

MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE HELD AT UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL ON TUESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 4.00 PM

Present: Councillor M McGuffie (Chairman)
Councillors M Barr, C Booth and M Lithgow

In attendance: David Farrow (Town Clerk)
Amy Kemmish Project Manager Heritage at Risk, Somerset Council for agenda item 5
Steve Saunders, Footpath Liaison Officer for agenda item 7
Charles Biscoe for agenda item 11

243 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors K Canham, C Govier and K Wheatley

244 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

245 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2023. It was noted that a request had been received to move the timing of the meetings to 6.00pm to allow better attendance of councillors. The Town Clerk agreed to review this.

246 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No members of the public were present.

247 HERITAGE UPDATE

Amy Kemmish, Project Manager - Heritage at Risk, Somerset Council presented her report had been circulated with the agenda and was noted. Councillors sought clarification in relation to action being taken at the Rockwell Green water towers and raised concerns about the presence of Japanese knotweed on the site. Ms Kemmish advised that they whilst they were aware of the issue it fell outside the Heritage notice that had been served but they were monitoring the situation.

At this point Ms Kemmish left the meeting.

248 SOMERSET COUNCIL TREE STRATEGY

Due to the change of date James Chapman, Somerset Council Tree Strategist was unable to attend the meeting. The Town Clerk reported that he had agreed with Mr Chapman that he would arrange a tour of the Green Corridor for him to be followed by a meeting to discuss how the Town Council Tree Strategy could complement the Somerset Council Strategy.

249 FOOTPATH UPDATE

Steve Saunders presented his report that had been circulated with the agenda. Councillors thanked Steve and the volunteers for all the work that they did.

Councillor McGuffie noted that following the recent heavy rain the surface of the footpath from Crosslands to Thomas Fox Close was now severely damaged. Steve Saunders to report to the County Footpaths Team.

The Town Clerk reported that he hoped that a ramp would soon be installed on the footbridge between The Basins and Rockwell Green.

250 GREEN CORRIDOR ADVISORY BOARD

The notes of the Advisory Board Meeting held on 6 September 2023 had been circulated prior to the meeting.

(i) **Tree Survey**

The Committee **RESOLVED to** authorise officers to agree works identified in the Tree Survey as being required within 6 months to a value of £2,410 plus VAT from Chris Groves Associates subject (a) to officers being satisfied that identified trees are on Green Corridor Land or Crown Estate and (b) agreeing the detailed work required.

(ii) **Fox's Field**

The Committee considered a written representation from a member of the public regarding concerns about Fox's Field. It also considered a response from Transition Town Wellington. It was **RESOLVED** that the Chair would respond in writing to the member of the public.

251 BASINS ALLOTMENTS ADVISORY BOARD

The notes of the first meeting of the Basins Allotments Advisory Board held on the 1 September 2023 had been circulated prior to the meeting and were noted.

252 GAY CLOSE PLAY AREA

A proposal from Councillor Booth for how the area could be improved was tabled at the meeting. He advised that he had been in discussion with the Somerset Council Open Spaces Team and was hopeful that agreement would soon be forthcoming for the Town Council to lease the play area land on a long term basis for a peppercorn rent. Until the lease arrangements were agreed no work could be carried out. Councillor Booth will meet with Town Council staff to begin to plan the work.

253 GRAND WESTERN GREENWAY

Charles Biscoe made a presentation to the Committee setting out a proposal to establish a greenway using the route of the Grand Western Canal. Copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Town Council that:

- (i) It supports the principle of establishing a Greenway Route to Taunton utilising the route of the Grand Western Canal and
- (ii) The Council demonstrates that support by setting aside a sum of money in future years budgets to support the development of the Greenway recognising the health and environmental benefits that it would bring to the Wellington community.

254 GENERAL UPDATES

(i) Tree Strategy

The Town Clerk reported that the Fruit Tree Offer agreed at the August Council meeting was being progressed and would be being advertised in the Wellington Weekly and Around Wellington that week. He also advised that he had had discussions with Somerset Council Open Spaces Team about tree planting on Somerset Council land in the town and that their view was that there weren't many spaces that would be suitable although they would be planting a number of trees in Wardleworth Way

(ii) Committee Work Plan

Committee Work Plans were being developed utilising Microsoft Office software and would be available by the next meeting.

(iii) Climate Change Strategy

Unfortunately, the Project Officer had been away from work for most of the time since the last meeting so no progress had been made on further developing an action plan to support the Strategy. The Town Clerk was looking at alternative ways of delivering this piece of work.

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

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Councillor M McGuffie
Chairman