

**MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
AT UNITED REFORM CHURCH ON MONDAY 19 JANUARY 2026 AT 6.00 PM**

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

In attendance: Dave Farrow – CEO/Town Clerk
Wasif Choudhury – Democratic Services & Finance Officer
Laura Batcha – Community Development Officer
Peter Joint – Community Connect Champion
Rachel Parker – Strategic Manager (Head of Public Health
Nursing, Somerset Council – For minute 409)
One member of the press

404 CHAIR TO WELCOME MEMBERS

The Chair welcomed members to the committee.

405 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND APPROVE THE REASONS GIVEN

Apologies were received from Councillor C Penk.

406 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C Govier-Wiggins declared a personal interest in item 8b (Minute 411) as she attends sessions run by Bright Beginnings in the Kings Arms Community Hub.

407 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public in attendance.

408 MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Community Committee meeting held 17 November 2025.

409 BEST START IN LIFE FAMILY HUB

Rachel Parker Strategic Manager, Head of Public Health Nursing, Somerset Council provided context and an explanation of this programme.

The Kings Arms Community Hub in Wellington will be the first Family Hub in Somerset, and a key element of this programme is to bring together all the services related to childhood development.

It was confirmed that all aspects of development will be targeted and measured at end of reception/EYFS stage by assessing various development goals. It will be important that ensure that the provision is universal and available to all. For those parents and children that require more support, outreach programmes can be tailored to their needs.

It was confirmed that the we would seek to engage with parents of home-schooled children about the programme.

The Community Connect Champion noted the importance in linking this with programme with the Cradle to Career initiative.

Councillor A Govier noted that it is imperative that this programme starts delivery as soon as possible.

The Chief Executive confirmed that there will be an assessment period between now and April to determine exactly what resources and staffing requirements are needed to ensure successful delivery of this programme which will evolve and develop as we learn more.

Councillors asked to have sight of the draft programme in March 2026.

At this juncture, R Parker left the meeting.

410 COMMUNITY CONNECT CHAMPION UPDATE

Connect Somerset have secured a further 2 years funding (2 days per week) with effect from the next Financial Year. A Community Visioning Breakfast took place in December with over 50 attendees and the plan is to set breakfast dates for the whole year.

The Main Connect Somerset Priorities for 2026 are to set up and embed Best Start in Life Family Hub Network, link the Cradle to Career Model with this initiative and coordinate parenting support across the area.

The Community Connect Champion confirmed that he has retired from the One Team Role. The One Team in Wellington will continue on the same basis and for the time will be chaired by Kieran Taffe pending further recruitment. One Teams will be promoted via Best Start in life and Cradle to Career models as a means of support for vulnerable families.

The Kings Arms Community Hub was mentioned by Gideon Amos MP in Parliament.

The Wacky Wednesdays Steering Group are meeting on 21st January to plan dates for the year and organise the first event. A survey for what people want is being made and will link with the Community Development Strategy.

A Cradle to Career visioning breakfast took place on 25 November at Court Fields. A huge amount of information was gathered and was shared at a Steering Group meeting in early January.

An agenda is being prepared for the Cradle to Career launch event on 10 February and invitations to this event will be sent out. There will be a number of workshops available to all attendees. It is imperative that all initiatives work alongside of each other and that a coordinated approach is taken to link these up.

411 KINGS ARMS COMMUNITY HUB ROOM HIRE

It was **RESOLVED** to approve a year-long commitment for In The Mix, to ensure stability and continuity of youth provision in Wellington.

It was **AGREED** that Somerset Drug and Alcohol Service should be charged to continue to make use of the Kings Arms Community Hub.

It was **AGREED** to initially approve subsidised access to the Kings Arms Community Hub for the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to be reviewed on a quarterly basis requiring evidence of need and outcomes on a rolling basis.

After much discussion, It was **AGREED** in principle to approve subsidised access to the Kings Arms Community Hub for the Bright Beginnings Volunteer Group. Council Officers are to review how to make this feasible given the organisation is not a legal entity. Councillors also asked that safeguarding arrangements for this group be reviewed.

It was **AGREED** that Wellington Women in Business CIC (WWIB) should be charged to continue to make use of the Kings Arms Community Hub.

412 WARM WELCOME

The Community Development Officer confirmed that Warm Welcome sessions are now being delivered at the following times:

- Mondays: 4pm–8pm – aligned with Thrive provision to test engagement with residents who are in work during the day.
- Wednesdays & Fridays: 11am–3pm – daytime provision supporting older residents, parents, carers, and those experiencing isolation.

There is a wide variety between the people that make use of this initiative ranging from residents seeking warmth, social connection, and low-pressure support, individuals signposted for cost-of-living advice, food support, and wellbeing services and repeat visitors, indicating the development of trusted relationships rather than one-off access.

This mix confirms the Hub is functioning not just as a warm space, but as a soft-entry point into wider support.

Volunteer capacity has increased, enabling more consistent cover and improved resilience. With more volunteers in place, the service can now be promoted more confidently and widely, ensuring demand can be met safely.

As capacity continues to stabilise, Warm Welcome is well-placed to transition from a winter response into a sustainable, community-led offer.

Councillors noted that local schools should be targeted for marketing as they will know which families will want to make use of this service.

413 IN THE MIX UPDATE

The Community Development Officer confirmed that the October half term programme marked a significant expansion of youth provision into Wellington, delivered in partnership with In The Mix Project and based at the Kings Arms Community Hub.

There were 44 unique young people engaged, with 30 from Wellington postcodes, demonstrating strong local reach with 83 hot meals provided, alongside snacks and food education, supporting both wellbeing and cost-of-living pressures.

The delivery achieved high satisfaction, with sessions rated 4–5 stars by young people and consistently positive parent feedback. The activities supported confidence, social connection, life skills, creativity, and emotional wellbeing, with strengths in inclusive practice and supporting young people with additional needs.

This programme demonstrated the value of town-centre, accessible provision in reducing transport barriers and establishing Wellington as a viable base for ongoing youth work.

It was confirmed that a detailed Christmas 2025 report is currently being produced by In the Mix which will be shared with Councillors in due course.

There being no further business the meeting closed at: 20:01.

Sign.....

Date.....



Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	16-03-2026
Briefing Item	Connect Somerset and Best Start in Life Updates
Author and email address	Peter Joint peter@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk Laura Batcha laura@wellingtoncouncil.co.uk

1. Context

Item: Connect Somerset Champion / Best Start in Life Update

Wellington Town Council currently hosts the Connect Somerset Neighbourhood Champion role, alongside emerging work connected to the Best Start in Life (BSiL) programme.

Best Start in Life is a countywide initiative focused on improving early identification of need, strengthening parenting support and improving school readiness for children before children start school.

The programme operates through a graduated support model, combining universal community support with targeted and specialist services. Within this model, community venues, schools, early years providers and voluntary organisations play an important role in ensuring families can access support early.

Wellington's approach aligns with this model through the development of local partnership initiatives including:

- the Cradle to Career programme
- early years and family support activity
- community-based support delivered through the Kings Arms Community Hub

Through the development of the Kings Arms Community Hub and the Cradle to Career partnership, Wellington Town Council is well positioned to support local delivery of early years and family support initiatives aligned with the Best Start in Life programme. Community venues and partnership networks in Wellington provide opportunities to strengthen local coordination and improve access to early help for families.

2. Briefing

Work during the current period has focused on strengthening partnership working and supporting activity linked to the Cradle to Career Early Years and Family Support strands.

A small partnership working group has been established including representatives from:

- early years providers
- health visiting services
- councillors
- community organisations

The group is exploring ways to improve Good Level of Development (GLD) at Reception age, with a focus on strengthening early identification of need and ensuring families can access appropriate support pathways.

- Initial work has focused on:
- mapping existing early years and family support provision
- strengthening links between early years settings, health services and community organisations
- identifying opportunities for earlier intervention and improved family support coordination.

Community engagement activity is also being supported through the development of Community Breakfast events, designed to bring together local organisations and residents to share information and strengthen partnership working.

Upcoming events include:

- Wiveliscombe Community Breakfast – 16 March
- Wellington Community Breakfast – 27 March (Court Fields School)

Further updates will be provided once grant agreements relating to the Connect Somerset Champion role and Best Start in Life delivery are confirmed.

3. Background Papers

None



Title	Together in Tone – Project Update and Report
Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	16.03.26
Action Required	Note progress and feedback on direction of project
Report Author and email address	Laura Batcha- Community Development Officer. laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

This report provides an update on the Together in Tone project, funded through the Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) Community Health and Wellbeing Programme.

The report summarises the engagement work undertaken to date, highlights key findings emerging from early conversations with local music groups, and seeks committee feedback on the proposed direction for the next phase of delivery.

2. Background

2.1 Wellington Town Council successfully secured £10,000 of external funding through the SALC Community Health and Wellbeing Programme to deliver the Together in Tone project across the Wellington and Wiveliscombe Local Community Network (LCN).

The project aims to:

- Improve health and wellbeing through participation in music.
- Reduce social isolation and strengthen community connections.
- Celebrate and promote local musical activity.
- Develop stronger links between existing community music groups.

The project was designed to include:

- Engagement with local choirs, bands and music groups.
- Development of collaborative musical activity across the LCN.
- Opportunities for community participation in music-making.
- Creation of a directory of local music groups.
- A shared community music event or performance.

5.2 A freelance Community Music Facilitator has been engaged to undertake initial scoping and engagement work with music groups across the area.

This phase of work aligns with the scoping and engagement stage outlined within the original funding application

5.3 Engagement activity undertaken

The Community Music Facilitator has undertaken initial engagement work with music groups across the Wellington and Wiveliscombe area.

Activities completed to date include:

- Contacting and mapping local music groups and ensembles.
- Identifying key contacts within groups (conductors, chairs and organisers).
- Gathering information on rehearsal schedules, membership and locations.
- Exploring existing collaboration between groups.
- Assessing interest in participation within the Together in Tone project.
- Beginning development of a directory of local music groups.
- Contacting parish councils to identify additional musical activity within rural communities.

Groups contacted include:

- Wellington Silver Band
- Wellington Choral Society
- Wellington Operatic Society
- Blackdown Community Choir
- Wiveliscombe Town Band
- Wivey Wind Band
- Wivey Community Choir
- Fitzhead Singers
- Wivey Ukulele Orchestra
- Skintight Samba
- Milverton Concert Society
- High Park Community Music Project

Further conversations and visits to rehearsals are planned during March.

5.4 Emerging findings

Initial conversations have been positive, with groups welcoming the overall aim of improving access to music and strengthening community wellbeing.

However, several key observations have emerged:

- Many groups already collaborate through occasional joint concerts and community events.
- Existing music groups are often fully scheduled with rehearsals and performances throughout the year.
- Residents who wish to participate in music locally are often already members of existing groups.

This suggests that while the area has a strong music culture, there may be greater opportunity to focus on engaging residents who are not currently involved in music activities, particularly those experiencing isolation or facing barriers to participation.

5.5 Emerging opportunities

Based on the early engagement work, opportunities being explored include:

- Community sing-along activities linked to existing town events.
- One-off participatory music sessions in local communities.
- Singing activities aimed at supporting wellbeing, particularly for older residents.
- Improved visibility of existing music groups through the development of a local directory.

Using existing community events may provide an opportunity to encourage wider participation while reducing the need for standalone event delivery.

Further work will take place during the next phase of the project to explore the most appropriate format for delivery.

5.6 Governance and oversight

The Community Music Coordinator leads operational delivery of the project, reporting to the Community Development Officer.

The project will continue to be overseen through Wellington Town Council's Community Committee, which provides formal governance and decision-making for the project.

As the project operates across the Wellington and Wiveliscombe Local Community Network (LCN) area, updates will also be shared through relevant LCN meetings to support communication, partnership working and engagement with neighbouring parishes.

3. Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

The Together in Tone project contributes to the Council's wider ambition to support an inclusive, connected and healthy community.

The project aligns with the Council's community development priorities by:

- Supporting health and wellbeing initiatives
- Encouraging community participation
- Reducing social isolation
- Strengthening partnerships across the Wellington and Wiveliscombe Local Community Network.

4. Financial Implications

The project is funded through an external grant of £10,000 from the SALC Community Health and Wellbeing Programme.

The grant covers:

- Project coordination
- Artist and workshop fees
- Event materials and logistics
- Documentation and promotion
- Volunteer support and refreshments

The funding period runs from October 2025 to September 2026.

There are no additional financial commitments required from Wellington Town Council at this stage.

5. Risks

The following considerations have been identified through the initial engagement phase:

5.1 Availability of participating groups

Many choirs and music groups already have established rehearsal schedules and event programmes, which may limit their ability to participate in additional events during the summer period.

5.2 Community engagement levels

While there is strong musical activity in the area, engagement work suggests that many people already involved in music are members of existing groups. This highlights the need to consider how the project can reach residents who are not currently participating in musical activities.

5.3 Rural participation and access

Some feedback has suggested that transport and accessibility may be barriers for residents in more rural parishes who may otherwise wish to participate.

These insights are helping to inform the next stage of project development.

6. Considerations

The Committee is asked to:

- 6.1 Note the progress and findings made during the engagement phase of the Together in Tone project.
- 6.2 Provide feedback on the proposed direction for the next phase of the project.

