

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WELLINGTON 12 DECEMBER 2023 AT 4.05PM

Present: Councillors C Govier (Chair), M Barr, A Govier, M Lithgow, M McGuffie, J Thorne and K Wheatley.

David Farrow – Town Clerk

One member of the press was in attendance.

393 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND APPROVE THE REASONS GIVEN

Apologies were received from Councillor Lloyd.

394 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes of the Extra Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 27 November 2023.

395 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

396 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

397 DEVOLUTION CONTINGENCY BUDGET (DCB)

Papers had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Town Clerk explained that work was still ongoing with Somerset Council Officers to determine what services or asserts may be transferred to the Town Council either in the coming financial year or the next. It would therefore not be possible to recommend a final DCB to the January Council meeting.

The Committee made the following observations:

- (i) Street Cleaning – that when the ID Verde contract ends in January 2025 the Council should consider taking on responsibility for some or all aspects of street cleaning in the town.
- (ii) CCTV – that if the Council is to be charged for CCTV provision in the town it should look to upgrade the system.
- (iii) Minor Road Maintenance Activities – that the Council should explore the proposed Highways Steward Model but also consider what elements could be delivered through the Community Warden.
- (iv) Parks and Green Spaces – when considering how to manage these to have discussions with the football and cricket cubs and Court Fields and Wellington schools to determine whether there were options for contracting/delivering services in a different way that would benefit all parties.

- (v) That additional staffing would be required as and when additional responsibilities were taken on.
- (vi) The Town Clerk was asked to draw up proposals for a post to promote Wellington.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Full Council:

- (i) That an amount of £5,400 should be included in the DCB to fund the provision of expert advice to the Town Council on heritage matters should the need arise.
- (ii) That the Town Council should take on responsibility for coordinating and managing the tours at Toneworks in 2024 recognising that they would continue to be led by members of the Somerset Council Heritage at Risk Team.
- (iii) That the Town Council should fund the application costs for Wellington Park's Green Flag at a cost of £430 and the town's Britain in Bloom entry at a cost of £300.

398 PURCHASE OF GREEN CORRIDOR LAND

A paper from Councillor McGuffie was circulated in advance of the meeting. Councillor McGuffie raised concerns regarding the financial liabilities associated with the Crown Estate Land in particular in relation to the bridge/culvert and weir at the bottom of Linden Drive. It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should seek to commission a survey of the bridge/culvert.

399 TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED to pass a resolution having been duly proposed and seconded under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting, on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted under the following agenda items there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, within the meaning of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972:

Reason: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

400 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve and sign the confidential minutes of the Extra Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 27 November 2023.

401 COMMISSIONING OF SPECIALIST HR SUPPORT FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that Worknest be appointed as the Council's HR advisory service on a three year basis.

402 PURCHASE OF 28-30 FORE STREET

RESOLVED to accept the overage condition of 25% if the building is sold within 10 years.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.05pm.

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Councillor Catherine Govier
Chairman

Possible Committee Structure

Policy and Finance	Corporate governance policies and procedures Financial regulation requirements Council Strategic Plan – development and monitoring Strategy and policy development (implementation overseen by committee) Staffing - HR Policy management/development, structure, Risk management Development of traded services approach Health and Safety Policy/Monitoring Grants SLAs
Environment	Oversight of all green spaces – Green Corridor/Wellington Park play areas etc etc Development/monitoring of proactive maintenance plans Delivery of Climate Change/Tree Strategy Allotment management Town Centre planting Footpaths Cemetery? Minor highways works activities – monitoring planned and reactive maintenance plans. Street Cleaning/bins
Community	Town events Promotion of Wellington Heritage Day to day asset management – planned maintenance and development Emergency Planning implementation Kings Arms Community Plan development and oversight of delivery Community engagement Twinning
Planning	Recommendations on planning proposals Meeting with developers re planned developments

Wellington Town Council
Job Description and Person Specification

Open Spaces Manager

Job Title	Open Spaces Manager
Grade	scp 24-28 (£33, 024 – £36, 648) subject to further review
Reporting to	Town Clerk
Supervises	To be confirmed
Hours	<p>37 hours per week. Normal work week will be Monday – Friday (5 days) The working hours can vary depending on demands and the time of year.</p> <p>The postholder will be expected to be flexible with weekend and evening work required and any extra hours over 37 worked can be taken as time off in lieu or paid as overtime.</p>
Job purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop and implement the Council's strategy for the management and development of Wellington's open spaces which includes The Green Corridor, Wellington Park, The Recreation Ground, the Playing Field, junior sports pitches, play areas, the cemetery, nature reserves and roadside verges and hedgerows for which the Council is responsible, including tree management. • To be responsible for the development, delivery and management of services to manage green spaces in new or existing developments in the town and to develop traded services for surrounding parish councils. • To ensure legal compliance, undertake routine inspections and effective people management to achieve Council priorities and high quality services. • To work closely with councillors, other Council staff, local sports clubs, and relevant local groups to develop and deliver the Councils strategy for open spaces.

Key Responsibilities

1. To develop and implement a detailed strategy and plan for the development and maintenance of green spaces in the town.
2. Day-to-day management of teams and workplans OR the management of contracts with external providers to ensure all our greenspaces are safe, accessible, legally run, and managed well
3. Ensuring resources across the team support all elements of the service to achieve service plan outcomes.
4. Ensure supportive supervision of the Open Spaces Team (including any Council volunteers carrying out related works) and comply with relevant policies and procedures, such as equal opportunities, diversity, sickness reporting, discipline and grievance procedures.
5. Support service planning and development, ensuring change is well managed and innovation supported.
6. Ensure that a risk management culture is maintained including ensuring safe working practices, risk assessments, and effective incident monitoring.
7. Work with wider Council teams to deliver specific projects, consultations and communications. In particular, the Assets & Events Officer.

8. To lead on the delivery of projects in relation to green spaces, ensuring they are completed to time and budget.
9. Represent the Council at external partnership meetings.
10. To support the Town Clerk in service planning, risk management, workforce development, budget management and reporting to Council.
11. Completing and submitting relevant funding applications
12. To support relevant committees of the Council relevant to this area of work and coordinate the work of the Council's Green Corridor Advisory Board.
13. The duties and responsibilities of the post are not restrictive, and the post holder may be required to undertake other duties from time to time. Any such duties should not, however, substantially change the general character of the post.

Person Specification

Category	Criteria	Essential	Desirable	How Assessed
Education, Qualifications & Training	5 GCSE's grade C or above (including English and Maths) or equivalent NVQ or relevant experience	✓		Application form/certificates
	RHS Level 2 Horticultural qualification or similar		✓	Application form/certificates
	Management development training		✓	Application form/certificates /interview
	Full UK driving licence, or access to a form of transport that allows the duties of the role to be undertaken	✓		Licence provided
Experience	Proficient IT skills and experience of all Microsoft packages, Word, Outlook, Excel, PowerPoint etc.	✓		Application form
	Operational management and supervisory experience in a parks and/or outdoor environment.	✓		Application form/ Interview
	Experience of planning, developing and managing projects	✓		Application form/Interview
	Experience of working under time and budget pressures	✓		Application form/interview
	Experience of general administration work in an office environment	✓		Application form
	Experience of writing funding applications		✓	Application form
Skills, Abilities & Knowledge	Effective communication skills both written and spoken and ability to write and present reports.	✓		Application form/interview
	Ability to work as part of a co-ordinated and joined up management team across the Council	✓		Application form/interview
	Ability to motivate, guide and mentor team members	✓		Application form/interview
	Ability to work proactively, organise own workload effectively, and making informed decisions to deliver results	✓		Application form/task
	A flexible approach to working and the ability to respond at short notice to a wide variety of tasks	✓		Application form/interview

	Knowledge of legislation and working practice relating to cemeteries	✓		Application form/interview
	Understanding of their responsibilities for health and safety in their area of responsibility	✓		Application/ interview
	Good knowledge of risk management		✓	
	Good knowledge of equality legislation and policy.		✓	Application/ interview
	Good knowledge of climate change issues.		✓	Application/ interview

Wellington Town Council
Job Description and Person Specification

Project Assistant

Job Title	Project Assistant
Grade	scp 7-12 (£26,873 - £28,770)
Reporting to	Town Clerk
Supervises	Nil
Hours	37 hours per week. Normal work week will be Monday – Friday (5 days) The postholder will be expected to be flexible with weekend and evening work required and any extra hours over 37 worked can be taken as time off in lieu or paid as overtime.
Job purpose	To assist other council officers in the development and delivery of projects and events and ensure that Councils communications are delivered effectively through social media/press releases, newsletters etc

Key Responsibilities

The Project Assistant will support staff on a range of projects. Examples include:

- Helping to organise events
- Identifying funding opportunities through grants and supporting officers in writing funding applications
- Community engagement – exploring innovative and effective ways to enable and encourage the local community to become more involved with the town
- Communications – helping to promote the Council's agenda and events through the use of the Council's website, social media, newsletters posters etc
- Research on a wide range of projects & issues as required
- Supporting the delivery of the Councils Climate Change Strategy
- Developing a volunteer database
- Assisting with fundraising activities
- Managing the Mayors activities and diary
- Supporting other officers in preparing agendas and minutes of meetings
- Attending meetings as required to take minutes.

