

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WELLINGTON 21 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 4.00PM

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

In Attendance: Councillor J Cole
David Farrow – Town Clerk

One member of the press.

496 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND APPROVE THE REASONS GIVEN

No apologies had been received.

497 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 12 December 2023.

498 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J Lloyd declared an interest in agenda item 5 (ii) as the Chair of Sampford Arundel Parish Council.

499 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

500 SOMERSET COUNCIL ASSETS AND SERVICES

The Town Clerk updated the committee on discussions that were taking place in relation to the transfer of assets and services from Somerset Council.

- (i) Public Toilets - he confirmed that at its meeting the previous day, Somerset Council had resolved to close all public toilets in Somerset. On that basis, the Town Council would be picking up responsibility for the cleaning and management of the toilets in North Street Car Park and Wellington Park from 1 April 2024. He advised that at a meeting with Somerset Council officers the previous day he had been advised that the cleaning contract was tied in to the Street Cleaning contract that runs until January 2025 with an option to be extended for a further three years. Discussions were ongoing about whether the toilet cleaning element of the contract could be taken out of that arrangement.
- (ii) Park Security – Somerset Council had agreed the previous day to cease to fund this so the Town Council would cover the cost as agreed at its budget meeting on the 31 January. However, at the meeting the previous day Somerset Council Officers had advised that the company carrying out the locking and unlocking of the park had given notice that they would be ceasing to provide the service in Wellington from the beginning of March 2024. Somerset Council Officers would be looking to make alternative arrangements.
- (iii) CCTV – costs for continuing to run CCTV had been confirmed as £16,789 – the Council had allocated £25,000. A meeting was being arranged involving all Town

Clerks of towns where CCTV was operational to discuss the arrangements for the coming year.

- (iv) Planting – this was on the agenda for the Full Council meeting that was following this committee meeting.
- (v) Highways Steward role – whilst the Council had agreed that it would not sign up to the scheme as a whole, the Town Clerk was still trying to meet with staff from the County Highways Team to see how our Community Warden role could deliver some of those functions.

The Town Clerk also advised that the town clerks of the larger towns in Somerset had requested a meeting with the Chief Executive of Somerset Council and other senior officers to discuss how they could be better engaged with discussions about budget setting for 2025/6 so that the challenges faced in preparing for 2024/5 were not repeated. They will also be suggesting that rather than looking at transforming Somerset Council it should be looking at transforming the delivery of public services in Somerset through a range of agencies including town and parish councils.

Councillor Wheatley asked that given that we would be procuring more services in the future that consideration as given to how we could ensure that local providers were utilised and that we should promote that that is what we are doing. The Town Clerk would look at how that could be done.

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that should the Council be approached by parish councils to provide services, it should be receptive to such requests recognising that its priority had to be delivering services to Wellington

501 FUTURE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

A paper had been circulated with the agenda and was discussed. It was agreed that the paper presented a good starting point. Concerns were raised that the Policy and Finance and Environment Committees had too broad a scope. It was also felt that work needed to be done at the level below committees to establish what would be the most effective way of conducting business. The Town Clerk would work up some alternative models for further consideration.

502 STAFFING MATTERS

- (i) Staff Appraisals – the Town Clerk reported that he had completed appraisals for all staff and that the outcomes were positive. He confirmed that training was considered as part of that process and that the training budget for 25/6 had been increased given the changes that were coming. He advised that his appraisal needed to be completed and it was agreed that Councillors Barr, Thorne and Wheatley would complete the process subject to the Clerk confirming that Standing Orders allowed that.
- (ii) Job Descriptions – **RESOLVED** to approve the job descriptions and grades for the roles of Open Spaces Manager, Projects Assistant and Receptionist.
- (iii) Staffing Review – **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that Local Council Consulting be approached to refresh the staffing review undertaken in 2022 in the context of the forthcoming changes to the Town Councils roles and responsibilities. Also that the role of Responsible Financial Officer be separated from the role of Town Clerk given the increasing size and scope of both roles.

503 RISK MANAGEMENT SCHEME

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that the scheme be adopted.

504 STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

RESOLVED to recommend to Ful Council that the Statement be adopted.

505 LONGFORTH ROAD TOILET BLOCK

The Town Clerk updated councillors on the progress that was being made in relation to the demolition of the toilet block. A briefing note will be circulated after the meeting. It was hoped that work would start on demolition within a month.

506 PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPING THE COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO COMMUNICATION

RESOLVED to agree the purchase of Canva Pro software at a cost of £100pa and to begin publication of a newsletter.

507 TONEWORKS TOURS

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that no charges are made for tours of Toneworks but that donations would be welcomed.