7. Appendices



Title	Kings Arms Community Hub Strategy & Business Plan 2026–2029
Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	16.03.26
Action Required	Review and approval of the Kings Arms Community Hub Strategy & Business Plan 2026–2029.
Report Author and email address	Laura Batcha- Community Development Officer. laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present the Kings Arms Community Hub (KACH) Strategy & Business Plan 2026–2029 to the Community Committee for review and approval.

The document provides a clear framework for how the Kings Arms Community Hub will operate, develop and be sustained over the next three years. It sets out the Hub's purpose, operating model, governance arrangements and financial approach.

The strategy reflects learning from the Hub's first operational period and establishes a more structured approach to decision-making, room hire subsidies and evidence gathering.

2. Background

Since opening, the Kings Arms Community Hub has become an important part of Wellington's community infrastructure, providing accessible space for a range of community activities, services and support programmes.

Activity delivered through the Hub includes support for families, youth provision, wellbeing initiatives, volunteering opportunities and partnership working with local organisations.

As activity at the Hub has developed, it has become increasingly important to establish a clear strategic framework that defines:

- The purpose of the Hub
- How it supports wider community development priorities
- How space is allocated and subsidised
- How decisions are made consistently and transparently

The Strategy & Business Plan has therefore been developed to provide a clear foundation for the Hub's future operation.

3. Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to ask the Community Committee to review and approve the Kings Arms Community Hub Strategy & Business Plan 2026–2029.

The Strategy sets out:

- The Hub's vision, mission and core priorities
- Its role as a community development platform rather than a standalone project
- Governance and operational responsibilities
- A transparent charging and subsidy framework for room hire
- A proportionate monitoring and evidence approach

Approval of this document will provide a clear framework for future decision-making relating to the Hub.

4. Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

The Kings Arms Community Hub plays a key role in supporting Wellington Town Council's wider community development ambitions.

The Hub contributes directly to priorities including:

Best Start in Life (Family Hub programme)

The Hub acts as a key access point for family support services and activities.

Cradle to Career

The Hub provides space for youth engagement, mentoring opportunities and partnership activity supporting young people.

Community wellbeing and prevention

The Hub offers accessible space for advice services, wellbeing groups and activities that help reduce isolation and support residents.

Community resilience and volunteering

The Hub provides infrastructure that enables grassroots organisations, volunteers and micro-providers to deliver activity within the town.

Through this role, the Hub acts as an important platform that connects residents with support, services and opportunities within Wellington.

5. Financial Implications

The Strategy confirms the approach to financial sustainability for the Hub. A dedicated Kings Arms Community Hub budget exists to support:

- Building management and maintenance
- Core staffing
- Operational delivery

Room hire income contributes towards operational sustainability while maintaining the Hub's social purpose.

The Strategy also introduces a subsidy eligibility framework to ensure that requests for reduced or free room hire are considered consistently and transparently.

This framework will operate on a **12-month trial basis**, with an annual review presented to the Community Committee.

6. Risks

Risk	Mitigation
Inconsistent decisions regarding room hire subsidies	Clear eligibility framework and delegated decision-making
Commercial use conflicting with community purpose	Defined subsidy criteria prioritising community benefit
Capacity pressures as Hub activity grows	Clear operational roles and streamlined processes
Lack of evidence to support future decisions	Introduction of proportionate monitoring and digital sign-in

7.Considerations

The Committee is asked to consider:

1. Approve Kings Arms Community Hub Strategy & Delivery Plan 2026–2029.
2. Noting that the Strategy will be reviewed annually, with any significant changes reported back to the Community Committee.

8 .Appendices

Appendix 1: KACH –3 year Strategy & Delivery Plan 2026–2029 draft

Kings Arms Community Hub (KACH) DRAFT

Strategy & Business Plan 2026–2029

1. Purpose of this Document

This Strategy & Business Plan sets out a clear, shared framework for how the Kings Arms Community Hub (KACH) will operate, develop, and be sustained over the period 2026–2029.

It is designed to:

- Clarify the purpose and outcomes of KACH
- Define the Hub as a community development platform, not a standalone project or purely commercial venue
- Establish a transparent charging and subsidy framework
- Enable delegated, streamlined decision-making
- Protect the Hub's social purpose while ensuring operational sustainability

This document responds to learning from the Hub's first operational period and provides a stable foundation for future decision-making.

2. Strategic Context

The Kings Arms Community Hub sits at the heart of Wellington's community infrastructure and plays a key role in delivering the Council's wider ambitions for inclusion, wellbeing, early intervention, prevention, and community resilience.

KACH supports and aligns with:

- The Wellington Community Development Strategy 2026–2029
- The Best Start in Life Family Hub programme
- Cradle to Career partnership working
- Connect Somerset and prevention agendas
- The Council's safeguarding, equality, and inclusion responsibilities

3. Vision, Mission & Core Priorities

Vision

A connected, compassionate, and inclusive Wellington where all individuals feel valued, supported, and able to thrive.

Mission

To provide a safe, welcoming, and community-led space that empowers people through access to support, engagement opportunities, and positive relationships.

Core Priorities

KACH exists to deliver activity aligned to the following priorities:

- 1. Children & Youth Engagement and Support**
Safe, inclusive spaces that support development, confidence, and positive life outcomes.
- 2. Adult Wellbeing & Social Care**
Non-clinical, accessible opportunities for connection, advice, and wellbeing.
- 3. Community Empowerment**
Supporting grassroots activity, volunteering, and micro-providers.
- 4. Inclusivity & Safeguarding**
A safe space for all, underpinned by robust safeguarding practice.
- 5. Sustainable Impact**
Long-term operational and financial sustainability without loss of social purpose.

4. The Role of KACH as a Platform

The Kings Arms Community Hub is a platform, not a project.

This means:

- It provides infrastructure (space, coordination, relationships)
- It hosts multiple programmes and time-limited projects
- It does not have a fixed end date

KACH acts as:

- The home hub for Best Start in Life Family Hub delivery
- A cross-generational access point for advice, support, and connection
- A base for partner delivery, not a replacement for statutory services

4.1 Core Outcomes & Values Alignment

KACH contributes to the following local outcomes:

- Increased access to safe and inclusive community space
- Improved social connection and reduced isolation
- Improved coordination between community, education and health partners
- Strengthened volunteering and grassroots capacity

- Earlier identification of need through visible, accessible provision

5. Operating Model

5.1 Staffing & Responsibilities

Community Development Officer (CDO)

Strategic oversight, safeguarding lead, policy development, governance reporting to Committee.

Hub Manager (22.5 hours)

Day-to-day operations, building and facilities management oversight, volunteer management, booking process management, coordination of activity, health & safety compliance.

Administrative Support (15 hours)

Booking processing, enquiries, record-keeping.

Volunteers

Support delivery, welcome users, and contribute to the community-led ethos of the Hub.

The Hub Manager is responsible for operational delivery within the agreed framework and for maintaining standards aligned to the Hub's priorities and safeguarding responsibilities.

Strategic policy direction, subsidy framework approval and financial oversight remain governance functions.

This structure ensures:

- Clear operational accountability
- Appropriate strategic oversight
- Separation between governance and delivery
- Transparency in decision-making

5.2 Safeguarding

- The Community Development Officer is the Safeguarding Lead
- The Hub Manager acts as Deputy Safeguarding Lead
- All activity delivered within KACH must comply with the Council's safeguarding policies

6. Charging & Subsidy Framework

6.1 Core Principle

Room hire charges are the default position for use of the Kings Arms Community Hub.

However, the Council recognises that some activities deliver high social value and directly support its community development priorities. In these cases, reduced or free hire may be appropriate. Consideration of this will be undertaken by the Chief Executive/Town Clerk applying the principles of this framework

6.2 Mandatory Subsidy Eligibility Framework

A mandatory subsidy eligibility framework will apply to all requests for reduced or free hire.

To be eligible, activity must:

- Align clearly with one or more KACH core priorities
- Demonstrate community benefit and need
- Have appropriate governance, safeguarding, and accountability
- Not duplicate statutory provision or commercial activity

Activities that are typically not eligible for subsidy include:

- Statutory or government-funded services
- Commercial or profit-making activity
- CICs or organisations where venue costs should reasonably be met through their business model

6.3 Delegated Authority & Decision-Making

- The Community Committee approves the Subsidy Eligibility Framework
- Delegated authority for day-to-day subsidy decisions sits with the Chief Executive/Town Clerk
- Decisions are made against the approved framework or matrix

Where a request:

- Falls outside the framework, or
- Presents exceptional circumstances or risk

The decision will be referred back to the Community Committee.

6.4 Trial Period & Review

This framework will operate on a 12-month trial basis.

An annual review report will be presented to the Community Committee assessing:

- Consistency and transparency of decisions
- Impact on community access
- Operational efficiency
- Financial sustainability

7. Evidence, Monitoring & Data

KACH will use a proportionate evidence model:

Tier 1 – Core Data (All Users)

- Organisation / group
- Type of activity
- Target group (broad age range)
- Frequency of use
- Charged / subsidised / free

Tier 2 – Subsidised Use Only

- Who the activity supports
- How it meets KACH priorities
- Likely impact if subsidy ended

Tier 3 – Strategic Insight (Optional)

- Postcode data
- Reach into underrepresented groups
- Trends over time

a digital sign-in system will be implemented to support this.

This evidence will inform:

- Annual budget setting
- Subsidy framework review
- Commissioning decisions
- Long-term sustainability planning

8. Financial Context

8.1 Cost Coverage

A dedicated KACH budget exists to cover:

- Building management
- Maintenance
- Core staffing

8.2 Income Generation

Room hire income is intended to:

- Contribute to running costs
- Support sustainability
- Not replace the Hub's social purpose

9. Three-Year Development Approach

Year 1 (2026–27): Stabilise

- Implement subsidy framework
- Trial delegated decision-making
- Embed evidence collection

Year 2 (2027–28): Strengthen

- Refine eligibility criteria
- Improve utilisation balance
- Use evidence to inform commissioning

Year 3 (2028–29): Sustain

- Confirm long-term funding approach
- Embed successful delivery models
- Reduce reliance on ad-hoc decisions

10. Risks & Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Commercial drift	Clear eligibility framework
Inconsistent decisions	Delegated authority + criteria
Capacity pressure	Streamlined processes
Funding uncertainty	Annual review & evidence

11. Governance & Review

- This Strategy will be reviewed annually
- Any material changes will be reported to the Community Committee
- The Strategy supports transparency, accountability, and long-term sustainability

12. Summary

The Kings Arms Community Hub is a cornerstone of Wellington's community infrastructure. This Strategy & Business Plan provides the clarity needed to:

- Protect its community purpose
- Enable fair and consistent decision-making
- Support long-term sustainability

It ensures KACH continues to serve residents effectively while operating within a clear, accountable framework.



Title	Best Start in Life (BSiL) – Platform Strategy 2026–2029
Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	16.03.26
Action Required	Review and approval of the Best Start in Life (BSiL) Platform Strategy and Delivery Plan 2026–2029.
Report Author and email address	Laura Batcha- Community Development Officer. laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present the Best Start in Life (BSiL) Platform Strategy and Delivery Plan 2026–2029 for review and approval by the Community Committee.

The document sets out how Wellington Town Council will support the delivery of the national Best Start in Life Family Hub programme locally between 2026 and 2029.

The strategy clarifies the Town Council’s role within the wider Somerset Family Hub system and provides a realistic framework for enabling local delivery while statutory services continue to develop their county-wide model.

2. Background

Best Start in Life Family Hubs form part of a national programme designed to improve outcomes for babies, children and families during the critical early years of development.

The programme focuses on supporting families from pregnancy through the early years by improving access to advice, parenting support and early intervention services.

Responsibility for coordinating Family Hub delivery sits with Somerset Council, with support from NHS services, early years providers, schools and voluntary sector partners.

Within Wellington, the Kings Arms Community Hub provides an important local access point where community-based family support activity can take place. The Town Council's role is not to replace statutory services but to support local delivery by:

- strengthening access to support within the community
- enabling partnership working
- hosting appropriate activity through community infrastructure
- supporting engagement with families who may not traditionally access services

The Best Start in Life Platform Strategy has therefore been developed to clarify the Town Council's role within the programme and provide a structured approach to delivery over the next three years.

3. Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to ask the Community Committee to review and approve the Best Start in Life Platform Strategy and Delivery Plan 2026–2029.

The Strategy provides:

- clarity on the Town Council's enabling role within the Family Hub programme
- a locally appropriate delivery model reflecting Wellington's rural context
- alignment with national Best Start in Life priorities and Somerset's emerging delivery model
- a phased delivery approach that recognises funding and governance arrangements are still evolving

Approval of this document will provide a clear framework for how Wellington Town Council supports early years and family engagement locally.

4. Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

The Best Start in Life programme aligns strongly with the Council's wider ambitions to support community wellbeing, prevention and early intervention.

The programme contributes to several key local priorities including:

Early years development and school readiness

Supporting parents and carers to provide positive early learning environments for children.

Family wellbeing and prevention

Helping families access advice, support and community networks before challenges escalate.

Community connection

Creating accessible opportunities for families to build relationships, share experiences and reduce isolation.

Integrated community support

Strengthening partnership working between health services, early years providers, schools and voluntary organisations.