Person Specification

Category	Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Education, Qualifications & Training	5 GCSE's grade C or above (including English and Maths) or equivalent NVQ or relevant experience	✓	
	Full UK driving licence, or access to a form of transport that allows the duties of the role to be undertaken	✓	
Experience	Proficient IT skills and experience of all Microsoft packages, Word, Outlook, Excel, PowerPoint etc.	✓	
	Experience of planning, developing and managing projects	✓	

	Experience of working under time and budget pressures	✓	
	Experience of general administration work in an office environment	✓	
	Experience of writing funding applications		✓
Skills, Abilities & Knowledge	Effective communication skills both written and spoken and ability to write and present reports.	✓	
	Ability to work as part of a co-ordinated and joined up team across the Council	✓	
	Ability to work proactively, organise own workload effectively, and making informed decisions to deliver results	✓	
	A flexible approach to working and the ability to respond at short notice to a wide variety of tasks	✓	
	Understanding of their responsibilities for health and safety in their area of responsibility	✓	

Wellington Town Council
Job Description and Person Specification

Receptionist/Admin Assistant

Job Title	Receptionist/Admin Assistant
Grade	scp 2-5 (£22,366 - £23,500)
Reporting to	tbc
Supervises	Nil
Hours	<p>28 hours per week. Normal work week will be Monday – Friday. Office opens at 9.00am and closes at 2.00pm (5 days)</p> <p>The postholder will be expected to be flexible with weekend and evening work required and any extra hours over 37 worked can be taken as time off in lieu or paid as overtime.</p>
Job purpose	To act as the first point of contact for the Council for people visiting or calling the Council offices and to provide general administrative support to other Council officers

Key Responsibilities

- Carry out reception duties including welcoming visitors.
- Unlock and lock reception as part of a rota with other Town Council staff.
- Receiving and directing telephone calls and taking messages.
- Receipt and distribution of post together with franking outgoing post.
- Assisting Town Council staff in the preparation of Town Council events, as required.
- To administer meeting requests setting up meetings and sending invitations.
- Assisting with the preparation and circulation of agendas, minutes, reports and communications.
- Receive complaints, enquiries etc and ensure they are recorded as appropriate and passed to the relevant officer for action and/or response.
- To attend staff meetings and training, including work towards the academic elements of the role, as required.
- Implement and keep filing systems up-to-date.
- Maintain a press cutting register from print press coverage of Town Council activities.
- Stock control of the stationery and request for ordering.
- Distribution of emails from info@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk and actioning where appropriate.
- Such other duties as required, commensurate with the responsibilities for this role

Person Specification

Category	Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Education, Qualifications & Training	English and Maths GCSE's grade C or above or equivalent NVQ or relevant experience	✓	
Experience	Proficient IT skills and experience of all Microsoft packages, Word, Outlook, Excel, PowerPoint etc.	✓	
	Experience of general administration work in an office environment	✓	
Skills, Abilities & Knowledge	Effective communication skills both written and spoken and ability to write and present reports.	✓	
	Ability to work as part of a co-ordinated and joined up team across the Council	✓	
	Ability to work proactively, organise own workload effectively, and making informed decisions to deliver results	✓	
	A flexible approach to working and the ability to respond at short notice to a wide variety of tasks	✓	
	Understanding of their responsibilities for health and safety in their area of responsibility	✓	

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 2024

Proposal for Staffing Review

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to seek the Committee's views on recommending to the Full Council that a review of the staffing structure of the Council be undertaken.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council previously commissioned a review of staffing structures in the Council in October 2022 which was carried out by the Local Councils Consultancy Service (LCC). A copy of the review is attached to this paper as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Salary levels for town clerk and associated staff are assessed under a National Agreement reached in 2004 which sets out the various levels of grade dependent on a range of criteria. A copy of the agreement is attached as an appendix to this paper as Appendix 2.
- 2.3 Decisions made recently in relation to services and assets that the Town Council will take responsibility for over the next two years will result in substantial changes to the levels of responsibility of staff and the complexity of the work being undertaken.
- 2.4 At a very basic level at the time of the last review the budget for the Council was £560,000 which equates to a LC3 council. The budget for 2024/5 has been set at c£976,000 and in all likelihood will increase further in 2025/6. From a budget point of view that places the Town Council at an LC4 level.
- 2.5 Budget level is not the sole arbiter of grades but is one consideration alongside the levels of responsibility associated with the roles of the staff. This needs to be assessed against the set criteria.
- 2.6 Given the size and increasing complexity of the budget and the increasing management scope and complexity of the role of the Town Clerk consideration needs to be given to separating out the role of Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) from the role of Town Clerk.
- 2.7 Having consulted with the Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) on this the advice received was that the separation of Town Clerk and RFO role *'is recommended for growing councils and helps all councils respond positively to assertions 2 and 5 of the AGAR (internal controls & assessment of risk in safeguarding money). Additionally, as you identify, there will be greater time constraints on a clerk managing more functions'*.
- 2.8 My recommendation is that this separation should be included as part of the review as through the next year there will need to be a lot of preparation work done to change the Council's systems and processes to reflect the changes that will be taking place in the coming years and part of that work will be ensuring that we have a budget structure that is fit for purpose which will require a root and branch review.

3. Consideration

- 3.1 That a review is commissioned to re-assess the grades of officers in the Town Council in light of the changes that will be coming through in 2024/5 and beyond and that the review should include the separation of the role of Clerk and RFO.

- 3.2 I have approached the Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) in relation to this but it has advised that it does not have the capacity at present to undertake this work and is unlikely to do so for the foreseeable future.
- 3.3 On that basis I have approached LCC to see if they could refresh the work they did in 2022 and whilst in principle they have indicated that they would at the time of writing I have not received a quote for that work.
- 3.4 The Committee is asked to recommend to the Council that a review is undertaken and that any findings of the review are applied from the 1 April 2024.

Dave Farrow
Town Clerk
February 2024



STAFFING STRUCTURE AND SALARY REVIEW

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL



OCTOBER 2022

ADAM KEPPEL-GREEN BSc FdA FSLCC MCMi

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Background and Brief

Wellington Town Council invited Local Council Consultancy to undertake a review of the council's staff structure and salaries. The council is anticipating growth in the coming years due to expanding its service delivery and the change to a unitary council structure at the principal council level.

The review was undertaken by LCC Associate Adam Keppel-Green in September/October 2022. Adam has worked in the sector since 2012, his primary role being the full time Town Clerk to a growing council in north Cheshire. Adam is also the clerk to a small parish council and involved in the sector as a Director of the SLCC, board member of the Cheshire ALC and training officer at the Cheshire Branch of the SLCC through which he delivers CiLCA training and other training to council clerks. Adam was the NALC Clerk of the Year 2021/22; he holds CiLCA, a Foundation Degree in Community Governance and is currently working towards attainment of the Community Governance BA.

Methodology

This review was undertaken in three stages, the first of which was to review published and supplied information including the existing job description, council website, minutes and the council budget. Separate remote meetings were then held with the Town Clerk, Dave Farrow; Deputy Town Clerk, Annette Kirk; Deputy RFO, Alice Kendall; Administration Assistant, Rebecca Hunt and Cllrs Mark Lithgow (Town Mayor), Michael McGuffie, Janet Lloyd and John Thorne. The data gathered in the first two stages was then used to determine the qualitative measures for the council and undertake the formal evaluation. The salary evaluation was undertaken in accordance with the NALC/SLCC Joint Agreement on Terms and Conditions 2005.

Overview of the Council

Wellington Town Council comprises 15 councillors across five wards covering both Wellington and Rockwell Green; the council was established in 1974 as a successor to the Wellington Urban District Council. Wellington is a medium sized town (population including Rockwell Green c. 16,800) located in the Somerset West and Taunton district of Somerset. A new unitary authority covering the entire county will replace the district and county councils in April 2023.

The Town Council's 2022/23 budget is in the region of £590k, including capital projects. The past three years actual expenditure has been between £225k-£400k; the council has a significant CIL balance (c. 568k) with the expectation of a further c. £360k in the coming years. The council owns a public toilet building, 102-plot allotment site, two play areas and amenity open space. The council has a number of outdoor assets (bins, benches etc) as would be expected of a council of this size and is looking to take ownership of bus shelters. The council rents office space from the district council, part of which it sublets to the museum, and rents a commercial unit in the town centre which it operates as a pop-up shop; the council also hires out a promotional space within the town centre.

The council has delegated authority to determine certain planning applications on behalf of the district council; this can only be exercised when a district planning officer is in attendance at committee meetings, but it does expose the council to the cost of planning appeals in the event its decision are appealed. The council took responsibility for the annual street fair in 2020, runs the Remembrance activities and a Christmas light switch on and fair. The council has been increasingly engaged in town centre activity using funds provided by the district from central government grants.

The council has recently is in the process of agreeing a 125-lease for 64 acres of land between Wellington and Rockwell Green which will be put to a variety of uses including a community farm, playing pitches and climate mitigation. The council is exploring acquiring pools and land around them near the old mill to make accessible to the public. Local government reorganisation will inevitably result in additional assets and services being taken on by the

Town Council in the coming years; the council expects it will take responsibility for further play areas, a second public toilet building and a Victorian formal park. The council also aspires to obtain car parks.

A climate crisis strategy has recently been adopted and the council is keen to commence implementation and working towards becoming a carbon neutral town. The council funds a part time community warden which is outsourced to a contractor to provide.

Current Staff Structure

The council current has four members of staff and an FTE (full time equivalent) of 3.9. The post of Deputy RFO and Assistant Clerk was created in 2021 amalgamating the Finance Officer and Assistant Clerk roles. The Administration Assistant is due to complete their apprenticeship shortly.

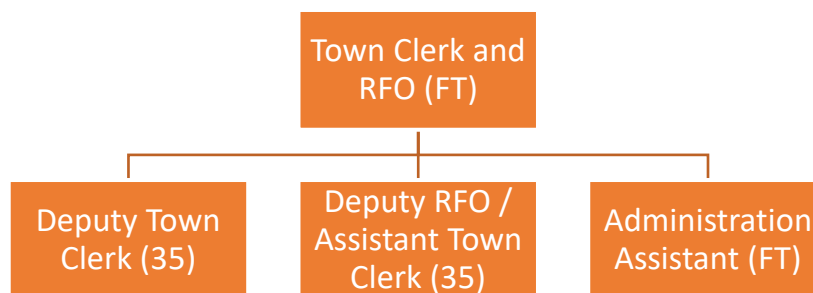


Figure One: Current Staffing Structure

Issues identified

The Town Council is an increasingly active council which aspires to be a leading council and place shaper. It is shortly acquiring a significant amount of open space and it is highly likely that its asset base will grow in the next 5-10 years as the unitary council establishes and passes assets/service to the Town Council.

There is a lack of staff resource to meet the aspirations of the council. This was particularly expressed by councillors some of whom expressed frustration at the speed of progress on certain projects which they attributed to needing more staff. There is concern there is a lack of expertise to deliver the council's climate objectives.

As the council grows, it is important to maximise the use of member/officer time and ensure efficient operational arrangements. At present allotment inspections are undertaken by councillors which can sometimes result in delay due to time commitments; multiple officers often attend committee/council meetings. There was concern there is not clarity in

operational health and safety responsibility. The Town Clerk will need capacity to provide leadership as the council responds to the opportunities of devolution and ensuring effective governance as its operations expand; the Town Clerk recognised that he could delegate more effectively to his team. The Administration Assistant noted that they often have capacity for additional work.