508 HMS WELLINGTON

RESOLVED that in response to the communication from the HMS Wellington Trust Councillor Wheately would make contact and arrange to visit when he is in London.

509 TO CONSIDER EXCLUDING MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED in accordance with 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 there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, within the meaning of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972:

Reason: taken from legislation - Information relating to a particular individual/s.

510 STAFFING ISSUE

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on a confidential staffing matter.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.55pm.

.....
Councillor Catherine Govier
Chairman

Possible Committee Structure

Committee	Areas of Responsibility	Sub Committee/Working Groups
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 Emergency Planning Development of traded services approach Health and Safety Policy/Monitoring Grants Policy SLA Policy	HR Sub Committee to cover interviews/pay/HR procedures – meets as required. SLA review board/panel – meet as required once yearly most likely. Audit – as and when?? Devolution Working Group (24/5) – under P and R as relates to developing a strategy
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	Green Corridor Advisory Board – ongoing Allotments Advisory Board – ongoing Station Development Working Group (task and finish)
Community	Community Plan development and oversight of delivery Community engagement	One Team Kings Arms Working Group

	Kings Arms Community Hub Twinning Day to day asset management – planned maintenance and development	
Economic Development	Town events Promotion of Wellington Economic Development activities Tourism Heritage Emergency Planning implementation	Event working groups as required
Planning	Recommendations on planning proposals Meeting with developers re planned developments	

Weavers Reach, Wellington

Footbridge Inspection Report

Inspection date: 20th February 2024



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Weavers Reach, Wellington

Footbridge Inspection Report

Inspection date: 20th February 2024

Prepared for:
Wellington Town Council,
28 Fore Street,
Wellington,
Somerset
TA21 8AQ



Revision	Status	Date	Document Reference
00	Draft	March 2024	GOWN.r7696.22166
Notes:	1. This report is a draft version produced only for the stated purpose (e.g. comment by the Client) and is therefore subject to ammendment and correction. To ensure this the latest/only version of the report please contact GOWN Engineers.		

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Summary

A General Inspection of the Weavers Reach footbridge over Back Stream in the Tonedale area of Wellington Somerset took place on the 20th February 2024.

The inspection found the bridge to be in a generally good condition, with only one critical defect, one and several minor defects:

- Critical defects:
 - Deck surface timbers:
 - Some of the timber planks forming the deck have decayed to reduce their effective thickness and therefore strength. Approximately 20 no.
 - Some of the original timber planks have already been replaced with unsuitable timbers, these include decking board that do not have anti-slip strips (approximately 10 no.) and others that appear untreated planed planks fixed with nails that protrude from the deck surface (approximately 5 no.)
- Significant defects:
 - Bank erosion below the west abutment.
- Minor defects:
 - Numerous location fixings are missing between the steel structure and the timber decking elements.
 - Bearing plate extends beyond the bearing elastomer pad.

The bridge should be subject to routine maintenance as soon as practicable and, going forward, the inspection and maintenance programme should be enacted.

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1 Introduction

1.1 General

A general bridge inspection was undertaken as follows:

Date of Inspection 20th February 2024
 Inspection Personnel Mark O'Neill
 Weather Dry, following rain showers.

1.2 Location

The bridge is located at OS Grid Ref: ST 1268 2143, the nearest postcode for the bridge is: TA21 0DH, its location is shown on Figure 1.