Through this approach, the Best Start in Life programme helps ensure families in Wellington can access support locally and earlier when it is most needed.

5. Financial Implications

At present, the Best Start in Life strategy primarily focuses on coordination, partnership working and enabling delivery rather than direct service provision by the Town Council.

The Town Council's involvement will largely utilise existing community development capacity and infrastructure, particularly the Kings Arms Community Hub.

Future funding opportunities linked to Family Hub development or early years support may be explored as part of the programme's evolution.

Any future funding proposals would be brought to Committee through the normal governance process.

6. Risks

Risk	Mitigation
Changes to national or county-level programme funding	Phased delivery approach and annual strategy review
Unclear reporting requirements while Somerset model evolves	Strategy designed to remain flexible
Capacity pressures across partner organisations	Partnership-led delivery model
Over-centralisation of services in one location	Hub-and-spoke delivery model across the locality

7. Considerations

The Committee is asked to consider:

1. Approving the Strategy as the framework guiding Wellington Town Council's involvement in the Best Start in Life programme.
2. Noting that the Strategy will be reviewed annually, with updates reported through the Community Committee.

8. Appendices

Appendix A – BSiL WTC 3 Year Strategy & Delivery Plan 2026–2029 draft

Best Start in Life – Wellington Town Council Platform Strategy

2026–2029

Three-Year Strategy and Delivery Plan

1. Purpose of this Document

This document sets out how Wellington Town Council will support the delivery of the Best Start in Life (BSiL) Family Hub programme locally between 2026 and 2029.

The document does not replace Somerset Council's statutory responsibilities or the county-wide Best Start in Life strategy. Instead, it clarifies the Town Council's role in enabling and supporting delivery locally.

The strategy provides:

- A clear framework for Wellington Town Council's involvement
- Alignment with national Best Start in Life policy and Somerset's emerging delivery model
- Clarity on how the programme will operate locally within a rural community context
- A phased and realistic approach to delivery while funding, governance and reporting arrangements continue to develop

2. National and Somerset Context

Best Start in Life Family Hubs form part of a national programme designed to improve outcomes for babies, children and families during the critical early years of development.

National priorities include:

- Early identification of need
- Supporting parenting and home learning
- Improving school readiness
- Reducing inequalities in early childhood development
- Strengthening family support pathways

The programme aims to improve the proportion of children reaching a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the Reception year.

National investment has been committed to Family Hubs until March 2029, with local authorities responsible for coordinating delivery.

Somerset Council is currently developing a county-wide Best Start in Life delivery model, recognising:

- The challenges of rural geography
- The need for flexible hub and spoke delivery models
- The importance of community-based support alongside statutory services

3. The Wellington Delivery Model

Best Start in Life in Wellington will operate as a local partnership platform, rather than a single service or programme.

The platform will support collaboration between health services, early years providers, schools, voluntary organisations and community partners.

Delivery will follow a hub-and-spoke model.

Hub

Kings Arms Community Hub will act as the primary community access point for family support activity.

Spokes

Additional delivery may take place through:

- Early years settings
- Schools and education partners
- Libraries
- Community venues
- Outreach activity across the Local Community Network (LCN)

This flexible approach ensures that support remains accessible to families across the wider locality.

4. Role of Kings Arms Community Hub

The Kings Arms Community Hub will act as the local base for community-facing elements of the Best Start in Life programme.

This may include:

- Hosting parenting and family support activities
- Acting as a visible access point for families seeking advice or guidance
- Supporting referrals and signposting to partner services
- Providing space for outreach services and engagement events

However, the Family Hub model extends beyond the building.

Not all activity will take place at the Hub, and many services will continue to operate through existing settings and partner organisations.

The Hub acts as an enabling community infrastructure asset, rather than the sole delivery location.

5. Role of Wellington Town Council

Wellington Town Council will support the Best Start in Life programme through its community development function.

The Town Council's role will focus on:

- Strengthening access to family support within the community
- Supporting partnership working between local services and community groups
- Hosting and enabling appropriate activity through the Kings Arms Community Hub
- Supporting outreach and engagement with families who may not traditionally access services
- Helping identify local needs and gaps in provision

This role complements the work of statutory services and strengthens the wider support network available to families.

6. Scope and Boundaries of the Town Council Role

While Wellington Town Council is committed to supporting the Best Start in Life programme locally, the Town Council is not the statutory provider of early years services.

Statutory leadership and service delivery responsibilities sit primarily with:

- Somerset Council
- NHS health services
- Early years providers
- Education partners

The Town Council will therefore focus on enabling access, coordination and community engagement, rather than delivering specialist services directly.

This approach allows the Town Council to support early intervention and community resilience while remaining aligned with its role as a local authority operating at town level.

7. Local Coordination Structure

Local coordination of Best Start in Life activity will involve two complementary roles.

Connect Somerset Champion

Responsible for:

- Supporting community navigation
- Connecting families to appropriate services
- Identifying gaps in provision
- Strengthening links between community groups and statutory services

Best Start in Life Family Hub Coordination

Responsible for:

- Coordinating family hub activity locally
- Supporting partnership engagement
- Helping facilitate parenting and early years interventions
- Supporting programme monitoring and reporting

In Wellington these two functions are currently delivered by one officer, providing continuity between community navigation and family hub coordination.

Strategic oversight remains within the Community Development function of Wellington Town Council.

8. Outcomes Framework

The Best Start in Life platform aims to contribute to the following outcome areas locally:

- Improved access to parenting and home learning support
- Earlier identification of family support needs
- Increased engagement of families who do not traditionally access services
- Stronger collaboration between health, education and community organisations
- Improved confidence and capability among parents and carers

These outcomes align with national priorities to improve children's development and school readiness.

Outcome measures and reporting requirements will be refined once Somerset Council confirms final programme KPIs.

9. Three-Year Delivery Approach

Year 1 – Establish and Align (2026–2027)

Focus: alignment and infrastructure.

Key actions:

- Confirm Somerset Best Start in Life funding scope
- Clarify governance and reporting arrangements
- Map existing early years and parenting provision locally
- Identify gaps in support for families
- Begin targeted parenting and home learning activity where capacity allows
- Strengthen engagement with families through community networks
- Align Connect Somerset work with Best Start in Life priorities

Year 2 – Develop and Test (2027–2028)

Focus: strengthening delivery.

Key actions:

- Expand evidence-based parenting programmes
- Increase outreach activity across the locality
- Strengthen partnership working with schools and early years settings
- Improve referral pathways between services

Year 3 – Embed and Sustain (2028–2029)

Focus: long-term sustainability.

Key actions:

- Embed successful delivery models
- Align commissioning and funding decisions with evidence
- Strengthen family engagement mechanisms
- Ensure Best Start in Life activity is integrated within wider community development work

10. Risks and Dependencies

Risk	Mitigation
Uncertainty around national funding	Phased delivery approach
Unclear KPIs and reporting requirements	Flexible strategy review
Capacity constraints	Partnership delivery model
Over-centralisation of services	Hub-and-spoke approach

11. Governance and Review

The Best Start in Life Platform Strategy will:

- Be reviewed annually
- Be updated as national and Somerset guidance evolves
- Inform future community development planning and investment decisions

Updates will be reported through the Community Committee as part of the wider Community Development Plan reporting framework.

12. Summary

Best Start in Life in Wellington will operate as a flexible, partnership-led platform rooted in community infrastructure and aligned with national ambitions to improve outcomes for children and families.

The Town Council's enabling role will:

- Strengthen access to support
- Support partnership working
- Improve engagement with families
- Contribute to early intervention and prevention

This approach allows Wellington to support the Best Start in Life programme in a way that is realistic, collaborative and sustainable.



Title	Cradle to Career (C2C) – Strategy & Delivery Plan 2026–2029
Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	16.03.26
Action Required	Review and approval of the Cradle to Career (C2C) Three-Year Strategy & Delivery Plan 2026–2029.
Report Author and email address	Laura Batcha- Community Development Officer. laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present the Cradle to Career (C2C) Three-Year Strategy & Delivery Plan 2026–2029 for review and approval by the Community Committee.

Cradle to Career is a partnership programme that brings together schools, community organisations, employers and local government to strengthen opportunities for children, young people and families in Wellington.

The strategy provides a framework for coordinating local action across education, family support, youth development and employability, ensuring that partners work together effectively to support positive outcomes for young people.

2. Background

Cradle to Career recognises that life outcomes are shaped across multiple stages of childhood and young adulthood. Support for children, young people and families is often delivered by a range of organisations including schools, early years providers, community organisations and employers.

Without coordination between these partners, there can be gaps in support, duplication of effort or missed opportunities to strengthen pathways between education and employment.

Cradle to Career provides a shared framework for collaboration between partners in Wellington. Rather than creating new services, the programme focuses on strengthening relationships between organisations and supporting locally-led initiatives that respond to community needs.

The programme is delivered as a partnership between Court Fields School and Wellington Town Council, supported by a wider network of education, employer and community partners.

Within Wellington Town Council, the Community Development function provides coordination, strategic oversight and reporting through the Community Committee.

3. Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to ask the Community Committee to review and approve the Cradle to Career Three-Year Strategy & Delivery Plan 2026–2029.

The strategy sets out:

- the programme structure and governance arrangements
- the key strands of activity within the programme
- partnership roles and responsibilities
- a proportionate monitoring and evidence approach
- delivery priorities for the first year of implementation

Approval of this document will provide a clear framework for ongoing partnership work supporting children, young people and families in Wellington.

4. Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

Cradle to Career aligns strongly with Wellington Town Council's wider ambitions to support community wellbeing, opportunity and long-term resilience.

The programme contributes to several key local priorities including:

Early intervention and prevention

Strengthening coordination between organisations supporting children, young people and families helps ensure support is available earlier and more effectively.

Education and opportunity

Partnership working between schools, employers and community organisations helps improve awareness of career pathways and access to opportunities for young people.

Family and community support

The programme encourages stronger collaboration between organisations working with families, helping improve access to advice, guidance and support.

Community collaboration

Cradle to Career strengthens partnership working across education, health, community and employment sectors within the town.

Through this collaborative approach, the programme helps build stronger local systems that support children and young people throughout different stages of life.

5. Financial Implications

A total budget allocation of £50,000 has previously been approved to support delivery of the Cradle to Career (C2C) partnership programme.

This report seeks approval for the initial allocation of funding to support delivery of several Year 1 strands and programme infrastructure.

The proposed allocations are:

- Early Years Network – **£2,000**
- Employability Strand – **£4,300**
- Mobile Phones (Digital Wellbeing) Strand – **£1,000**
- Programme Communications and Branding – **£2000**
- Programme Events and Engagement – **£3000**
- Programme Support and Travel – **£2000**

The total allocation requested through this report is £14,300, to be drawn from the existing £50,000 Cradle to Career budget.

Further proposals relating to the Reading Town and Family Support strands will be developed with delivery partners and will be brought to Committee for consideration at a later date.

Funding requirements will continue to be reviewed as delivery develops, and where appropriate additional funding opportunities may be explored through partnership working or external funding streams.

6. Risks

Risk

Limited coordination between partner organisations

Mitigation

Programme provides shared framework for collaboration

Capacity constraints among partners

Delivery model allows strands to develop at a realistic pace

Unclear programme outcomes in early stages

Proportionate monitoring framework and annual review

Dependency on partner engagement

Programme governance includes shared leadership between partners

7. Considerations

The Committee is asked to consider:

1. Approving the Strategy as the framework guiding Cradle to Career partnership activity within Wellington.
2. Noting that programme delivery will be reviewed annually through the Community Committee.
3. Approve the proposed allocation of £14,300 from the Cradle to Career budget to support delivery of Year 1 programme activity.

8. Appendices

Appendix A – Cradle to Career (C2C) Three-Year Strategy & Delivery Plan 2026–2029. draft

Cradle to Career (C2C)

Three-Year Strategy & Delivery Plan (2026–2029)

1. Introduction

Cradle to Career (C2C) is a partnership programme bringing together education, community organisations, employers, and local government to improve opportunities for children, young people and families in Wellington.

The programme recognises that positive life outcomes are shaped over time — beginning in early childhood and continuing through education, wellbeing and access to meaningful employment.

Through coordinated local action, Cradle to Career aims to strengthen local systems, support prevention and early intervention, and create clearer pathways for young people as they grow and progress through different stages of life.

2. Why Cradle to Career Matters in Wellington

Wellington is a growing community with strong schools, active community organisations and an engaged local employer base. However, like many towns, it faces challenges ensuring that children, young people and families can access consistent opportunities and support throughout their lives.

Services supporting families, education and employment are often delivered by different organisations with different responsibilities. Without coordination, this can lead to gaps in support, duplication of effort, and missed opportunities for collaboration.

Cradle to Career provides a framework for partners in Wellington to work together more effectively. By bringing together schools, early-year-old settings, employers, health partners, community organisations and the Town Council, the programme aims to strengthen local systems and improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

Rather than creating new services, the programme focuses on strengthening collaboration, improving communication between partners and supporting locally led initiatives that respond to community need.

Wellington Town Council supports this work through its Community Development function, providing coordination, strategic oversight and reporting through the Community Committee.

