

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Wellington Town Centre Committee held at Court Fields School Hall, Mantle Street, Wellington TA21 8SW on Monday 12th July 2021 at 5pm

Present: Councillors M Lithgow (Chair), J Lloyd, M McGuffie, J. Thorne, V Stock-Williams, M Barr
Richard Coupe
Annette Kirk – Deputy Town Clerk
Dave Farrow – Town Clerk

133 APOLOGIES

Keith Wheatley and Donna Munson

134 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Thorne – Prejudicial Interest in Agenda Item 4: Pop Up Shop

135 WELLINGTON FOOTFALL COUNTER

Councillor Lloyd gave an update:

- Footfall reports are showing a weekly increase of around 1%. Monthly reports for April and May saw an increase in footfall following the easing of Covid Restrictions. June showed a small decrease but now averaging out as people are more confident to venture out.
- Deputy Clerk to meet Proximity Future shortly (Elephant Wifi) to establish the locations for the two new footfall sensors.

136 POP UP SHOP

- Pop Up Shop update was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting.
- Lease Renewal
 - Committee agreed that the new lease be for a length of 5 years with a 2 year break clause should either side wish to give notice. Wait draft lease. Both parties to meet their own legal costs.

RECOMMENDATION: Committee agreed that the new Pop Up Shop Lease would be for a term five years with a 2 year break clause subject to seeing and agreeing the draft lease. Both parties to meet their own legal costs.

- Christmas Bookings – (Councillor Thorne withdrew from the meeting at this point).
- Email correspondence received from The Handmade Pop Up Shop and circulated to the Committee prior to meeting:
 - The Committee noted the previous decision that had been taken by the Council in relation to Christmas bookings and agreed that the Council must be seen to be fair to all businesses who wish to book the Pop Up Shop. It was

agreed as the Council has received applications covering the six weeks leading up to Christmas that the Committee would not consider changing the resolution to accept the Booking Policy of Max. 2 weeks in Nov/Dec.

137 RETAIL PREMISES – Co Working Space

Councillor Lithgow (Chair) gave an update:

- No further progress – will continue to source suitable premises
- “Costa” Coffee Premises – it was felt the rent was too high.
- Recent visit to Foxton’s Estate Agents Office, High Street – second and third floor again in poor state of repair.

138 FARMERS MARKET

Councillor Lithgow (Chair) gave an update

- Town Clerk confirmed that the Wellington Farmers Market will start again on Saturday 17th July 2021 outside the Co-op.
- Deputy Clerk provide an update on Somerset Farmers Market – Hannah Palmer of Somerset Farmers Market had met with Councillor Lithgow and John Rendall, Licensing, Somerset West & Taunton District Council in preparation for a Licensing Application which will be processed when they have the likely outcome of the road closure. Rob Powell of Somerset West & Taunton District Council had confirmed that unfortunately due to road works in the area July is not going to be possible. They are hopeful for August.

139 SEPTEMBER COMMUNITY EVENT

Councillor Lloyd and Deputy Clerk gave an update.

- Concerns were raised over the running of the “Street Fair” after a number of Zoom meetings with the Carnival Committee. The event must go ahead and wait on the outcome of the Carnival Committee’s meeting of 13th July 2021.
- Town Clerk suggested a larger working group is created to facilitate the event management to include the Secretary of the Carnival Committee.
- RC said to make this event go ahead we need to get volunteers to support the event
- Sunday 26th September 2021 – “Proms in the Park”
- The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting 23rd June 2021 were circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting for information

140 TOWN CENTRE EMERGENCY HIGH STREET AND WELCOME BACK FUNDS

Councillor Lloyd and Deputy Clerk gave an update.

- Project Management Report upto 30th June 2021 was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting:
 - Town Centre Surveys – On Line Survey and Business Survey completed. see item 9. On the minutes
 - Somerset Farmers Market – see item no. 32 above.
 - Corner of South Street & Fore Street – Environmental and Open Spaces Committee and Town Centre Committee to agree what they require in this area. We have received quotation for a curved bench and planters.
 - Licence application been submitted to renew the existing cycle hoops outside the Co-op Supermarket and for 5 new ones outside Stags Estate Agents in White Hart Lane.
 - Town Centre Notice Boards – on going Carly Press to provide proof for Town Centre Plan
 - Town Centre Fingerposts – Planning Application submitted but this was sent back as further information was required. Deputy Clerk to complete
 - Digital signage – if we require this on our bus stops, then it has been recommended that if we intend to renew our bus stops we do this as one project. Quotations to be sought for standalone digital signage.
- Councillor Lloyd gave an update on Welcome Back fund:
 - Wellington Town Council had been allocated £36,660 to cover projects. Councillors Lloyd and Lithgow to attend a zoom meeting on Wednesday 14th July 2021 at 2.30pm held by Economic Development, Somerset West & Taunton District Council to outline the process of delivering the projects
 - The Economic Development Team looking at the possibility of joint procurement for Benches as there have been a number of requests from other Town/Parish Councils. Wellington Town Council to provide Somerset West & Taunton District Council with details of how many benches/picnic benches they require.
 - It was suggested that £2,000 of the Council's Street Furniture Budget is added to the £5,000 allocated under the Welcome Back Fund

141 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:**
- Oxygen Agency, Tiverton – online survey from 1st June 2021 to 30th June 2021
 - The Committee felt overall it was a good response from residents with nearly 900 responses. It was a worthwhile exercise which tells the public the Town Council value their opinions, although there were some concerns about the quality of the survey and the analysis.
 - The Committee were disappointed with the analysis from Oxygen Agency and asked could Oxygen Agency extract more data from the comments received.

- It was agreed that a press release is put in the paper to thank the public and provide detail of what projects we are currently working on and what from comments received we can look at putting in place in the future if resources allow
- Enterprise South West (ESW) – Alan Smith Business Advisor visited town centre businesses week commencing 13th June 2021. Alan’s report was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting. Alan Smith joined the meeting at 6pm to give a general overview of the feeling from business owners:
 - Hospitality business booming but they are struggling to get staff
 - Perceived poor communication/engagement between businesses and the Town Council and Somerset West & Taunton District Council.
 - Loyalty Scheme – most retailers had their own schemes, so unless every retailer participated, it would not work
 - Alan Smith felt the Town had a massive potential for quality artisan shops
 - Free Parking Day had been suggested– e.g. once a month
 - More Street Events/Fairs – to attract more people from outside the area
 - Business Owners disappointed having not been consulted with regards to the Shop Appy scheme. Generally it was felt there was no need for this scheme in Wellington
 - Somerset West & Taunton District Council have a online Business Newsletter that Town Centre Businesses can sign up to.
 - To encourage more Town Centre Businesses to send posts in, for coverage on the Town Council Facebook Page etc.,
 - It was suggested that the Town Centre Committee invite Town Centre Business Owners to come along to Committee Meetings once or twice a year to enable them to raise any concerns they may have.

142 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 8th September 2021 at 10am - to be confirmed.

The meeting ended at approx. 6.45pm

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 Councillor Mark Lithgow
 Chairman