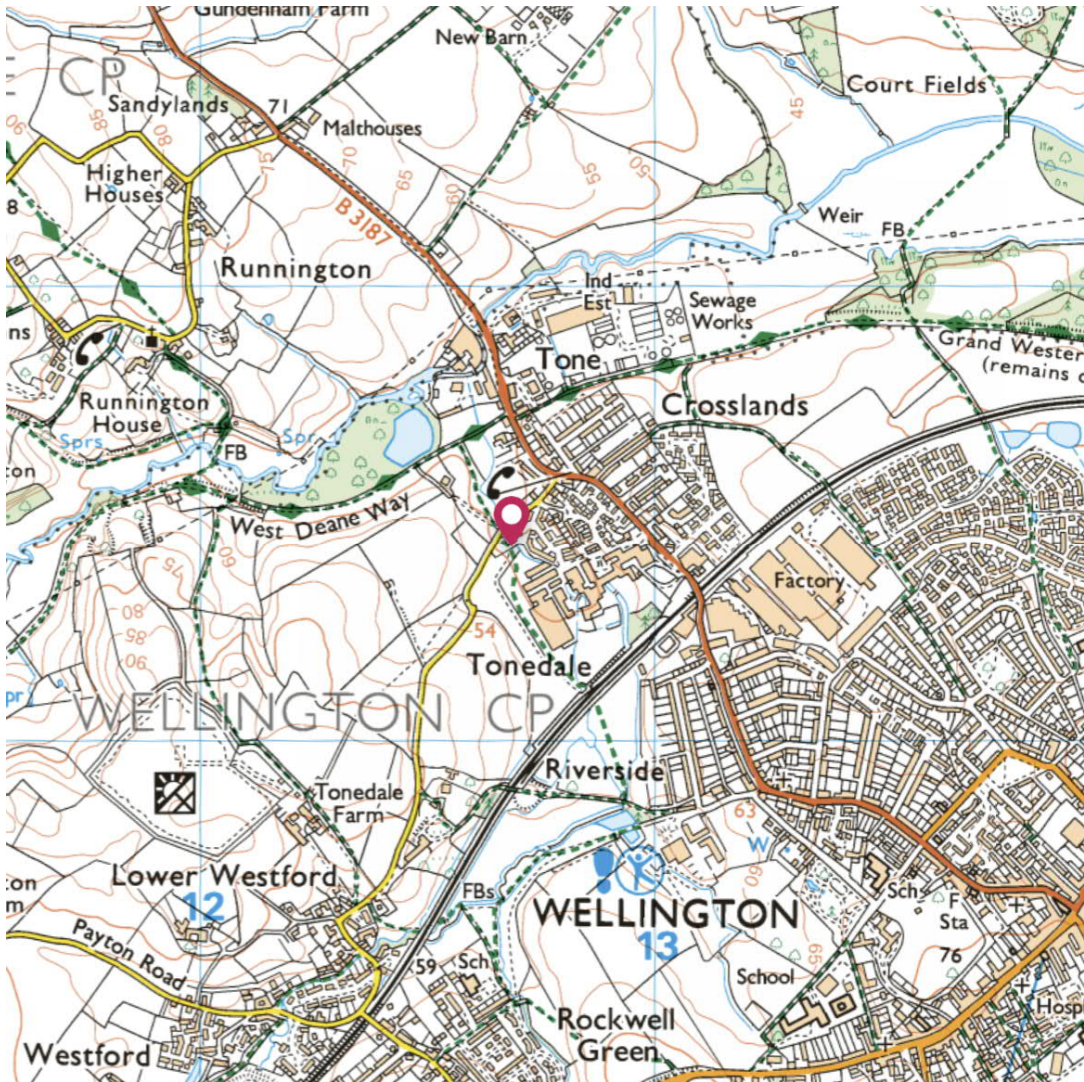


Figure 1: Bridge location plan. Reproduced under Licence Number (100064460)

1.3 Bridge details

Carries Footpath over (bridge is used by cyclists too)

Road type	Footpath
Crosses	Back Stream (flowing south to north), a tributary to the River Tone.
Span	16.1 m
Width (deck)	2.0 m

1.4 Limitations and terms of reference

The inspection was carried out in accordance with Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, CS 450, Inspection of Highway Structures. Only parts of the bridge that could be safely accessed and or viewed were inspected.

2 Inspection information

2.1 Recorded information

Record information was not available to the inspection team.

2.2 Bridge description

The bridge is pictured in Figure 2, on the front page (northern elevation) and throughout this report.

It is a simple cambered dual beam bridge with regularly spaced Parallel Flange Channel (PFC) sections spanning between the upper flange of the main girders providing restraint to the top flange.

Cross bracing on plan is provided by PFC sections spanning diagonally between the upper flanges of the main beams from close to the ends of the lateral restraint PFCs.

Longitudinal timber bearers for the timber decking are attached to the main beams and the lateral and cross bracing welded to the upper flange of the main beam.

The parapet is a timber railing system with the main timber posts cantilevered up off the outer side of the main beams and timber spacers with two through bolts.

More widely spaced PFC sections are attached to the lower flange of the main beams providing lateral restraint.



Figure 2: Bridge southern elevation.

The bridge has a manufacturer/installer plaque fixed to the parapet at the bridge's western end, southern side. See Figure 3.



Figure 3: Bridge manufacturer's plaque.

2.3 Bridge schematic

2.3.1 Plan

A schematic sketch showing the referenced terms and orientations used herein is provided as Figure 4.