3. Programme Structure – Community Coherence Framework

Cradle to Career in Wellington is organised around three areas of community coherence:

Local Systems Coherence

- Early Years
- Employability

Educational Coherence

- Reading Town

Relationship Coherence

- Mobile Phones
- Family Support

Each strand contributes to improving coordination, opportunity and support for children, young people and families within Wellington.

4. Programme Governance

Strategic Leadership

Cradle to Career in Wellington is delivered as a partnership between Court Fields School and Wellington Town Council, working alongside a wider network of education, community and employer partners, which forms the C2C Steering group.

Court Fields School and Wellington Town Council provide joint leadership for the programme, supporting coordination across the different strands and ensuring alignment with local priorities.

Programme Partners

- Court Fields School
- Early Years settings
- Somerset Careers Hub
- Local employers

- Health partners
- Community organisations

C2C Programme Funding Protocol

All programme expenditure should be noted and recommended by the Cradle to Career Steering Group and submitted to Wellington Town Council for approval before costs are incurred.

Delivery Model

Delivery is coordinated through strand leads who bring sector expertise and existing networks within their area of focus.

Court Fields School and Wellington Town Council work together to support programme coordination, monitoring and reporting, with progress reviewed through Wellington Town Council's Community Committee and shared with programme partners.

5. Programme Overview Table

Strand	Lead Organisation	Strand Lead	Key Focus	Estimated Budget (Year 1)
Early Years	Early Years Settings	Becky Alder / Emma Clements	Early years network and reception readiness	£2000
Employability	Wellington Town Council	Laura Batcha	Employer Engagement and Supported Internships	£4,300
Reading Town	Wellington Library	Katy Chic	Literacy development across community	TBC
Mobile Phones	Court Fields School	Sarah Westwood	Digital wellbeing and smartphone awareness	£1000
Family Support	Wellington Town Council	Andrew Govier and Peter Joint	Family support and multi-family groups	TBC
Programme Communications	C2C Partnership	Steering Group	Branding, promotional materials and	£2000

			shared communication assets	
Programme Events & Engagement	C2C Partnership	Steering Group	Launch events, town-wide engagement activity	£3000
Programme Support & Travel	C2C Partnership	Steering Group	Conference attendance, partnership development	£2000

6. Strand Summary

Early Years

The Early Years strand focuses on strengthening coordination between early years settings, health partners and education providers to support children and families during the earliest stages of development.

The strand aims to improve communication and collaboration between providers, ensuring that families can access the support they need and that children are well prepared for their transition into school.

This strand contributes to Local Systems Coherence, strengthening the connections between services supporting children and families.

Employability

The Employability strand focuses on improving connections between education providers, local employers and career pathways for young people in Wellington.

Working with Court Fields School, Somerset Careers Hub and local employers, the strand aims to increase awareness of local career opportunities and support young people as they transition into further education, training or employment.

This strand contributes to Local Systems Coherence, helping align education, skills and employment opportunities within the town.

Reading Town

The Reading Town strand focuses on strengthening literacy and a culture of reading across the Wellington community.

Working with local education providers, libraries and community partners, this strand aims to encourage reading as a shared community activity and support children and families to develop strong literacy skills.

This strand contributes to Educational Coherence, supporting learning and educational engagement across Wellington.

Mobile Phones

The Mobile Phones strand focuses on digital wellbeing and supporting young people and families to develop healthy relationships with technology.

The strand aims to increase awareness of the impacts of smartphone use on wellbeing, sleep, learning and social relationships while supporting families to make informed choices around digital habits.

This strand contributes to Relationship Coherence, strengthening communication and understanding between young people, families and education providers.

Family Support

The Family Support strand focuses on strengthening support networks for families within Wellington and improving collaboration between organisations working with parents and carers.

The strand aims to ensure families can access early help where needed and that organisations supporting families work together effectively.

This strand contributes to Relationship Coherence, supporting stronger connections between families, community organisations and services.

7. Monitoring, Data and Evidence

Monitoring for Cradle to Career will focus on a small number of proportionate indicators that demonstrate programme participation, partnership activity and emerging outcomes across the different strands.

The programme does not replace statutory services but aims to strengthen coordination and collaboration between partners. Monitoring therefore focuses on evidence of engagement, partnership working and access to opportunity.

Indicators will focus on participation, partnership activity and pathways across the different Cradle to Career strands.

Participation and Engagement

- Participation in Early Years network activity and partnership meetings
- Engagement of families in early years or family support activities
- Participation in literacy initiatives, reading campaigns or community learning opportunities
- Participation in digital wellbeing or mobile phone awareness initiatives
- Participation of children, young people and families in Cradle to Career activities

Partnership and System Coordination

- Number of organisations participating in Cradle to Career delivery
- Number of partnership events, meetings or engagement activities delivered
- Participation of schools, early years providers and community organisations in strand delivery
- Number of employers engaged through the Wellington Employer & Skills Partnership (WESP)

Opportunity and Development Pathways

- Student participation in employer engagement or work experience opportunities
- Development of supported internship pathways
- Evidence of improved coordination between education, families and community organisations
- Data relating to young people seeking education, employment or training (SEETs) where available.

Learning and Community Impact

- Feedback from participating families, students and partners.
- Evidence of increased awareness of opportunities available to children and young people in Wellington.
- Examples of new initiatives or collaborations emerging from the partnership.

Review Frequency

Programme activity will be reviewed through:

- Termly partner discussions where appropriate
- Quarterly reporting through Wellington Town Council's Community Committee
- Annual programme review with delivery partners

Data Sources

Data may be drawn from a range of partners including:

- Wellington Town Council
- Court Fields School and education partners
- Early Years settings
- Somerset Council
- Somerset Careers Hub
- Local employers and community organisations

Data collection will remain proportionate and will build over time as the programme develops.

8. Year One Delivery Priorities (2026–27)

Early Years

- Establish the Wellington Early Years Network to strengthen collaboration between early years settings, health partners and education providers
- Improve coordination and communication around the two-year review process
- Increase awareness and uptake of funded early years places for two-year-olds
- Support activity that contributes to improved school readiness and the Good Level of Development (GLD)

Employability

- Deliver employer engagement activity through the Wellington Employer & Skills Partnership (WESP)
- Pilot a Wellington Work Experience Week bringing employers and students together in a coordinated format
- Strengthen collaboration between education providers and local employers
- Develop and promote supported internship pathways for young people

Mobile Phones (Digital Wellbeing)

- Deliver student engagement activity to understand local smartphone use and digital habits
- Provide digital wellbeing education within school settings
- Develop parent workshops and resources to support healthy digital behaviours
- Work with partners to strengthen consistent messaging around digital wellbeing and online safety

Reading Town

- Explore opportunities for shared literacy initiatives across schools, libraries and community organisations
- Develop activity that encourages reading within families and the wider community
- Consider potential town-wide reading initiatives or events

Family Support

- Develop multi-family group support models working with local partners
- Strengthen collaboration between services supporting families with young children
- Support activity that contributes to school readiness and improved Good Level of Development (GLD) outcomes
- Align family support activity with the Best Start in Life platform

9. Review

This strategy will be reviewed annually through Wellington Town Council's Community Committee to ensure that delivery remains aligned with local priorities and partner capacity.



Title	Community Development Strategy 26-29 Report
Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	16.03.26
Action Required	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the Wellington Community Development Strategy 2026–2029. 2. Approve the strategy as the framework guiding community development activity delivered or supported by Wellington Town Council.
Report Author and email address	Laura Batcha- Community Development Officer. laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

This report presents the Wellington Town Council Community Development Strategy 2026–2029 for review and approval by the Community Committee.

The strategy provides a structured framework for how community development activity will be coordinated, delivered and monitored over the next three years. It brings together a number of existing programmes, partnerships and community initiatives under a single strategic framework.

The strategy has been developed to ensure that Wellington Town Council can support preventative, locally coordinated activity that strengthens community wellbeing while working alongside partners across education, voluntary organisations and public services.

2. Background

Wellington Town Council has supported a range of community initiatives and partnerships in recent years, including the development of the Kings Arms

Community Hub, the Cradle to Career partnership with Court Fields School, and engagement in the Best Start in Life Family Hub network.

As community development activity has expanded, the need for a clear strategic framework to coordinate and guide this work has become increasingly important.

The Community Development Strategy therefore provides clarity around:

- the Council's role in supporting preventative community activity
- how community initiatives are organised and coordinated
- how projects and partnerships align with agreed priorities

3. Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to request that the Community Committee:

- Review the Community Development Strategy 2026–2029
- Confirm that the strategy provides an appropriate framework for coordinating community development activity
- Approve the strategy as the guiding document for community development work over the next three years

The strategy identifies:

- the key community development platforms operating in Wellington
- the programmes and projects currently supporting community priorities
- a set of strategic themes that will guide future activity and investment

All community development activity supported by the Council will align with at least one of these strategic themes

4. Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

The strategy aligns with the priorities identified in the Wellington Place Plan and reflects insight gathered from residents, councillors, community organisations and local partners.

The strategy identifies six strategic themes which guide community development activity:

1. Inclusive Access and Connected Communities
2. Pride in Place: Culture, Heritage and Belonging
3. A Healthy, Sustainable and Green Town
4. Youth, Learning and Lifelong Support

- 5. Community Safety, Inclusion and Neighbourhood Support
- 6. Enterprise, Skills and Local Economies

These themes provide a framework through which projects, partnerships and investment decisions will be considered.

5. Financial Implications

Community development activity will continue to be supported through a combination of:

- existing Town Council budgets
- partnership contributions
- external funding where appropriate

Indicative allocations currently include funding related to:

- Cradle to Career
- Youth Development activity
- Community Development budgets
- project-specific partnership funding

The strategy itself does not commit the Council to new financial expenditure but provides a framework through which future activity and funding decisions will be considered

6. Risks

The development of a clear community development strategy reduces the risk of:

- fragmented or duplicated community initiatives
- lack of coordination between partners
- uncertainty regarding the Council's role in community development activity

The strategy also establishes a framework for monitoring progress and reviewing priorities over time.

7. Considerations

The Community Committee is asked to:

7.1 Review the Wellington Community Development Strategy 2026–2029.

7.2 Approve the strategy as the framework guiding community development activity delivered or supported by Wellington Town Council.

7. Appendices

Appendix A – CDP (draft) 26–29

Wellington Town Council Community Development Strategy 2026–2029

1. Vision for Community Development in Wellington

Wellington Town Council recognises that strong communities are built through connection, opportunity and collaboration.

Community development in Wellington aims to:

- Strengthen social connection and reduce isolation
- Support children, young people and families to thrive
- Enable residents to participate in community life
- Build resilient partnerships between community organisations, education providers, employers and public services

The Council's role is not to replace statutory services, but to support preventative, locally coordinated activity that strengthens community wellbeing.

This strategy sets out how Wellington Town Council will organise and support community development activity over the next three years.

2. Strategic Approach

Community development in Wellington is delivered through a structured model that distinguishes between:

Platforms

Long-term delivery environments that host multiple programmes and partnerships.

Programmes

Coordinated areas of activity working toward shared outcomes.

Projects

Time-limited initiatives designed to test new ideas or respond to emerging needs.

This approach allows the Council to maintain stability while still supporting innovation.

Inclusive and Accessible Communities

Wellington Town Council recognises that some residents may experience additional barriers to participation in community life.

Community development activity will therefore seek to ensure that opportunities are accessible, welcoming and responsive to the needs of all residents, including those who may be underrepresented or marginalised.

This may include consideration of the needs of:

- LGBTQ+ residents
- Refugees and people seeking asylum
- Disabled residents and carers
- People experiencing social isolation
- Low-income households
- Young people and older residents

The Council's role is to support inclusive community environments, enabling local groups and partners to develop activities that are welcoming, safe and accessible for all.

3. Community Development Platforms

The following platforms form the core infrastructure for community development in Wellington.

Kings Arms Community Hub (KACH)

A physical community hub providing accessible space for community activity, partnership working and preventative support.

The Hub supports:

- community groups
- family engagement
- youth activity
- health and wellbeing initiatives
- volunteering opportunities

Best Start in Life – Family Hub Network

Best Start in Life supports families with children from pregnancy through early childhood.

The model operates through a hub and spoke network, linking community locations with services and support.

Wellington Town Council contributes to the local Family Hub approach by supporting coordination, engagement and community access points.

Cradle to Career (C2C)

Cradle to Career is a partnership between Wellington Town Council and Court Fields School, supported by a wider network of partners.

The programme focuses on improving outcomes for children and young people by strengthening links between:

- early years
- education
- families

- employers
- community organisations

C2C operates through themed strands covering key stages of childhood and youth development.

4. Community Development Programmes and Projects

Alongside the core platforms, a number of initiatives support community priorities and provide opportunities for innovation.

Current projects include:

Wellington Cares

Supporting the development of micro-providers, volunteer networks and support for unpaid carers.

Together in Tone

A community music project designed to strengthen social connection and wellbeing.

Wessex Water – Watermark Status

Environmental engagement programme supporting community awareness and responsible water use.

Projects may be piloted and evaluated before decisions are made regarding continuation or expansion.

4.1 Connect Somerset – Community Navigation and System Coordination

Wellington Town Council also hosts the Connect Somerset Neighbourhood Champion role.

The Champion supports community navigation, partnership working and early help across the local area. The role focuses on strengthening connections between residents, community organisations, schools, health services and public sector partners.

