

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD AT THE UNITED REFORM CURCH HALL 11 AUGUST 2021

Present: Councillors Lithgow (Chair), Govier, Lloyd and Thorne
David Farrow – Town Clerk

171 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Stock-Williams, who was on holiday, and Hunt, for personal reasons

172 Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

173 Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 5 May.

174 Questions and Comments from Members of the Public

None had been received.

175 Local Government Reorganisation in Somerset

The Committee discussed the recent decision of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government that there should be a single unitary authority in Somerset. It was noted that the 'One Somerset' brand was no longer being used instead it was being referred to as The New Somerset Council.

Councillor Thorne reported that a review of ward boundaries for the new authority was being undertaken by officers of Somerset County Council which would be completed by October. There will be fewer councillors on the new authority than originally envisaged in the One Somerset proposal on the direction of the Secretary of State.

The Committee felt that at this stage it was too soon to hold meetings with either the County or District Councils and instead asked the Clerk to draw together a list of County and District Council assets in the town to enable an assessment to be made of what services or assets the Town Council may want to have transferred to it.

176 Councillors' Attendance

The Committee considered the proposed protocol circulated with the agenda. Councillor Thorne questioned whether the interpretation of the legislation contained in the report was correct. The Town Clerk advised that he had sought advice from the Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) prior to drafting the Protocol and had also sent a draft to them for comment. The Chief Executive of SALC had confirmed that the interpretation of the law contained in the protocol was correct.

After further discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should seek further advice from SALC based on Councillor Thorne's concerns.

177 Council Work Plan

A draft Work Plan had been circulated with the agenda. It was agreed that this was a useful document for monitoring progress against areas of work, particularly in light of the impending restructure of local government, and that it also provided a useful structure for Committees to work to. It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Work Plan model should be adopted to support delivering the Council's work programme.

178 Longforth Road Toilets Remodelling

The Town Clerk presented plans to the Committee that had been received from Healthmatic after the agenda had been sent out. A copy is attached to the minutes. The Town Clerk advised that more work was needed as he had asked that storage areas etc for the Street Wardens be retained in the building. He had also asked for a Changing Places toilet to be included. It was agreed that:

(a) The Town Clerk would ask Healthmatic to (i) redraw the plans to allow for storage/refreshment areas for the Street wardens (ii) advise whether the building was sound enough to extend upwards (iii) to price the installation of a Changing Places facility (iv) ask that in designing the new layout, consideration is given to ensuring the that the carbon footprint of the provision is as small as possible.

(b) The Town Clerk would undertake more research to establish if a Changing Places facility was needed in the town.

179 The Queens Platinum Jubilee Celebrations 2 June 2022

Following discussions, the Committee agreed to **RECOMMEND** to the full Council:

(a) that The Town Council should participate in the event.

(b) that the most appropriate site for the Beacon would be on Hilly Head and

(c) that the Town Centre Committee should plan and coordinate the event.

180 Proposal to Adopt a Climate Emergency Priority

A paper from the Chair of the Environment and Open Spaces Committee had been circulated with the agenda. After some discussion the Committee agreed to **RECOMMEND** to the full Council that:

The Council should adopt a specific policy that it, and the town in general, should take rapid steps to reduce carbon emissions going forward, so that becoming carbon neutral by 2030 in line with local, national and international government commitments is achievable

The policy will require a strategy to be developed that sets out how this could be achieved both in relation to the Council's own activities and also across the town as a whole given the Council's role in place leadership.

The responsibility for the development and delivery of the strategy should sit with the Environment and Open Spaces Committee.

190 Venue for September Council Meeting

It was noted that Court Fields School Hall was not available. It was agreed that the United Reform Church Hall and St Johns Church Hall were too small to allow for the numbers who may attend, and, in the case of the URC Hall there is a lack of ventilation. It was agreed to

explore whether Wellington School had a suitable space and if not then it was agreed that the football and rugby clubs should be explored noting that they are licensed premises but that no other options were available.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.40 pm

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Councillor Mark Lithgow
Chairman