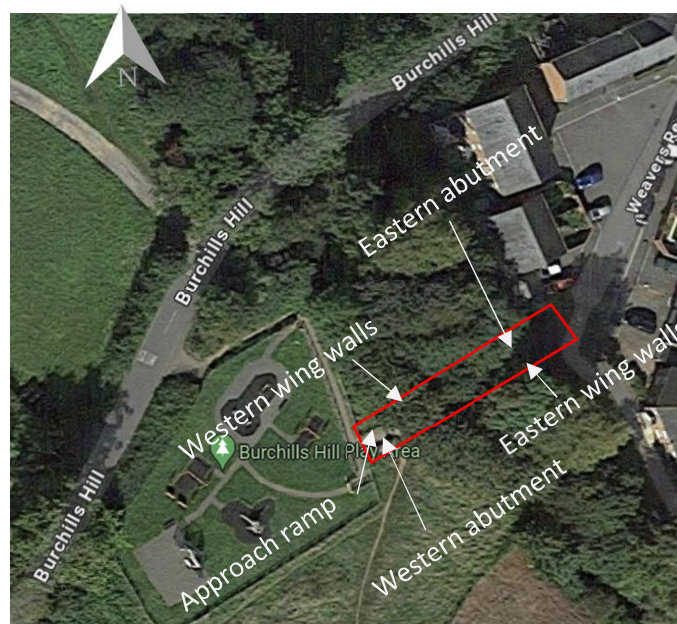


Figure 4: Bridge schematic plan.

2.3.2 Other terms used.

The diagram provided as Figure 5 shows other terms and bridge element nomenclature as they are used herein.

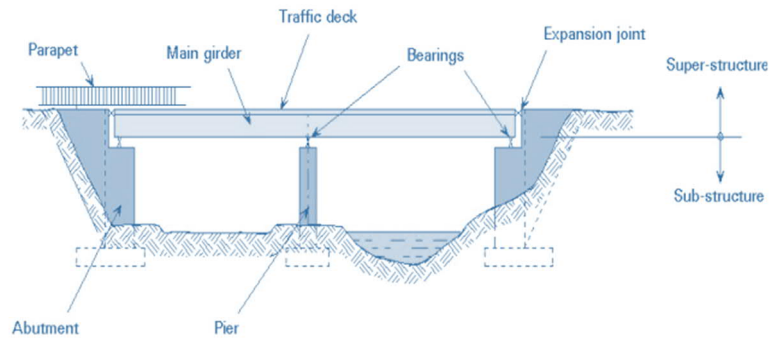


Figure 5: Bridge nomenclature

2.4 Photography

Photographs were taken during the inspection and are shown throughout the report with additional images presented in Appendix A.

3 Inspection

3.1 Deck

3.1.1 Surfacing

The surfacing is, generally, timber decking boards with anti-slip strips. See Figure 6.



Figure 6: *West looking east along bridge.*

A number of these boards (around 20no.) are in a state of decay that will necessitate their replacement in the near future. See Figure 7.



Figure 7: Deck surfacing showing decayed areas of boards.

A number of these boards (around 10no.) have been replaced with either planed wood boards or decking boards without anti-slip strips. The replacement boards are unsuitable as they do not match the adjacent boards sufficiently well and/or present a slip hazard. See Figure 8.

Occasional, the fixings for these boards are exposed, incorrectly used, or unsuitable. These boards and their fixings should be replaced. See Figure 8.

In general, the deck surface is in a fair condition.



Figure 8: Deck surfacing showing unsuitable replacement boards.

3.1.2 Decking supports

The decking surfacing boards are supported on timber bearers. These are located one atop each of the main girders and one at each side of the middle-third of the decking span (spans side to side). The central timber bearers are supported off the lateral and cross bracing members using welded steel plate/RSA. A number of the locating hole through the supports are not utilised. See Figure 9. This is of no significant detriment to the deck support but at the next routine maintenance visit these locator fixings should be installed.



Figure 9: Deck board bearer locating fixings missing (example of).

3.2 Parapets

The parapets to the bridge are 1.12 m high and are provided by a timber post and rail system. See Figure 10.



Figure 10: Parapet arrangement.

The main posts are connected to the main girders with a bolted connection through the girder web and using a timer spacer to offset the post around the girder flange. See Figure 11.



Figure 11: Parapet fixings showing nut on underside of bridge and spacer on outer face of girder.

The parapets are in a good condition.

3.3 Steel Structure

3.3.1 General & protection system

See Section 2.2.

The steel environmental protection system for the structural steel to the whole structure comprises of a hot dip galvanised treatment.

The protection system is in a good condition.

3.3.2 Main Girders (Primary structure)

The main girders comprise of cambered 533 x 210 x 82 Universal Beams (UB).
Spanning a length of 16.1 m from bearing to bearing.

The main girders can be seen throughout the photos reproduced throughout.

The main girders are in a good condition.