Rather than operating as a standalone programme, the Connect Somerset role works across multiple community development platforms and initiatives.

This includes supporting activity connected to:

- the Kings Arms Community Hub
- the Cradle to Career partnership
- Best Start in Life family support activity
- wider community engagement initiatives

The role helps ensure that services, organisations and residents are better connected, supporting early intervention and stronger community networks.

5. Strategic Priorities (2026–2029)

The following strategic themes guide community development activity in Wellington. These themes reflect the priorities of the Wellington Place Plan, alongside insights gathered from residents, councillors, community organisations and local partners.

Each theme provides a framework for decision-making, partnership working and investment. All community development activity delivered by Wellington Town Council will align with at least one of these themes.

Inclusive Access and Connected Communities

Creating a town where residents can easily access information, services and opportunities to participate in community life.

This theme focuses on reducing barriers to participation and ensuring community spaces, communication and services are accessible and welcoming.

Areas of focus include:

- Improving access to community information and services
- Supporting inclusive communication and digital access
- Ensuring community buildings and spaces are welcoming and accessible
- Strengthening community navigation, advice and signposting
- Supporting community initiatives that create safe and welcoming spaces for residents who may experience barriers to participation

This may include supporting activity that promotes inclusion and belonging for groups who are sometimes underrepresented or face additional barriers to community participation.

This theme is closely supported through the Kings Arms Community Hub platform, which provides accessible community space and coordination of local activity.

Pride in Place: Culture, Heritage and Belonging

Supporting a strong sense of identity, belonging and civic pride within Wellington.

Community development activity will support opportunities for residents to connect through cultural, creative and heritage activity.

Areas of focus include:

- Supporting community events and town celebrations
- Encouraging participation in cultural and creative activity
- Celebrating Wellington's heritage and green spaces
- Ensuring diverse voices are represented in community life

Activities such as community festivals, arts initiatives and heritage engagement contribute to this theme.

A Healthy, Sustainable and Green Town

Supporting physical and mental wellbeing while encouraging environmentally responsible community activity.

Areas of focus include:

- Promoting mental health and wellbeing through community activity
- Encouraging outdoor activities and use of green spaces
- Supporting community growing and sustainable initiatives
- Promoting environmental awareness and climate action

Projects such as Together in Tone and the Wessex Water Watermark programme contribute to this theme.

Youth, Learning and Lifelong Support

Ensuring children and young people are supported through every stage of development, from early years through education and into employment.

Areas of focus include:

- Early years support and family engagement
- Youth participation and leadership opportunities
- Education, skills and employability pathways
- Support during key life transitions for young people

This theme is primarily delivered through the Best Start in Life Family Hub platform and the Cradle to Career partnership programme.

Community Safety, Inclusion and Neighbourhood Support

Supporting welcoming neighbourhoods where residents feel safe, supported and connected.

Areas of focus include:

- Addressing isolation among vulnerable residents
- Supporting age-friendly and dementia-aware communities
- Strengthening community hubs and warm spaces
- Improving communication around community safety and support services

Community hubs, volunteer activity and partnership working play an important role in supporting this theme.

Community development activity may also support collaboration with partners working on housing and community wellbeing where appropriate.

Enterprise, Skills and Local Economies

Supporting residents to develop skills, confidence and opportunities to contribute to the local economy and community.

Areas of focus include:

- Access to employment and training opportunities
- Skills development and confidence building
- Supporting volunteering pathways
- Encouraging micro-enterprises and social initiatives

This theme is supported through Cradle to Career employability work, the Wellington Employer and Skills Partnership, and wider community initiatives.

All community development initiatives, partnerships and funding proposals will be assessed against their contribution to one or more of these strategic themes.

6. Delivery Phases

The strategic themes above provide the framework through which projects, partnerships and funding decisions will be prioritised.

The strategy will be delivered through three phases.

Year 1 – Stabilise and Strengthen (2026–27)

Focus:

- Establish clear governance
- Deliver existing commitments
- strengthen coordination between platforms
- begin evidence collection

Year 2 – Connect and Expand (2027–28)

Focus:

- deepen partnership working
- test new delivery models
- strengthen monitoring and evaluation

Year 3 – Embed and Sustain (2028–29)

Focus:

- secure long-term delivery models
- develop sustainable funding approaches
- embed successful initiatives into ongoing provision

7. Resources and Funding

Community development activity is supported through a combination of Town Council funding, partnership resources and external grants.

Indicative allocations currently include:

- Cradle to Career programme funding
- Youth Development funding
- Community Development budget
- Project-specific grants and partnership contributions

Where appropriate, Wellington Town Council will also support the identification and development of external funding opportunities that align with local priorities.

7.1 Resources Supporting Community Development

Community development activity in Wellington is supported through a combination of core Town Council staff, externally funded roles and partnership delivery.

Core Town Council roles

- Community Development Officer
- Community Hub Manager
- Hub Administration Support
- Community Team Administration Apprentice (from 2026)

Externally funded or project-supported roles

- Wellington Cares Project Coordinator
- Together in Tone Freelance Programme Coordinator
- Connect Somerset Neighbourhood Champion
- BSiL Coordinator

Wider delivery network

Community development activity is further supported through:

- volunteers
- partner organisations
- community groups and micro-providers
- education, health and employer partners

These roles strengthen the Council's ability to deliver partnership-based community development while maximising external investment in Wellington.

8. Governance and Coordination

Strategic coordination of community development activity is led by the Community Development Officer, working with partners across the community, education and public sectors.

Responsibilities include:

- coordinating delivery across platforms
- partnership engagement
- monitoring and reporting progress
- supporting evidence collection and evaluation
- identifying opportunities for external funding

Progress will be reviewed regularly to ensure activity remains aligned with community priorities and available resources.

9. Monitoring and Review

Community development activity will be monitored through a proportionate evidence framework.

Indicators may include:

- participation in community activity
- engagement with families and young people
- partnership collaboration
- volunteer participation
- qualitative feedback from residents and organisations

The strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure delivery remains relevant and achievable.



Title	Kings Arms Community Hub – Room Hire Charges and Subsidy Framework
Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	16.03.26
Action Required	Approval of Subsidy Framework and Commercial Hire
Report Author and email address	Laura Batcha- Community Development Officer. laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to confirm the implementation of room hire charges at the Kings Arms Community Hub (KACH) from 1 April 2026, and to seek approval for a clear and consistent framework for managing room hire requests and potential subsidies.

The report also proposes a decision-making process that allows requests to be assessed efficiently through a defined eligibility matrix with delegated authority to the Town Clerk, avoiding unnecessary referrals back to Committee.

This approach will provide clarity for community organisations, ensure fairness in decision-making, and protect the Hub’s community purpose while supporting financial sustainability.

2. Background

The Kings Arms Community Hub opened with an initial period of subsidised room use to allow activity to establish and community groups to become familiar with the space.

As previously communicated to Committee, room hire charges will come into effect from 1 April.

A draft Spring programme will be provided as an appendix to demonstrate the type of community activity currently taking place at the Hub.

To support transparent and consistent decision-making, it is now necessary to confirm:

- Standard room hire charges
- Eligibility criteria for Hub use
- Circumstances where subsidy may be appropriate
- A delegated process for reviewing subsidy requests

Without a clear framework, requests must be repeatedly referred to Committee, which creates delays and uncertainty for community organisations.

The Kings Arms Community Hub exists primarily to support community development and preventative support activity.

Room hire should therefore align with activities that serve a clear community interest.

Examples include:

- Health and wellbeing groups
- Mental health support groups
- Family and parenting support
- Youth development activities
- Social connection and anti-isolation groups
- Advice and guidance services
- Community volunteering initiatives
- Micro-provider and community enterprise support
- Educational and skills development activities

The Hub is not intended to operate as a low-cost commercial venue for profit-generating activity.

3. Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

4. Financial Implications

Confirmed Room Hire Charges

The following standard hire rates are proposed:

Space	Hire Rate
Activity Room	£10 per hour
Cafe Area	£8 per hour
Meeting Room 1	£5 per hour
Meeting Room 2	£5 per hour

These charges are intended to contribute towards the operational costs of the Hub while remaining accessible for community organisations.

Proposed Subsidy Eligibility Matrix

For a subsidy to be considered, activities must meet all essential criteria and at least one priority category.

Essential Criteria (all must apply)

- The activity must demonstrate clear benefit to Wellington residents.
- Activity serves a clear community interest
- Activity aligns with the Hub's priorities and the Council's Community Development Strategy priorities.
- The activity has a named organiser responsible for delivery
- The organiser agrees to comply with Hub safeguarding and safety requirements
- The activity does not duplicate statutory provision unnecessarily

Priority Areas (at least one must apply)

- Best Start in Life / Family support
- Youth development
- Health and wellbeing support
- Mental health support
- Carer support
- Community isolation reduction
- Volunteer development
- Micro-provider support
- Community learning or skills development

Activities that fall within the following programmes may also be prioritised:

- Best Start in Life
- Kings Arms Community Hub priorities
- Cradle to Career
- Together In Tone Project
- Watermark Status: Wessex Water Project
- Wellington Cares Pilot

Delegated Authority

To support efficient decision-making, it is proposed that the Chief Executive/Town Clerk is granted delegated authority to review and approve subsidy requests that clearly meet the agreed eligibility framework.

Requests that fall outside the framework will be referred to the Community Committee.

A summary of approved subsidies will be reported annually to the Committee for transparency and review.

Council-Led Engagement Activities

Where engagement activity is directly linked to Council-led programmes or projects, room hire charges will not apply.

Examples include:

- Parent engagement sessions
- Carer engagement events
- Micro-provider development meetings
- Community consultations

These activities support early intervention and prevention work and therefore contribute directly to the Hub's purpose.

Commercial Hire Opportunities

To support the long-term sustainability of the Hub, the Council may also consider limited commercial hire opportunities, provided these do not displace community activity.

Commercial hire would operate at separate commercial rates and may include:

- Workshops or training sessions
- Small business events
- Private bookings during available periods

These activities would generate additional income to support the Hub's operation.

Social Event Hire

It is also proposed that the Hub may be hired for private social events such as birthday celebrations, subject to availability.

This would primarily apply to Saturday bookings and would be coordinated with Falcon for bar provision where appropriate.

This provides an additional opportunity to generate income outside core community delivery hours.

Room hire charges will contribute towards the operational sustainability of the Hub.

However, the Hub is recognised as a community infrastructure asset, and therefore income generation will complement, rather than replace the Council's investment in community development.

Commercial and social hire opportunities may provide additional revenue to support the Hub.

5.Risks

Risk	Mitigation
Inconsistent subsidy decisions	Clear eligibility matrix
Administrative burden	Delegated authority to Town Clerk
Commercial drift	Community activity remains priority
Financial sustainability	Room hire income and commercial opportunities

6.Considerations

1. Approve the proposed room hire eligibility and subsidy framework.
2. Approve the subsidy eligibility matrix.
3. Grant delegated authority to the Chief Executive/Town Clerk to review and approve subsidy requests against the agreed criteria.
4. Approve the use of the Hub for commercial hire and private social events where appropriate, subject to availability and operational arrangements.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Spring Programme



THE KINGS ARMS COMMUNITY HUB



Spring Programme 2026



Agenda Item 13a

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
 10am - 12pm Mind & Motion @ The Hub <i>Bluebird Care</i> Arts, crafts, and games *2nd and 4th Mons of the month	 9am - 5pm 40-74 yrs Free Health Checks <i>NHS Public Health</i>	0-5 yrs 9:30am - 11:30am Baby & Toddler Cafe <i>Bright Beginnings</i> *Term time only	10am - 12pm 1:1 Support Sessions <i>Reminiscence Learning</i>	10am - 12pm Monthly Get Together <i>Wellington U3A</i> *2nd Fri of the month
10am - 11:30am 0-5 yrs Healthy Little Ones <i>Wellington Health Visiting Team</i>	£2 per session  1pm - 4pm Baby Spa <i>Growing Minds</i> *1st and 4th Weds of the month	10am - 11am Community Police Drop-In <i>Avon & Somerset Police</i> *Fortnightly from 9th April	7pm - 9pm Wellington Youth Club <i>In The Mix Project</i>	
10am - 12pm Chill & Chat <i>Somerset Parent/Carer Forum</i> For parents/carers with additional needs children aged 0-25 *3rd Mon of the month *Term Time only	10am - 4pm Wellbeing Hub <i>SDAS and Mind Somerset</i> Mental health and addiction support	1:30pm - 3pm Housing Drop-In <i>Somerset Council</i> *2nd Weds of the month	 9am - 2pm Jobcentre Group Sessions <i>Jobcentre</i> *Fortnightly from 8th Jan	
6pm - 8pm Committee Meeting <i>Wellington Carnival Club</i> *3rd Mon of the month	£3 per session 2pm - 3:30pm Singing for Fun <i>Reminiscence Learning</i> Open to anyone	10am - 12pm Employment Hub Drop-In <i>Employment Hub</i> *3rd Weds of the month	10am - 1pm Community Drop-In <i>The YOU Trust</i> Support surrounding domestic abuse *4th Thurs of the month	
6:30pm - 8pm Talking Cafe with Village Agent <i>Thrive (CCS)</i> *2nd Mon of the month	 7pm - 9pm WWIB Meeting <i>Wellington Women in Business</i> *2nd Tues of the month	2pm - 2:45pm Seated Exercise Group £5 per session <i>Move It Or Lose It</i>	6:30pm - 8:30pm Monument Games Club <i>Monument Rotary Club</i> *Term time only - SEND youth	

Items marked  must be booked in advance

Please make bookings directly via the event organiser

If you have a question about the Kings Arms Community Hub please email kingsarms@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk or call 01823 774158



WELLINGTON
TOWN COUNCIL
Serving Wellington & Rockwell Green





Title	Wellington Cares & Somerset Council Report
Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	16.03.26
Action Required	Note the emerging proposal from Somerset Council regarding responsibility for supporting and coordinating micro-providers.
Report Author and email address	Rob Odams – Wellington Care Project Co-ordinator. Rob@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk Laura Batcha- Community Development Officer. laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

This report provides an update to the Community Committee on the Wellington Cares project and outlines recent discussions with Somerset Council regarding the future management and support of Micro Providers within Somerset.

