

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES 7 AUGUST 2023

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WELLINGTON ON MONDAY 7 AUGUST 2023 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Barr (Mayor)
Councillors Z Barr, C Booth, A Govier, C Govier, R Henley, J Lloyd, M McGuffie, N Powell-Brace and J Thorne.

In attendance: Alice Kendall (Deputy Clerk)
Sgt Jon O'Connor
One member of the press
Three members of the public

158 TO OFFER WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all those present.

159 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO APPROVE THE REASONS GIVEN

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors S Booker, K Canham, M Lithgow and K Wheatley.

160 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared other than the standing declarations listed at the end of the minutes.

161 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Planning and Town Council meetings held 3 July 2023.

162 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A member of the public gave representation regarding Fox's Field. The Deputy Clerk asked that the concerns be forwarded to her so that it can be referred to the Environment and Heritage Committee for consideration.

Another member of the public asked if Wellington School has been asked to repair a section of wall that had fallen onto a public footpath. As a result of this being raised, Councillor Powell-Brace reported that a section of wall along the path from the Cottage Hospital was leaning badly. The Deputy Clerk will follow this up with the Assets and Events officer as she is involved in the Footpaths Volunteer Group.

163 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE LOCAL POLICING TEAM

The report from Sergeant Jon O'Connor had been circulated prior to the meeting. He further reported that issues at Tonedale Mill have been persistent. He informed the meeting that he had met on site with colleagues from Somerset Council and the owners and had issued a warning that the fencing and other welfare items must be brought up to standard as a matter of urgency. The summer holiday programmes of free football and airsoft were going well and have positive sign-up rates. A new PCSO will soon be on duty in the Town Centre, although this is not an additional role it does bring the team back to full capacity.

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164 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor's report had been circulated by e-mail in advance of the meeting. He further reported that following a visit to the 'In the Mix' cafe in Milverton, he had asked the Clerk to arrange a meeting with the Mix Team and Councillors to review what youth services could be provided in Wellington.

165 SOMERSET COUNCIL/LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK (LCN) UPDATE

Councillor C Govier gave an update on the first meeting of the LCN. Although it will be challenging to agree on the group's priorities, it was a positive meeting. It will be likely that there will be smaller working groups to focus on specific activities. Councillor Henley was appointed as Chairman, he too thought it was a positive meeting and found it interesting to hear of all the projects and ideas from the smaller parishes.

On general Unitary Council business, Councillor Henley reported that he had spoken at Full Council on the campaign to keep open train station ticket offices. At the next Constitution and Governance Committee, of which he is Chairman, they will receive data from recent elections and the impact on the recent changes that now require voters to show ID.

Councillor A Govier agreed that the LCN was useful and positive, and it will be important to make sure the issues affecting Wellington are aired as there a wide range of issues to consider, not all of which affect the other Parishes. Somerset Council are continuing to look very seriously at finances as costs continue to increase. He further reported that he expects an update on the NHS dentistry issue in October and continues to push the matter.

166 TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT ON RECENT COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

The Town Clerk's report had been circulated with the agenda and was duly noted. Councillor A Govier thought the report was a positive one, all Councillors agreed.

167 FINANCE COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2023 had been circulated with the agenda and were noted.

168 TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held 11 July 2023 had been circulated with the agenda and were noted. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations of the Committee as follows:

- (i) Annual Street Fair – that the date for the 2024 Annual Street Fair be set as Saturday 1 June 2024.
- (ii) D-Day 80th Anniversary – that there is a week of events to commemorate this anniversary starting on the 1 June 2024 with the Annual Street Fair.

The recommendation regarding a letter of complaint to Somerset Council in relation to Road Closures was not voted on and was referred back to the Committee for further discussion on how to apply the agreement that one application can cover several events in one 18 month period.

It was agreed to note that Councillor Thorne stated his opposition to Produce Market moving to High Street.

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169 ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held 11 July 2023 had been circulated with the agenda and were noted. The committee had made several recommendations and it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) A Council Working Group is established to have oversight of the work taking place at Tonedale Mill in light of the decision of the current directors of Wellington Mills Community Interest Company to step down.
- (ii) The submission prepared by the Wellington Wheelers should be included in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, recognising that it is aspirational and that for it to be implemented there would need to be more work done and that it was not something that could be delivered in the short term.
- (iii) The Draft Terms of Reference for the Basins Allotments Advisory Board be adopted.
- (iv) Councillors Janet Lloyd and Catherine Govier be the Council's representatives on the Basins Advisory Board.
- (v) The proposed amendments to the Committees Terms of Reference to reflect oversight of the Basins Allotments Advisory Board be adopted.
- (vi) The Fruit Tree Project is approved and that £5,400 is committed from the Environmental Improvement budget for the purchase of 300 dwarf apple trees to be given free of charge to residents and schools.
- (vii) From September 2023 the committee will meet every other month in the second week of the month i.e. the week after the Council meeting.

Councillor Lloyd expressed interest in being part of the Working Group for Tonedale Mill. Councillors were asked to inform the Clerk if they had suggestions of who else should be involved.

170 PROPOSED CHANGES TO ROAD MARKINGS IN HIGH STREET AND PARKING IN SOUTH STREET

Councillor Govier reported that he has been in contact with Highways and proposed that the Council recommended to Somerset Council that:

- (i) The 'Keep Clear' road markings on High Street, outside what used to be the entrance to the Veterinary Surgery, be replaced with parking restricted to 30 mins between 8am and 6pm Monday – Saturday in line with other on street parking in the town and
- (ii) That no parking should be allowed on South Street between the roundabouts at Bulford and Eight Acre Lane.

After some discussion, the proposal was duly seconded, and it was **RESOLVED** to make the recommendations. It was further agreed that a wider review of parking across the whole town should take place as was planned before the reorganisation. Councillor A Govier will take this matter further and report back to a future meeting.

171 WATER SAFETY – FOX'S FIELD AND THE BASINS

As a result of a site visit with the Council's health and safety consultant, it had been recommended that appropriate signage and a lifebuoy be installed in both locations. After some discussion, it was proposed, and seconded, that one life ring be installed at the Basins location only and that signage warning of deep water be erected at both locations. Signage to be placed on trees where possible. There were five votes in favour and five votes against. The Chairman used his casting vote in favour; the motion was carried, and it was duly **RESOLVED**.

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There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.25pm.

STANDING DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of Somerset Council:

Councillor Andrew Govier

Councillor Marcus Barr

Councillor Ross Henley

Mayor

Councillor Marcus Barr