The council website is out of date in a number of areas (images not yet available on some pages, no news items posted in past 6 months, staff information page requires updating, website lists it is recruiting for a filled post etc.)

Recommended Staff Restructuring

A revised staffing structure is proposed (see figure two, below). This structure is based on the council's current aspirations and discussions with the incumbent staff.

The structure changes the role of the existing Deputy Town Clerk to that of Assets and Events Officer; the incumbent has experience in asset/event management and has less interest in the governance side of the Deputy Town Clerk role. As the council's asset base grows, having an officer as the dedicated lead for asset management will be beneficial. Likewise, the council has stated its intention to expand the event provision and the role would lead on the coordination of these. This role would have operational health and safety responsibility across the council's activity and should be made full time.

The existing Deputy RFO and Assistant Clerk would become the Deputy Town Clerk (and Deputy RFO). Their role would be broadly similar to present but with greater responsibility for deputising for the clerk and providing support for overall council policy and governance. The role should be made full time. The Administration Assistant would take responsibility for the management of the website, mayor's diary and maintaining stationery stocks from the DRFO/AC.

A new position of Projects Officer is recommended. Reporting to the Town Clerk, their role would be to lead on the implementation of projects under the direction of the TC/DTC/AEO. This would include implementation of the climate change strategy and other projects the council delivers, noting its significant CIL balances which will require to be utilised. It is suggested that this be a full time position, from the ambition of the council and current under resourcing it appears this would be a fully engaged role at full time. The success of the role requires the TC/DTC/AEO to effectively delegate projects; maintaining an operational oversight but leaving the implementation to the PO. This will allow these officers to focus on the strategy, governance and routine operation of the council.

It is considered appropriate that the Town Clerk retains the Responsible Financial Officer designation. Whilst it is noted that at present the DRFO/AC undertakes the majority of RFO duties, it is uncommon for the role to be separated from the Town Clerk at a council of this size. However, the scope of responsibility will be reflected in the grading of the DRFO role.

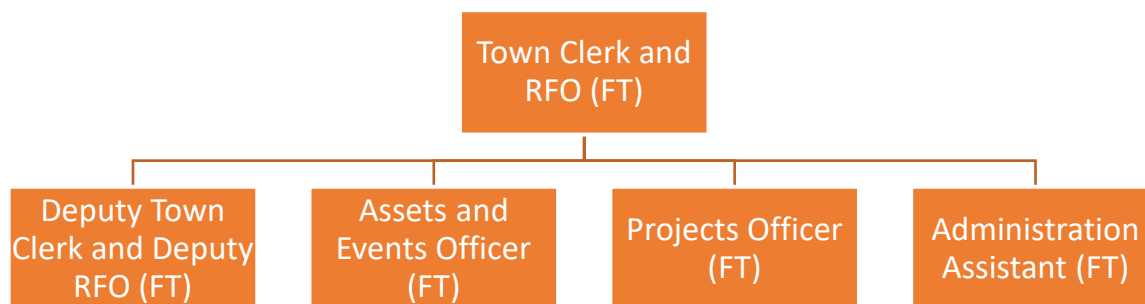


Figure Two: Proposed Staffing Structure

Future Adjustment

With the uncertainty as to how precisely the council will develop following unitarisation of the principal council, it is not possible to provide certainty that the above structure will be sufficient, but it would be inappropriate to try to over-guess the council's requirements.

It is recommended that the council should review workload following the implementation of this structure as in time it may find it necessary to create a second Administration Assistant position to provide additional administrative resource. Creating additional resource at the bottom of the structure enables more senior officers to more effectively delegate work, for example financial data entry and aspects of event and project administration.

Depending on the scope of assets/events the council delivers, it may be necessary to separate out the Events Officer role into a dedicated part time position. This may be particularly prudent if the scope of the asset management increases as it allows better specialisation within the team.

Additional Recommendations

Allotment Inspections

It is recommended that the allotment inspections be undertaken by the Assets and Events Officer (with support from the Administration Assistant) rather than by members. The inspection and good management of the council's assets is a responsibility of officers and the time of members is better spent on strategy and decision making than routine operations. The procurement of allotment software is recommended to facilitate more efficient management of the allotments and to automate some administrative tasks.

Officer attendance at meetings

Multiple officers attending the same meeting is generally a waste of officer time which takes

them out of operational duties; in some cases all four officers have attended a meeting. Whilst it is recognised that there will be occasions where the meeting will benefit from a specific officer being present to advise the committee, in general the council should look to have a well briefed designated officer attend each committee with other officers providing a written report with clear recommendations/guidance for members. The following allocation is suggested but should be refined as appropriate by the Town Clerk.

Full Council	Town Clerk
Policy and Resources	Town Clerk
Environment and Open Spaces	Town Clerk
Allotments	Assets and Events Officer
Town Centre	Assets and Events Officer
Finance	Deputy Town Clerk
Planning	Deputy Town Clerk

Delegation from the Town Clerk

It is recognised that the Town Clerk role is currently stretched. This will increase as the council takes on additional assets, services and staffing. It is vitally important that the council therefore develops a strong officer support team which it already has good foundations for. This relies on the Town Clerk effectively delegating tasks to ensure his time is focused on the areas he needs to be focused on and enabling his team to take responsibility for other areas. For example, reducing involvement in event management with the Asset and Events Officer taking full responsibility for this. The consideration of a second administration assistant to facilitate effective delegation should be considered in due course should the Town Clerk find it is not possible to effectively delegate further duties down the chain.

Recommended Salary Gradings

The salary gradings for the current staffing structure are:

Town Clerk	SCP 31-35
Deputy Town Clerk	SCP 18-20
Deputy RFO / Assistant Clerk	SCP 14-17
Administration Assistant	SCP 1-4

The following salary gradings for the proposed staffing structure are recommended:

Town Clerk	SCP 37-41
Deputy Town Clerk	SCP 24-28
Assets and Events Officer	SCP 24-28

Appendix One: Salary Evaluations

Introduction

The 2005 agreement sets out four profiles (LC1, LC2, LC3 and LC4) designed to fit the majority of clerking roles, it includes a series of statements for eight aspects of a role. Within each profile there are three pay ranges which can be used to benchmark the post as being a little below the standard (below substantive), on the standard (substantive) or a little above the standard (above substantive). The output of this system is a specific salary grading (e.g. LC1 substantive which is spinal column points 7-12).

Table one is an overview of the profiles which is used to initially determine the profile which a role will be first assessed against. The items in the table are examples of a typical council within that profile.

Profile	Size	Meetings	Committees	Staff	Devolved functions	Statutory functions	Budget
LC 1	Small Parish	Up to 6	None	None	None	None	25K
LC 2	Medium Parish	6 - 12	None	<10	2	Several	25K – 250K
LC 3	Large Parish or small town	12	2+	10 - 20	Some	Most	250-750K
LC 4	Large town	12	5+	20 +	Many	Most	750K+

Table One: typical profile examples from the 2005 agreement

Whilst the agreement is designed for salary evaluations of the clerk, it can be used to guide evaluations for junior staff with a greater degree of confidence the more similar a position is to that of clerk. Where posts vary significantly from that of a clerk, market data is often used to assess the outcome.

Town Clerk Salary Evaluation

Based on the overview outlined in table one, the evaluation has first been undertaken against the LC3 profile and each aspect assessed to determine if the role meets/exceeds/fails to meet it.

Criterion	Summary	Grading
Knowledge	The role requires a theoretical, practical and procedural knowledge of local government law with some specialist knowledge for open space management. The council unusually has authority to make planning decisions albeit it is advised by specialist officer.	SUBSTANTIVE
Mental Skills	Whilst the role has limited delegated authority the Town Clerk is involved in the development and management of a range of projects. The clerk is on the officer working group for the local plan and is likely to be involved in a range of strategic matters as the council works through the changes of local government reorganisation.	SUBSTANTIVE
Interpersonal / Communication Skills	The role services meetings of the full council and two committees as well as representing the council at external meetings. The clerk will be involved in advising, guiding and negotiating with a broad range of internal/external partners.	SUBSTANTIVE
Initiative and Independence	The role is expected to exercise initiative to bring matters to the council. There is some delegated authority for the day-to-day administration of the council and is likely to grow as the council takes on further responsibilities.	SUBSTANTIVE
Responsibility for People	The role is responsible for the overall health and safety in the organisation albeit that the day-to-day operational responsibilities are primarily undertaken by other staff. There does not appear to be a significant number of volunteers involved in the council's direct work.	SUBSTANTIVE
Responsibility for Employees	The clerk line manages four staff, all engaged in office based roles.	BELOW SUBSTANTIVE
Financial Responsibility	The council's budget is within the range for a council at this profile. The role is the RFO and the council additionally has significant CIL balances.	SUBSTANTIVE
Resource Responsibility	The clerk has overall responsibility for a range of assets and it is expected that this will grow in due course. As well as street furniture, allotments and public toilets, the council leases property and sub-	SUBSTANTIVE

	leases the pop-up shop. The council is acquiring a significant amount of open space which it plans to develop.	
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The majority of measures sit firmly within the substantive benchmark of an LC3 post and accordingly the role is graded at LC3 substantive. This corresponds to SCP 37-41.

Deputy Town Clerk Salary Evaluation

Based on the overview outlined in table one, the evaluation has first been undertaken against the LC2 profile and each aspect assessed to determine if the role meets/exceeds/fails to meet it.

Criterion	Summary	Grading
Knowledge	The role is required to deputise for the Town Clerk, requiring a broad local government knowledge. The role undertakes the majority of financial management and requires knowledge of local council finance, VAT and payroll.	SUBSTANTIVE
Mental Skills	The Deputy Town Clerk will support the Town Clerk in a range of matters supporting the good governance of the organisation. It will involve problem solving and project planning/development and supporting the development of strategy.	SUBSTANTIVE
Interpersonal / Communication Skills	The role services two committees and will engage with a small range of external stakeholders to deliver projects.	SUBSTANTIVE
Initiative and Independence	The job involves working within recognised procedures, within which the jobholder is required to organise own workload. There is scope for initiative and developing projects for committee consideration.	SUBSTANTIVE
Responsibility for People	The role has limited responsibility for people.	BELOW SUBSTANTIVE
Responsibility for Employees	The role has no line management responsibility.	BELOW SUBSTANTIVE
Financial Responsibility	This role fulfils the duty of deputy RFO and completes the majority of financial management.	ABOVE SUBSTANTIVE
Resource Responsibility	This role has limited resource responsibility.	BELOW SUBSTANTIVE

The majority of measures sit at the substantive benchmark whilst one is above and three are below. This supports a grading of at the substantive benchmark of LC2 (SCP 24-28).