The report summarises the original purpose of the Wellington Cares pilot project, provides an update on recent developments, and outlines the potential implications for Wellington Town Council.

2. Background

2.1 Wellington Town Council has invested heavily in the creation and running of the King's Arms Community Hub, addressing a long-standing gap in youth and family provision. The hub is now a focal point for local services, hosting partners including NHS teams, housing officers, employability providers and voluntary groups.

During the development and early operation of the hub, community engagement highlighted a clear gap in adult social care support and early intervention. Residents and partners reported that service information was fragmented, making

it difficult to access support, and unpaid carers were often hidden and unsupported.

To address this need, Wellington Town Council secured Accelerated Reform Fund (ARF) funding to deliver the Wellington Cares pilot project.

The Wellington Cares project was designed to:

- strengthen partnership coordination between local services
- improve signposting and early intervention support for residents and unpaid carers
- create and maintain a digital community directory
- raise awareness of caring roles and support networks
- support volunteers and micro-providers through training and engagement

The project runs from January to December 2026 and aims to evidence local need and impact in order to inform longer-term decisions about future provision.

2.2 Recent Developments

Somerset Council has recently indicated that it intends to change how support for Micro Providers is managed across the county.

The proposed direction of travel is that community-based organisations may take on a greater role in supporting and coordinating Micro Provider networks locally, rather than this being managed centrally by the County Council.

To support this approach, Somerset Council has circulated three documents for review by organisations involved in the Somerset Care Alliance:

- Readiness Checklist for Assured Organisations
- Service Level Agreement
- Somerset Care Alliance / Somerset Council Joint Strategy

These documents outline a proposed framework for how local organisations could support Micro Provider networks within their communities.

At the time the Wellington Cares project was developed and funded, it was not known that Somerset Council intended to introduce this approach.

This therefore represents a change in context and potential scope for the Wellington Cares project.

2.3 Clarification of Roles

Discussions with Somerset Council have confirmed that the proposed model for Micro Providers remains based on individual choice and responsibility.

In this model:

- individuals seeking care remain responsible for selecting and engaging a provider
- individuals are responsible for checking appropriate documentation such as DBS or insurance
- Micro Providers remain independent businesses

The role of a local organisation would therefore be to facilitate and support the network, rather than act as a governing body.

This support role may include:

- providing guidance to Micro Providers on good practice
- offering information to residents about what to look for when engaging support
- supporting networking, training and information sharing
- improving signposting and awareness of services

At this stage Wellington Town Council has not been asked to take on governance responsibilities, compliance checks or DBS verification for Micro Providers.

2.4 Implications for Wellington Cares

The Wellington Cares project was originally designed as a pilot programme to explore need and test a model of improved coordination and support for carers, volunteers and Micro Providers.

The potential shift in Somerset Council's approach may mean that community-based coordination of Micro Provider networks becomes more important in the future.

While the Wellington Cares pilot is still in its early stages, the emerging direction of travel may require Wellington Town Council to consider the long-term role that the project could play locally.

In particular, if the network grows and requires ongoing coordination, this may create the need for a dedicated administrative or coordination function in the future.

Initially these sustainability considerations were intended to be explored at the end of the pilot period. However, given the emerging changes at county level and the recognised need for support within the sector, it may be beneficial to begin considering potential long-term models earlier.

Possible future options could include:

- continuation of a facilitated network model
- development of a dedicated platform or directory for local support services
- introduction of a small charging model to sustain coordination and administration

These options would be explored further as part of the evaluation of the Wellington Cares pilot.

3.Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

The Wellington Place Plan identifies an increasing ageing population within the town and areas of deprivation within current wards.

The Council vision highlights the importance of creating an inclusive, safe and supportive community, particularly for vulnerable residents.

Wellington Cares aligns with these priorities by strengthening community support networks and improving access to early intervention and preventative services.

4.Financial Implications

The Wellington Cares project is currently funded through the Accelerated Reform Fund for the period January to December 2026.

Future sustainability options may include a mixture of funding sources such as community contributions, partner funding, sponsorship or commissioning arrangements.

At this stage no financial decisions are required from the Committee.

5.Risks

There is a growing need in the Wellington area for community-based support for adults and unpaid carers.

If coordination and support for Micro Providers is not developed locally, there is a risk that residents may struggle to access appropriate information and support.

Conversely, if community-based models are developed without clear roles and responsibilities, this could create governance or sustainability risks.

The Wellington Cares pilot is intended to help the Council better understand these issues before making any long-term decisions.

6.Considerations

The Community Committee is asked to:

1. Note the emerging proposal from Somerset Council that responsibility for supporting and coordinating

confirmation that Wellington Town Council would not

<p>micro-providers may transfer from county-level management to community-based organisations, including those receiving Accelerated Reform Fund (ARF) funding.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Acknowledge that this represents a change in scope from the original Wellington Cares ARF pilot, which was designed to explore local need around unpaid carers, micro-providers and volunteers rather than formally govern or manage the micro-provider network. 3. Agree in principle that Wellington Town Council continues to explore the potential role of coordinating micro-provider support locally through the Wellington Cares pilot, subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • further clarification from Somerset Council regarding governance arrangements, responsibilities and support available to community organisations • confirmation that Wellington Town Council would not assume responsibility for regulatory functions such as DBS verification, insurance checks or formal governance of micro-providers • completion and review of the proposed Readiness Checklist, Service Level Agreement and Joint Strategy • a further report being brought back to the Community Committee before any formal commitment is made 	<p>assume responsibility for regulatory functions such as DBS verification, insurance checks or formal governance of micro-providers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> completion and review of the proposed Readiness Checklist, Service Level Agreement and Joint Strategy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> a further report being brought back to the Community Committee before any formal commitment is made</p>
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<p>7. Appendices</p> <p>Appendix A - Readiness Checklist</p> <p>Appendix B - Joint Strategy</p> <p>Appendix C - SLA</p> <p>Appendix D - WTC response</p>
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Readiness Checklist for Assured Micro-providers.

This checklist is designed to help community hubs assess their readiness to implement the microprovider networks strategy and meet Somerset Council's requirements.

Governance and Accountability

- [] A board of trustees or management group is in place to oversee operations. Who needs to be represented on this group, look at other organisations?
- [] A safeguarding policy has been developed and implemented. Use Wivey Cares as an example?
- [] A clear escalation process for complaints or disputes is documented. Advice and guidance from SC, who would advise from the Council?
- [] Contingency plans are in place for key roles, such as coordinators. What would this look like? Who are the key roles?

Microprovider Engagement

- [] A recruitment strategy for microproviders has been developed. 'Could you be a carer' campaign exists link in with other organisations? Council support?
- [] Regular meetups or co-design sessions with microproviders have been conducted. Who would do this? Facilitator/coordinator
- [] Microproviders have been informed about the benefits and expectations of joining the network. List of benefits and possible subscription?
- [] A feedback mechanism is in place to gather input from microproviders. Who manages this? What format would this take?

Quality Assurance

- [] Processes for conducting folder reviews and quality checks are established. Who would do this?
- [] A system for collecting and analysing client feedback is operational. Coordinator? What format would this take?
- [] Evidence of compliance with safeguarding and quality standards is documented. Who is responsible for doing this. Where would this be held?

Communication and Collaboration

- [] Regular updates are provided to Somerset Council on progress and challenges. Who will be the Council link person?
- [] Communication channels with Thrive agents and other stakeholders are established.
- [] Public communications and messaging are consistent and aligned with the strategy.

Operational Readiness

- [] All necessary documentation, such as policies and procedures, is finalised. Are these individual to organisations is a central template to be used?
- [] A coordinator or equivalent role is in place and adequately trained. County support for this? Costs?
- [] Funding and resources are secured to support initial operations. From where?
- [] A timeline for implementation has been developed and shared with stakeholders.

Approval Process

- [] A formal meeting with Somerset Council and key stakeholders has been scheduled.
- [] All required documentation has been submitted to Somerset Council for review.

- [] Feedback from Somerset Council has been addressed, and any necessary adjustments have been made.

- [] Final approval has been received, and the network is ready to launch.

- What is the benefit to WTC to take this on? Expectation/impact v resourcing/costs.
- Will there be support for funding and resources for this?
- There will be potentially considerable savings to be made from existing Social Care and NHS budgets.
- More detail is needed with regards to the processes e.g hospital discharges etc
- Unpaid carers support.
- Does the '**The Somerset Micro-Enterprise Programme Quality Standards' (August 2024)** still apply?
- Training for MP's?
- Who will manage the registration process for MP's
- CQC registration? Is this relevant for Micro Providers?
- Funding streams will need to be identified to secure longevity of the initiative.

Strategy for Somerset Council + Somerset Care Alliance (SCA) to implement micro provider networks

1) Shared aim and operating model (set once, then reuse everywhere)

Aim: move to an “assured route” where people are signposted and referred through trusted micro provider networks, with clear governance and safeguarding escalation, and minimal friction for micro providers.

Operating model (two-track):

- **Somerset Council (system levers / “stick + standards”):** sets expectations, routes, and assurance requirements; aligns NHS + other commissioners; turns on “assured route” locality-by-locality once readiness is evidenced.
- **SCA (community enablement / “carrot + capacity”):** grows and stabilises local networks, supports governance, convenes micro providers, and provides trusted community-facing messaging.

This fits the Care Act expectation that the local authority coordinates and works with stakeholders, uses mapping, and builds in review/feedback rather than one-off delivery .

2) Governance and accountability architecture (make it simple, consistent, and auditable)

Create a **single “Partnership Agreement / SLA” template** between Somerset Council and each local hub/network, built around:

- Minimum governance (board/management oversight, coordinator supervision, contingency if coordinator leaves).
- Quality assurance checks (folder checks, process audits, feedback loops).
- Complaints/concerns pathway (incl. when to escalate to safeguarding).
- Fair access / transparency (e.g., how carers are listed and how disputes are handled).
- Evidence requirements for “readiness to switch on”.

This directly supports what was discussed: moving from “generic direction-of-travel” to a **local covenant/SLA** that demonstrates how a hub is “brilliant” with evidence, not self-certification.

Note: where any council functions are effectively being carried out by partners, statutory guidance is clear the council must retain oversight via contracts/monitoring and remain responsible for legal obligations .

3) Partner strategy: keep prime partners to 2–3 and align at top level

Prime partners (from the meeting):

1. **Thrive** (village agent infrastructure, referrals, community intelligence)
2. **NHS / Trust leadership** (system-wide alignment on assured routes)
3. **SCA** (network support and standard-setting across hubs)

What Somerset Council should do now

- Agree the “move to networks” position and socialise it system-wide.
- Put in place a **top-level MOU** with Thrive + NHS partners that creates “real-world consequences” for unsafe/unassured routes, while also committing to positive signposting into assured networks.

What SCA should do

- Help define Thrive’s *future role* as “facilitator/infrastructure support” to community networks (not competing delivery), and bake that into working practice locally (e.g., Thrive agents at readiness meetings; shared comms; shared mapping).

4) Delivery plan: phased “readiness then switch-on”, not one big bang

Adopt a **locality-by-locality activation model**:

- No single countywide date.
- Each area triggers a formal “**readiness meeting**” (Council + Thrive + local hub + key referral partners) and then the system “turns on” the assured route for that locality.

This matches the meeting’s logic: hubs progress at different speeds; activation is a deliberate moment with stakeholders present.

Prioritisation approach

- **First protect and stabilise the next tranche of hubs** that are close but fragile (to avoid losing momentum).
- Then scale by moving from (for example) 3 strong hubs → 6, using the early exemplars as proof.

5) Micro provider engagement: a practical “carrot + stick” package

Stick (Council-led, system-wide):

- Clear statement: the system is transitioning to assured routes; unsafe/unassured signposting is not acceptable.
- MOU alignment across commissioners so Thrive and others can’t “opt out”.

Carrot (SCA/hub-led):

- Regular meet-ups, peer-to-peer recruitment (micro providers bring micro providers).
 - Co-designed processes that feel supportive rather than bureaucratic.
 - Practical benefits: community support, clearer reporting lines, and visible protection for carers as well as clients.
-

6) Mapping and gap-filling: use Thrive coverage intelligently without over-stretching

SCA should build and maintain a **Somerset coverage map**:

- Current hubs and the actual parish/area coverage (many hubs cover more than one place).
- “Gaps” where there is no credible local network yet.
- Overlay Thrive village agent footprints to identify the best entry points into gaps (agents as convenors/introducers).

