

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WELLINGTON ON MONDAY 6 OCTOBER 2025 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J Lloyd (Chair),
Councillors C Booth, J Cole, A Govier, C Govier-Wiggins, M McGuffie, S Mercer, C Penk, S Pringle-Kosikowski, J Thorne and K Wheatley

IN ATTENDANCE: David Farrow – CEO/Town Clerk
Wasif Choudhury – Democratic Services & Finance Officer
Sergeant Jon O'Connor, Wellington Community Policing Team (for minute 248)
One member of the press
12 members of the public

243. WELCOME BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed those attending.

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

Apologies were received from Councillors S Fox, M Lithgow, K Wheatley.

It was **RESOLVED** to grant Councillor S Fox a leave of absence for all Council and committee meetings until the end of December 2025.

245 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

245. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes of the Full Council Meeting on 1 September 2025.

246. QUESTION AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

One member of public raised concerns in relation to the planning application (Item 249), explaining her views on why it should not be approved citing transport, sewage and flood plain considerations.

One member of public raised the issue of flags on public property and how these should be removed.

Another two members of public spoke regarding the flag erected at the Basins and asked what progress has been made in ensuring it is removed. The Chief Executive Officer noted that discussions with the Basins landlord are ongoing.

One member of the public raised issue with high volumes of traffic noise and several motorists within Wellington owning cars that exceed the recommended DB noise levels and are often seen breaking the speed limit. Sgt O'Connor advised that registration plates of those motorists should be recorded and submitted to the police.

247. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE LOCAL POLICING TEAM

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

248. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The following planning application was discussed.

(a) Case Ref: 43/25/0064

Proposal: Application for Outline Planning with all matters reserved, except for access, for the erection of up to 320 No. dwellings, public open space, drainage and associated infrastructure on land east of Wardleworth Way, Wellington.

At this juncture, Councillor K Wheatley joined the meeting.

After much discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend that this application is refused citing the concerns raised regarding the impact to traffic and transport this development would have on Wellington, specifically referencing the needs for an additional railway bridge and a northern relief road in order to make this development more viable. Councillors noted that this development provides opportunity to connect with the proposed Greenway project.

It was further **RESOLVED**:

- To request that this application is reviewed by Somerset Council Planning Committee as opposed to a Planning Officer.
- That if this application is approved, to request that considerations should be made towards using Section 106 funds to develop an additional railway bridge as part of the development.

249. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor provided an update on her activities which was noted.

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

Councillor A Govier stated that there had been discussions about the challenges and impact of providing the educational needs of individuals with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) requirements.

He also noted that at the most recent Scrutiny Committee meetings, they had discussed the closure of Lusson Surgery and the use of Community Hospital. Wellington Town Councillors, who were in attendance, made it very clear that there are major issues regarding pharmacy provision within Wellington and the shortage of GP's and medical professionals within the overall Somerset area.

The Chair noted that she will raise the issues regarding traffic and congestions within Wellington, particularly due to street parking in Tonedale at the next Highways Working Group meeting. She will also raise the current issues surrounding car park signage.

It was agreed that Councillors A Govier and J Lloyd would request a review of traffic and transport within Wellington.

251. SOMERSET COUNCIL SUNDAY PARKING CONSULTATION

Councillors considered how it should respond to the proposed introduction of Sunday parking charges in Wellington.

It was proposed, and duly seconded, that the Council should oppose the proposals stating that they are a simple measure to bring in more revenue for Somerset Council and noted that comparisons to other more tourist focused Somerset towns like Cheddar, Minehead and Glastonbury were not accurate. The majority voted against, so the motion was not carried.

After much discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to reluctantly support the proposals on the following conditions:

- That the increased revenue should be invested in car parks in Wellington.
- That the Council's response should list the work required in each car park individually, so it is clear where the investment is required.
- That Blue Badge holders are exempt from charges as they are in other areas of Somerset.

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

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

253. COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2025 were noted and the following recommendations were considered:

- (a) That £10,700 be allocated upon a successful Accelerated Reform Fund bid application.

RESOLVED to approve.

- (b) That the proposed changes to the Safeguarding Policy be adopted.

RESOLVED to adopt.

- (c) To approve the Community Engagement Policy

RESOLVED to adopt.

- (d) To approve the statement on the displaying of flags around the town.

Councillors agreed that the flag and structure erected in the Basins should be removed as soon as possible.

The Chief Executive confirmed that he has contacted Somerset Council asking when the next round of maintenance is scheduled for lampposts and he confirmed that a Police presence can be requested if Wellington Town Council staff are instructed to remove the flags erected in the Basins.

After much discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the statement.

254. ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2025 were noted and the following recommendations were considered:

- (a) To approve the Nature Recovery Policy

RESOLVED to adopt.

255. POLICIES TO BE APPROVED

(a) Appraisal Process

It was **AGREED** to include details of how the Chief Executive can make an appeal on their own appraisal which is reviewed by Councillors who are not involved in the HR Sub-Committee. It was also confirmed that the Chief Executive should not be required to produce a comment for each appraisal.

RESOLVED to adopt the policy as amended.

(b) Co-option Policy

RESOLVED to adopt the policy.

(c) Training & Development Policy

It was **AGREED** to amend section 2.3 and 2.4 to replace 'Committee' with 'Sub-Committee' Councillors also agreed to enhance the link between training, appraisal and budget.

RESOLVED to adopt the policy as amended.

256. CADES FARM COMMUNITY HALL – PROJECT INITIATION

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting and Councillors agreed that the project should be renamed 'Wellington East Community Hall'.

