

**MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE  
COMMITTEE HELD AT UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL ON  
WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY 2024 AT 6.00 PM**

**Present:** Councillor M McGuffie (Chairman)  
Councillors C Booth, C Govier, and K Wheatley

**In attendance:** David Farrow (Town Clerk)  
Councillor J Lloyd  
Councillor J Thorne  
Stephen Tate -Climate Change project Officer  
One member of the press

**443 APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Councillor M Lithgow

**444 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**445 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2023.

**446 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no members of the public present.

**447 HERITAGE UPDATE**

Amy Kemmish was unable to attend the meeting. Her report had been circulated with the agenda and was noted.

The Town Clerk reported that he had been advised that funding for the Heritage at Risk Team would in future be covered by the Levelling Up Funding that Somerset Council had received for Tonedale Mill and Toneworks. On that basis there would no longer be support available from the team for matters like the Rockwell Green water Towers and the Conservation Area. Councillor Lloyd suggested the Town Council make stronger links with Historic England.

Councillor Wheatley said that the Town Council should be seeking to engage more with the Levelling Up Fund work to help shape the outcome possibly through a working group. The Town Clerk reminded the meeting that the Town Council had agreed that it would set up a group to fill some of the gap left by the Wellington Mills CiC ceasing to operate and that he would convene a meeting in relation to that as soon as possible.

**448 FOOTPATH UPDATE**

Steve Saunders was unable to attend the meeting so there was no update provided.

**449 GREEN CORRIDOPR ADVISORY BOARD**

The notes of the meeting had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Town Clerk outlined the key elements of the meeting relating to the completion of the Biodiversity Audit which opens up the possibility of being able to utilise biodiversity net gain credits from developers to invest in the land, along with the developments taking place in the Community Farm.

He also referenced concerns from the Community Farm regarding dog walkers on the land and the detrimental impact that could have on the quality of the soil but also the health and safety of people working on the farm and visitors including school children.

Councillor Wheatley said he understood the concerns about dogs on the land the farm was on but was concerned that an email he had seen from the Community Farm seemed to suggest trying to restrict dog walking on other parts of the Green Corridor which would not be appropriate. Councillor Thorne agreed with Councillor Wheatley saying that any suggestion there should be wider restrictions should be nipped in the bud.

#### **450 ALLOTMENTS**

The Town Clerk reported that progress was being made in relation to the Longforth Farm allotments in that whilst the transfer of land had not yet been completed Bloor Homes had given permission for the Town Council to fence the allotment area.

It was **RESOLVED**

- (i) To authorise the further expenditure of £460 for the hiring of skips for the Basins Allotments.
- (ii) To recommend to Full Council that, as officers had been advised by Somerset Council that the S106 funding that they had been hoped could be utilised to fund the set up costs of the Longforth Farm allotment site had already been allocated to the development of the Longforth Farm Junior Sports pitch development, The Community Infrastructure Levy funding received in relation to the Lidl development should be used.
- (iii) That potential developer funding should be utilised to explore options for the establishment of allotments on the south side of the town and/or the extension of The Basins Allotments
- (iv) To recommend to Full Council that within the Basins Allotments budget a £2,500 reactive maintenance budget be identified which the Town Clerk can utilise without seeking committee or Council approval.

#### **451 WELLINGTON TO TAUNTON CYCLE ROUTE UPDATE**

Councillor J Lloyd provided an update. The STANTEC Feasibility Study commissioned by Somerset Council had been completed and concerns had been raised about underscoring of the proposed Greenway route. Discussions had been taking place to address those concerns. The consensus of the meeting was that the Greenway route should be the preferred option.

#### **452 CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY**

The Town Clerk introduced Stephen Tate who had joined the Council on a temporary basis to develop an action plan to deliver the Councils Climate Change Strategy.

After some discussion it was agreed that a baseline carbon output for the town should be established based on residential and transport factors. Officers will seek quotes for carrying out that work.

#### **453 BRIDGE BETWEEN WEAVERS REACH AND FOX'S FIELD**

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quote of £1,650 from Gown Engineering to carry out a survey of the bridge to inform a decision about whether to seek to purchase it from The Crown Estate.

**454 TONEDALE/RICHARDS CLOSE PLAY AREA**

- (i) Footpath – officers were asked to obtain further quotes for installing a footpath as far as possible without affecting the tree roots
- (ii) It was agreed to place on hold the provision of any artwork whilst options were explored with local schools to provide artwork for the site.

**455 RED PHONE BOX – TONEDALE**

It was noted that this year was the centenary of the introduction of the red phone box and that the example in Tonedale was the last remaining one in Wellington. It was noted that it was sited on private land.

The Committee agreed that officers should explore how the Council could take responsibility for the phone box to restore it and bring it into some use.

**456 TOWN CENTRE RAILING PLANTERS**

It was **RESOLVED** to give the Town Clerk delegated spending power up to £1,000 to cover the cost of maintenance work required. To be funded from the 2023/24 Town Centre Projects budget line.

**457 LANCER COURT FLOWER BEDS**

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Town Council that it takes responsibility for the planting and maintenance of the flower beds at Lancer Court subject to reaching agreement with the landowner

**458 TREE PLANTERS FOR TOWN CENTRE**

A paper prepared by Councillor McGuffie was circulated at the meeting. After some discussion it was agreed that proposal would not be taken forward.

**459 UPDATES FOR NOTING**

The updates on the path at Weavers Reach, Gay Close Play Area and Tonedale/Richards Close Play area were noted.

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.00 pm**

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**Councillor M McGuffie**  
**Chairman**