

**WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL ON WEDNESDAY 25 MAY 2022 AT 4.00 PM**

**Present:** Councillors M McGuffie, M Barr, C Booth, C Govier, M Lithgow and J Lloyd.  
**In attendance:** Councillor A Govier  
David Farrow, Town Clerk  
Steve Saunders, PPLO

**35 TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR**

Councillor McGuffie was elected as Chair

**36 TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR**

The Committee determined not to elect a Vice Chairman. If the Chairman is unable to attend a meeting another member of the Committee will be elected as Chair for that meeting in accordance with the Committees terms of Reference.

**37 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Canham.

**38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

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

No representations had been received.

**40 REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE**

A draft set of Terms of Reference had been circulated with the agenda with proposed changes highlighted. The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend the acceptance of the revised Terms of Reference to the Town Council at its next meeting.

**41 TONEDALE PLAY AREA**

**(a) Refurbishment Update**

The Town Clerk reported that 10 bids had been received and they will be opened as advertised on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May at 4pm by the Clerk, Mayor, Committee Chairman and the Deputy RFO. They will then be shortlisted and referred to a special Committee meeting on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June at 2.30pm. Presentations will be invited from those shortlisted.

**(b) Tree Report/Works**

The trees in the play area have been inspected by a tree surgeon as it has been several years since they have been tended to. Some are overgrowing neighbouring properties and some complaints have been received. The report containing recommendations for works and quotations had been

circulated with the agenda. The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend approval of the quotation to The Town Council.

**42 UPDATE ON FOOTPATHS/RIGHTS OF WAY**

Steve Saunders, PPRO, gave an update and a copy of his report is attached to the minutes for information. Concern was raised in relation to the length of grass in Westford Field. Steve Saunders had agreed to investigate and report back to the Town Clerk. In response to a question from Councillor Lithgow, Councillor A Govier agreed to find out what the position was with the closure of the pedestrian crossing in the Longforth Farm development.

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the Council would continue to pay for the hosting of the Welly Walking website at a cost of £83.88 per year.

**43 LAND AT WESTFORD**

**(a) Tree Works**

An inspection of the mature sequoia and oak trees were carried out. Works to remove deadwood and reduce two over extended laterals are required to the sequoia at a cost of £880.00. The oak requires no work. The report had been circulated with the agenda. Under its current Terms of Reference, the Committee can agree expenditure of up to £1,000 per item. The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve this work

**44 COMMUNITY FARM**

A paper from Wellington Community Food had been circulated with the agenda.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Town Council 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, 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. This will be on the proviso that Wellington Community Food agree to return 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 a suitable location for a community farm.

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**Councillor Michael McGuffie**  
**Chairman**

## PPLO Report to Wellington Town Council 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022

I have been the Parish Path Liaison Officer (PPLO) for Wellington for a year now following the departure of Tom Borg. I feel that I am getting to understand the role better now after the handover under Covid restrictions. This has been mainly due to the help provided by the Town Council and the existing volunteers Annette Kirk, Jackie Marsh, and Rick Szur.

There are 40 footpaths and bridleways in Wellington of which 4 of are currently closed. Three of these are long term closures WG17/17, WG17/34 and WG17/36. All three cross the railway line and seem likely to be closed indefinitely. There is also a temporary closure for an initial 3 months of WG17/12 from the Basins to Linden Hill for Network Rail to replace/maintain the stones between the sleepers. While not actually on a footpath, but between two, there has been a sewage leak in a field between the Basins and Rockwell Green.

Spring sees a change in the type of problems found from the winter mud to overgrown vegetation. May sees the start of Somerset County Councils cutting regime. SCC clear most of the longer rural paths using contractors or volunteers. The paths are classified as needing 1,2 or 3 cuts per year. The urban paths tend to be maintained by volunteers or be adopted by local residents or people with an interest in the path.

The volunteer team and I have inspected all of the paths during the past 2 months. Some will need revisiting soon. Any issues reported recently have been to do with excess or overhanging vegetation and have been cleared fairly promptly. Help has been provided by Swains Lane Volunteers, the Basins Volunteer Group and Wellington School.

One issue that has been noted more and more frequently is the degradation of wooden posts, fences and bridges. These obviously have a limited lifetime and a lot seem to be coming to the end of their lives. I am not sure who is responsible for these structures but will try and find out.

SCC are in the process of introducing a new application called Assemble which is meant to make reporting of issues, logging volunteer hours and communications between teams easier and more efficient.

**Total volunteer hours this year = 20 hours.**

### Table of issues investigated and the action taken

Issue/ Action	Raised	Path	Description
#66089	21/02/2022	WG17/16	Overhanging tree
Checked issue which had been fixed			
#65968	01/03/2022	WG17/16	Fallen trees reported
Checked issue which had been fixed			
#66154	07/03/2022	WG17/30	Overhanging tree
Checked issue which had been fixed			
#66673	12/04/2022	WG17/16	Fallen tree
Checked issue which had been fixed			
N/A	18/05/2022	WG17/5	Members of public reported overgrown path
I trimmed the path and cleared the path. Subsequently Wellington School have cleared further areas.			

Steve Saunders, PPL