Assets and Events Officer Salary Evaluation

Based on the overview outlined in table one, the evaluation us first been undertaken against the LC2 profile and each aspect assessed to determine if the role meets/exceeds/fails to meet it.

Criterion	Summary	Grading
Knowledge	The role requires a practical and procedural knowledge across a range of areas including asset and event management and health and safety.	SUBSTANTIVE
Mental Skills	Working under the general direction of the Town Clerk, the role will be required to develop and oversee projects and plan the effective management of events/assets. Event management in particularly requires responsive problem solving.	SUBSTANTIVE
Interpersonal / Communication Skills	The role services two committees and engages with a range of external stakeholders, including the general public, to deliver services.	SUBSTANTIVE
Initiative and Independence	The job involves working within recognised procedures, within which the jobholder is required to organise own workload. There is scope for initiative and developing projects for committee consideration.	SUBSTANTIVE
Responsibility for People	The role has operational responsibility for health and safety at the council and through delivery of events and management of assets has considerable responsibility for the public on sites.	SUBSTANTIVE
Responsibility for Employees	The role has no line management responsibility.	BELOW SUBSTANTIVE
Financial Responsibility	This role has limited direct responsibility for financial resources although does involve the oversight of projects and expenditure from approved budgets through express delegated authority from committee.	BELOW SUBSTANTIVE
Resource Responsibility	The role has operational responsibility for a range of assets, and it is expected that this will grow in due course. As well as street furniture, allotments and public toilets the council is acquiring a significant amount of open space which it plans to develop.	ABOVE SUBSTANTIVE

The majority of measures sit at the substantive benchmark whilst one is above and two are below. This supports a grading of at the substantive benchmark of LC2 (SCP 24-28).

Projects Officer Salary Evaluation

Based on the overview outlined in table one, the evaluation us first been undertaken against the LC1 profile and each aspect assessed to determine if the role meets/exceeds/fails to meet it.

Criterion	Summary	Grading
Knowledge	The role will particularly require a specialist knowledge of climate change mitigation as this will be a key area they will work in. They will also need to gain sufficient knowledges in a range of areas including some local government regulation.	SUBSTANTIVE
Mental Skills	The role will require some judgment and creative skills in furthering projects but will have support from senior officers on contentious or particularly challenging areas. The role will require effective project management skills.	ABOVE
Interpersonal / Communication Skills	The delivery of projects will involve engagement with a range of external/internal stakeholders, including the general public. There will be the requirement to prepare reports for committee, undertake consultations and prepare documents for public consumption.	ABOVE
Initiative and Independence	The role will predominantly be working under the direction of senior officers but will be expected to take initiative to develop projects and organise their own workload.	ABOVE
Responsibility for People	Depending on the projects delivered, the role is likely to have some responsibility for volunteers or users of council facilities, although this is with the oversight of senior officers.	ABOVE
Responsibility for Employees	The role has no line management responsibility.	SUBSTANTIVE
Financial Responsibility	The role will have some financial responsibility from within approved budgets.	SUBSTANTIVE
Resource Responsibility	The role will have minimal resource responsibility.	SUBSTANTIVE

The measures are split between the substantive and above benchmarks. On balance, greater weight is attributed to the first five criterion given this is not a clerk role and therefore a grading of LC1 Above is recommended (SCP 13-18)

Administration Assistant Salary Evaluation

Based on the overview outlined in table one, the evaluation us first been undertaken against the LC1 profile and each aspect assessed to determine if the role meets/exceeds/fails to meet it.

Criterion	Summary	Grading
Knowledge	The role benefits from a basic understanding of local government administration as well as a solid knowledge of the local area and services provided by the council and other authorities.	SUBSTANTIVE
Mental Skills	The role will predominantly undertake routine administrative tasks under the direction of senior officers leaving little need for problem solving.	BELOW
Interpersonal / Communication Skills	The role will be responsible for managing the council's website and social media, ensuring clear and appropriate messages are transmitted. They will support a range of projects, processing and preparing correspondence and they deliver front line customer service via email/phone/in person to customers.	SUBSTANTIVE
Initiative and Independence	The role predominantly works under the direction and to the instruction of senior officers leaving minimal room for initiative and independence.	BELOW
Responsibility for People	The role has minimal responsibility for people.	BELOW
Responsibility for Employees	The role has no line management responsibility.	SUBSTANTIVE
Financial Responsibility	This role has minimal financial responsibility with no delegated authority for incurring expenditure. They do undertake some basic financial administration to support the RFO/Deputy RFO.	SUBSTANTIVE
Resource Responsibility	The role has minimal resource responsibility, maintaining stationery stocks.	SUBSTANTIVE

The majority of measures sit at the substantive benchmark of an LC1 post and accordingly the role is graded at LC1 substantive. This corresponds to SCP 7-12.



SOMERSET ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Serving Local Councils in Somerset

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NALC / SLCC Salary Agreement – Short Form

In December 2004, agreement on salary scales was reached between NALC and SLCC. This document contains a much abbreviated summary of the text – the full document should be referred to in the event of any doubt.

A Council, in appointing the Clerk to the Council, is choosing the holder of a responsible public position who will have the qualities necessary to administer properly the Council's affairs and to carry out the tasks associated with the wider role of the Council as its representative and ambassador. Those qualities include competence, initiative, energy and imagination. The Council should act as a responsible employer in the recruitment, employment and management of its staff and make use of good employment practice in conducting its relations with its staff. [Guidance on making an appointment is available from SALC in hard and electronic format].

The final decision on salary has to be agreed between the council and the officer at appointment, but the National Agreement between NALC and SLCC provides a reasonable salary and terms and conditions standard for clerks.

NALC and SLCC strongly advise that the starting salary of a Clerk to the Council should, as a minimum, be paid in accordance with the ranges set out below. This has been derived from an independent bench marking exercise carried out on behalf of the NALC and SLCC across a sample set of Clerks' positions. The job profiles for the benchmarks are included at the end of this document. Councils and Clerks should establish the appropriate similar job specification taking account of the particular realities of the role in question.

Salary is calculated by reference to the numbered positions on the spinal column points chart issued regularly by NALC and the SLCC. The spinal column points used will be those of the National Joint Council for Local Government Service.

<i>Scale</i>	Points below substantive range	Substantive benchmark range	Points above substantive range
<i>LC1</i>	15-17	18-22	23-25
<i>LC2</i>	26-29	30-34	35-38
<i>LC3</i>	39-42	43-47	48-51
<i>LC4</i>	52-55	56-60	61-64

Having established the benchmark salary for the post, the Council will either;

- Adopt a salary scale within the range. The salary will rise annually, by automatic increase on the 1st April each year (or such other date as may be agreed between NALC and SLCC) by incremental steps to the scale maximum.
- Or adopt a single salary point (a 'spot salary') within the range. Where a single salary point is adopted the Council should review the salary annually.

In either case, the starting point or single salary point is to be chosen by reference to the following factors:

- experience and expertise
- qualification
- whether the clerk is also the Responsible Financial Officer
- whether the council has developed increased functions as a result of Quality Council status
- the extent of functions devolved from principal authority level
- staffing levels.

Under the National Agreement, professional development through a recognised institution or programme will be rewarded by a salary movement of one upward point on the spinal column in respect of each level attained.

The National Agreement requires that part-time officers are remunerated *pro rata* at an hourly rate derived from the salary for a full-time post. The hourly rate is calculated by dividing the annual full-time salary, including any additions or allowances, by 52 weeks to produce a weekly figure. That figure is to be divided by 37, being the standard number of hours worked by a full-time officer.

Under employment legislation any part-time member of staff must be offered on a *pro rata* basis the same terms and conditions as those of a full-time worker in a comparable post. This includes supervisory enhancements, expenses, overtime/time-in-lieu, leave, pension or gratuity, etc. For a comparable post where there is a sole employee the comparison must be with an employee in the local council sector.

PROFILE LC 1

The job requires predominantly practical and procedural knowledge across a technical or specialist area or an equivalent level of organisational, procedural and policy knowledge.

<i>Small or medium parish.</i>	<i>Up to 6 meetings a year</i>	<i>No devolved functions</i>
<i>Few statutory functions.</i>	<i>No Staff</i>	<i>Typical budget of up to £25,000</i>

PROFILE LC 2

The job requires predominantly practical and procedural knowledge across a technical or specialist area or an equivalent level of organisational, procedural and policy knowledge.

<i>Small or medium parish.</i>	<i>6 – 12 meetings per year.</i>	<i>2 devolved functions.</i>
<i>Many statutory functions.</i>	<i>Small team of up to 10 staff.</i>	<i>Typical budget £25,000 – £250,000</i>

PROFILE LC 3

The job requires theoretical plus practical and procedural knowledge in a specialist area or an equivalent level of organisational, procedural and policy knowledge.

<i>Large parish/small town.</i>	<i>12 meetings plus 2 committees.</i>	<i>3 delegated functions</i>
<i>Most statutory functions.</i>	<i>Large team 10-20 staff.</i>	<i>Typical budget £250,000–£750,000</i>

PROFILE LC 4

The job requires advanced theoretical, practical and procedural knowledge across a specialist area or an equivalent level of organisational, procedural and policy knowledge.

<i>Large town</i>	<i>12 meetings per year plus 5 committees</i>
<i>3+ delegated functions</i>	<i>Most statutory functions in large town.</i>
<i>20 + staff.</i>	<i>Budget in excess of £750,000</i>

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL RISK MANAGEMENT SCHEME

1. Background

- 1.1.** Wellington Town Council is committed to ensuring business risks are appropriately managed, whether relating to Council premises and people, public money, Council activities or Information Technology and Communications.
- 1.2.** This document sets out how Wellington Town Council will manage and minimise risk in all its areas of operation. It is reviewed annually each year as part of the annual audit process. New risks arising are incorporated when identified. The risk management scheme should be reviewed annually and forms an integral part of governance and risk management as part of the annual audit. Appropriately managing risks is a specific declaration within the Annual Governance Section of the external audit AGAR form (Annual governance and Accountability Return)
- 1.3.** Each risk is identified with risk level of high, medium or low. Control measures show actions or procedures which serve to reduce risk. This then leaves a residual risk rating. Residual risk is that which is left after all risk-reduction measures have been put in place. Risk management seeks to identify then reduce risks to their lowest potential of harm. No risk can be completely eliminated but planning for potentially harmful eventualities is a big part of successfully running any type of business. A range of written documents support risk control and record due diligence and governance tools to protect the Council from financial or reputational risk.

