

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES 5 JUNE 2023

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WELLINGTON ON MONDAY 5 JUNE 2023 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Barr (Mayor)

Councillors Z Barr, S Booker, C Booth, A Govier, C Govier, M Lithgow, J Lloyd, M McGuffie, N Powell-Brace and J Thorne.

David Farrow (Town Clerk)

One member of the press and ten members of the public were in attendance.

51. TO OFFER WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all those present.

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

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors K Canham and K Wheatley.

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Thorne declared a personal interest in agenda item 16 as he was friends with people who worked at the establishments

Councillor Booker declared a personal interest in agenda item 16 as a relative worked at one of the establishments.

54. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Annual Town Council and Planning Meetings held on 3 May 2023 with the correction in minute 7 of the Annual Town Council meeting that Sergeant Dan O'Connor should read Sergeant Jon O'Connor

At this juncture it was **RESOLVED** to move agenda item 16 to agenda item 7 and to take Questions and Comments from members of the public at that point.

55. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE LOCAL POLICING TEAM

The report from Sergeant Jon O'Connor had been circulated prior to the meeting Sergeant O'Connor was welcomed to his first meeting and his report was noted. In response to questions Sergeant O'Connor said that he would look in to concerns about speeding on the Exeter Road. He was also thanked for his teams rapid response to the incident on Roly Poly Green.

56. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Two members of the public spoke to raise concerns about the consultation being carried out by Abbeyfield in relation to the possible closure of Ivy House and The Old Vicarage. For clarity it was noted that the two establishments are not residential homes but supported living accommodation

57. THE OLD VICARAGE AND IVY HOUSE RESIDENTIAL HOMES

Councillors expressed concern regarding the decision of Abbeyfield Homes to consult on the possible closure of Ivy House and The Old Vicarage and the process that it was following. After some discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the Council should continue to work with Abbeyfield to find a solution but that if Abbeyfield decided that it could not continue to run the establishments and no other alternative came forward the Town Council should consider buying the buildings and managing the provision. The Town Clerk was asked to begin to look into this option.

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58. TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM THE HEADTEACHER OF COURT FIELDS SCHOOL

Mrs Polly Matthews, Head teacher, was unable to attend the meeting to update the Council on the work of the school including the outcome of its recent Ofsted Inspection and will instead attend the July meeting.

59. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

A report detailing the Mayors activities had been circulated prior to the meeting.

60. PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A MAYOR'S FUND

After some discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that further consideration was required and that the proposal should be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee at its next meeting.

61. TOWN SCARECROW COMPETITION

After some discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that there should be a Town Scarecrow Competition, but that more detailed work was needed and should be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee at its next meeting.

62. SOMERSET COUNTY AND UNTARY COUNCIL PROGRESS UPDATE

Councillor Govier provided an update noting that around 29 staff had been made redundant from Somerset Council as a result of the restructuring of senior management posts. He also reported that the road at Hilly Head was due to be resurfaced over the summer.

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

The Clerks report had been circulated with the agenda and was noted.

64. FINANCE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2023 and relevant papers supporting its recommendation had been circulated with the agenda. Councillor Lithgow detailed the recommendations of the Committee and it was **RESOLVED**

- (i) That the Committee's Terms of Reference remain unchanged.
- (ii) That the Finance Committee meetings be held on the 2nd week of the month to precede either the Town Centre or Policy and Resources Committees. The time to be half an hour before the start of those meetings (approx. 5.30pm or 3.30pm).
- (iii) Year End Accounts & Audit
 - a. To note the Internal Auditors Report 2022/23 with the notes from officers.
 - b. To accept the AGAR sections 1 and 2
 - c. To accept the draft Summary of Funds Report.
 - d. To approve the Draft Notice of Exercise of Public Rights (attached), is approved the dates published being Monday 5 June to Friday 14 July. NB – the dates to be published are amended to Monday 12 June to Friday 21 July due to the date of the meeting where it will be approved.
- (iv) That a Grant of £3362.22 be awarded to the Whirlwinds Academy to support its Accessibility and Disability Project.

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65. TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2023 had been circulated with the agenda. Councillor Booker provided an update and it was **RESOLVED**:

- (i) That the Town Centre Committee meetings be held on the 2nd Tuesday of every other month. The timing will depend on the size of the agenda but will be approx. 6.00pm.

66. ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meetings held on 23 May 2023 and the background papers relating to the recommendations were circulated with the agenda. Councillor M McGuffie detailed the recommendations made by the Committee and it was **RESOLVED**

- (i) That no further changes be made to the Committee's terms of reference.
- (ii) That £5,000 be allocated from the Green Corridor Budget for the purchase and delivery of a storage container at the Community Farm Field for use by both the Town Council and Wellington Community Food.

The decisions taken by the Committee under its delegated powers were noted:

- (i) Commission Clarkson and Woods to carry out an Ecological Walkover Survey and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment of the Green Corridor at a cost of £2,920.
- (ii) To replace the waste bin at the Tonedale Play Area with a larger bin.
- (iii) To refurbish the bench at the Tonedale Play Area and
- (iv) To install signage clearly showing that the area is owned and managed by the Town Council and that dogs are not allowed.

67. LONGFORTH ROAD TOILETS

A paper setting out proposed costs had been circulated with the agenda. The Council **RESOLVED** to agree payment to Ravenslade of £3,325 plus VAT for Section 1 works required for the settlement of the insurance claim and £1,275 plus VAT for Section 2 works to prepare sketches of options for the next stage of the process.

68. EMPLOYMENT OF COMMUNITY CONNECT CHAMPION

A paper had been circulated with the agenda. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint a Community Connect Champion for two days a week for a period of two years to be fully funded by Somerset Council noting that the £11,000 Town Council contribution to the cost of the Wellington Community One Team Coordinator would not be required for this period.

69. NEW BENCHES

It was **RESOLVED**

- (i) To purchase two new Lowther benches (black) c/w Brown Enviropol Slats to match other Town Centre Benches at a cost of £1,412.76 and.
- (ii) To approve the installation of a new bench inside the entrance to Lodge Close from North Street, final location to be confirmed, at a cost off £250-£300 for concrete base and fixing bolts.

70. WELLINGTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

This item had been placed on the agenda following reports that the centre may have to close if more volunteers did not come forward. Councillor Lithgow reported that volunteers had now come forward and the risk of closure had passed. It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should enter into

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discussions with Somerset Council about the trusteeship of the building been transferred to the Town Council from Somerset Council

71. TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude members of the press and public for agenda item 22 and 23 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. The basis of the request is that elements of the reports supporting the items contain commercially sensitive information and personal information.

72. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS CONTRACT

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2023 and supporting papers had been circulated with the agenda. It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The hire contract be awarded to Event Power Engineering at a cost of £10,000 per year for a period of three years.
- (b) The installation contract be awarded to Event Power Engineering at a cost of £9,000 per year for a period of three years.

73. CROWN ESTATE LAND

A confidential paper had been circulated with the agenda. After some discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to purchase the land contained in Tonedale Estate Title Number 1516 from the Crown Estate.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.55pm

STANDING DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of Somerset Council:

Councillor Andrew Govier
Councillor Marcus Barr
Councillor Ross Henley

Councillor Marcus Barr Mayor