

## WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES 2 OCTOBER 2023

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WELLINGTON ON MONDAY 2 OCTOBER 2023 AT 7.00PM

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

**In attendance:** David Farrow – Town Clerk  
Police Sergeant Jon O'Connor  
Dan Farthing, Ravenslade for agenda item 20  
Three members of the public  
One member of the press

#### **259 TO OFFER WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all those present.

#### **260 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO APPROVE THE REASONS GIVEN**

No apologies were received.

#### **261 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **262 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Planning and Town Council meetings held 4 September 2023.

#### **263 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

No members of the public were in attendance.

#### **264 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE LOCAL POLICING TEAM**

The report from Sergeant Jon O'Connor had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Councillor Lloyd asked Sergeant O'Connor if his team could check the community farm field on their patrols as there was significant littering and evidence of fire setting in one corner.

Councillor M Barr thanked Sergeant O'Connor and his team for their work on the night of the Carnival.

Councillor A Govier asked Sergeant O'Connor to pass the Council's thanks on to PCSO Lousie Fyne who was retiring from the force.

At this juncture the Chair agreed to bring agenda items 15, 18 and 19 forward.

#### **265 FLOODING IN WELLINGTON**

A report by the Town Clerk had been circulated with the agenda. Councillors discussed the flooding around the town and expressed sympathy for those affected. It was **RESOLVED** that the Policy and Resources Committee should coordinate the Council's response to any enquiry and seek answers to the questions raised in the Town Clerks Report.

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### **266 TO CONSIDER RESOLVING TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting. The reason for this was that item 20 referred to matters which were commercially sensitive and confidential

### **267 THE LONGFORTH ROAD TOILET BLOCK**

It was **RESOLVED**

- (i) That the Longforth Road Toilet Block should be demolished
- (ii) That Mercury Construction be appointed to carry out the work
- (iii) That Benchmark Surveys be appointed to carry out the Topographical Surveys.

At this juncture, the member of the press and one member of the public rejoined the meeting.

### **268 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor's report had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was noted.

### **269 SOMERSET COUNCIL/LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK (LCN) UPDATE**

Councillor Henley reported that the next LCN meeting would be taking place on the 12 October 2023 at Wellington Rugby Club and that the focus would be on highways issues.

Councillor A Govier reported that work was ongoing in relation to setting the Councils budget for 2024/25. The Town Clerk said that he had been involved in a recent Clerks Briefing with Somerset Council's Director of Finance where the challenging budget position had been discussed and a very clear indication given that town/parish councils may be approached to take on the delivery of services/assets. As a result, he had been asked to join a working group to look at how that process may work.

Councillor M Barr reported that he had recently attended a Tenants Board Meeting where the issue of mould in council properties had been discussed.

### **270 TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT ON RECENT COUNCIL ACTIVITIES**

The Clerk's report had been circulated with the agenda and was noted. The Town Clerk advised the Council that following the tragic suicide of another teenage boy the previous week, he had asked for a meeting to be convened of appropriate groups and agencies to discuss a strategy for trying to address this.

He also reported that the Town Council had been shortlisted for the National Association of Local Council's Council of the Year Award 2023 with the winner being selected by a public vote.

### **271 FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2023 had been circulated with the agenda. It was **RESOLVED** that IAC be reappointed as the Council's Internal Auditor for the next three years on the basis set out in the fee letter which had been circulated with the agenda.

### **272. TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2023 had been circulated with the agenda and Councillor C Govier provided an update. It was **RESOLVED:**

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- (i) to approve the Mayor having use of the Pop-Up Shop for two weeks in January for Mayor's Fund Raising with the Council covering all costs.
- (ii) to approve the following arrangements to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Town Council in April 2024:
  - To convert 15 VHS tapes to digital files at £10.00 per tape. These tapes include a range of films of civic events recorded by the late former Councillor Terry Milton. Councillor K. Wheatley said he would come back to the next Town Centre Committee meeting with a cost to put the tapes together to make a film, that could be shown at the film festival in 2024.
  - To hire the Pop-up Shop for week in April – to work alongside Wellington Museum who will display a range of items and papers from the past 50 years, as well as pieces relating to the Urban District Council. To create displays giving information on: "How to become a Councillor". "What Do Councillors Do". To consider inviting former Councillors to occupy the shop and speak about their experiences on the Council.
  - To hold a Civic Service in April 2024 at St. Johns Church – to invite Councillors who have served during the 50 years of the Town Council. The Councillors to be recognised during the event. Reception to be held in Church Hall after the service.

### 273. ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2023 had been circulated with the agenda and Councillor M McGuffie provided an update. It was **RESOLVED:**

- (i) To support the principle of establishing a Greenway Route to Taunton utilising the route of the Grand Western Canal and
- (ii) That the Council should demonstrate its 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. The amount for 2024/5 to be agreed when the Council sets its budget for that year.

### 274. CONCLUSION OF AUDIT 22/23

It was **RESOLVED** to note Section 3 (External Auditor Report and Certificate 2022/23) of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return which had been circulated with the agenda along with the public notice of conclusion of audit.

### 275. CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE

The Council considered a paper from the Town Clerk that had been circulated with the agenda.

A resolution that the Council does not sign up to The Pledge was defeated and a subsequent resolution to sign up to the Pledge was passed. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that the Council should sign up to the NALC Civility and Respect Pledge.

At this juncture Councillor Z Barr left the meeting.

### 276. CORNHILL VICTORIAN LANTERN

It was **RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the work to the refurbishment of the Cornhill Victorian Lantern to include shot blasting the lantern before powder coating it in black and installing four new glass panels should be undertaken by LS Fabrications, West Buckland at a cost of £660.00

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- (ii) That the Assets & Events Officer commission a structural engineer to advise how the lantern could be reinstated to the Cornhill Archway
- (iii) That further consideration be given by the Town Centre Committee to whether to reconnect power to the light

**277. TO APPROVE HIRE OF A SKIP TO ENABLE CLEARANCE OF ALLOTMENTS**

It was **RESOLVED** to authorise officers to hire a skip for one day to enable clearance of allotments that have become vacant at a cost of £500.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00pm.

**STANDING DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Members of Somerset Council:**

Councillor Andrew Govier  
Councillor Marcus Barr  
Councillor Ross Henley

Mayor  
Councillor Marcus Barr .....