2. Risk Assessment by Category

2.1. Finance

ACTIVITY	RISK	RISK LEVEL	CONTROL MEASURES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	RESIDUAL RISK
Payment of Accounts	Errors in payment. Fraud.	High	Payment on receipt of formal invoice only. All accounts approved at monthly Finance meeting. A schedule of payments is attached to each agenda. Minutes confirm approval to pay. Three signatures required for each payment (whatever type) or bank will not process. Care taken to ensure correct bank details entered for each payee (bank system also has control measures for organisations).	WTC uses mostly online banking payments, but does issue a limited number of cheques and makes a small number of Direct Debit payments for some supplies. Cheque signatories, and online payment approvers are members of the Finance Committee and the Clerk or Deputy. Different signature combinations used at random.	Council's Financial Regulations. Monthly bank reconciliation. Service provider invoices. Cheque book counterfoils.	Low
Banking	Errors By Bank. Loss of signatories. Insufficient checks on records.	Medium	Bank statements checked regularly against payment instructions. Signatory list reviewed each year. New staff added as account administrators where appropriate. Additional Councillors created as bank signatories when need arises.	Income and expenditure balanced to transactions on bank account for the same period. Chairman publicly signs monthly bank reconciliation and income and expenditure accounts at each month's Finance meeting.	Council's Financial Regulations. Council meeting agenda and minutes.	Low

Petty Cash	Fraudulent claims. Dishonesty. Theft via burglary.	High	Signed, dated voucher matches receipt to payment. Two witnesses required when reimbursing expenses. Locked petty cash tin retained in safe. Expenditure balanced monthly. Restricted list of items for purchase with petty cash. Cash drawn may not exceed £100. Only a signatory can draw cash at the bank. Cheques for cash require 3 signatures. WTC no longer carries a petty cash float. See also income receivable.	Account signatory only can present cheque for cash at bank. At monthly reconciliation, expenses are allocated to their appropriate budget heading.	Council's Financial Regulations. Petty cash book, cash book records, vouchers and monthly reconciliation.	Low
Grant awards given	Applicant is not bona fide organisation. Grant is not used for stated purpose. Grant is unspent or activity not delivered.	Medium	Standard application form. Pre-set criteria for awards set out in grants policy. Grants may not be paid to individuals. Applicants provide feed-back at year end. Policy states unspent grants must be repaid. Formal Service Level agreements entered into where grants will span 2 or more years.	Applicants are required to submit two years' financial accounts with their application, as well as a copy of their constitution or equivalent.	Grant application form. Supporting evidence. Grant policy. Council minutes record awards made. Confirmation letter to applicant. Cheque book counterfoils. Signed Service Level Agreements.	Low
Grant awards received	Grants are not received.	n/a	WTC does not apply for external grant funding.	Should this change a new policy will be required.	-	n/a
Income receivable	Non payment of monies due. Misappropriation of sums paid.	High	Formal invoices issued for each income payable. Workflow reminder to check income has been received. Formal agreements held relating to charges. Incremental measures in case of non-payment. BACS payments encouraged so no actual money changes hands. Receipt or other written acknowledgement sent to confirm payment has been received.	Payment due within 28 days, then payment is chased in writing and verbally. Cheques and cash (rare) are paid into the bank the same or the next day.	Numbered invoices. Bank statements. Council's Financial Regulations. Written record of correspondence.	Medium
Precept	Precept is insufficient to cover statutory duties, activities and operations.	Low	Monthly budget statements to Council provide overview of expenditure against previous year's budget. Annual budget summary, budget report and draft budget prepared by Clerk and reviewed by Council prior to setting following year's budget. Final budget formally approved at Council meeting. Precept raised in writing. Receipt of precept formally reported at Council meetings.	Precept is received in one instalment in April each year	Monthly budget statements. Annual budget summary Annual pre-budget report with draft budget. Final budget statement. Precept claim form. Council agenda and minutes. Bank statements. Cash book record of income.	Low

Annual Budget	Funds are overspent. Funds are underspent.	Medium	Monthly budget statements presented at Council meetings enable regular review of actual expenditure against forecast. Ongoing adjustments made if necessary or formal resolution to transfer funds from other budget headings or from financial reserves.	Some invoices are received annually only in March of each year so it is essential to contact these providers in advance to establish costs for the year ahead. Where cost of living price increases are not notified by service providers the October retail price index will be used to estimate service increases for the year ahead.	Monthly budget statements. Council meeting agendas and minutes.	Low
Financial Records	Inadequate records maintained.	Medium	Staff are suitably trained. Suitable software packages are used. Annual feedback from Internal and External Auditor acted on. Monthly summaries approved at each monthly Council meeting.	Audit feedback is collated into an annual action plan. 'Proper practices' employed in the preparation of all financial statements.	Auditor recommendations action plan. Conclusion of audit feedback from external auditor. Council meeting agendas and minutes.	Low
Audit	Records are inadequate. Financial irregularities come to light. Audit is not completed by the statutory deadline. Public inspection period not correctly publicly notified. Conclusion of Audit not correctly publicly notified. Audit results in 'except for' matters or audit failure.	Medium	Clerk employs strict planning for audit deadlines. Clerk is suitably qualified to prepare for audit. Internal auditor commissioned well in advance. Clerk follows annual guidance published by external auditor. Only current year template AGAR forms provided are used. Only current year template inspection and conclusion of audit Notices are used. Feedback from previous year's audit incorporated into financial practices.	Additional training around audit may be provided if necessary.	Internal Auditor's report. AGAR form. Annual risk-management review. Public inspection rights Notice. Conclusion of audit Notice.	Medium
Staff Salaries and Pensions	Salaries are incorrectly calculated. Payment is made due to fraudulent claim. Incorrect payment issued.	Medium	Salary rates are formally approved by Council at recruitment and reviewed as required. Payroll package calculates salaries. HMRC notifications of tax codes used. Each staff member completes a weekly time sheet detailing hours worked and any holiday or sick leave taken. Sample reviews of hours worked against timesheets. Salary payments approved monthly at Council meeting. Tax and National Insurance contributions are calculated and paid monthly. Pensions are calculated and contributions paid monthly. Salaries are paid by electronic bank transfer with usual requirement for 3 signatories to release payment.		Payroll Software reports. Cash-book entry. Banking records. Employee wage slips. Council meeting agendas and minutes.	Low

Expenses	Misappropriation of funds.	High	<p>Expenses may not be paid in cash, and can only be submitted on the Council's expenses form. Payment may not be made unless supported by the correct receipt. Payment may not be made unless approved by the Finance Committee. Any alterations on forms must be initialised by Clerk.</p> <p>Claims for travel expenses must be signed by the Clerk and Chairman, Clerk and Deputy where the expense claim is the Chairman's, and Chairman when the claim is the Clerk's.</p>	The Clerk and Deputy are the only member of staff empowered to sign off expenses claims.	Signed claim forms for expenses. Cash book and expenditure statements.	Low
Councillor Allowances	Allowances are paid at the wrong rate. Income tax on allowance is not deducted where due.	Medium	<p>Councillors each receive the same allowance set annually at June's Council meeting as part of the budget setting process. Only the Mayor receives an additional allowance. Wage slips are created for the allowance. Emergency Tax code used if no formal tax code notification to the contrary provided. Cheques and electronic payments are subject to usual signatory requirements.</p>	Additional care required where Councillors are in paid employment.	Adopted Financial Regulations Council minutes. Wage slips. HMRC PAYE records. Cheque book counterfoils.	Low
Value-for Money	Contract and/or service costs are exorbitant or do not reflect value for money.	Medium	<p>Contracts issued/expenditure approved only in line with Financial Regulations. Competitive quotes sought where Financial regulations stipulate. Contract sums reviewed annually unless otherwise specified to enable cost reductions.</p>	Council has some 2-year contracts for example electricity contracts if this can achieve further reductions. WTC does not commission large-scale contracts.	Adopted Financial Regulations. Tender documents. Comparative quotations received. Council agendas and minutes.	Low

2.2. Premises

ACTIVITY	RISK	RISK LEVEL	CONTROL MEASURES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	RESIDUAL RISK
Insurance	Buildings or premises are not adequately insured. Insurance does not cover premises, equipment and people.	High	Insurance in place for buildings, contents and Public Liability. Insurance contract covers all insurable risks and is reviewed annually. Appropriate annual increase in level of cover across all insured risks (rebuild costs). Any changes in premises reported to insurer as they happen. Changes to be followed up by Office/insurer in writing. Public Liability insurance to be in place at all times and for all premises.	WTC operates from a building owned by the District by Somerset Council who pay the buildings insurance then charge a proportion of the sum back to WTC. Other premises and Public Liability within its office premises are directly insured by the Council. Additional premises may be taken on temporarily or permanently. Premises covers all physical areas where the Council operates including allotments and public conveniences.	Annual insurance renewal, schedule and register of assets.	Low
Fire Risk	Risk to people or premises caused by fire.	High	Formal written Fire Risk assessment. Formal fire plan and evacuation procedure. Fire extinguishers in place and tested annually. Fire hazards recorded and remedied immediately. Fire risks reported to landlord the same day. Fire alarm tested weekly (landlord). 6-monthly fire drill (landlord) Quarterly formal inspection of premises Fire alarm and emergency lighting serviced six-monthly (landlord). Risks and near misses reported to Council each month.	WTC operates from a building leased from the District Somerset Council, who perform the statutory tasks relating to employer fire safety. WTC staff formally sign annually to record they have read and understood fire risk assessment, and evacuation procedure. Staff receive training on use of fire extinguishers.	Fire risk Assessment. Fire safety plan. Fire evacuation procedure. Fire alarm testing records. Fire drill records. Formal building inspection forms. Contractor Invoice for PAT testing. Clerk's monthly risk report. Council meeting agendas and minutes.	Low
Health and Safety	Non-compliance with statutory requirements. Inadequate Health and safety controls in place.	High	Staff are suitably trained on H&S matters. All landlord and Town Council H&S procedures adhered to. Clerk designated as delegated Health and Safety Lead Officer. <u>WTC employ specialist H&S advisors to ensure compliance in H&S law.</u> Appropriate procedures and risk assessments in place. All building and repair work carried out by suitably-qualified contractors.	The Council has fewer than 5 employees so does not need a formal H & S policy. <u>Formal H&S policy in place. However T</u> the staff handbook makes clear that the safety of employees is paramount, also what duties are incumbent on employees to observe safe practices.	H&S and associated Policies. Asbestos register COSHH risk assessments. Relevant Risk assessments. <u>Clerk's monthly risk report to Council.</u> Council meeting agendas and minutes. Staff handbook.	Low

