

MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE HELD AT UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL ON TUESDAY 23 MAY 2023 AT 4.00 PM

Present: Councillor M McGuffie (Chairman)
Councillors C Booth, K Canham, C Govier and M Lithgow

In attendance: David Farrow (Town Clerk)
Councillor J Thorne
Amy Kemmish, Project Manager Heritage at Risk Somerset Council (for agenda item 6)
Steve Saunders Footpath Volunteer Coordinator (for Agenda Item 7)
Adam Lockyer, Wellington Community Food (for agenda items 10(b) and 11)
1 Member of the press

47 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE COMING YEAR

Councillor M McGuffie was elected as Chairman for the coming year

48 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors M Barr and K Wheatley.

49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

50 HERITAGE UPDATE

A report from Amy Kemmish had been circulated with the agenda.

In response to a question regarding the Notice served on the Teare's building she advised that there were a range of options open to the Council should it not be complied with within the twelve week period.

The Town Clerk was asked to explore options for involving Building Control if there was a possibility that the Teare's building was unsafe

51 FOOTPATH UPDATE

Steve Saunders provided a verbal update.

In response to points raised The Town Clerk said that he had received a communication from Network Rail explaining why the Westford Crossing was still not open which he read out to the meeting. He agreed to forward it to Steve Saunders.

The Town Clerk also said that he was in discussion with the Footpath Team from Somerset Council about making the footpath between Rockwell Green and The Basins more accessible for wheelchairs etc by changing the gates at either end and installing a ramp at the bridge. Somerset Council were preparing proposals which he would bring back to the Council for consideration.

52 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Full Council that as the Terms of reference had been reviewed in April 2023 no further changes were required and that they should be adopted unchanged.

53 CROWN ESTATE LAND

The Town Clerk advised that he had spoken to both The Environment Agency and Wessex water and both agencies had said that the culvert which appeared linked to the Crown Estate Land on Linden Drive was not their responsibility. He had ascertained that the culvert did have a Somerset Council Asset number which suggested responsibility for maintenance/repair may sit with it. He was waiting for a response to confirm that.

He also advised that other issues had come to light in the last few days which meant that the Town Council would want to review its position irrespective of the position on the culvert and that it would be an agenda item for the Full Council meeting on the 5 June.

54 GREEN CORRIDOR LAND

(a) The notes from Advisory Board Meeting held on 10 May 2023 were noted.

(b) The Committee considered quotes for carrying out Biodiversity Audits on the Green Corridor Land and **RESOLVED:**

a. That it would not pursue a Soil Carbon Assessment at this stage and

b. That it would accept the quote from Clarkson and Woods to carry out an Ecological Walkover Survey and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment at a cost of £2,920. As the value of the work is below £3,000 the Committee is able to accept this quote on behalf of the Council under its delegated powers

(c) The Committee consider a request from a local resident to purchase part of Linden Meadow to create a turning circle. This was because of the risks associated with having to reverse out of the and on to Linden Hill and the risk to walkers coming down the lane when reversing especially when it was dark.

The Committee did not support the request on the basis (a) that the field was purchased to protect the habitat and prevent development and the request was not consistent with that (b) that the amount of land being requested was excessive and (c) that the resident should explore options for creating space for turning on their own land.

55 PURCHASE OF STORAGE CONTAINER FOR COMMUNITY FARM FIELD

After some consideration the committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Full Council that £5,000 be allocated to purchase a storage container on the Community Farm field for use by both the Town Council and Wellington Community Food.

56 PROPOSAL FOR WORK ON THE FORMER GAY CLOSE PLAY AREA

The Committee considered ideas submitted by Councillor C Booth for improvements to the Gay Close play area.

The Committee asked the Town Clerk to seek quotes for the proposed work and report back to the next meeting of the Committee.

57 TONEDALE PLAY AREA

After some discussion the Committee **RESOLVED**

- (a) That officers do further work to determine options and costs for surfaces for the footpath from Milverton Road to the play area to report back to the Committee.
- (b) That officers proceed with replacing the existing bin with a larger covered bin.
- (c) That officers proceed with refurbishing the bench.
- (d) That signage is installed clearly showing that the area is owned and managed by the Town Council and that dogs are not allowed.
- (e) That contact is made with the artist who installed the mural on Tonedale Bridge in relation to having artwork on the backs of the garages backing on to the play area;
- (f) That officers seek advice about appropriate planting for the wetter areas of the play and report back to the next meeting.

58 CARBON POLICY REVIEW

A paper had been circulated prior to the meeting setting out a range of activities that had been identified that would support the delivery of the Town's Carbon Neutral Strategy. The Town clerk reported that the intention would be to work these up into a more detailed action plan.

The Committee members present identified some key areas as being the development of community transport options for those parts of the town that don't have easy access to public transport, increasing the number of secure bike racks in the town centre to encourage more bike use, implementing the Tree Planting Strategy and exploring whether public transport to Taunton could be better subsidised.

59 LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN UPDATE

The Town Clerk advised that the Wellington Wheelers had been asked to do some more work to identify what they considered to be ideal solutions for creating safe cycle routes in the town to be completed by the end of May.

The Town Clerk also said that he would circulate details of a new proposal for a Wellington – Taunton Cycle route following the route of the Grand Western Canal.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.00 pm

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Councillor M McGuffie
Chairman