- Councillor Lithgow updated Committee regarding the Farmers Market's current licence and confirmed that since being granted their new licence, they were already in breach of the licence conditions, It was seen recently they had 4 stalls in the area in front of the Co-op not 3 stalls as agreed in the licence. Councillor Lithgow had reported this to SWT Licencing
- The Deputy Clerk informed the committee that an email had been sent to Parking at SWT, looking at relocating the market to North Street or South Street Car Parks. We await a reply
- The general feeling was that the Parking area at the Fore Street end of North Street Car Park was a good location, as access to the North Street Car Park could be from the North Street end.
- Councillor Lithgow also reported that an organisation called Somerset Farmers Markets were keen to come into Wellington and they would be approaching the current Licence Holder. We should wait to see if its viable for Somerset Farmers Markets to set up in Wellington
- The Committee agreed we did not need to buy two Gazebos
- The Committee agreed to hold off discussions about owning market stalls until we receive further news on the Farmers Market development/growth.

10. FILMS

- Councillor McGuffie felt we need to revisit this idea, as further work needed to be done to see where, and how we can hold filming events in the town/Wellington Park

11. TO RECEIVE FEEDBACK FROM SWT ON THE INDICATIVE PLAN FOR THE TCEF

- Councillor Lloyd led the report following further meetings/negotiations with Lisa Redston SWT :
 - Wellington Town Council had submitted their first 8 weekly report. Councillor Lloyd thanked the Deputy Clerk for her efforts in putting the Project Report together.
 - Lisa Redston SWT is encouraging all local towns to come together to have an informal chat, sharing ideas on what they are doing to get their High Street back on its feet. William Collier to send invites out to attend.
- The Street Entertainers Events in December 2020 were very well received from Wellington Residents and the entertainers could be considered for future events
- The Introtweet Social Media Results Report were circulated to Committee Members for information
- Other Ideas for TCEF – “Living Roof” on Bus Shelters: Councillor Lithgow said the bus shelters are in such poor condition and they would need refurbishing/replacement. It is on his radar and is well aware of the work that is needed on the Bus Shelters. Hold fire on this idea.
- The Deputy Clerk was asked to progress the fingerpost signs. The committee agreed on the Black & Gold Heritage Design, they would like to see town crest on top.
- The Committee reviewed the Living Walls Project Proposal from Oasis. In general, it was felt that the idea of having them on the railings at top of High Street (Costa End) was a good one. A few concerns were raised, were they replaceable, ongoing maintenance etc. The Deputy Clerk to confirm costs and further railings we could use.
- DM asked that local contractors could be approached to tender for the living railings. The Deputy Clerk said now the committee have seen Oasis Proposal and like the idea, we can approach local companies to tender.
- The Committee agreed that Longforth Toilet did not need any further plants, as they have bedding plants troughs put up and maintained annually.

12. RESIDENTS SURVEY

- **To consider undertaking a survey of residents on the future of and activities in the Town Centre to inform the development of a Town Centre Vision and Strategy and the delivery of activities for the coming year:**
 - This was received as a good idea, as it was felt the public would feel more engaged with the Council with what was going on. This in turn would bring positive feedback
 - The Town Clerk said there was various ways of doing this e.g. Social media, newspaper, website
 - Town Clerk reported that we had started looking into how we would create the survey with MT-MIT and how we can best capture feedback from Wellington Residents.

RESOLVED: That the Council’s Officers continued with the work creating the survey

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Wednesday 24th March 2021 at 10.30am.

The meeting ended at approx. 11.50am