Building security	Break in, vandalism, theft.	Medium	<p>Insurance cover for all risk events - buildings and contents and Public Liability.</p> <p>Written record of key-holders - staff only plus the Office cleaner.</p> <p>All staff obliged to comply with office security measures.</p> <p>New staff sign for 1 set of keys and sign their return at end of employment.</p> <p>All spare sets of keys unlabelled and stored in locked key cabinet.</p> <p>Key log-book stored in office safe.</p> <p>Rear entrance door kept locked at all times.</p> <p><u>Small-limited</u> amounts of cash only retained in office.</p> <p>Prompt banking procedures.</p> <p>Any cash or cheques in the office are locked into a petty cash tin which in turn is locked into the safe.</p>	Although the building is shared, the Clerk is usually last to leave the building each evening and a full walk of the premises is conducted to ensure all windows are closed and all office, front and back doors are locked.	Key-holding records. Insurance documents including certificate of cover on office wall.	Low
Equipment	Inadequate or faulty equipment causes service failure or risk of injury	Medium	<p>Equipment is insured within the contents section of the insurance policy.</p> <p>Annual PAT testing of equipment.</p> <p>Regular service and maintenance of equipment.</p> <p>Equipment is robust and fit-for-purpose.</p> <p>Operating instructions available and staff instructed on use of the equipment.</p> <p>Items replaced when necessary.</p>	see also people section below.	Purchase invoices. Operational instructions. Risk assessment.	Low

2.3. People

ACTIVITY	RISK	RISK LEVEL	CONTROL MEASURES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	RESIDUAL RISK
Elections	Insufficient funds available.	Medium	<p>Annually a contingency sum is budgeted for to cover the cost of one election and an advertisement in the press.</p> <p><u>Amount built into each year's budget to form an earmarked reserve for scheduled term elections.</u></p>	Where possible, the Council has followed the co-option route, having found that sufficient interest has been shown to co-opt a replacement to the Councillor lost.	Budget statement.	Low

Recruitment	Staff recruited are not suitably skilled to carry out required duties.	High	<p>Quality, in-depth interview process. Panel process for interviews. Full council approve appointments. Clerk and interview panel approve appointments. Job description and person-specification clear for each role and assessed by Policy & Resources committee. References sought prior to formal confirmation of employment offer. Comprehensive induction package. Three-month review of new staff. Six-month probationary period. Skills and training audit for new staff.</p>	WTC may choose to minimise risk by employing new staff via a trusted recruitment agency, where a temp-to-perm arrangement may be offered. Some higher-risk work processes are not allocated to temporary staff (eg managing petty cash) or those in a probationary period (eg banking administration).	<p>Application forms. Interview feedback and test results. Job Description. Person-specification. Contract of employment. Formal records staff appraisals.</p>	Medium
Workplace Arrangements	Use of facilities or equipment causes injury or illness. Premises and/or equipment not adequately maintained.	Medium	<p>Induction of staff member explains use of facilities and equipment. Building inspected quarterly. Repairs carried out promptly by suitably-qualified contractor. Tailored review of desk, chair, computer set-up. Annual display Screen Equipment assessment carried out for each staff member. All incidents recorded in accident book and acted on. User instructions in place for all office equipment. Foundation risk assessment tailored to individual staff and reviewed annually Health & Safety policy and risk assessments in place.</p>	<p>Reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate any special requirements by staff. Risk assessments to be reviewed to accommodate changes in staff such as new members joining or pregnancy.</p>	<p>Accident book records. Building inspection records. Works orders and invoices. Minutes of formal meetings. Monthly risk report to Council meeting by Clerk.</p>	Low
Staff use of equipment or substances	Inadequate safety measures. Incorrect use of equipment may damage it or cause injury. Materials used cause injury or illness.	High	<p>COSHH instructions available for all products used. Staff fully inducted and trained on any and all equipment they will use. Staff provided with all relevant risk assessments for activities, use of tools and equipment. Staff sign annual declaration that they will adhere to all health and safety procedures in the fulfilment of their duties. Personal Protective Equipment is provided free of charge where its use is necessary to protect the employee. Any incidents to be written up in accident book, and acted on. Employer's Liability Insurance is in place.</p>	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health is a legal responsibility placed on employers to ensure products used do not damage the health and well-being of employees.	<p>COSHH product sheets. Risk assessments for using tools and equipment. Tool and equipment servicing records. Tools and equipment purchase records. 'PAT tested' stickers on electrical tools and appliances. Accident book records. Insurance documents.</p>	Low

Staff Competency	Staff fail to perform to the required standard. Errors cause financial or reputational loss.	Medium	Adequate recruitment processes. Appropriate line-management procedures in place, include regular review of staff tasks and competency. Annual review sets targets and areas for improvement. Ongoing review of staff training requirements. Employer's liability insurance.	Golden threads of honesty integrity and maintaining confidentiality run through all Council operations. Shortfalls in performance are tackled early to prevent repeat or escalation.	Personnel records. Job description. Person-specification. Training records. Capability procedure. Disciplinary Procedure. Insurance Documents.	Low
Conduct of Staff	Poor or inappropriate staff conduct causes financial or reputational loss. Disharmonious workplace environment.	Medium	Adequate recruitment processes. Training on standards of behaviour required. Appropriate line-management procedures in place. Inappropriate behaviour is managed robustly and promptly. Staff are instructed to call emergency services should a serious risk arise. Employer's Liability Insurance	Attitudes around culture and values are tested at interview. New staff induction focusses on standards of behaviour and team working in addition to working practices.	Personnel records. Job description. Personnel records. Training records. Capability procedure. Disciplinary Procedure. Harassment Policy. Insurance documentation.	Low
Staff shortages, planned and unplanned.	Statutory duties not complied with. Deadlines missed. Inadequate financial checks. Poor decision making. Increased pressure on remaining staff. Increased sickness absence.	Medium	Adequate staffing levels. Supervision and annual review records. Succession planning where staff are anticipated to leave. Well-written information to guide staff through all key Council activities and procedures. Arrangements in place for employment of temporary workers if staffing levels dictate a need. Annual review of resourcing requirements as part of budget-setting. Staff feedback taken into consideration.	The Council works on a policy that all staff have oversight of day-to-day activities. This forms part of the staff induction process. Also that written procedures are available to all in paper and electronic form. The principle is that for all non-specialist work any staff member could perform the activity in the absence of another.	Staffing and Training Policy & Resources Committee minutes. Budget-setting report and budget provision. Line-management and annual appraisal documentation. Sickness absence records. Staff interviews.	Low
Insurance	Personal injury or damage to staff belongings is inadequately insured.	Low	Employer's liability insurance renewed every year. Cover is adequate to provide for all appropriate risks. Level of cover required re-evaluated with insurer each year.	Staff are covered at all times when working within Council premises.	Annual insurance schedule and certificate of insurance.	Low
Health and Safety	Staff fail to comply with H&S requirements, including Risk Assessments or COSHH assessments. Injury or harm is caused to people or their belongings.	Low	Accident, incident and near-misses book on premises for completion, and each entry subject to formal review. All relevant risk assessments made available to staff. Staff sign annually to confirm their compliance with all relevant H&S workplace requirements. Repeated or deliberate breaches treated as competency or disciplinary matters. Employer's liability insurance.	Each entry in the Accident book reviewed, remedial measures implemented where necessary, and signed off when complete. The Council operates very few potentially harmful activities. Any new activity would need to be risk-assessed and training may be required.	Staff handbook. Accident book records. Personnel records. Risk assessments. COSHH information sheets. Competency records. Disciplinary Procedure. Insurance documents.	Low

Councillor Probity	Councillors fail to meet standards legally required of them.	Medium	<p>Councillors sign statement of eligibility prior to election.</p> <p>Councillors sign formal Declaration of Interests form at each annual meeting<u>at the start of their term</u> - written Register held by Monitoring Officer and put on website. <u>Councillors are individually responsible for informing Officers of any updates to the form.</u></p> <p>Councillors sign acceptance of formal<u>The Council adopts a Code of Conduct at each annual meeting which is reviewed annually and applies to all Council members</u></p> <p>Councillors<u>The Council</u> adopts formal standing orders detailing processes and standard of behaviour required.</p> <p>Declaration of interests required for each agenda item at each Council or Committee meeting.</p> <p>Suitably qualified Clerk advises on requirements and report matters to statutory authorities when necessary.</p> <p>All complaints against probity investigated and reported to Monitoring Officer when required.</p>	<p>The Clerk will ensure appropriate guidance to Councillors to ensure boundaries are not over-stepped and that proper practices are conducted at all times.</p> <p>Complaints are acted on when appropriate.</p> <p>Misdoings requiring formal reporting are acted on promptly.</p> <p>Openness and accountability is required at all times when conducting Council business.</p>	<p>Election forms</p> <p>Councillor Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Declaration of interest forms.</p> <p>Good Councillor guide.</p> <p>Adopted Standing Orders.</p> <p>Council's Financial Regulations.</p> <p>Equality Policy.</p> <p>Minutes of meetings.</p>	Low
Conduct of Councillors	Councillors fail to meet expected standards of behaviour.	High	<p><u>The Council adopts a Code of Conduct at each annual meeting which is reviewed annually and applies to all Council members</u>Councillors sign acceptance of formal Code of Conduct at each annual meeting.</p> <p><u>The Council adopts formal standing orders detailing processes and standard of behaviour required.</u>Councillors adopt formal standing order detailing processes and standard of behaviour required.</p> <p>Clerk is suitably qualified to provide guidance on acceptable behaviour and to report breaches to external bodies when necessary.</p> <p>Where required breaches of standards will be formally reported.</p>	<p>The Clerk will ensure appropriate guidance to Councillors to ensure boundaries are not over-stepped.</p> <p>Decent, non-threatening behaviour is required throughout all Council activities.</p>	<p>Good Councillor Guide.</p> <p>Councillor Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Harrassment policy</p> <p>Adopted Standing Orders.</p> <p>Equality and Diversity Policy</p> <p>Written records.</p>	Low

