

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WELLINGTON ON MONDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 7.00 PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor J Lloyd (Chair),  
Councillors C Booth, S Fox, A Govier, C Govier-Wiggins, R Henley, M Lithgow, M McGuffie, S Mercer, C Penk, S Pringle-Kosikowsky, J Thorne and K Wheatley

**IN ATTENDANCE:** David Farrow (Town Clerk)  
One member of the press  
Eight members of the public

**519 TO OFFER WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed those attending.

**520 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO APPROVE THE REASONS GIVEN**

Apologies had been received from Councillor J Cole.

**521 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made at this time.

**522 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the Council meeting held 6 January 2025.

**523 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE LOCAL POLICING TEAM**

The report from Sgt O'Connor was circulated prior to the meeting and was noted. The Town Clerk thanked Sergeant O'Connor for ensuring that the report of vandalism submitted by the Council has not been closed down without investigation.

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

Three members of the public spoke to raise concerns about Somerset Council's decision not to contest the appeal against non-determination of the Planning Application submitted by Gladman Developers (agenda item 5)

One member of the public spoke in relation to the payment of councillor allowances to co-opted councillors (agenda item 17)

One member of the public provided an update on the work of the Community Farm to provide context for agenda item 14.

Councillor Henley joined the meeting during this item

**525 DEVELOPMENT NORTH OF EXETER ROAD, ROCKWELL GREEN (42/23/0099)**

Councillors thanked the members of the public who had spoken earlier and expressed concern at the decision of Somerset Council not to contest the appeal against non-determination lodged by Gladman developers. It was noted that the Town Council had previously objected to the development. Given that Somerset was not contesting the appeal it was agreed that it was important that whilst the Town Council should still ensure that its objection was considered it should also seek to influence what was contained in the Section 106 Agreement.

The Town Clerk will ascertain when the deadline is for informing the Planning Inspectorate that it wishes to address the appeal hearing and will also write to Somerset Council formally to express the Council's concern at the position it is taking and seeking clarification of what exactly it is in the National Planning Policy Framework that has led Somerset Council to the decision it has made. He also asked that councillors consider what they would wish to see in the S106 Agreement over and above education and health provision. He cited active travel, sports or recreation provision as examples of what could be asked for.

**526 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted.

**527 COUNCIL/LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK (LCN) UPDATE**

Councillor C Govier-Wiggins provided an update on the recent LCN meeting. A presentation on the development of Local Plan for Somerset had been circulated with the agenda and it was agreed that the Town Clerk should arrange an informal meeting of councillors later this month to discuss what it wanted to see in the Local Plan for Wellington.

Councillor A Govier reported that the Government had agreed to allow Somerset Council to increase its Council Tax by 7.5% for 2025/6. A final decision on the level of Council Tax to be raised would be made at the end of February. Councillor Govier noted that even a 7.5% increase would, on its own, not be sufficient to meet the budgetary gap and that staff reductions and sale of assets would need to continue.

Councillor Henley reported that the recommendations of the Boundary Review Working Party had not been accepted by the Committee and the Boundary Commission had agreed to an extension of the deadline for submission for a further 6 weeks. He also mentioned that he was in discussions with Somerset Council Highways about installing a pedestrian crossing in Priory for St John's School.

Councillor Lloyd asked when people in receipt of Council Tax Relief were going to be told that the amount was reducing. Councillors Govier and Henley said they would find out.

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

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

**529 POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2025 were noted.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) that the Town Clerk should write to the Chief Executive of Somerset Council formally requesting that a Community Governance Review of the Town Council's boundary is undertaken in time for the 2027 elections;
- (ii) to agree to undertake a review to inform a Somerset Council Community Governance Review with a view for completion before the next elections in 2027 and that the Council should fund such work either individually or jointly with other Town and Parish Councils in Somerset seeking a review. It was further agreed to recommend that a working be created with the members being Councillors A Govier, M Lithgow, S Mercer, C Penk and J Thorne.
- (iii) Councillor Mercer be appointed as the Councils representative on the Somerset Bus Users and Stakeholder Group.

**530 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on the meeting held on 15 January 2025 were noted.

**531 COMMUNITY COMMITTEE**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on the meeting held on 20 January 2025 were noted.

**532 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on the meeting held on 13 January 2025 were noted.

**RESOLVED** to support the proposal of Wellington Community Food to construct a polytunnel on the Community farm site.

**533 WELLINGTON RECREATION GROUND PAVILION**

**RESOLVED** to contribute £4,500 towards the cost of repairing the pavilion.

**534 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)**

**RESOLVED** to allocated CIL as follows:

- (a) Up to £80,000 to contribute to the cost of fitting out of the Kings Arms Community Hub as recommended by the Community Committee.
- (b) Up to £62,300 to fund work to prepare the Longforth Farm allotment site.

At this juncture Councillor Henley left the meeting.

**535 ELIGIBILTY FOR COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES**

Councillors Fox, Penk and Pringle Kosikowsky declared a pecuniary interest in this item as co-opted councillors and did not vote on any of the motions related to this agenda item.

The following motion tabled by Councillor McGuffie which had been circulated as part of the agenda was discussed.

- (a) That the Council resolves to reverse its original decision to pay allowances to coopted members and that for the future avoidance of doubt resolves that councillor allowances will only be paid to members who have been elected be virtue of their being duly nominated to stand in an election organised by Somerset Council’s returning officer.
- (b) That if this is agreed given all payments in the accounts for the current financial year (24/25) have to be both lawful and agreed, the council will seek the repayment of any allowance paid to coopted members after its original decision. It will not include any such unlawful payments in its accounts.

A proposal to suspend Standing Orders to allow a member of the public to speak was seconded and voted on with three voting in favour and six against so was not passed.

The first part of the motion submitted by Councillor McGuffie was seconded and voted with three voting in favour and six against so was not passed. Councillor McGuffie asked that it be recorded that he and Councillors A Govier and C Govier-Wiggins voted in favour of the motion.

As the first part of the motion had not been carried there was no requirement to vote on the second part of the motion.

**536 COMMUNITY OFFICE – 30 FORE STREET**

**RESOLVED** that Officers be given delegated spending of up to £17,750 to carry out the works detailed in the paper that had been circulated with the agenda with a view to opening the reception area on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40 pm

**STANDING DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Members of Somerset Council:**

Councillor Andrew Govier  
Councillor Marcus Barr  
Councillor Ross Henley

**Director of the Somerset Association of  
Local Councils**

Councillor Janet Lloyd

Mayor

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