RESOVLED to:

- (a) Agree to progress the project to build a community hall on allocated land at Cades Farm and if so
- (b) Accept the transfer of land from Persimmon Homes
- (c) Give officers delegated authority so spend against the Cades Farm Community Hall Earmarked Reserve budget and Professional Fees budget for this project.
- (d) Proceed with pre-planning discussions
- (e) Tender works for site preparation
- (f) Issue design and build tender for provision of modular building

257. DISPENSATION REQUEST – Councillor A GOVIER/COURT FIELDS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Councillors considered Councillor A Govier's written request for dispensation to cover discussion and voting on any items that relate to Court Fields Community School.

RESOLVED to approve.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21:20.

STANDING DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of Somerset Council:

Councillor Andrew Govier
Councillor Ross Henley

Mayor

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Initial



Title	Proposal for Creation of Planning Officer Post
Meeting	Full Council
Date of meeting	3 November 2025
Action Required	Decision
Report Author and email address	townclerk@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's views on whether it wishes to consider creating a post of Planning Officer given the scale and scope of planned developments around the town in the coming years.

2. Background

2.1 This report outlines the rationale for creating a post of Planning Officer to support the Town Council in influencing planning decisions, despite having no statutory role in the planning process. The appointment is proposed as a strategic measure to enhance the Council's capacity to represent community interests, respond effectively to development proposals, and engage proactively with planning authorities and developers.

2.2 Councillors will be aware from previous discussions of the scale of developments currently at various stages of the planning process from initial consultation to planning approval being given. At its June meeting it considered the town's growth and how it might work more effectively to ensure that the town's needs were properly identified and addressed.

2.3 The Town Council currently operates without a statutory role in the planning system. While it may submit comments on planning applications, its influence is limited by:

- Lack of technical expertise in interpreting planning documents and policies.
- Inconsistent engagement with planning consultations and strategic frameworks.
- Limited capacity to monitor and respond to planning activity in a timely and informed manner.

This may result in missed opportunities to shape development in alignment with local priorities and values.

2.4 Currently there are eight developments at varying stages of the planning process which, if all come to fruition, will result in around 1800 new houses around the town over the next ten to fifteen years. In addition to that earlier this year Somerset Council put out a 'call for sites' which may result in further development sites in the town being identified.

2.5 As the town continues to grow and evolve, the need for the town to play a significant role in strategic planning to ensure the towns infrastructure can support the amount of development and sustainable development becomes increasingly critical. A Planning Officer will play a pivotal role in ensuring that development aligns with the town's vision and that planning decisions meet community needs.

2.6 Planning decisions have long-term impacts on the town's:

- Character and heritage
- Housing mix and affordability
- Infrastructure and public services
- Environmental sustainability
- Economic vitality

Without dedicated planning expertise, the Council risks being reactive rather than proactive, and its voice may be underrepresented in decisions that shape the future of the community.

2.7 A Planning Officer would serve as a dedicated resource to:

- Monitor planning applications and strategic planning documents.
- Draft informed responses and representations on behalf of the Council.
- Liaise with district and county planning authorities, developers, and community stakeholders.
- Advise the Council on planning policy, legislation, and best practices.
- Support the development of a local planning vision or design code, where appropriate.

This role would not confer statutory powers but would significantly enhance the Council's ability to influence outcomes through informed advocacy and strategic engagement.

2.8 Appointing a Town Planning Officer would:

- Strengthen the Council's credibility and effectiveness in planning matters.
- Ensure timely and well-reasoned input into planning consultations.
- Empower the Council to protect local character and promote sustainable development.
- Facilitate better communication between the Council, residents, and planning authorities.
- Enable the Council to develop long-term planning strategies aligned with community aspirations.

2.9 Appointing a Planning Officer is a strategic investment in the town's future. It ensures that the Town Council would have a role in ensuring that development is well-managed, legally compliant, and aligned with the community's values and aspirations. The role will strengthen the council's capacity to respond to growth, protect the town's character, and deliver long-term benefits to residents.

3. Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

Vision

- An inclusive, safe and secure town where everybody is supportive of each other and offers particular care for the more vulnerable members of our community
- A town with a diverse, thriving, and resilient local economy
- A town with vibrant cultural, sporting, and social communities
- Proud and protective of our heritage, green spaces, and biodiversity
- Committed to becoming a net carbon neutral town
- A destination of choice for people to live and work and for businesses to be located.
- Connected with the Blackdown Hills National Landscape and surrounding communities

Wellington Place Plan

- Inclusive Access and Connected Communities
- Pride in Place: Culture, Heritage & Belonging
- A Healthy, Sustainable & Green Town
- Youth, Learning & Lifelong Support
- Housing, Inclusion & Community Safety
- Enterprise, Skills & Local Economies

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 In order to be competitive in the market it is likely that a role of Town Planning Officer would need to be graded at LC2 Above Substantive which currently equates to £39,862 - £42,839pa basic salary with oncosts making the total cost of the range £53,814 - £57,833

5. Risks

5.1 Financial Risk

- Risk: The cost of employing a Planning Officer will impact the Precept, especially if the role expands over time.
- Mitigation: Explore shared services with neighbouring councils or seek external funding and grants although at the time of writing there is no external funding or grants available.
- Role Ambiguity
- Risk: Without a statutory mandate, the Planning Officer's influence may be limited or misunderstood by external stakeholders.
- Mitigation: Clearly define the role's scope and objectives. Establish protocols for engagement with planning authorities and developers to ensure credibility and consistency.
- Community Expectations
- Risk: Residents may assume the Council has direct control over planning decisions, leading to unrealistic expectations.
- Mitigation: Communicate transparently about the Planning Officer's advisory role and the limits of Council influence. Use the role to educate and inform the public about the planning process.