2.4. Activities

ACTIVITY	RISK	RISK LEVEL	CONTROL MEASURES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	RESIDUAL RISK
Risk Assessment	Accidents or incidents during activities damage or injure people or property.	High	Tailored risk-assessment completed before any activity is carried out. Risks assessed include people, places and equipment. Control measures in place to mitigate each risk to its minimum. All partner organisations provided with Risk assessment prior to the event. All organisations involved in the event work to the same level Risk assessment.	Standard format risk assessment document tailored to each type of activity.	Written risk-assessments. Signed off by Clerk. Computer records.	Low
Insurance	Insurance does not cover an activity or people involved.	High	Public Liability insurance renewed every year. Public Liability insurance covers activities at all Council premises. Check with insurers before carrying out any new or unusual activities.	Certificate of Insurance clearly displayed at Council offices.	Insurance Documents.	Low
Safeguarding	Vulnerable children and adults are placed at risk through Council activities.	High	All activities fully risk-assessed prior to commencement. Where staff, Councillors or volunteers will be working alone directly with children or vulnerable adults ensure DBS checks are in place. Adequate knowledge of Safeguarding procedures to enable reporting in line with statutory requirements.	Data Barring Services checks should be renewed every 2 years to support safeguarding measures. WTC currently does not operate any activities where staff work alone with children or vulnerable adults. If this were to change new procedures and risk assessments would need to be put in place.	DBS documents. Written risk assessments. Written records of safeguarding reports retained ad infinitum	Low

2.5. Information Technology

ACTIVITY	RISK	RISK LEVEL	CONTROL MEASURES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	RESIDUAL RISK
Computers and Devices	Data is not secure. Portable devices are lost or stolen. IT system is hacked.	High	Individual passwords required for each user on each IT device. Different passwords used for different software. All suspicious activity investigated and reported, including to the police if appropriate. Individual log-in security for each software package. Password protection and/or encryption of sensitive or high-risk data. Anti-virus protection kept up-to-date. Software updates installed promptly.	For example Payroll accounting package, HMRC software all require separate passwords.	IT policy. Privacy Policy. Data Protection Policy.	Medium

Digital Records	Digital records may become corrupted or lost.	High	Microsoft or other proven software only is used. System back-up is run weekly. Back-up drive stored away from office. <u>Cloud system is used to allow remote access to records.</u> Anti-virus protection kept up-to-date. Software updates installed promptly. Expert IT contractor used.	Clerk runs back-up run each Friday and keep the back-up drive at her own house.	IT policy. IT support contract.	Medium
Website	Website failure results in inability to publish statutory information.	High	Website updated weekly to check functionality. Service agreement with website host manager enables instant fault reporting and prompt resolution.	Any outage longer than a few days will require the website host to put up a notice requesting to contact the Town Clerk for information or advice.	IT support contract.	Medium
Data protection	Data protection regulations are breached. Personal data is shared by accident or design. Data breach causes harm or loss.	Medium	Staff and Councillors trained on Data protection Regulations. Confidentiality required from all staff and Councillors. Deliberate breach of DP regulations treated as misconduct. Personal data processing kept to a minimum. Explicit consent sought where data may be shared. All paper containing personal data are shredded. Regular housekeeping to clear old emails and databases. <u>External group emails only to be sent via 'Blind Carbon Copy'.</u> Public and Employer Liability Insurance.	All staff and Councillors are required to read, understand and comply with the Council's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice.	Data Protection Policy. Privacy Notice. Data consent forms. Insurance documents.	Medium
Insurance	IT devices and equipment are not properly insured.	Medium	Insurance is in place and level of cover for equipment is reviewed annually. New or replacement equipment is valued then added to the insurance schedule immediately after purchase. Equipment only used at out of office locations when strictly necessary.	All Council Assets are photographed for recording purposes.	Annual insurance documentation. Insured Schedule of Assets.	Low

2.6. Assets

ACTIVITY	RISK	RISK LEVEL	CONTROL MEASURES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	RESIDUAL RISK
Premises other than office.	Fire, theft, burglary or other risk. Harm or injury to public.	High	Appropriate and adequate Insurance in place. Regular, documented inspection reports. Day-to-day and planned maintenance regime. Photographic records of condition. Padlocked gate to allotments with combination code changed 6-monthly. Play areas formally inspected quarterly by the Insurers inspected weekly by the Community Warden. Public Toilets locked between 7pm and 7am. Public Notice boards locked, only staff have keys. Emergency repairs arrangements for Out of Hours repairs.	Assets are set out in the Insurance Schedule, with a financial valuation as well as a rebuild cost if appropriate. Assets in this category are the Basins allotments, the Tonedale Play area, <u>Weavers Rach play area</u> , Longforth Road Public Conveniences and <u>3-4</u> public notice boards.	Written inspection reports. Photographic records of asset. Photographic records of any harm or damage. Insurance schedule. Insurer's inspection reports.	Medium
IT devices	See Information Technology section above.					
Portable assets	Theft, loss or damage.	Medium	Frequent specialist cleaning of Robes, tricorn etc. Specialist annual check of Chain of Office. Adequate insurance cover.	Portable assets include the Mayor's ceremonial outfit and chain of Office, both of which are specialist items. Other items are a projector and screen.	Schedule of insured assets containing monetary valuation as well as insurance valuation. Schedule of assets as part of annual audit risk reporting.	Low
Insurance	Cover is inadequate. Event is not covered.	Medium	Insurance renewal dates diarised by Clerk. Renewal quotations received one month before cover expires to allow review and any amendments. <u>Renewal of cover is reviewed and approved by Council.</u> Cover must be sufficient and cover all likely insurable risks.	Assets are valued for insurance purposes at the cost of replacement if lost. Their actual financial value as an asset may often be lower. New or disposed assets should be reported as and when to the insurer.	Schedule of insured assets. Insurance certificate and policy.	Low.

2.7. General

ACTIVITY	RISK	RISK LEVEL	CONTROL MEASURES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	RESIDUAL RISK
Council decisions	Council does not have an appropriate legal power. Decisions not lawful at inquorate meetings. Decisions are not recorded properly. Poor decisions cause reputational damage.	Medium	Clerk is required to be CiLCA qualified to advise appropriately. Inquorate meetings are disbanded prior to commencement. Councillors formally approve draft minutes or request amendments at next meeting.	Record book of minutes retained. Council decisions recorded in bold text. Complaints relating to council decisions responded to and formal records kept.	Minutes of Council and Committee meetings. Complaints procedure. Complaints records.	Low

Business Continuity	Office is not occupiable and/or damage restricts use of IT devices and telephone. Foul weather prevents staff reaching office.	Medium	Business Continuity plan. Office <u>Top level officers have</u> lap tops kept away from premises, <u>as well as mobile phones with access to the telephone system</u> .	A simple plan is in place covering diversion of office phone to home or mobile numbers, working from the laptop, posting notices on the website and access to 4-wheel drive vehicles. In instances of foul weather Councillors and staff within easy walking distance of Office are called on to 'hold the fort'.	Business Continuity Procedure.	Low
Risk Reporting	Councillors are unaware of contemporary risks. Councillors fail to act effectively to known risks.	High	Clerk reports monthly to Council meetings on risks, including accidents, incidents and near-misses. Formal approval of remediation requested by Clerk when processes require change as a result of risk or incident. Annual risk report formally approved at July Council meeting as part of annual audit.	Remember to update any supporting documentation such as Standing Orders or Financial Regulations if processes or control measures are amended.	Monthly risk report. Annual audit risk summary. Annual Governance Statement. Council agenda and minutes.	Medium



WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2023

1. Scope of Responsibility

Wellington Town Council (the Council) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2. The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

3. The Internal Control Environment

The Council

The Council has appointed a Mayor who is the Chairman of the Council and is responsible for ensuring that meetings are run in accordance with legislative requirements. The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and prepares a budget at its December or January meeting. This enables the determination of the level of precept required for the following financial year. The Council monitors progress against its aims and objectives at its meetings by receiving relevant reports from the Town Clerk. The Council regularly reviews its internal controls, its policies, systems and procedures.

The Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer

The Council has appointed a Clerk of the Council who acts as the Council's Proper Officer. The Clerk is also the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances with the assistance of the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer. The Clerk is responsible for the day-to-day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also ensures that the Council's procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

Payments

All payments are approved by Council. Two Members of Council must sign every cheque, and an Officer of the Council countersigns. Following the passing of a resolution at the Council's meeting on 5th August 2019 an online bank account was set up and most payments are now paid by electronic bank payment. As with cheques, the release of online payments requires two Councillors to approve payments set up by an Officer.

Risk Management

The Council actively reviews its systems and controls and associated risk. On 12th May 2020, the Council adopted (by electronic vote due to Covid-19 regulations and the inability to meet in person) a new comprehensive risk management scheme. This details risks to all areas of Council operations with the mitigations and supporting documents in place to reduce risks to their practicable minimum. This is reviewed and adopted each year.

Risk Assessment

The Council prepares a written risk assessment in respect of its activities, and where activities are carried out with partner agencies, it ensures that each organisation is working to a shared risk assessment.

Internal Audit

At a meeting held in March 2021, the Council appointed a new independent Internal Auditor who will report to the Council on the adequacy of its systems and procedures, internal controls and risk management and its reviews of these matters. The effectiveness of internal audit is reviewed annually, and recommendations considered and enacted where deemed appropriate.

External Audit

The Council's External Auditors submits an annual Certificate of Audit which is presented to the Council.

4. Review of Effectiveness

The Council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of:

- The Council
- The Clerk/RFO who has responsibility for the design and maintenance of the internal control environment and managing risk
- The independent Internal Auditor who reviews the Council's systems of internal control
- The Council's External Auditors who make the final check using the Annual Return, a form completed and signed by the RFO, the Chairman and Internal Auditor

5. Significant Internal Control Issues

No significant internal control issues were identified during the 2022-23 financial year.

The Council strives for the continuous improvement of the system it had designed for internal control and is committed to addressing all of the minor issues and weaknesses raised and reported during the review process.