Somerset Council supports by ensuring Thrive provides usable mapping and that agents understand the new operating model and referral expectations.

This mirrors Care Act guidance to use **mapping and coordination** and to avoid duplication .

7) Communications plan: reduce fear, clarify expectations, and show real people

What to produce (jointly branded Council + SCA, delivered locally):

- A one-page “What’s changing and why” (the direction-of-travel).
- Short local videos (“who we are” from coordinators/hubs) to counter the “agency/platform” misconception.
- A simple “How the assured route works” graphic: referral → hub → micro provider matching → feedback/concerns → safeguarding escalation.

Care Act guidance supports ongoing, accessible information and advice planning with feedback loops .

8) Management, measures, and assurance (make it visible, lightweight, and repeatable)

Create a shared **implementation tracker (Gantt-style)** with a standard milestone set for every locality:

- Hub governance readiness (SLA complete, policies in place, board oversight evidenced).
- Micro provider engagement readiness (meetups held, initial cohort engaged).
- Referral partner readiness (Thrive agents briefed, other referrers briefed).
- “Switch-on” meeting completed.
- 30/60/90-day review (volume, satisfaction, incidents, improvements).

This reflects the meeting’s emphasis on timelines, milestones, and accountability.

Immediate next steps (practical actions from this strategy)

1. **Somerset Council:** finalise the “move to networks” position and convene the senior-level MOU conversation with Thrive + NHS.

2. **Somerset Council + SCA:** co-produce the **Partnership Agreement/SLA template** and a short “readiness checklist/audit” for hubs (evidence-based, not self-certifying).
3. **SCA:** identify 3–6 priority localities (protect fragile ones + scale proven ones) and start scheduling readiness meetings.
4. **Joint:** publish the first comms pack (1-pager + “assured route” graphic + local video templates).

Partnership Agreement / Service-Level Agreement (SLA) Template

Partnership Agreement Between Somerset Council and [Community Hub Name]

1. Purpose of the Agreement

This agreement outlines the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of Somerset Council and [Community Hub Name] in the implementation and operation of the micro provider networks strategy. The aim is to ensure safe, effective, and sustainable care delivery within the community while fostering collaboration and accountability.

2. Parties to the Agreement

- Somerset Council
- [Community Hub Name]

3. Scope of the Agreement

This agreement applies to the development, governance, and operation of the micro provider network within [Community Hub Name]'s designated area. It includes:

- Recruitment and support of micro providers.
- Safeguarding and quality assurance processes.
- Reporting and accountability mechanisms.
- Communication and collaboration with stakeholders.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Somerset Council:

- Provide strategic oversight and guidance for the micro provider networks.
- Offer training and resources to support community hubs and micro providers. **Types of training and resources, costs ?**
- Conduct quality assurance checks and audits as required. **More detail regarding QA checks who, when?**
- Act as the escalation point for safeguarding concerns or unresolved issues. **Roles and Responsibilities, process details.**
- Ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements **as detailed in theWhere would these be identified so all parties are aware of them.**

[Community Hub Name]:

- Establish and maintain a governance structure, such as a board of trustees or management group, to oversee operations. **Hub Coordinator?**
- Recruit, support, and engage micro providers within the community. **How and what level of support (financial) can be expected and by whom? Use existing initiatives from organisations such as Thrive?**
- Implement safeguarding policies and procedures, including reporting mechanisms. **Who? coordinator**
- Conduct regular quality assurance checks, such as folder reviews and client feedback surveys. **Would there be a common ARF approach to this. Hub Coordinator or Council?**
- Provide a clear escalation process for complaints or disputes involving micro providers. **Level of support with this i.e. would there be a contact at Somerset Council?**
- Ensure contingency plans are in place for key roles, such as coordinators. **More detail required.**

5. Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

- **[Community Hub Name]** must have a safeguarding policy in place, including clear reporting lines for concerns.
- Regular audits will be conducted by Somerset Council to ensure compliance with safeguarding and quality standards. **Audit structure and by whom?**
- Feedback mechanisms must be established to gather input from clients, carers, and micro providers. **Role of the coordinator? What format would this take.**

6. Communication and Reporting

- **[Community Hub Name]** will provide regular updates to Somerset Council on the progress and challenges of the micro provider network. **Who would be responsible for this? Reporting to who?**
- Somerset Council will share relevant updates, training opportunities, and resources with **[Community Hub Name]**.
- Both parties will collaborate on public communications to ensure consistent messaging. **Responsibilities, consistent message, social media etc**

7. Contingency Planning

- **[Community Hub Name]** must have a documented contingency plan for key roles, such as coordinators, to ensure continuity of operations. **More detail?**
- Somerset Council will provide interim support if required during transitions. **More detail needed what level of support?**

8. Dispute Resolution

- Any disputes between Somerset Council and [Community Hub Name] will be addressed through a formal escalation process, starting with a joint review meeting. **More detail, what does this look like?**

9. Term and Review

- This agreement will remain in effect for [time period, e.g., one year] and will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

10. Signatures

Signed on behalf of Somerset Council:

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

Signed on behalf of [Community Hub Name]:

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

- **More detail is need regarding the level of support a Hub can expect from Somerset Council, given that recent feedback suggests that there is very little at the moment.**
-

1. Strategic Direction & Status

1. Is closure of the central micro-provider directory a confirmed Council decision, or a proposal under consultation? It is a confirmed decision that the system will move to a "Trusted Network model" over time. In areas where a Trusted Network is operating, that local network will become the primary holder of up-to-date micro-provider information and the main referral route.

2. What is the intended timeline for transition, if any? There is **no single countywide date**. It will be a phased, "locality-by-locality activation model". Hubs will transition through a formal "Switch-On" meeting only when they meet readiness criteria.

3. Is participation by community hubs mandatory or voluntary? Participation is voluntary. Community hubs and grassroots groups applied voluntarily for the Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF) grants to build these networks.

4. What happens in areas where hubs determine they are not ready? The council will continue to operate as usual in those areas. System partners should not refer exclusively through a local hub until it has officially completed its "Switch-On" process. Over time, the goal is for every area to eventually have a network, and unnetworked areas may be supported by the SCA to activate.

5. How does this proposal align with the Adult Social Care Strategy and existing Connect Somerset infrastructure? The proposal is directly aligned with Connect Somerset's bid to ARF, focusing on Priority 3 (local area networks for prevention), Priority 10 (social prescribing), and Priority 11/12 (carer support). It supports Somerset's Adult Social Care Strategy by promoting community-led prevention, early help, and keeping public funds in local economies.

2. Statutory Responsibility

6. What statutory responsibilities does Somerset Council retain in relation to market oversight, safeguarding, quality assurance, and brokerage?

Somerset Council retains full statutory responsibility for **safeguarding, quality assurance, and the Somerset Quality Standard**. The Council will manage serious safeguarding escalations and retain regulatory boundaries.

7. What statutory responsibilities, if any, are expected to transfer to hubs?

No statutory responsibilities transfer to the hubs. Hubs are taking on visibility, basic onboarding, information sharing, and low-level governance. The Care Act guidance dictates that the local authority must retain oversight via monitoring and remain responsible for legal obligations.

8. If hubs decline to sign the Partnership Agreement, who retains legal accountability for micro-provider governance? Somerset Council retains legal safeguarding and quality assurance oversight. However, micro-providers themselves are self-employed sole traders and retain full independence and individual liability for their businesses.

9. How will regulated vs unregulated provision be distinguished in practice?

Trusted Networks operate strictly under the "**introductory agencies exemption**" from the Care Quality Commission (CQC). To maintain this boundary, networks must not employ, supervise, direct, or organise a micro-provider's work. Really worth reading: [Personal care: ongoing role, introductory agencies and individual care workers - Care Quality Commission](#)

3. Funding & Resourcing

10. What financial support will Somerset Council provide to hubs assuming governance responsibilities? The Council has provided "**one-off grants**" (between £10,000 and £50,000) from the ARF. There is **no further ongoing core funding** available from the Council beyond this catalyst money.

11. Is funding available for dedicated coordination roles, compliance monitoring, DBS/PLI verification processes, quality audits, and training provision? The initial ARF grant money is explicitly intended to fund these coordination roles and setup processes for a 12-month pilot period. Long-term, hubs must enact a "trading model" or self-sustaining community income to pay for these ongoing roles.

12. Has Somerset Council undertaken a cost modelling exercise for what this transition requires per locality? No countywide cost modelling is mentioned. Instead, to receive the grant, each individual group was required to submit its own **costed set of projections, cashflow forecasts, and a business plan** demonstrating local financial viability.

13. If this model generates savings in Adult Social Care budgets, how will this be reinvested into locality coordination? There is no mechanism or commitment from the Council to reinvest direct adult social care savings back into the hubs. The strategy relies on groups developing independent, sustainable trading or subscription models rather than expecting ongoing statutory funding.

4. Operational Model Clarity

14. What does 'strategic oversight and guidance' from Somerset Council look like in practice? The Council will provide quarterly training on safeguarding and lawful boundaries, maintain a consolidated resource library, and conduct one annual "light-touch commissioning & quality assurance review" of each Network.

15. Who conducts quality assurance checks under the new model? **Trusted Networks** will conduct basic local quality assurance, this is a local decision but may involve including folder/portfolio reviews, collecting client feedback, and managing low-level issues.

16. Who is responsible for maintaining and enforcing Somerset Micro Enterprise Programme standards? Somerset Council is responsible for upholding the Somerset Quality Standard and handling serious quality concerns. Networks must adopt policies aligned with these standards.

17. Will Connect Somerset remain live? If so, how does it interface with local hub directories? The Connect Somerset platform will refer solely to local trusted networks (where they are operational). local Trusted Network directory will become the **primary local contact point and referral route** in that area.

18. Are hubs expected to endorse providers, collect and store DBS/PLI documentation, act as escalation point for disputes, or manage complaints? Hubs will decide a local approach to quality assurance. In most areas this includes document checks. But good information to families is the critical output as legally it is the families responsibility to provide checks. They must also have a clear complaints and mediation process to handle low-level issues locally.

19. Is Somerset Council expecting hubs to act as a regulatory checkpoint? No. Hubs act as an introductory filter providing clear information for care workers and care seekers in an area.

independent oversight and community accountability (checking documents). True regulatory compliance and serious safeguarding concerns remain the responsibility of the Council and the CQC.

5. Risk, Liability & Governance

20. Who holds liability if a micro-provider fails to maintain insurance, a safeguarding issue arises, or a client complaint escalates? Micro-providers are independent sole traders and hold their own business liabilities. The hub acts as a conduit to pass concerns to Somerset Council QA team, but serious safeguarding issues must be escalated immediately to Somerset Council's safeguarding team. The host organisation of the hub holds the financial and legal responsibility for the hub's own operations.

21. Has Somerset Council completed a risk assessment on transferring governance to voluntary/community bodies?

The risk is mitigated procedurally through the "**Partnership Agreement / SLA**" and the "**Readiness Checklist**", which require hubs to prove they have independent boards, safeguarding policies, and strict escalation pathways before any transfer occurs.

22. Will Somerset Council indemnify hubs acting under an agreed SLA? To be discussed/ agreed.

23. What insurance implications have been considered? Support available with this.

6. Transition & Readiness

24. What criteria determine 'readiness'?

Readiness is determined by completing a formal checklist requiring: an independent governance structure (e.g., three non-micro-provider trustees), finalized policies (Safeguarding, Complaints, EDI, GDPR), an operational onboarding process for micro-providers, an appointed coordinator, and a transparent trading model. (more details to follow)

25. Is there a phased implementation model? Yes. It is a locality-by-locality phased transition. Areas will activate only when they independently complete a formal "Switch-On" meeting.

26. Will existing local disputes be resolved prior to transfer? In a local network model. Historic disputes are not subject to this development. The network may want to develop clear rules on behaviour. Historic issues were caused because of lack of governance, accountability and mandate. This rectifies this.

27. What interim arrangements will be in place during transition? Until a locality holds its formal "Switch-On" meeting, system partners will continue current practices. No system partner should mandate referrals through a Network until the Switch-On is complete. The Council retains the current register in the meantime.

28. What happens if a hub signs the agreement but later withdraws? If a network fails to maintain governance or safety standards, its Trusted Network status "may be paused pending improvement" and will revert to previous arrangements,

7. Evaluation & Pilot Alignment

29. How does this proposal align with ARF-funded pilot projects that are still in scoping and mapping phase? There is no pressure to launch prematurely. Groups in the scoping phase (some of whom received £5,000 development grants) are expected to use their funding to explore their

models, test ideas, and finalise their business plans at their own pace without a countywide deadline.

30. Is Somerset Council prepared to treat hub adoption as a pilot with evaluation before full transfer? Yes. The implementation plan includes a review (measuring volume, satisfaction, incidents, and improvements) after a hub is switched on. Furthermore, ARF funding was explicitly distributed as "targeted experimentation" to pilot different community models



Title	Wacky Wednesdays Proposal
Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	16.03.26
Action Required	Approval for Wellington Town Council to formally adopt the Wacky Wednesdays programme and provide ongoing organisational coordination and governance support.
Report Author and email address	Laura Batcha- Community Development Officer. laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Community Committee for Wellington Town Council to formally adopt the Wacky Wednesdays programme and provide organisational coordination and governance support for its future delivery.

