

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES 1st March 2021

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

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

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

3 members of the press were in attendance.

1 member of the public was in attendance.

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

221 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Mayor opened the meeting.

222 APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

223 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Barr, Booth, Govier, Henley, Lithgow, 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

224 MINUTES

RESOLVED approve and formally adopt the minutes of the Planning and Full Council meetings held on 1 February 2021.

225 MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor read a report which is attached to the minutes. As part of that, Councillors were advised that a special meeting of the Council will be arranged for the 15 March to consider the Council's response to the Unitary Authority Consultation that had recently been published

226 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.

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The Mayor thanked Sergeant Bishop for his report and for all that his team were doing for the Town. She agreed that not having a Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) would not be an issue for the Town given the other powers that the police had to address anti-social behaviour. In response to a question about the 'threat to kill' report Sergeant Bishop advised that it had been investigated and no action had been taken.

Councillor Lithgow welcomed the appointment of PC Sarah Norman. He also welcomed the reported work being done in relation to drugs offences in particular the use of Youth Alcohol Drug Diversion schemes (YADD) alongside formal criminal processes.

Councillor Thorne asked what the situation was in relation to the use of Community Speed Watch Groups. Sergeant Bishop reported that these had had to be suspended during COVID but would be reinstated as soon as it was possible to do so. In the meantime, the PCSOs would continue to undertake speed checks. Sergeant Bishop also confirmed that mobile speed cameras could be used in areas where there were no speed camera warning signs.

The Mayor thanked Sergeant Bishop for his attendance, and he left the meeting.

227 CLERK'S REPORT

The report prepared by the Clerk had been previously circulated with the agenda. The Clerk provided further information as follows:

Paragraph 2 Coronavirus Impacts – as the new budget management system is being introduced some changes are being made to coding of expenditure. As a result, the spend against the COVID budget is currently £5,778.88 not £4,953.88 as reported.

Paragraph 9 Relocation of the Pyramidion – The Clerk reported that information had been received from Somerset Highways and The National Trust that afternoon. He would be reconvening a meeting of the Pyramidion Group to consider it.

Paragraph 11 The Possible Return of Face-to-Face meetings – In response to a question from Councillor McGuffie who raised concerns about the possible return to face-to-face meetings the Deputy RFO/Assistant Clerk advised that the Annual Meeting had to be held in the first two weeks of May and could not be held in April. Councillor McGuffie asked if in that case it could be held later in the week commencing the 3 May? The Clerk advised that there would be a report to the April meeting of the Council setting out the position and what the options were for the May meeting.

Paragraph 12 – The Basins – The Clerk reported that following the meeting on the 23 February there was agreement that a wider group should be convened to include the Basins Group, The Wellington Mills CiC, Transition Town Wellington and the Heritage Officer from Somerset West and Taunton to look at the purchase of the land

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held by The Crown Estate in the wider context of creating a green corridor from The Mill to Rockwell Green and also the links with the Tonedale Mill. The maps showing the land currently owned by The Crown Estate are attached to the minutes.

Paragraph 14 – Playing Pitch Strategy – Councillor Thorne expressed concern that this item should have been a separate report as it contained a recommendation. He also expressed concerns at the actions of the football club in seeming to have broken away from the broader playing pitch strategy approach that was being taken. In response, Councillor Govier said that he had encouraged the football club to look at the option of moving to Longforth Farm as it was clear from the plans that sports pitches were to be provided and he was aware of the difficulties the football and cricket clubs experienced having to share a ground.

Paragraph 15 – Protocol in the Event of the Death of a Senior Public Figure – The Clerk reported that since circulating his report he had had discussions with the Revd Tim Treanor and would draft and circulate a protocol to councillors as soon as possible. It would be an item for agreement on the next meeting of the Council.

Paragraph 16 – Cades Farm Community Hall – The Clerk reported that 11 people had now come forward as volunteers to be part of the Management Group and that an initial meeting had been arranged for Monday 8th March which would be joined by the Chair of the Bishops Hull Hub and a representative of the Community Council for Somerset. Concern was expressed about the negative comments on social media in relation to the community hall project, but Councillors were pleased that a group had come forward to take a lead on this. Councillor Stock-Williams reminded councillors that the inclusion of a community hall in the Section 106 Agreement came about following a public consultation exercise.

Councillors noted the content of the report and **RESOLVED** to support the cricket club's application for Section 106 Funding as a contribution towards the costs of installing new nets.

228 GRANT APPLICATIONS

(a) Rockwell Green War Memorial Institute Club

The Club has applied for a grant of £5,000 for a kitchen refurbishment project. The application and supporting papers were circulated by e-mail in advance of the meeting. Since submitting the documents, the Club have also applied to the Community Chest fund at SWT. As requested at previous meetings, further information has also been circulated by email.

The Mayor suspended standing orders to allow a representative from the Club answer questions from Councillors. Standing orders were re-instated.

RESOLVED to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee that a grant of £3,000 be awarded.

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

The Clerk advised that no representations had been received.

230 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk advised that no correspondence had been received.

231 TO REVIEW ELECTRONIC DECISIONS MADE BY COUNCILLORS

At a Coronavirus emergency meeting on 19th March 2020, 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 decisions made since the Council meeting of 1 February was attached to the agenda, with the full voting records available on the Council website.

RESOLVED to note and accept the voting report.

232 COUNCIL ACCOUNTS

To note and approve the December bank reconciliation.

RESOLVED to accept the Bank reconciliation.

233 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;

- Wellington Network Partnership – 17th March 2021 - 6.30pm
- Town Centre Committee – 24th March 2021 – 10.30am
- Staffing and Resources Committee – 24 March 2021 – 2.30pm
- Environment & Open Spaces – 14th April 2021 – 6pm
- Allotments – 24th May 2021 – 6pm

234 FEEDBACK FROM THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

The Mayor provided an update following the meeting of the Allotments Committee on the 15 February. She reported that good progress had been made by the tenants of Plot 93 to reinstate it to its former condition following unauthorised building work.

In relation to the Longforth Farm Allotments the Mayor reported that Helen Gillingham, Transition Town Wellington, and her husband had visited the site and had conformed that the soil was suitable for allotments. In response to a question from Councillor Lithgow The Mayor advised that mains water would not be provided because of cost but that when there is a meeting with Bloor Homes, they will be asked to provide 6'x4' sheds and water butts for each allotment.

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235 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

The Finance Committee had previously considered a paper with details and quotations for the appointment of a new internal auditor.

RESOLVED to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee that Kevin Rose of IAC be appointed as Internal Auditor on a 3 year basis.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

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Councillor Janet Lloyd Mayor