Accepted at the Full Council meeting held on XXX

Prepared by Alice Kendall
Deputy Clerk & Deputy RFO

Reviewed and authorised by David Farrow,
Town Clerk

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

21 FEBRUARY 2024

Developing Communications

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to seek the Committees support in further developing our approach to communicating with our community.

2. Background

- 2.1 Given the significant changes that will be taking place over the coming years as the Council takes on more responsibilities it is even more important that we have effective communication with our community both to explain the changes that are taking place but also to promote the positive impact of those changes.
- 2.2 Currently our only ways of communicating is via social media and reactive press releases. The former, whilst effective, as has been demonstrated through my monthly Council reports, excludes those who don't make use of social media and the latter, once received by online and paper publications, can be edited and selectively used meaning our intended message may be diluted.
- 2.3 In addition to this we currently have to outsource the design of window wraps/posters which over the last year has incurred costs of £420. By taking this in house we can save some money but also generate more product to promote what we are doing without incurring additional cost but it will be necessary to purchase a product to enable us to do that.

3. Considerations

- 3.1 It is proposed that we re-introduce the Town Council Newsletter. A proof is attached as an appendix to this paper.
- 3.2 The newsletter ran from 2008 until 2019. It ceased in December 2019 and staff moved to doing weekly press releases. This fell off with Covid. Re-introducing it will give us an opportunity to communicate in long form directly with people who have an explicit interest in our news. We would manage the newsletter via Mailchimp which is free to use until you reach over 500 contacts, then it is £20 per month. This rate rises as there are more contacts. Mailchimp can also be used for us to manage event contacts and can be linked with Canva (see below) and Eventbrite.
 - Will allow us to manage our communication more effectively and control the message instead of relying on third party reporting
 - Will reach those without social media or those who do not use it
 - Will allow us to go more in-depth with news as social media does not work well for long-form posts

- Gives rise for opportunities such as allowing newsletter subscribers to vote on names/ideas. For example, something such as naming of fields in the Green Corridor could have been conducted in this way.

3.3 To support this and to enable us to do more inhouse design of window wrap/posters etc it is proposed that we purchase the software product Canva Pro. We have been using it via a free version which is quite limiting. On occasions our Admin Assistant has kindly used her personal account to do more.

- Cost for pro account: £100 per year or £12.99 per month
- Features/benefits:
 - Templates
 - 100m+ photos, videos, graphics, audio
 - Brand kits
 - Ability to resize and reconfigure designs
 - Ability to remove backgrounds
 - AI tools
 - 1TB Cloud storage
 - 24/7 customer support
 - Can save designs in super high quality – enough for banners/window wraps
 - Can save designs in any format
 - Will allow us to do all design in house, saving money as we have spent £420 for Word Gets Around to do designs for us in this financial year

3.4 The work in relation to the newsletter and the design of window wrap and posters will be undertaken by the Admin Assistant in a redesigned role.

Dave Farrow

Town Clerk

February 2024

Alice Kendall

From: Wellington Town Council <info@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk>
Sent: 15 February 2024 12:52
To: Alice Kendall
Subject: [Test] Newsletter Mockup



[View this email in your browser](#)



WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 1

MARCH 2024

The Newsletter Is Back!

Wellington Town Council are excited to be resurrecting our newsletter after it stopped being released in 2019. We hope that this will help strengthen our communications with the public, especially those who do not have or use social media but would still like to stay up to date on our activities.

In our first newsletter we will be exploring the outcome of our budget setting meeting on 31st January 2024 and what this means for you and our town. Other than this, we have some great news to share about the Banking Hub, the Community Awards, and our Climate Change Strategy.

We would like to thank everyone who has already subscribed to this newsletter and look forward to welcoming more people in the future.



Mayor's Diary

In the past month the Mayor has attended...

POLICE REPORT

January 2023

Provided by Sergeant Jon O'Connor

3/2/24 - Taunton Deane Male Voice Choir Biennial Dinner at Rumwell Farm Shop & Restaurant

12/2/24 - Winter Song (in support of the Mayor of Taunton's charities) at St James Church

If you would like to invite the Mayor or Deputy Mayor to attend your event please [email us](#) with the event date and time.

"We received a total of 257 calls this month and of these calls 94 crimes were recorded.

This month's figures indicate yet another reduction on the same period last year, working out to 14% fewer crimes than in January 2023. There are reductions across the board in almost every offence type and I am pleased to report that there were no recorded burglary or robbery offences this month."

[Click Here to View the Full Report](#)

Wellington Town Council Budget

As you have probably already seen in the press, Wellington Town Council voted to take responsibility of a range of assets and services that are currently being provided by Somerset Council that it will either be ceasing to provide or charging to carry on providing from 1 April 2024 as a result of the financial difficulties it is facing.

These responsibilities include:

- Maintenance of public toilets in North Street Car Park and Wellington Park
- The provision of bedding plants and security for Wellington Park
- Repair of play equipment
- Provision of CCTV
- Minor Highways maintenance functions such as verge maintenance, highways surface water drainage maintenance, weed removal, sign cleaning, cutting back vegetation, and bus shelter cleaning and maintenance
- Funding the subsidy for the school crossing patrol at St John's Primary School

As well as the above, Wellington Town Council has agreed that in 2025/6 it would take on the ownership and management of all the green spaces and council-owned play areas in town and has set aside a budget in the 2024/25 financial year to prepare for this.

How does this affect you?

To enable Wellington Town Council to take on the additional responsibilities and the associated costs, they agreed to increase its Annual Precept to £945,392 which takes the amount paid by a household in Band D up to £166.29 pa, or £3.19 per week, up from £84.65 pa and £1.62 per week in this current year. Seventy Five percent of the town's houses are in Bands A-C which pay proportionally less than the Band D amount as set out in the table below:

Council Tax Band	Proportion of houses (%)	23/24 £ per annum	23/24 £ per week	24/25 £ per annum	24/25 £ per week
A	14.8	56.43	1.08	110.86	2.13
B	36.7	65.84	1.27	129.33	2.49
C	22.1	75.24	1.45	147.81	2.84
D	12.3	84.65	1.63	166.29	3.20
E	11.4	103.46	1.99	203.24	3.91
F	2.1	122.27	2.35	240.19	4.62
G	0.5	141.08	2.71	277.14	5.33
H	0.1	169.30	3.26	332.57	6.40

If you do not know what band your household falls in, you can check [here](#).

Challenges and Opportunities

Mayor Marcus Barr said, 'We thought long and hard about what we should do. On the one hand we were very conscious of the financial pressure that would be placed on the community by taking on what Somerset Council was saying it was going to stop delivering or would start charging us for, but on the other felt that there really was no alternative if we want the town to continue to thrive and be the great place to live and work that it is. We looked at all aspects of our budget to try to minimise the impact of the increases.

This situation, whilst challenging, does provide us with the opportunity to do things differently and better for the benefit of the town and we will be spending the next year reviewing what we have taken on and looking at how we can best manage the green spaces that are going to come our way in April 2025. By taking ownership of these facilities and services both now and next year we can be more responsive and do things that we want to do rather than having to take our turn alongside other town and parish councils in the county.

We are not alone in facing these challenges – we know that other town councils have also had to increase their Precept to take on areas of responsibility that Somerset Council will no longer be delivering with Taunton increasing theirs by 172.9% and Bridgwater by 163.5%.'

Banking Hub

We are pleased to confirm that a Banking Hub will be coming to Wellington very soon. Cash Access UK are already hard at work renovating the old Community Office at 30 Fore Street to be their temporary premises while they look for a more permanent home. They are confident that it will be open and operational before the closure of Lloyds Bank in Fore Street.

What is a Banking Hub?



If you don't already know, a Banking Hub is a shared banking space that has a counter service operated by the Post Office. Here, customers of all major banks and building societies can carry out regular cash transactions Monday through Friday.

The Hub will also have a private space where you can speak to a Community Banker from your own banking provider about more complicated banking issues. Community Bankers work on rotation, with a different banking provider represented on each day of the week.

Information about our Banking Hub, including its opening hours, Community Banker availability, and counter services will be available to view [here](#) once the hub is ready to open.



Wellington Community Awards

After the success of last year's inaugural Community Awards, they are back again this year to celebrate the people of Wellington in four categories: Youth Award, Civic Award, Community Award, Business Award.

Voting is open now, please [click here](#) to read the rules and make your nominations.



For What It's Earth...

Climate Change Strategy Underway

Stephen Tate has come onto the Town Council team on a part-time temporary basis to help us in the development of our Climate Change Strategy.

Stephen looks forward to helping us develop our strategy for the coming years and hopes to engage with the community on environmental issues.



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Policy and Resources Committee

21 February 2024

Request from the HMS Wellington Trust

The following communication has been received from The Wellington Trust.

Councillors are asked to consider how the Council should respond.

Dear Sirs

Can you help please?

In March, 1942, following a successful Warship Week Nation Savings campaign, the Royal Navy ship, HMS Wellington was adopted by the civil community of Wellington, Somerset.

During the War, *Wellington* took part as escort to 103 convoys [West Africa, Gibraltar and North Atlantic] steaming a total of 248,586 miles and in the process saving 281 survivors from four vessels, victims of the U-boat menace. After the War she was laid up awaiting the scrapyard torch when she was bought by the Honourable Company of Master Mariners [HCMM] and converted for use as their floating City Livery Hall. Since 1948 she has been moored at Temple Stairs at Victoria Embankment on the Thames.

In 2005, ownership of *Wellington* passed to a charity, The Wellington Trust [No 1109066] established specifically to maintain the ship as a reminder of the part played by both the Royal and Merchant Navies in the protection of this Country. In April last year 2023, the HCMM left the ship, taking with them artefacts collected over the intervening years including silverware, medals, original paintings and ship models. The loss of rental income from this departure plus their cancellation of the premises licence has put the WT into a dire financial position from which it is working hard to survive.

This is not a begging letter, although of course any donation would be most welcome. Instead it is to ask if you hold any records of the adoption by Wellington of HMS *Wellington*. As all documents were removed by the HCMM on leaving the ship, the WT are anxious to build up an archive of the ship's history once again. Also, this might be an opportunity for Wellington Town Council and civic community to re-connect with the ship, possibly commencing with a formal visit on board, which would be most welcome.

With my best wishes for 2024, I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Glyn L Evans

Ambassador to the Wellington Trust

