

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES 6 JUNE 2022

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WELLINGTON ON MONDAY 6 JUNE 2022 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Lithgow (Mayor)

Councillors M Barr, Z Barr, W Battishill, S Booker, C Booth, K Canham, A. Govier, C. Govier, R Henley, J Lloyd, M McGuffie, J Thorne, N Powell-Brace, K Wheatley

David Farrow (Town Clerk), Annette Kirk (Deputy Town Clerk), Alice Kendall (Deputy Responsible Financial Officer), and Rebecca Hunt (Administrative Assistant)

Two members of the public were present.

61. TO OFFER WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all those present.

62. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO APPROVE THE REASONS GIVEN

All councillors were present.

63. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made in addition to the standing interests listed at the end of these minutes.

64. MINUTES

Councillor Thorne questioned the accuracy of the Annual Meeting minutes in relation to items 7.2 (d) and (f). He considered that the Council had resolved that an increase in the number of members of the Policy and Resources and Town Centre Committees should be considered by each committee when they reviewed their Terms of Reference. The Clerk stated that he was content that the minutes accurately reflected what was resolved at the Annual Meeting. After some discussion it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting and Planning Meeting held on the 16 May 2022 as written.

65. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Two representatives of the Wellington Action Group for Dogs spoke asking the Council to consider using additional powers to deal with dog walkers who did not carry bags with them to dispose of faeces. The Clerk will invite them to a future meeting of the Environment and Open Spaces Committee to discuss this.

66. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE LOCAL POLICING TEAM

Sergeant Dan Bishop was unable to attend the meeting. His report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Councillor Thorne raised a concern that not enough had been done to reassure the community following an alleged arm robbery at a local petrol station. The Clerk will raise this with Sergeant Bishop.

67. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

Details of the Mayor's engagements since the Annual Meeting had been circulated by e-mail before the meeting. In response to concerns raised by Councillor M Barr the Mayor explained that he circulated his report late to ensure that all engagements were included and that he would continue to do this.

68. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT ON RECENT COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

The Clerk reported on the great success of the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations and paid tribute to the hard work and commitment of the Council staff that had made it such a success. The Mayor added

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his thanks and also thanked those councillors who had supported on the day in particular Councillor M Barr who had put up and taken down the street bunting at the beginning and end of the day.

In response to a question from Councillor Powell-Brace the Clerk explained that the bunting could not have gone up across the streets before Saturday morning because of the clearance required for buses and large lorries to get through.

The remainder of the Clerks report was noted.

69. INTERNAL AUDIT AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2021-22

(a) Internal Auditor's Report

RESOLVED to note and approve the Internal Auditors Report.

(b) Summary of Funds Report

RESOLVED to note the report which provided background and breakdowns of how the figures on the AGAR had been calculated.

(c) Statement of Internal Control

RESOLVED to approve the Statement of Internal Control.

(d) Risk Management

RESOLVED to approve the Risk Management Scheme.

(e) Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

i. Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

RESOLVED to answer 'Yes' to the AGAR Section 1 Statements for the year to 31 March 2021 for sign off by the Chairman and Clerk.

ii. Section 2 - Annual Accounting Statements 2020/21

RESOLVED to approve the Accounting Statement section of the AGAR and give the required confirmation that the Accounting Statements have been accepted by Members as true and accurate.

(f) To review and confirm the dates for the exercise of Elector's rights as attached

RESOLVED to confirm the dates for the exercise of Elector's rights as attached to the agenda.

70. WELLINGTON TO TAUNTON CYCLE ROUTE

Charles Biscoe, a member of Wellington Wheelers and the Wellington to Taunton Cycle Path Group gave a presentation on the current position of the project. A copy of his presentation was circulated to councillors after the meeting.

Councillor Thorne stated that he felt that the north side of the A38 still presented the better option for the route.

Councillor McGuffie questioned whether the potential cost would be better spent on other projects to contribute to carbon neutrality.

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71. REVIEW OF COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES

RESOLVED not to seek to recover any amounts previously paid to non-elected (co-opted) members in previous financial years.

It was also **RESOLVED** that

- (a) Councillor allowances remain at £280 for 22-23, and
- (b) a general review of the allowances be carried out by the Policy and Resources committee in preparation for the setting of the 23-24 budget.

72. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 MAY 2022

The draft minutes were attached to the agenda and Councillor Lithgow gave an update.

It was **RESOLVED** that the revised Terms of Reference as circulated with the agenda including managing the additional Town Centre Fund of £25,000 be adopted

73. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 MAY 2022

The draft minutes were attached to the agenda and Councillor McGuffie provided an update. It was **RESOLVED**:

- (a) that the revised Terms of Reference as circulated with the agenda are adopted with the addition of 'and associated action plans' in the first bullet point of the Summary of Responsibilities.
- (b) that work is authorised to the trees sited in the Tonedale Play Area as set out in the report provided by Arboricare Ltd at a cost of £2,310.
- (c) that the Town Council confirms that it supports Wellington Community Food's proposal to run a trial growing project on land that is part of the area being purchased by Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) prior to being leased to the Town Council and which has been identified as the potential location for the Community Farm. This is on the understanding that the final decision will rest with the current landowners and SWT, as the purchase and lease have not been completed yet, and on the proviso that Wellington Community Food agree to returning the land to its current condition should the trial not be successful or the Town Council, in consultation with other groups, determine that the site is not suitable for a community farm to be located.

74. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2022/23

A proposed calendar of meetings for 2022/23 had been circulated with the agenda. The Clerk explained that in drafting it council staff had taken into account feedback from the Annual Meeting and had also taken the opportunity to move the Finance Committee meetings to enable it to report in to full Council meetings in the same way as other committees. It was noted that timings of meetings could be adapted depending on the agenda for the meeting.

After some discussion it was **RESOLVED** to agree the draft calendar of meetings.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of Somerset County Council:

Councillor Andrew Govier

Councillor Marcus Barr

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Councillor Ross Henley

Members of Somerset West and Taunton Council:

- Councillor Janet Lloyd
- Councillor Andrew Govier
- Councillor Mark Lithgow
- Councillor Ross Henley
- Councillor Marcus Barr
- Councillor Chris Booth
- Councillor Keith Wheatley

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Councillor Mark Lithgow
Mayor