Duplication of Effort

- Risk: Potential overlap with district or county planning teams could lead to inefficiencies or tension.
- Mitigation: Foster collaborative relationships with planning authorities. Position the Planning Officer as a complementary resource focused on local insight and community representation.
- Recruitment and Retention
- Risk: Difficulty in attracting qualified candidates, especially for part-time or non-statutory roles.
- Mitigation: Offer flexible working arrangements and emphasize the opportunity to shape local development. Consider secondments or partnerships with planning schools or professional bodies.

6. Considerations

The Council is asked to consider whether it agrees to the creation of a Planning Officer post on the basis set out in this paper to enable the costs to be built into the 2026/7 budget.

7. Background Papers

Town Growth Report to July Council meeting

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

7 JULY 2025

TOWN GROWTH

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to seek the Council's views on a way forward on ensuring the town's needs are properly considered in the context of its likely growth in the coming years. The approach differs from that proposed by the Policy and Finance Committee at its meeting on the 9 June 2025 for reasons which I hope will become apparent.

2. Background

- 2.1 Since the meeting on the 9 June I have been able to have a range of conversations with Somerset Council officers responsible for different aspects of the planning process, and developers and have a better understanding of the context in which planning matter are being considered, timeframes for developments and the work being done by Somerset Council to develop a Local Plan which will inform planning decisions in the future including setting out what infrastructure improvements/changes are required to support any growth.
- 2.2 It is worth summarising the context of the current planning situation in Somerset to better understand the issues we are facing as a town.
- Under the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Somerset Council has to deliver 57,000 new homes over the next 15 years. That is in the region of a 42% increase on the previous NPPF.
 - As things stand, in the absence of a Local Plan, Somerset Council is unable to demonstrate an adequate five year housing land supply meaning that developers are able to make speculative planning applications on land that had not previously been identified for development knowing that it is likely to be approved either directly or through appeal because of that.
 - Somerset Council cannot stop planning applications being made whilst it develops a Local Plan. Once an application is made there are statutory timescales within which it must be considered. If it doesn't make a decision within the statutory timescales then a developer can appeal on the grounds of 'non-determination' as they did in relation to the development on land North of the Exeter Road in Rockwell Green.
 - In considering whether to defend appeals Somerset Council has to consider (a) the cost of doing so knowing that the lack of a Local Plan limits its chance of success and (b) the risk of losing infrastructure funding if the appeal is successful as this is often used to offset costs that would be awarded against the Council if it lost an appeal
 - The Local Plan is in development and whilst it won't be formally adopted until 2029 at the earliest, as it moves through the various stages of development it becomes more relevant and useful as a tool for managing planning applications.

2.3 It is also worth understanding the timeframes associated with developments from the initial consultation stage to spades in the ground to get a sense of the time it will take for developments that are currently in play at one stage or another of the process to get to completion.

- National house builders hope to sell at between 25 and 50 houses a year per site. Due to costs of building and availability of labour force that means a build out rate each year of around 50 houses per site. That is the experience of officers in Somerset responsible for school place planning and triangulated with discussions with a developer. A site of 350 houses could therefore take seven years to build out
- There is then the time taken to get from initial proposals to spades in the ground. By way of example the proposal to develop Longforth 2 was first signed off in 2022. Now that planning approval has been received it is anticipated that building will start in Spring 2027 with the site built out by 2030/31. The five years from initial agreement to starting work is considered to be one of the faster processes – it can often take much longer.
- At present only two of the sites around Wellington have approval – Longforth 2 and the site North of Exeter Road. The others are still at the early stages of the process and on that basis, based on Longforth 2, building won't start until 2030 at the absolute earliest assuming all are approved.
- Another element that will impact on timings is the finalising of the Section 106 Agreement that sets out the developers' obligations for the delivery of infrastructure or the funding for it. These are not always easy discussions and sometimes can result in a developer considering that a development isn't viable.

2.4 So, on this basis it is important to understand that as a town, even if all the developments are agreed, we are not suddenly going to be overwhelmed by new houses and an increased population in a short amount of time. Increases will be incremental and could take 10 or 15 years, possibly more, to be fully delivered.

2.5 That said, it is still important that assessments of the infrastructure needs of the town to cope with any growth are properly assessed early in the process at that is when Section 106 agreements are drafted and agreements on funding reached.

2.6 At the June meeting of Policy and Finance I presented a list (Appendix A) of initial areas that I considered needed to be looked at to enable the town's infrastructure needs to be properly considered and it was agreed to recommend to Full Council that funding be provided to recruit a Project Manager for 12 months to coordinate that work as well as for professional fees required to experts on any of the matters.

2.7 Following discussions with Somerset Council staff it is clear that the work on the Local Plan covers off the areas I initially listed and much more (Appendix 2). It is also the case that these areas will probably be covered off in more technical detail than we could ever hope to achieve. However, what is lacking in the Local Plan work being undertaken by Somerset Council, is the local input, the local knowledge and local capacity to feed in to the work.

2.8 There seems little sense, and not an effective use of public money, to seek to duplicate work that is already being undertaken. Instead, I would suggest that the Council should use whatever resource it decides to make available to contribute to and add value to the work

being undertaken by Somerset Council ensuring that there is a truly local voice engaged in the process.

2.9 Whilst taking this approach the Council should still critically evaluate the merits of any proposed development in and around the town's boundaries whilst recognising the Somerset context.

2.10 I would also suggest that it is important that our community is kept properly informed of the work being done and given the opportunity to contribute to shaping the plans for the town. The detail needs to be sorted out but as a starting point I would suggest we establish a website, either as part of the Council's website or as a standalone site, where information about developments, the progress on work on the Local Plan etc can be held so that there is transparency and access to information to ensure that engagement is well informed rather than based on assumptions and inaccurate information.

3. Considerations

3.1 The Council is asked

- (i) whether it wishes to devote resource to this work on the basis set out in this report. If so, I will discuss with Somerset Council Officers and develop more detailed proposals about how it will work for initial consideration by the Policy and Finance Committee.
- (ii) Whether it wishes to set up a website as suggested in para 2.10 above. If so. I will develop a more detailed proposal for the Policy and Finance Committee to consider.

Dave Farrow

Chief Executive Officer

1 July 2025

Appendix 1

List of Activities Submitted to June Policy and Finance Committee Meeting

Issue	Commentary	Specialist support required?
What is expected growth of the town over the next x years	<p>Somerset Council need to set out its targets for meeting Government targets. DF written to SC Planning lead requesting a meeting to discuss.</p> <p>How does that link with the Place Plan?</p> <p>Identify what developments may be acceptable (subject to all of the below points) and those which aren't e.g. south of A38 and develop strategy for objecting where necessary.</p>	Yes
Education	<p>Need update on presentation made to the Council last June in relation to school place planning – DF has written to staff in Somerset Council responsible for this asking for a meeting to discuss</p>	No - policy and legal requirements
Health	<p>Information received from NHS England about S106 funding.</p> <p>Local surgeries not consulted about what is needed.</p> <p>DF written to NHS asking for meeting to involve representatives of the two practices.</p>	No – specialist advice available from practices in town
Active Travel	<p>LCWIP published and should be used as a basis for 106 funding requests – need to ensure this is picked up by Planning.</p> <p>May need some review as some developments weren't known about – links to school provision.</p> <p>Link with Planning Department</p>	Maybe
Public Transport	<p>Need to understand basis on which commissioners assess need for additional services.</p> <p>Town Council working group on community bus service.</p>	Bus User Group

Flooding	Need to understand basis on which flooding risk is assessed for new development, what mitigation needs to be put in place and how that is managed/policed.	Yes
Sport and Play	<p>Playing pitch strategy needs updating – has been requested but no response from original author.</p> <p>Needs to take in to account increased number of young people in town – use education formula as a basis.</p>	Yes
Road Infrastructure	<p>In particular need for relief road to the north. Link up 106 from developments</p> <p>Different approach to town centre traffic management?</p> <p>How can existing roads be made safer for active travel?</p> <p>Can the existing road system be made more efficient?</p>	Yes
Environment/Ecology/Biodiversity	<p>What requirements are placed on developers to protect/enhance the environment/ecology/biodiversity?</p> <p>Can they be enhanced?</p>	Yes – local consultants available for advice.
Water Infrastructure (e.g. surface water management sewage treatment)	<p>Is the current infrastructure able to cope with the expected growth of the town?</p> <p>DF written to Wessex Water for meeting re sewerage capacity.</p>	Maybe
Affordable Housing	Somerset policy for this area is 25% of new homes must be affordable.	No – policy won't be changed
Housing design	Low carbon/low running costs/triple glazing/pv panels and storage etc etc	No – Climate Change Officer can advise on appropriate expectations. Scope of influence may be limited but no harm in

		setting expectation.
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Specialist Planning Advice £130 plus VAT an hour.

Appendix 2

EVIDENCE BASED WORK FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY SOMERSET COUNCIL

- Infrastructure Delivery Plan (including education and health needs)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
- Call for Sites and Sites Assessment
- Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment
- Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment
- Economic Development Needs Assessment
- Local Housing Needs Assessment
- Employment Land Review
- Town Centre Health Checks
- Playing Pitch and Built Sports Strategy
- Open Space Audit
- Role and Function of Settlements Study
- Water Cycle and Phosphates Study
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Habitat Regulations Assessment

This evidence base, put together with other data sources and engagement with internal and external agencies/specialists, is resulting Topic Papers on:

- Biodiversity
- Flooding and Coastal Change
- Gypsy and Travellers
- Infrastructure Delivery
- Heritage
- Health
- Climate Change and Energy
- Site Allocations
- Landscape
- Affordable and Specialist Housing
- Custom and Self Build

- Housing Delivery
- Agriculture, soil, water and air quality
- Nutrient Neutrality
- Economy
- Retail and Town Centres
- Sport, Open Space and Green Infrastructure
- Design
- Spatial Strategy and Settlements
- Sustainable Travel



Title	Chief Executive's Report
Meeting	Full Council
Date of meeting	3 November 2025
Action Required	For noting
Report Author and email address	townclerk@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

1.1 This report will update councillors on matters not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

2. Other Matters

- Community Governance Review (CGR) – Somerset Council has announced that following the 2027 elections it will be carrying out a CGR of all city, town and parish council boundaries for implementation in time for the 2031 elections.

The Town Council had previously submitted a request for a CGR and established a working group to consider options. The request will now be subsumed within the wider review. Councils have been asked to develop local proposals and if local agreement can be reached that will make the process easier. I will be arranging meetings with neighbouring councils to discuss this.

- Sports Pitch and Facilities Review – As part of its Local Plan development Somerset Council is carrying out a review of sport pitches and facilities around the county. Councils and clubs have been sent surveys to complete looking into the quality of provision. I held a meeting with representatives of clubs and the Sports Federation on the 22 October to discuss how we would engage with the process and to begin discussions about what our 'ask' would be for the town given the level of planned development. Helen Acreman is supporting me in this work.
- The South West in Bloom Awards took place on the 8 October and the details of all the awards made to the Town Council and various groups around the town have been circulated previously. This is proof that the decision to bring open spaces management in house was

justified. Huge thanks to Darren and his team for their fantastic work in just six months. On the 31 October the Mayor and Open Spaces manager will be attending an event in Brighton where the Town Council has been nominated for an RHS National Award on the back of the Woodland Creation Scheme we ran in conjunction with the Woodland Trust.

- I attended the Somerset City Town and Parish Conference on the 3 October and made a short presentation to a workshop about the Kings Arms Community Hub outlining the journey to opening and what we were delivering through it which was well received. It is being held up as an example by many organisations of what a town council can do to support the delivery of early help/early intervention services in a locality.
- On the 21 October most staff including the Open Spaces Team received a briefing from Shane and Claire from Reminiscence Learning on their work and how to support people with dementia as part of their programme to make Wellington a Dementia Inclusive Community which the Town Council is supporting. This is particularly important for our 'front facing' services who have regular contact with the community.
- Please note that the Policy and Finance Committee meeting on the 10 November will be reviewing the initial draft of the budget for 2026/7 following committee recommendations from October's meetings. Whilst it is always the case that non committee members can attend and contribute to discussions at committee meetings, although not vote, councillors who aren't members of the Policy and Finance Committee may find it particularly useful to attend this meeting as it will develop a recommendation for the budget for the December Council meeting.
- Finally, a reminder about the Remembrance events detailed below. I hope that as civic leaders as many councillors as can attend the service in the Park on the 9th and the two minute silence in the town centre on the 11th to lead the town in the respective acts of remembrance.

3. Communications and Social Media

In the period from 29th September to 27th October 2025 our social media posts have reached an estimated 43k people. We have received 2.5k content interactions, a 52% increase on the previous month. Our Facebook page netted 58 new followers, bringing our total up to 3,842. Our Instagram has also grown over the past month, receiving 8k views and reaching 420 total followers.

Our top five posts in this period were:

1. Alan and Jay transforming the flowerbed outside North Street Toilets – 251 reactions, 14.7k reach
2. Wellington wins gold at South West in Bloom – 219 reactions, 4.3k reach
3. South West in Bloom additional awards – 117 reactions, 3.3k reach
4. Official opening of Kings Arms Community Hub – 87 reactions, 4.6k reach
5. "hot off the press" SWIB gold announcement – 57 reactions, 992 reach

We are looking into implementing a small number of paid ads throughout the year to promote consultations such as the Community Development Survey. This has been delayed due to some technical issues but we hope to have this up and running within the next couple of weeks.

The Kings Arms Community Hub has now reached 512 followers and is continuing to promote activities within the hub and signpost people to appropriate services via social media.

The Wellington Town Council Newsletter has 248 subscribers and the next issue will be going out on Friday 7th November.

4. November Meetings/Events

Dave	Time	Event	Location	Who Involved
2 November	12.00pm	Dedication of Field of Remembrance	Baptist Church	All invited
3 November	11.00am	WI Town Poppy Display Launch	Outside the Conservative Club	All invited
3 November	12.00pm	Opening of Domino's Pizza Pod	West Park	Mayor
3 November	7.00pm	Full Council	URC Hall	All
6 November	All day	South Ward Vacancy Election	Bulford Community Hall	For info
9 November	3.15pm	Service of Remembrance (parade assembles at Wellington School from 2.30pm)	Wellington Park	All
10 November	10.00am	Talk to U3A	Wellington RFC	Mayor
10 November	6.00pm	Policy and Finance Committee	URC Hall	Committee members
1 November	11.00am	Armistice Day Two Minutes Silence	Town Centre	All
17 November	6.00pm	Community Committee	URC Hall	Committee members
19 November	7.00pm	Environment Committee	URC Hall	Committee members
20 November	2.00pm	Christmas Card Competition Judging	Council Chamber	Mayor
29 November	All day	Christmas Market and Light Switch On	Town Centre	All

4. SLT Annual Leave

CEO – 27 November

Community Development Officer – 18 November a.m. and 27 November

5. Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

Vision

- An inclusive, safe and secure town where everybody is supportive of each other and offers particular care for the more vulnerable members of our community
- A town with a diverse, thriving, and resilient local economy
- A town with vibrant cultural, sporting, and social communities
- Proud and protective of our heritage, green spaces, and biodiversity
- Committed to becoming a net carbon neutral town

- A destination of choice for people to live and work and for businesses to be located.
- Connected with the Blackdown Hills National Landscape and surrounding communities

Wellington Place Plan

- Inclusive Access and Connected Communities
- Pride in Place: Culture, Heritage & Belonging
- A Healthy, Sustainable & Green Town
- Youth, Learning & Lifelong Support
- Housing, Inclusion & Community Safety
- Enterprise, Skills & Local Economies

6. Financial Implications

None

7. Risks

None

8. Considerations

The Council is asked to note the report.

**MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL POLICY & FINANCE
COMMITTEE HELD AT UNITED REFORM CHURCH HALL ON MONDAY 13
OCTOBER 2025 AT 6.00 PM**

Present: Councillor M Lithgow (Chair)
Councillors C Booth (from minute 264), J Cole, A Govier, J
Lloyd, C Penk, J Thorne, K Wheatley

In attendance: Alice Kendall – Democratic Services & Finance Manager
Wasif Choudhury – Democratic Services & Finance Officer
One member of the press
Representative of NHS Armed Forces (for minute 265)

259 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors S Pringle-Kosikowsky.

260 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors A Govier and J Lloyd have a standing personal interest declaration relating to MTMIT, the Council's IT consultant, being former customers of the company.

Councillor Thorne has a standing personal interest declaration relating to MTMIT, the Council's IT consultant, being a friend of the company owner.

261 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public in attendance.

262 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 11 August 2025.

263 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

**(a) TO NOTE AND APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT 6
OCTOBER (attached)**

RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliation.

**(b) TO NOTE AND APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR 6 AUGUST – 6
OCTOBER (attached)**

RESOLVED to approve the expenditure.

**(c) TO NOTE AND APPROVE INCOME RECEIVED 6 AUGUST – 6
OCTOBER (attached)**

RESOLVED to approve income.

(d) TO NOTE AND APPROVE THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AGAINST THE BUDGET FOR THE 2025-26 YEAR AS AT 6 OCTOBER (attached)

RESOLVED to note and approve the budget report.

It was **AGREED** that Council Officers should review best practices for how expenditure is reported to committees and the contract for the window cleaning of the Council offices should be changed given the supplier's previous links with the Council (former Councillor).

At this juncture, Councillor C Booth joined the meeting.

264 PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDERS

It was **RESOLVED** to note the paper with no further action.

265 Q3 GRANTS

- i. NHS Somerset - Armed Forces Outreach - £500

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders to allow representative of NHS Armed Forces Outreach to answer questions.

It was **RESOLVED** to resume standing orders.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the grant application of £500.

- ii. Kiera Chard – Christmas at the Well - £250

Councillors were supportive of this event, however, it was confirmed that the Grants Policy does not allow grants to be provided to individuals so it would not be possible to approve this application.

Councillors confirmed that they would like to support the event through separate means to the grant policy.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve Council Officers to support this event up to a cost of £150.

266 STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL

RESOLVED to defer this item for two months until the review of expenditure reporting is completed.

267 SCHEDULE OF FEES & CHARGES

RESOLVED to approve.

268 SCHEDULE OF DIRECT DEBITS & STANDING ORDERS

RESOLVED to approve.

269 COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES

A paper was circulated for consideration which included the findings of the last Paris Independent Remuneration Panel.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that the Councillors' Basic Allowance be increased to £807.78, with the additional payment to the Mayor/Chairman remaining at an additional 50% (£403.39).

270 INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT

Agreed to note the report.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 18:55pm

Signed

Date

MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL ON WEDNESDAY 15th OCTOBER 2025 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor C Booth (Chair),
Councillors M Lithgow, J Lloyd, C Penk, J. Thorne, K. Wheatley.

IN ATTENDANCE: Dave Farrow - Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk
Annette Kirk - Facilities Manager
Wasif Choudhury – Democratic Services and Finance Officer
One member of the press.

271. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor S Mercer.

272. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor M Lithgow declared a personal interest relating to item 280 as he has close friends who are members of the Friends of Wellington Park organisation.

Councillor K Wheatley declared an interest related to item 278 as he was involved in organising the Film Festival event.

273. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 13th August 2025.

274. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public in attendance.

275. EVENTS WORKING GROUP

RESOLVED to approve Minutes of the Events Working Group meeting held on 1st October 2025.

276. WELLINGTON DAY EVENT

The committee considered proposed details for the annual Wellington Day event and **RESOLVED** to approve the following:

- i. Event Times: Start 10am and Finish 5pm
- ii. Total budget of £15,000 to hold Wellington Day on Saturday 14th August 2027 on the Recreation Ground. To include exploring grant funding and sponsorship options available.
- iii. To set a budget of £7,000 for the new financial year 2026/2027 to cover the cost of advance booking deposits.
- iv. To budget £15,000 in the financial year 2027/2028 to pay the event balance £8,000 for August 2027 event and £7,000 for the preparation, set up and payment of booking deposits for the event to be held August 2028.

277. CARNIVAL

Councillor J Lloyd provided a report on Mayor's reception at the Wellington Carnival which was noted.

278. FILM FESTIVAL

Councillor K Wheatley provided a report on the success of the event which was noted.

279. BUS SHELTERS

RESOLVED to approve quotation from GW Shelters to include an Aluminium Bench, installation of a timetable casing and installation of RTI if power is available at Exeter Road, Rockwell Green.

RESOLVED to approve maintenance of two bus shelters and to proceed with the quote provided by M J Fletcher Property Maintenance. The following was **AGREED**:

- Bus shelter on High Street outside Casey Warren Hairdresser would receive a new timetable case.
- Bus shelter on High Street outside old Post Office will be cleaned, rubbed down, repainted and include a new timetable case.

280. PUBLIC TOILETS AND PAVILIONS

It was **RESOLVED** to approve appointing Property plans (southwest) Ltd to produce design layout drawings for the redesign/remodelling of Wellington Park Toilets (£840) and Recreation Ground Pavilion (£980).

It was confirmed by Council Officers that the cost would be met by the Professional Fees budget line which is Officer delegated.

281. TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKS

Councillor K Wheatley confirmed that there were no further significant developments and noted that Somerset Council is currently in the process of reviewing all car parks within Somerset and the review of Sunday charges which will delay any further action by Somerset Council.

282. PROMOTION OF WELLINGTON

Councillor K Wheatley confirmed that following discussions between the local artist and the Town Clerk, there is no need for a 50/50 profit share as there are no plans to produce goods or products with artwork that would bring in any revenue streams to share.

283. BUDGETS

It was **RESOLVED** to note Current Year (25/26) Income and Expenditure as at 9 October including committed spending.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend next year (26/27) income and expenditure budgets to be presented to November Policy & Finance Committee for approval with the following amendments:

- Changing name of “Smaller Trees” budget line to “Christmas Trees” and increasing the budget to £1000.
- Approve that the Emergency Planning budget line would be delegated to Council Officers.
- Approve that the Pop-Up Shop cost centre would be delegated to Council Officers.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the principle of extending the current contract for Christmas lighting for 1 year. It was **AGREED** that a request would be made to increase scope of Christmas lights to include Corn Hill and Lancer Court for the remainder of the contract

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19:15.

Signed.....

Date.....

**MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
AT UNITED REFORM CHURCH ON MONDAY 20 OCTOBER 2025 AT 6.00 PM**

Present: Councillor A Govier (Chair)
Councillors J Cole, C Govier-Wiggins, J Lloyd, M Lithgow, M McGuffie, C Penk.

In attendance: Dave Farrow – CEO/Town Clerk
Wasif Choudhury – Democratic Services & Finance Officer
Laura Batcha – Community Development Officer
One member of the press

284 CHAIR TO WELCOME MEMBERS

The Chair welcomed members to the committee.

285 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND APPROVE THE REASONS GIVEN

There were no apologies.

286 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

287 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public in attendance.

288 MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Community Committee meeting held 15 September 2025.

289 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor C Govier-Wiggins was elected as Chair.

290 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

Councillor A Govier was elected as Vice-Chair.

291 BUDGET REVIEWS

After much discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the Kings Arms Community Hub (KACH) Budget to November Policy & Finance Committee for approval on the basis that a more detailed report on the estimated income received is provided.

It was **AGREED** that to increase visibility and scrutiny of spend, earmarked reserves should all be returned to the budget.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend the Community Budgets to November Policy & Finance Committee for approval with the following amendments:

- Youth Services, Cade Farm Community Hall and Cost of Living Crisis cost codes are to be put into the budget and should no longer be listed as Earmarked Reserves.

- The Accelerated Reform Fund (ARF) should be included in the budget.
- Specific projects should be explicitly listed in the Community Development & Support cost code.

There being no further business the meeting closed at: 18:55

Sign.....

Date.....

MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WEDNESDAY 22 OCTOBER 2025 AT 7.00 PM

Present: Councillor C Booth (Chair)
Councillors M Lithgow, J Lloyd, M McGuffie and S Pringle-Kosikowsky.

In attendance: Dave Farrow – Chief Executive/Town Clerk
Darren Hill – Open Spaces Manager
Wasif Choudhury – Democratic Services and Finance Officer
One member of the press

229. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

230. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

231. MINUTES

It was **AGREED** to clarify line 237 to confirm that there would be no increase in cost as a result of not purchasing new bins.

RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2025 noting the above clarification.

232. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

233. BASINS ALLOTMENTS ADVISORY BOARD

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 2025 were noted.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following:

- a) To begin tree maintenance work inside the allotment site to include new trees/hedge plants to fill gaps around the boundary line (£1,000)
- b) To complete maintenance of tracks and skip hire (£1,000)

234. LONGFORTH FARM ALLOTMENTS

It was **RESOLVED** to approve £5,000 from the CIL allocation for this project is delegated to Council Officers to commence preparation work on the allotment site set up.

235. FOOTPATH UPDATE

Steve Saunders had provided his apologies beforehand and therefore this update was not provided.

236. OPEN SPACES MANAGER REPORT

The report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Open Spaces Manager provided a verbal update, and this was noted by the Committee.

At this juncture, the Town Clerk entered the meeting.

Councillors noted that the Wellington Green Corridor is receiving national acclaim and congratulated the Open Spaces Team for all of their efforts towards this.

237. OPEN SPACES MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

The papers circulated with the agenda were considered.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of an oak board to allow for corporate sponsorship plaques erected at the entrance of Wellington Park (£600).

It was **AGREED** that further conversations should be had regarding the erection of plaques on benches for individual residents.

It was **RESOLVED** to arrange repairs to whole roof of the park shelter (£5,100).

238. RISK ASSESSMENT – GREEN CORRIDOR

Risk assessment has yet to take place, so this item was withdrawn.

239. CORNER CLOSE

Councillor Booth proposed the possibility of installing dog training/activity equipment to be installed in the open space near Hoyles Road.

It was **AGREED** not to take this proposal any further.

240. ACCESSIBLE PLOT – THE BASINS ALLOTMENT SITE

It was **RESOLVED** to approve delegated spend of £3,000 and to give delegated power to the Facilities Manager to project manage the expenditure and complete the creation of the “Accessible Plot” as detailed in Accessible Plot Cost Report.

241. BUDGETS

It was **RESOLVED** to approve expenditure to date against the budgets delegated to the Committee in the current year (2025/26).

It was **RESOLVED** to approve Officer delegated spending from the available Basins Allotment budget code for provision of skips and other maintenance requirements.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the items for inclusion in the 2026/27 (and onwards) budget.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20:10pm

Sign.....

Date.....



Title	Forecasted Budget Line Overspend (2025/26)
Meeting	Full Council
Date of meeting	03 November 2025
Action Required	Resolution to note and approve (either as amended or presented)
Report Author and email address	Alice Kendall – Democratic Services and Finance Manager (RFO) alice@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to highlight the budget lines which are forecasted to be overspent at the end of the financial year. As per the Council's [Scheme of Delegation](#), all budget overspends must be reviewed and approved by Full Council.

2. Background

- 2.1. As per [Financial Regulations](#), a draft budget for the following year shall be prepared and presented to the Policy & Finance Meeting no later than the November meeting. As part of the drafting process, the RFO forecasts the year end position on each budget line, thus identifying those lines that are likely to become overspent.
- 2.2. Forecasting uses assumptions based on known spending, existing contracts and current spend to date.
- 2.3. Each line identified, and the related overspend is detailed within appendix A.

3. Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

3.1. Budget setting, and appropriate management, is directly linked to all aspects of the Council's vision.

4. Financial Implications

4.1. Appendix A details the lines which are forecasted to be overspent at the Year End.

4.2. It should be noted, however, that the overspends are specific to these lines and that the Council's budget overall is forecasted to be underspent. The subsequent surplus to be used to offset the Precept Demand or to fund larger projects not currently included in the budget. A full breakdown will be presented to the November Policy & Finance meeting.

4.3. While it would be tempting to spread costs between lower or under spent budgets to 'balance' the budget, this misinforms spending when forecasting and analysing specific budget lines.

5. Risks

5.1. Financial Risk

- **Deficit Spending:** Overspending can lead to a budget deficit, requiring borrowing or cuts in future services.
- **Reduced Reserves:** Emergency or contingency funds may be depleted, leaving the council vulnerable to unexpected costs.

5.2. Operation Risk

- **Service Disruption:** Services may be delayed or reduced.
- **Project Delays or Cancellations:** Improvement projects may be paused or scrapped due to lack of funds.

5.3. Mitigation

- The Council's Policy & Finance Committee regularly review spending against the budget.
- By identifying overspending as part of the year end forecasting and budget setting process, the Council ensures that appropriate budgets are set for future years. At present, forecasted overspending is outweighed by forecasted underspending in other areas.
- The Council holds a general reserve of £200,000 which would be used to ensure the cost of essential contracts are met.

6. Considerations

6.1. To note the report and approve the overspends.

Appendix A

Code	Title	25/26 Budget £	Forecasted YE Position £	Overspend £	Overspend %	Reasoning	Mitigation
36	Audit Fees	2,470	2,890	420	17	External Auditors fees are banded based on level of income/expenditure. Council fell into a higher bracket than budget for.	Increase budget accordingly for 26/27 based on forecasted financial positions.
40	Hire of Hall	1,860	2,310	450	24	Voucher 223 in current year (£540) relates to hire in the previous financial year and would normally have been adjusted at the year end. However, the invoice was received after the accounts were closed.	Ensure suppliers send invoices in a timely manner.
18	Staff Travelling	250	630	380	152	Travel to in person conferences and meetings has increased as well as travel further afield for events such as In Bloom.	Staff encouraged to use Council vehicle where possible. Review budgets for specific travelling, i.e. In Bloom. Overall budget increase.
99	SLCC	420	480	60	14	Membership rate is based on Clerk/Chief Executive's salary. Falls into next band after annual pay award.	Amend budget accordingly and make allowance for inflationary increase in fees.

Appendix A

Code	Title	25/26 Budget £	Forecasted YE Position £	Overspend £	Overspend %	Reasoning	Mitigation
23	Members Travelling	200	420	220	110	Mayor's engagements increased over year. Claims trend at c£100 per quarter. Voucher 461 (£194) contains £107 value which would have been adjusted at year end (Q4 24/25) but claim was submitted after accounts were closed.	Members to submit claims in a timely manner. Increase budget based on forecasted spend.
37	Office Cleaning & Maintenance (Fore Street)	4000	4400	400	10	Underestimation of cleaning requirements given opening of Community Office/Reception.	Office spaces were reduced to one clean per week, keeping Community Office at two given public use. Update budget accordingly for 26/27.
156	Gas (Fore St)	3,000	3,500	500	17	Forecast based on previous years usage	Update budget for 26/27. Updated heating controls and thermostats have been installed which may reduce usage over winter.
31	IT Support & E-mail hosting	4,250	4,579	329	8	Increased IT support hours required due to growth.	Budget increase for 26/27.

Appendix A

Code	Title	25/26 Budget £	Forecasted YE Position £	Overspend £	Overspend %	Reasoning	Mitigation
217	Green Waste	1,000	1,200	200	20	Unexpected amount of waste from increased cutting back scheme in first year.	OS Team to chip and mulch as much green waste as possible. Increase budget.
226	Park Water Bill	2,500	2,676	176	7	Budget set based on old data from Somerset Council for first year of devolution. There is an assumption that this supply also covers the Park toilets and the playing field pavilion. Therefore there is likely splitting of spend to be done.	Facilities Manager working on tracing supply as well installing sub meters so cost can be properly apportioned.
240	Pavillion Utilities	3,500	8,000	4,500	128	First year budget for these supplies; Somerset was unable to give usage/cost data before property transfer so budget figure was ill informed. Contracts transferred at high rate, but contracts now fixed.	Budget for 26/27 to be set based on two year fixed costs with usage data from energy supply broker. New cost centre for Pitches and Pavilions to cover appropriate lines for routine and responsive maintenance etc.

Appendix A

Code	Title	25/26 Budget £	Forecasted YE Position £	Overspend £	Overspend %	Reasoning	Mitigation
						Line also includes some items of responsive maintenance, etc.	It has recently transpired that Somerset Council did not recharge any utilities costs to lease holders. This to be addressed in 26/27 and sub-meters installed to inform re-charge.
247	Utilities (Public Toilets)	4,000	6,800	2,800	70	<p>As with other utility supplies, budget figures were a best guess given poor information from Somerset Council.</p> <p>Contracts transferred at very expensive deemed rates and have now been fixed. That said, the process of fixing the contract should have been carried out sooner.</p> <p>This line includes spending for a supply that covers the park (including the toilets). This supply is being assessed for apportioning as mentioned above.</p>	<p>Contracts now fixed at significantly lower rate. Estimated 46% saving for the North Street Toilet supply, for example.</p> <p>26/27 budgets can now be informed at known spending based on first half of the year.</p> <p>Costs to be apportioned to correct areas of the budget once established. Facilities Manager working installing sub-meters where possible to inform detailed usage data.</p>