Wacky Wednesdays is a well-established school holiday activity programme that provides free or low cost family-focused events for children and families within Wellington.

The programme has historically been coordinated through partnership working across local organisations, with support from the One Team network, local partners, volunteers and community groups.

The proposal would allow the Town Council to provide a stable home for the programme, ensuring its continuation while strengthening links with other Council-led community initiatives.

2. Background

Wacky Wednesdays has operated in Wellington for several years as a series of free / low cost schoolholiday activity events, typically held in Wellington Park during the school summer holidays.

The events attract large numbers of local families and provide opportunities for children to participate in outdoor play, creative activities, sports and community-led activities in a safe and welcoming environment.

Historically, the programme has been facilitated through partnership working involving:

- One Team partners
- Local community organisations
- Volunteers
- Local service providers

Due to the collaborative nature of the programme, coordination responsibilities have shifted between partners over time depending on organisational capacity.

A Wacky Wednesdays steering group has historically supported the coordination of the programme, bringing together partners, volunteers and organisations who have contributed to the success of the events over a number of years.

Members of the steering group have provided valuable local knowledge, supported activity delivery and helped maintain the community-led ethos that has made Wacky Wednesdays such a well-loved initiative within Wellington.

The steering group has recently identified some practical challenges relating to the ongoing administration of the programme, including the management of the programme bank account and associated charges. The group indicated that they would be supportive of Wellington Town Council providing organisational support to manage these administrative elements moving forward.

This arrangement would remove the administrative burden from volunteers while ensuring the programme continues to operate in a transparent and sustainable way.

Providing coordination through Wellington Town Council would also offer a clearer structure for governance, safeguarding and financial oversight, while retaining the partnership-based nature of delivery.

The intention is that Wacky Wednesdays will remain a partnership-led programme, with the Town Council providing and/or supporting coordination and governance support alongside the continued involvement of the existing steering group and delivery partners.

3. Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to request approval for Wellington Town Council to adopt the Wacky Wednesdays programme and provide organisational coordination and governance support for the programme moving forward.

This would include:

- Coordinating delivery of the Wacky Wednesdays programme
- Managing financial contributions associated with the programme
- Supporting partner organisations involved in delivery
- Ensuring appropriate safeguarding and insurance arrangements are in place

The programme would continue to be delivered through partnership working with local organisations and volunteers, maintaining the collaborative approach that has historically made the programme successful.

The existing Wacky Wednesdays steering group will continue in its current format to play an important role in shaping the programme and supporting delivery through partnership working.

The involvement of Wellington Town Council also provides an opportunity to support the long-term sustainability of the programme and, over time, explore opportunities with the steering group to refresh elements of delivery, broaden participation and strengthen partnership involvement while building on the strong foundations already established by the steering group.

4. Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

Wacky Wednesdays aligns strongly with several of the Council's existing programmes and strategic priorities.

Best Start in Life (BSiL)

The programme provides opportunities for children and families to access free, inclusive activities that promote play, learning and social development. Families highlighted within this programme will be signposted to Wacky Wednesdays

Cradle to Career (C2C)

Wacky Wednesdays supports early engagement with young people and families within the community and helps build positive relationships with services that support long-term wellbeing and opportunity.

Kings Arms Community Hub

Although activities typically take place in Wellington Park, the programme complements the wider community support network connected to the Hub and provides an additional route for families to access services and information.

Community engagement and prevention

The programme provides accessible activities for families during school holidays, helping to reduce isolation, promote wellbeing and encourage positive community interaction.

Bringing the programme under the Town Council's coordination would also create stronger opportunities to:

Connect families with wider support services

Better understand community needs

Strengthen the Council's role in supporting families within the town

5. Financial Implications

The Wacky Wednesdays programme currently operates with approximately £2,000 held within an existing programme account.

Based on previous delivery, it costs approximately £1,500 per year to deliver the full programme of events.

Remaining funds are occasionally used to provide additional support for vulnerable families in crisis where appropriate.

If the programme is adopted by the Town Council:

The existing bank account currently holding programme funds would be closed

Remaining funds would be transferred to Wellington Town Council

Funds would be held and managed under the appropriate Town Council budget line

No additional funding is requested at this stage.

Future funding requirements would be reviewed annually as part of the Council's community development budget planning.

6. Risks

Risk	Mitigation
Safeguarding responsibilities	Activities will follow Town Council safeguarding policies and procedures
Financial accountability across multiple partners	Funds managed through Town Council financial systems

Sustainability of programme delivery

Clear coordination role for Town Council through a steering group while maintaining partner involvement

7. Considerations

1. Approving Wellington Town Council adopting the Wacky Wednesdays programme and providing coordination and governance support.
2. Confirming that the existing programme bank account will be closed and any remaining funds transferred to Wellington Town Council.
3. Supporting the continuation of Wacky Wednesdays as a partnership-led family activity programme within Wellington.

8 .Appendices



Title	Adoption of Bright Beginnings Parent, Baby and Toddler Group
Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	16.03.26
Action Required	Approval to adopt the volunteer-led Bright Beginnings Parent, Baby and Toddler Group under the Wellington Town Council volunteer framework and confirmation of room hire support at Kings Arms Community Hub.
Report Author and email address	Laura Batcha- Community Development Officer. laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Committee to formally adopt the Bright Beginnings Parent, Baby and Toddler Group under the Wellington Town Council volunteer framework.

The report also seeks confirmation that the group's room hire costs at the Kings Arms Community Hub (KACH) can be supported through an appropriate Council budget in order to allow the group to continue operating.

2. Background

Bright Beginnings is a volunteer-led parent, baby and toddler group currently operating from the Kings Arms Community Hub.

The group approached the Town Council requesting support with room hire costs, as the group operates on a voluntary basis and does not generate income beyond small voluntary donations.

At the time of the original request, Committee raised several concerns including:

- The group not being a constituted organisation
- Safeguarding arrangements
- Insurance coverage
- Governance and accountability

Following discussion with the volunteers, the group has confirmed that they would be happy for the activity to operate under the Town Council's umbrella as a volunteer-led group rather than as a separate constituted organisation.

This approach resolves the governance concerns previously raised.

3.Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

Bright Beginnings provides a safe and welcoming space for parents, carers and young children to meet, connect and access informal support.

The group supports a number of key community outcomes including:

- Early years social development for babies and toddlers
- Informal peer support for new parents
- Social connection and reduced isolation for families
- Opportunities for intergenerational volunteering
- Confidence building for volunteers exploring future employment

Several volunteers involved in the group are retired residents who bring valuable knowledge and experience, providing informal guidance and support to young families.

For some volunteers, participation in the group also provides a stepping stone into employment, particularly in early years or social care settings.

The group aligns strongly with several existing Council priorities and programmes. These include:

Best Start in Life (Family Hub platform)

Supporting early years development and family engagement.

Cradle to Career – Early Years and Family Strand

Supporting families and improving early childhood experiences.

Kings Arms Community Hub priorities

Providing accessible community space for preventative and supportive activity.

Given this alignment, the group represents a natural fit within the Council's existing community development framework.

Given this alignment, the group represents a natural fit within the Council's existing community development framework.

Similar volunteer-led parent and toddler groups are commonly supported by local authorities as part of preventative family support and community connection activity.

4. Financial Implications

The group operates on a voluntary basis and requests a £2 voluntary donation from attendees to cover small refreshments such as tea, coffee, squash and light snacks.

There are no staffing costs associated with the group.

The only ongoing cost relates to room hire at the Kings Arms Community Hub.

Committee is therefore asked to confirm whether the Council wishes to support the group by covering the room hire cost.

It is recommended that the cost is covered through one of the following budgets:

- Wellington Community Support Services budget, or
- Youth Development budget

The cost of room hire is minimal but enables the group to operate sustainably.

Support for this group is recommended because it aligns directly with existing Council priorities including Best Start in Life, Cradle to Career early years engagement and the community purpose of the Kings Arms Community Hub.

Any future requests for similar support would be considered on a case-by-case basis against the Council's agreed community priorities and available resources.

Group	Space	Frequency	Weekly	Annual
Bright Beginnings	Activity Room + Café	Weekly 2 hrs (term time)	£36	£1,404

Room hire costs are based on the standard hourly rates for the Activity Room and Café area during delivery time only.

5.Risks

Risk	Mitigation
Governance concerns	Group adopted under Town Council volunteer framework. The group will also be supported to sign up to the early years alliance.
Safeguarding	Volunteers trained and activity delivered under Council safeguarding procedures
Insurance	Covered under Town Council insurance
Financial risk	Minimal operational costs
Governance concerns	Group adopted under Town Council volunteer framework

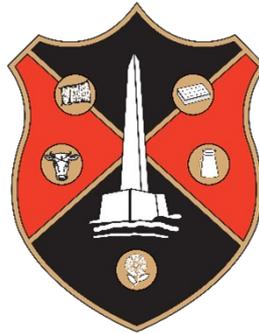
6.Considerations

The Committee is asked to consider:

1. Approving the adoption of the Bright Beginnings Parent, Baby and Toddler Group under the Wellington Town Council volunteer framework with a view to them operating at Kings Arms Community Hub.
2. Confirming that room hire costs for the group will be covered by an appropriate Council budget.

7. Appendices

N/A



Title	Youth Development Holiday Provision – Funding Request
Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	16.03.26
Action Required	Approval for additional funding to support youth holiday provision during upcoming half-term periods.
Report Author and email address	Laura Batcha- Community Development Officer. laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Community Committee for additional funding to support youth activity provision during school holiday periods.

The core youth provision delivered in Wellington is currently funded through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Wellington Town Council and In The Mix Project, which funds weekly youth sessions during term time.

However, this agreement does not cover delivery during school holiday periods such as half-term breaks or summer holidays.

This report therefore seeks approval for additional funding to enable holiday youth provision to be delivered in Wellington via In The Mix as the provider.

2. Background

Wellington Town Council currently supports youth work provision in the town through its partnership with In The Mix Project, delivering regular youth sessions during term time.

The existing SLA covers:

- Two weekly youth sessions
- Delivered during term time

- Up to 40 weeks of the year

Holiday provision sits outside the scope of the current SLA, meaning additional funding must be agreed separately where the Council wishes to provide activity for young people during school holidays.

Holiday activity programmes are widely recognised as an important part of youth engagement, providing:

- Safe places for young people to gather
- Structured activities that support wellbeing
- Opportunities for physical activity, creativity and social development
- Support for families during school holiday periods

National programmes such as the Happy Healthy Holidays initiative highlight the role that structured holiday activities can play in supporting children and young people's physical and mental wellbeing, while also reducing social isolation and inactivity during school breaks.

The proposal is to commission In The Mix Project to deliver youth activity sessions during the upcoming half-term holidays.

Provision is expected to include activities that support:

- Youth engagement and social connection
- Positive use of free time during school holidays
- Physical and creative activities
- Safe and supervised environments for young people

Holiday activity programmes can play an important preventative role by supporting young people's wellbeing, building confidence and helping them remain connected to positive youth services.

3.Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

Supporting youth development and access to positive activities aligns strongly with the Council's strategic vision to create an inclusive, safe and supportive town where all residents have opportunities to participate in community life.

Supporting the Council's wider community development priorities

Holiday youth provision complements a number of existing Council programmes and priorities, including:

- Cradle to Career, which supports young people's development and engagement.
- Kings Arms Community Hub, which provides accessible space for community activities and services.

- Best Start in Life / Family Hub initiatives, which focus on improving outcomes for children and families.

By supporting holiday youth activity, the Council continues to strengthen the local youth support ecosystem and provide opportunities for young people to access positive, community-based activities.

4. Financial Implications

Based on information provided by the delivery partner, the estimated funding required to support youth holiday provision during 2026 (excluding summer provision) is **£4,100**.

This funding would support activity during the following school holiday periods:

- Easter holiday provision – **£200**
- May half-term provision – **£1,750**
- October half-term provision – **£1,750**
- December holiday provision – **£400** (subject to confirmation of HAF funding)
- February half-term provision – **£1,750**

The total funding request therefore amounts to **£5850.00** for holiday provision across the 2026 calendar year, excluding summer provision.

Funding will be monitored alongside the provider to ensure spaces are used effectively and any unused places can be carried forward where possible.

It is proposed that funding is allocated from the Youth Development budget, which has been reserved to support youth engagement, participation and preventative activity within the town.

A separate report will be brought to the May Community Committee meeting to consider summer holiday provision once delivery plans and potential external funding opportunities have been explored.

5. Risks

Risk	Mitigation
Lack of provision for young people during school holidays	Holiday activity programme commissioned through experienced youth provider
Youth disengagement during holiday periods	Structured activities provide positive engagement opportunities
Funding sustainability	Summer provision to be reviewed separately with external funding options explored

6.Considerations

The Committee is asked to consider:

- 6.1 Approving additional funding of £5850.00 to support youth activity provision during half-term holiday periods.
- 6.2 Confirming that funding should be allocated from either the Wellington Community Support Services budget or the Youth Development budget.

7 .Appendices