

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES 4 DECEMBER 2023

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WELLINGTON ON MONDAY 4 DECEMBER 2023 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Barr (Mayor)
Councillors Z Barr C Booth, K Canham, C Govier, A Govier, , M Lithgow, J Lloyd, , S Pringle-Kosikowsky, J Thorne and K Wheatley.

In attendance: David Farrow – Town Clerk
One member of the public
One member of the press

368 TO OFFER WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all those present.

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

Apologies were received from Councillor M McGuffie.

370 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J Lloyd reported that she had been elected to the Board of the Somerset Association of Local Councils and asked that this be noted as a standing declaration on future agendas.

371 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Planning and Town Council meetings held on 6 November 2023.

372 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A member of the public congratulated the Council on reaching the Council of the Year award final and raised concerns about its involvement in the Toneworks project as it was not within its boundaries.

373 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE LOCAL POLICING TEAM

The report from Sergeant Jon O'Connor had been circulated prior to the meeting. The significant reduction in crime on the previous year was welcomed and Sergeant O'Connor was thanked for his and his team's work. The Council were concerned to hear that the teams Facebook page had been shut down as a result of a review of social media by Avon and Somerset Police. The local team now had to post on a Taunton and West Somerset page. It was **RESOLVED that** the Town Clerk should write to Avon and Somerset Police setting out the Council's concerns.

374 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor's report had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was noted. He reported that he had attended a Metro Board meeting the previous Friday and that positive progress continued to be made on the project.

375 SOMERSET COUNCIL/LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK (LCN) UPDATE

There had not been a Somerset Council or LCN meeting since the last Council meeting. The next LCN meeting is due to take place on the 12 December.

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

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The Clerk's report had been circulated with the agenda and was noted.

377 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- (i) Town Centre Committee – one vacancy.
RESOLVED to appoint Councillor S Pringle-Kosikowsky to the Town Centre Committee. It was noted that this leaves a vacancy for a co-opted member on that committee.

- (ii) Finance Committee – three vacancies.
RESOLVED to appoint Councillor C Govier to the Finance Committee. It was noted that two vacancies remain.

378 FINANCE COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 14 November and relevant papers were circulated with the agenda and duly noted. Councillor Lithgow provided an update at the meeting. It was **RESOLVED:**

- (i) To adopt the amended Treasury & Investment Policy

- (ii) To adopt the Debit Card User Agreement

379 TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 14 November were circulated with the agenda and duly noted. Councillor Booth provided an update. It was **RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the Produce Market should be included on one road closure application including Town Council events subject to a satisfactory meeting with the organisers of the Produce Market on Wednesday 6th December to discuss possible issues of the market being moved to High Street. Councillors Lithgow and Wheatley have been delegated to attend this meeting.

380 ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 14 November along with relevant papers were circulated with the agenda and, in the absence of Councillor M McGuffie, were noted. It was **RESOLVED:**

- (i) That a charged service is offered to tenants to remove rubbish from their plots at a minimum amount of £25.00 for 2 compost bags of rubbish. Anything more to be inspected by a Council Officer and quoted accordingly. Tenants to pay up front. A day once a month to be allocated for the Community Warden to collect.

- (ii) In reference to Longforth Farm Allotments:
 - a. That the Town Council take ownership of the land from the developer
 - b. That as soon as possible the site is secured with stock proof fencing costs to be covered by the £10,000 already set aside for the Longforth Allotments
 - c. That the Council apply for S106 funding of £50,000 to cover set up costs for the allotments

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381 ADDITIONAL POLICY AND RESOURCES

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 27 November were circulated with the agenda and duly noted and Councillor C Govier provided an update. It was **RESOLVED**:

- (i) that Healthmatic be commissioned to develop a comparative design and specification package for a modular building option based upon the preferred design/layout option selected above at a cost of £3,500 plus VAT – the output of which will be used by Ravenslade to prepare a feasibility Order of Cost Estimate considering ‘traditional’ and ‘modular’ options.
- (ii) in principle, the balance of costs for a rebuild on the Longforth Road site should be funded through a Public Works Loan Board Loan with a final decision on the amount to be borrowed to be made when costs are known.

382 ADDITIONAL FINANCE MEETING

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 27 November were circulated with the agenda and duly noted. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and develop the draft budget, an updated copy was attached to the agenda for information. It was noted that further work was required before setting the precept.

It was **RESOLVED** that, given Somerset Council’s decision not to fund free parking in the town on the three Saturdays leading up to Christmas as it has in the past, the Town Council should fund it at a cost of £3,750 plus VAT to be taken from the Town Centre budget line.

383 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 is that the following item refers to matters which are commercially sensitive and confidential.

384 PURCHASE OF 28-30 FORE STREET

It was **RESOLVED**:

- (i) That the Council should proceed with the purchase of 28-30 Fore Street from Somerset Council.
- (ii) That the initial offer should be £130,000 with officers given discretion to agree a price up to £160,000.
- (iii) That the funds for purchasing the building should be drawn from the Council’s Community Infrastructure Levy funding reserve.

STANDING DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of Somerset Council:

Councillor Andrew Govier
Councillor Marcus Barr
Councillor Ross Henley

Mayor

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Councillor Marcus Barr

Initial