

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WELLINGTON ON MONDAY 7 JULY 2025 AT 7.00 PM

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

IN ATTENDANCE: David Farrow – Chief Executive
Wasif Choudhury – Democratic Services & Finance Officer
Sergeant Jon O'Connor, Wellington Community Policing Team (for minute 41)
Simon Collier – Representing Collier Planning
One member of the press
Nine members of the public

111. WELCOME BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed those attending.

112. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO APPROVE REASONS GIVEN

Apologies were received from Councillors C Booth, J Cole, S Fox & C Penk.

Councillor C Govier-Wiggins is still on approved maternity leave.

113. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no additional interests other than those identified on the agenda.

114. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes the minutes of the Council Meeting on 2 June 2025.

115. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Three members of the public wanted to make comments in relation to Agenda Item 8 (minute 118 refers.)

The Chair confirmed that the planning application for this development has yet to be submitted and residents can submit concerns to Somerset County Council Portal once this has been done.

116. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE LOCAL POLICING TEAM

Sgt O'Connor presented his report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, which was noted.

Councillors thanked him and his team for all their hard work in policing the community.

Councillor R Henley requested that the police attend a follow-up meeting with residents living near St. Johns Primary School regarding parking in the area.

Sgt O'Connor left the meeting at this stage.

117. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

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

118. COLLIER PLANNING

Simon Collier discussed and presented the initial proposal of the development of two bungalows at the end of Corams Lane by the Basins.

Councillor J Thorne stated that he did not believe there was any public benefit from this development and would not be able to support such a development if it progressed to a formal planning application.

Councillor S Pringle-Kosikowsky noted that the main benefit of the area is the biodiversity of the area which would be impacted by any development on this land.

Simon Collier confirmed that the road off Corams Lane would remain a private road if the development was approved.

Councillor R Henley noted that these would be isolated developments. He confirmed that Somerset Council Planning Committee does not accept any applications for developments of less than ten houses so the decision will come to an Officer of Somerset Council.

Chair confirmed that any planning application would come to Wellington Town Council for noting and comments.

Simon Collier stated that a planning application should be expected soon.

Simon Collier left the meeting at this stage.

119. SOMERSET COUNCIL / LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK (LCN) UPDATE

Councillors R Henley and A Govier provided an update.

Councillor R Henley confirmed that recent meetings of the LCN were held in June. A presentation on Open Spaces in Wellington was provided which was well received. There is currently an ongoing review of the LCN taking place by Somerset Council as to whether they should continue.

He also referenced discussions he had held at St Johns School regarding parking around the school and the risks of crossing roads near the school

Councillor R Henley also noted his disapproval of the most recent Boundary Commission draft proposals for Somerset. Councillor M McGuffie also raised concerns. The Chief Executive confirmed that these points have been raised in a previous meeting and a submission to the Boundary Commission has been made noting the Council's concerns

Councillor A Govier noted discussions regarding a speed limit change outside St. Johns School had taken place with the current plan to raise this with Somerset Council in September when the schools are open again. He said he would liaise with Councillor R Henley on this matter given his engagement with the school.

Councillor R Henley left the meeting at this time.

120. TO RECEIVE THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT ON RECENT COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

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

121. POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2025 were noted and the following recommendations considered:

(i) Planning

That Planning Committee be disbanded with the following outcomes:

- i. All planning applications received for comment will be circulated to all councillors for comment.
- ii. A system is established through which councillors can request that planning applications be considered by Full Council.
- iii. Significant planning proposals (e.g. multiple residences, supermarkets) should be considered by Full Council as a matter of course and that a lead Councillor be appointed (It is recommended that this be Councillor J Lloyd) to work with the Chief Executive and/or the Finance Manager to manage the process.
- iv. A draft process/policy to be drawn up for consideration at the next Full Council meeting. (attached)

The Chief Executive agreed to investigate if specific planning applications on Somerset Council portal can be provided via a link and what arrangements could be put into place so that councillors can view other councillors' comments on planning applications.

Councillor M Lithgow wanted to note this move is a response to the changing methods of reviewing planning applications by Somerset Council and the need to work more efficiently.

Councillor J Thorne noted that each councillor should have the ability to request that a planning application is brought to Full Council instead of the proposed 5 councillors and that if a member of the public wanted an application considered by the Council, they should contact their local councillor who would request it was placed on the next agenda. It was also proposed that the arrangements should be kept under review.

RESOLVED to approve the recommendations with the proposed changes.

(ii) Town Growth

A recommendation to employ a project manager for 12 months to review long-term development in Wellington.

The Chief Executive provided an update on this item which was noted by the Council. It was noted that Somerset Council is already undertaking this work and the Chief Executive recommends that Wellington Town Council should work alongside and combine resources with Somerset Council. This would also coincide with the development of a website that highlights all the development work being undertaken in Wellington over the next 15 years.

RESOLVED to reject the initial recommendation of the Policy and Finance Committee.

RESOLVED to approve the proposals in the paper submitted to the meeting by the Chief Executive Officer namely:

- (i) That he discusses with Somerset Council how Wellington Town Council resources could be used to support its work in developing the Local Plan for Wellington and report back to Policy and Finance Committee.
- (ii) The Chief Executive Officer investigate the development of a website and report back to the Policy and Finance Committee.

122. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2025 were noted and the following recommendation considered:

(i) Pulse Hub

That the revised site proposals be approved but to only have one pulse hub in the following location:

- Westpark – Budgens

Chief Executive confirmed that there are no proposed locations within Rockwell Green at this time.

RESOLVED to approve the recommended locations and ask for further work to be done in relation to a site in Rockwell Green.

(ii) Mayoral Events

That delegated power be given to the Mayor and Facilities Manager to oversee expenditure from Mayoral Event Budget £2,500.

RESOLVED to approve.

(iii) Budget Lines

- i. Pop Up Shop Overheads

That Line 118 – Overheads be renamed “Rates”, that the overspend is noted and approved and that a new line for utilities be created and that approval be given for appropriate spending.

RESOLVED to approve.

123. ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held on the 18 June were noted and the following recommendations considered:

(i) Basins Allotments – Accessible Plot CIL Funding

That £6,500 of CIL funding is allocated to complete the work on the Accessible Plot in the Basins Allotments.

RESOLVED to approve.

124. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Council confirmed membership of committees and address the vacancies:

- (i) Environment Committee – 3 vacancies – Current members: Councillors C Booth, M Lithgow, J Lloyd, M McGuffie and S Pringle-Kosikowsky.

RESOLVED to approve Councillor S Fox to join this committee.

- (ii) Economic Development Committee – 1 vacancy – Current members: Councillors C Booth, M Lithgow, J Lloyd, S Mercer, J Thorne, and K Wheatley

RESOLVED to approve Councillor C Penk to join this committee.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:40pm

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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