3.3.3 Upper Lateral Bracing

The upper lateral bracing of the bridge comprises of 150 x 75 x18 PFC sections welded to the upper flange of the main girders at 1.94 m centres.

See Figure 12.

The upper lateral bracing is in a good condition.



Figure 12: Bridge underside.

3.3.4 Upper Cross/Plan Bracing

The upper cross/plan bracing of the bridge comprises of 150 x 75 x18 PFC sections welded to the upper flange of the main girders and spanning diagonally between the connection points for the upper lateral bracing.

See Figure 12.

The upper lateral bracing is in a good condition.

3.3.5 Lower Lateral Bracing

The upper lateral bracing of the bridge comprises of 95 x 95 x 7 RSA sections welded to the lower flange of the main girders at 3.1 m centres.

See Figure 12.

The lower lateral bracing is in a good condition.

3.4 West Abutment

3.4.1 Superstructure

The abutment's face is located approximately 3 m behind the bank of the river.

The abutment's construction is unknown as it is predominately buried. It is likely a mass concrete structure. See Figure 13.

The abutment is likely to be in a good condition.



Figure 13: Western abutment.

3.4.2 Foundation

The foundation is buried and could not be assessed, there are no signs of significant foundation movement.

The bank between the abutment and the river has eroded. In time this may compromise the abutment. See Figure 13.

3.4.3 Approach ramp

The bridge approach is shown in Figure 14. The approach is a concrete surfaced footway with a post and rail fence at to the northern side.

The post and rail fence is in a fair condition whilst the surfacing is in a good condition.



Figure 14: Western approach.

3.5 East Abutment

3.5.1 Superstructure

The abutment's face is located approximately 4 m back from the bank of the river.

The abutment's construction is unknown as it is predominately buried. It is likely brick faced mass concrete structure.

There are minor brick laying defects whereby the face of the abutment has a slight (10 mm) step in it. See Figure 15.

The abutment is in a good condition.



Figure 15: East abutment.

3.5.2 Foundation

The foundation is buried and could not be assessed, there are not signs of significant foundation movement.

3.5.3 Approach ramp

The bridge approach is shown in Figure 14. The approach is an asphalt surfaced footway with a post and rail fence at each side.

The post and rail fence is in a fair condition whilst the surfacing is in a good condition.



Figure 16: Western approach (google image).

3.6 River system and bank

The river and riverbanks have some engineering to them. These features are in various states of repair.

- Around 30 m up stream is a pipe bridge, below which is a weir or artificial dam of debris.
- Between the pipe bridge and the footbridge there is a piece of failed canalisation wall on the west bank
- About 5 m downstream on the east bank is a drainage outfall head wall.
- Approximately 30 m downstream the river flow appears to change from sub- to super-laminar.

See Figure 17.



Figure 17: Back Stream crossed
(left image is looking upstream (south) and right image is looking downstream (north)).

3.7 Hidden Elements

3.7.1 Hidden components (not highlighted elsewhere)

None.

3.7.2 Bearings

The bearings comprised an elastomer rubber pad located below the bearing of each main girder at each end. The pad does not extend under the whole bearing plate only below the flange of the main girder. See Figure 18.





Figure 18: bearing pad below flange of main girder (example).

4 Conclusions

The bridge is in a good overall condition.

Maintenance is required of:

- The deck surfacing.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Immediate

Deck surfacing timbers :

- Some of the timber planks forming the deck have decayed to reduce their effective thickness and therefore strength. Approximately 20 no.

These shall be replaced at the soonest opportunity.

- Some of the original timber planks have already been replaced with unsuitable timbers, these include decking board that do not have anti-slip strips (approximately 10 no.) and others that appear untreated planed planks fixed with nails that protrude from the deck surface (approximately 5 no.) .

These shall be replaced at the soonest opportunity.

5.2 Short-medium term

The bridge's manufacturer should be contacted, and design and maintenance information still held by them obtained. See Figure 3

Significant defects:

- Bank erosion below the west abutment.

This shall be monitored and remedial action taken should it become necessary.

5.3 Medium-long term and ongoing.

Minor defects:

- Numerous location fixings are missing between the steel structure and the timber decking elements.

These should be installed as part of the bridge's on going maintenance.

- Bearing plate extends beyond the bearing elastomer pad.

This shall be monitored and remedial action taken should it become necessary.

The bridge should be subject to routine maintenance as soon as practicable and, going forward, and inspection and maintenance programme should be enacted at bi-annual basis.

Appendix A Additional inspection photographs

Bridge soffit:



Bridge superstructure:



Eastern Abutment & Approach:



