

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WELLINGTON ON MONDAY 5 JANUARY 2026 AT 6.00 PM

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

IN ATTENDANCE: David Farrow – CEO/Town Clerk
Alice Kendall – Democratic Services & Finance Manager
Wasif Choudhury – Democratic Services & Finance Officer
Sergeant Jon O'Connor, Wellington Community Policing Team (for minute 386)
One member of the press
49 members of the public

382. WELCOME BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed those attending.

383. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO APPROVE REASONS GIVE

Apologies were received from Councillor C Booth.

384. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none to declare.

385. MINUTES

It was RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 1 December 2025.

386. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE LOCAL POLICING TEAM

It was AGREED to move this item forward on the agenda.

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

At this juncture, Councillors J Cole and M McGuffie entered the meeting.

387. QUESTION AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were several members of the public expressing dissatisfaction regarding planning application (44/25/0013) of up to 250 dwellings on the land south of Oldway Road. Their main concerns were related to loss of wildlife habitats and biodiversity, increased road congestion and traffic incidents due to the proposed housing being located on the opposite side of the A38 to Wellington Town centre, increased demand on already overstretched services such as schools, dentists and GP surgeries as well as limited public transport options. In addition to this, there were concerns that this was set a precedent for further development in that area eventually stretching all the way to the M5.

One member of the public spoke to raise concerns about the Wellington Place Plan which was adopted in 2023 and requested that this be amended in advance of the review date in February 2026 with the hope that this could be converted into the Wellington Neighbourhood plan.

One member of the public spoke noted that Wessex Water has scheduled investment at the works for 2025/30 but these upgrades are concerned only with additional phosphorus removal and additional storm storage. They do not include upgrades to rectify the sewage treatment capacity shortfall which is not profiled to be completed until 2030-2035." This derives from a Wessex Water letter stating that the capacity upgrades are profiled for delivery for 2030-2035.

388. PLANNING APPLICATION

The following planning applications were considered.

(a) Case reference 44/25/0013

Proposal: Application for Outline Planning with all matters reserved, except for access, for the erection of up to 250 No. dwellings, public open space, ecological/biodiversity enhancements and associated works with details of access on land south of Oldway Road, Wellington.

The Chief Executive provided clarification and context on the details included within the Wellington Place Plan adopted in 2023. It sets out that the A38 is the hard boundary for Wellington and this application would be in direct contravention of this. He also reported that the Planning Officer of the Blackdown Hills National Landscape had not been consulted on this application

There was much discussion by Councillors with unanimous agreement that the application should not be supported and agreeing with the previous comments made by members of the public in minute 387.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend refusal of the application based on the following reasons:

1. The proposed development is in contravention of the hard boundary adopted in the Wellington Place Plan.
2. The proposed development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the National Landscape, contrary to local and national planning policy.
3. The proposal represents unsustainable development due to its location, inadequate local infrastructure, including highway capacity, drainage, and access to essential services.

(b) Case reference 43/25/0088

Proposal: Application for Approval of Reserved Matters following Outline Application 43/23/0056 for the layout, landscaping, scale and appearance of the erection of 178 No. dwellings and associated infrastructure on land north of Taunton Road, Longforth Park, Wellington.

Amendments: Increase in the number of dwellings proposed from 161 to 178, amended layout with associated amended landscaping, boundaries, materials, parking, engineering and house type plans.

It was **RESOLVED** to raise no objection.

389. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

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

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

Councillor A Govier noted there was nothing of direct relevance to Wellington at the most recent Somerset Full Council meeting.

Councillor J Lloyd provided an update on the latest Highways Working Group meeting noting that roadworks on the A38 toward Taunton will start today. There is a section of the A38 between Chelston Roundabout and Wellington that is liable to flooding which will be reviewed by Somerset Council. Section 106 funding will be used to improve the World's End junction and the road to Bradford and Silver Street will be closed however no timescale has yet been provided.

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

The report from the Chief Executive was noted.

392. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2025 were noted.

It was RESOLVED to remove the following overspend amounts from the remaining post-event balance to pay to Fuse Performance:

£38.70 Biffa – Event General Waste Disposal.

£150.00 Carly Press – Carnival Programme & 2 x The Edge Publication for Wellington Garden of Light Event.

Total: £188.70 to be deducted from the outstanding £2,000 post-event balance.

393. TOWN CENTRE EVENTS - ROAD TRAFFIC ORDER APPLICATION (TTRO)

It was RESOLVED to approve the Somerset Council Fee of £697.00 for a new TTRO which will cover Town Council and Wellington Independent Market events in the Town Centre from September 2026 to March 2028 with the proviso that the Independent Market waive the fee for Wellington Town Council to hire a stall.

It was RESOLVED to approve in principle the date for holding the "Christmas Lights Switch on" event in 2027 for the last weekend in November 2027. The Economic Development Committee will determine at their next meeting the full schedule after 2027.

394. DRAFT SUBMISSION TO BOUNDARY COMMISSION

It was AGREED to approve the draft submission with the addition that there should be one Councillor for each of the two divisions in Wellington.

395. PRECEPT 2026/27

It was RESOLVED that the Precept for 2026/7 should be set at £1,569,759 (£263.52 Band D equivalent).

396. TO CONSIDER EXCLUDING MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude members of the press and public under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 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 the legislation - Information is commercially sensitive.

397. LONGFORTH ROAD TOILETS UPDATE

It was RESOLVED:

- i) To confirm Danfo as the appointed supplier of the Modular Building for the new Longforth Road toilets.
- ii) That BVLR Projects be appointed as the Main Contractor
- iii) To approve the updated pricing from Ravenslade for stages 5 and 6 of the build.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20:15.

STANDING DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of Somerset Council:

Councillor Andrew Govier

Councillor Ross Henley

Mayor

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Date.....