

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES 1 NOVEMBER 2021

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT COURT FIELDS SCHOOL HALL, WELLINGTON TA21 8SW ON MONDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2021 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Lithgow (Mayor),
Councillors M Barr, C Booth, A Govier, J Hunt, J Lloyd, M McGuffie, S Pringle-Kosikowsky, J Thorne, V Stock-Williams

David Farrow (Town Clerk), Annette Kirk (Deputy Clerk), Alice Kendall (Deputy RFO & Assistant Clerk), Rebecca Hunt (Admin Assistant).

One member of the press was in attendance.

322 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Mayor opened the meeting.

323 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Bradley and Powell-Brace. Councillor Smith submitted apologies by email prior to the meeting starting but this had not been seen by the Town Clerk and so was not reported.

Councillors W Battishill and R Henley were absent.

324 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

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

325 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve and formally adopt the minutes of the Planning and Full Council meetings held on 4 October 2021.

326 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No public representation had been received.

327 REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor had circulated details of his engagements since the previous meeting in advance of the meeting following a visit to Isambard Kingdom Brunel School that afternoon.

328 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk's report had been circulated with the agenda. An updated copy of the Council Work Plan was tabled at the meeting. In addition to the tabled report the Town Clerk reported that:
(i) He and councillors had been notified that the SWT Levelling Up Bid which was to have been used to fund improvements to Tone Dale Mill and the purchase of land had been unsuccessful.

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES 1 NOVEMBER 2021

He would be having discussions with SWT officers and other partners to consider how to move this forward.

(ii) In the Chancellor's Budget funding had been provided to enable the railway station project to proceed. He would be holding discussions with SWT officers to ensure the Town Council was fully engaged with the process.

(iii) The Councils Interim Audit had taken place three weeks ago and was very positive. He thanked the Deputy RFO for her work in preparing for it and working with the auditor on the day

(iv) There was still no announcement from the Government as to whether local council elections in Somerset would be brought forward to May 2022. It had been expected by the end of October.

The Council noted the content of the report.

329 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE LOCAL POLICING TEAM

Sergeant Bishop's report had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was noted.

330 POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 14 OCTOBER 2021

The draft minutes of the meeting and supporting papers had been circulated with the agenda and The Mayor provided an update. The content was noted and the following resolutions made:

(a) Longforth Road Toilets Remodelling

RESOLVED that the Longforth Road Toilet block should be redesigned to have three cubicles and a Changing Places facility recognising that this would leave insufficient space for a retail/office space in the block.

(b) Proposed Lease for Additional Council Office

RESOLVED that the revised terms of the lease relating to the addition of the former Housing Office be accepted.

(c) Staffing Update

RESOLVED that the staffing complement should be increased to 7 FTE over time and that the Town Clerk be given flexibility for determining how that should be used recognising that any increase should be incremental based on an assessment of workload. The Town Clerk to consider how this should be reflected in the budget setting process.

(d) To Consider a Proposal to Establish a Wellington Schools Children's Parliament Event in June 2022.

RESOLVED that a Wellington Schools Children's Parliament should be established and that a sum of money should be set aside to implement the winning ideas. The Town Clerk to make a separate proposal in relation to the amount as part of the budget setting process.

331 ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE MEETING 20 OCTOBER 2021

The draft minutes of the meeting had been circulated with the agenda. Councillor McGuffie provided an update which was noted.

332 EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE 21 OCTOBER 2021

The draft minutes of the meeting had been circulated with the agenda and were noted.

The Council **RESOLVED** to change the current Town Centre Committee Terms of Reference to enable the Town Centre Committee to have the powers to act as the Council's delegated body for the receipt of and spend against the Government's Welcome Back Fund award for Wellington Town Council of £36,660.00. In doing so to manage the fund in line with associated regulations, terms of acceptance or guidance relating to the funds given and to carry out all required administration in respect of the award.

333 GRANTS

(a) Applications

- i. **Wellington Cricket Club – RESOLVED** to approve the application from Wellington Cricket Club for the amount of £876 for their annual indoor youth coaching sessions. The Application and supporting documents had been circulated to Councillors by e-mail.

- ii. **Skintight Samba – RESOLVED** to approve the application from Skintight Samba seeking £1,040 to fund church hall hire and teaching fees for beginners' sessions. The Application and supporting documents had been circulated to Councillors by e-mail.

(b) Review of policy and application form

Several comments were made on the proposed Grants Policy. It was agreed that the Deputy RFO and Town Clerk would bring a revised draft back to the December meeting for approval.

334 CHRISTMAS OFFICE ARRANGEMENTS

RESOLVED that the Town Council Offices would close from 23 December 2021 and re-open on 4 January 2022. Time off for the staff to be covered by a combination of bank holidays, statutory days, annual leave and/or time off in lieu in agreement with the Town Clerk.

It was also **RESOLVED** that future decisions around office closure at Christmas should be delegated to the Town Clerk and reported to the Town Council for information at its November meeting.

335 ADDITIONAL CHRISTMAS LIGHTING

RESOLVED not to agree to the installation of additional Christmas Lighting at Joseph Welch Jewellers for this year and that instead it should be considered in the context of an overall review of Christmas lighting in the town when the current contract is reviewed.

336 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude members of the press and public for agenda item 16 in accordance with Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES 1 NOVEMBER 2021

337 CONFIDENTIAL ITEM - PURCHASE OF LAND AT WESTFORD

RESOLVED to authorise the Town Clerk to proceed with the process of purchasing land at Westford and to authorise payments of the amounts stated below at the appropriate time as required by the purchase process. It was noted that Councillors Lithgow and Stock-Williams will sign documents on behalf of the Town Council. The agreed amounts are:

Purchase Price - £55,0000

Abortive Auction Costs - £2,400

Contribution to the seller's legal costs of up to £1,500 on production of evidence of costs incurred.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20pm.

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Councillor Mark Lithgow
Mayor

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