

**MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
AT UNITED REFORM CHURCH ON MONDAY 16 MARCH 2026 AT 6.00 PM**

Present: Councillor C Govier-Wiggins (Chair)
Councillors J Cole, A Govier, M McGuffie, 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
Rob Odhams – Community Project Coordinator
Michelle Brookes – Somerset Council LCN Officer
Nick Harvey – In the Mix
One member of the press

487 CHAIR TO WELCOME MEMBERS
The Chair welcomed members to the committee.

488 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND APPROVE THE REASONS GIVEN
Apologies were received from Councillor C Penk.

489 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
None declared.

490 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
No members of the public in attendance.

491 MINUTES
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Community Committee meeting held 19 January 2026.

492 COMMUNITY CONNECT CHAMPION UPDATE
A verbal update was provided by the Community Connect Champion which was noted.

It was confirmed that the draft Funding Agreements for the Best Start in Family Life and Community Connect roles were with the Chief executive for consideration.

493 TOGETHER IN TONE
The report detailing the progress and findings made during the engagement phase of the Together in Tone project was noted.

Councillor J Lloyd noted that Samford Arundel and Wellington Without parishes have yet to be contacted. The Community Development Officer said that she will investigate this and contact Stawley Parish Council.

Councillor A Govier asked whether a Winter concert similar to the summer concerts hosted by the Friends of Wellington Park could be delivered as part of the project. The Community Development Officer confirmed that the requirement was to deliver this project before September 2026 but said that interest for a winter event can be assessed.

Councillors **AGREED** that the project direction should be toward smaller events as opposed to one big event.

494 IN THE MIX YOUTH DELIVERY

An update was provided by Nick Harvey and was noted.

Councillor A Govier noted the positive impact of the provision and that he is supportive of the second session being an outreach session.

It was confirmed that attendance data is being collated and sent to the council to determine trends and impact.

At this juncture, it was **AGREED** to bring forward item 17.

495 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT HOLIDAY PROVISION

It was **RESOLVED** to approve additional funding of £5850.00 to support youth activity provision during half-term holiday periods.

It was **AGREED** that funding should be allocated from the Youth Development budget.

Councillor J Cole noted that ideas for outreach programmes should be tested first before being brought to the Community Committee.

496 KINGS ARMS COMMUNITY HUB STRATEGY

After much discussion it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Kings Arms Community Hub Strategy & Delivery Plan 2026–2029 to include the following amendment:

- Par 5.1 - 'governance reporting to committee' will be changed to 'reporting via the chief executive to committee'.

Councillors noted this will be reviewed annually, with any significant changes reported back to the Community Committee.

At this juncture, it was **AGREED** to bring forward item 13.

497 KINGS ARMS COMMUNITY HUB ROOM HIRE PLAN

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the use of the Hub for commercial hire and private social events where appropriate, subject to availability and operational arrangements.

The following resolutions were made on the casting vote of the Chair of the Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the proposed room hire eligibility and subsidy framework for a trial period of two months.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the subsidy eligibility matrix for a trial period of two months.

It was **AGREED** to grant delegated authority to the Chief Executive/Town Clerk to review and approve subsidy requests against the agreed criteria for a trial period of two months.

498 BEST START IN LIFE STRATEGY

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Best Start in Life Strategy as the framework guiding Wellington Town Council's involvement in the Best Start in Life programme.

Councillors noted that the Strategy will be reviewed annually, with updates reported back to the Community Committee.

499 CRADLE TO CAREER STRATEGY

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Cradle to Career Strategy as the framework guiding Cradle to Career partnership activity within Wellington.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the proposed allocation of £14,300 from the Cradle to Career budget to support delivery of Year 1 programme activity.

Councillors noted that programme delivery will be reviewed annually through the Community Committee.

Councillors noted that they are keen for initiatives and project to begin and be tested as soon as possible. Councillor J Lloyd noted that it has been some time since an update on the initiative to turn Wellington into a Reading Town. The Community Development Officer outlined the work that had been taking place and agreed to provide a more detailed update at the next meeting.

500 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

It was **AGREED** that the proposed strategy should be revised to ensure it is more forward thinking and includes specific details on which groups are targeted by this strategy. An update will be provided at the next meeting with the revised timescales of completion.

501 WELLINGTON CARES

Rob Odams provided an update on the emerging proposal from Somerset Council that responsibility for supporting and coordinating micro-providers may transfer from county-level management to community-based organisations, including those receiving Accelerated Reform Fund (ARF) funding.

It was acknowledged 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. Councillors noted that this is an opportunity for the council to create a model that works specifically for Wellington.

It was **AGREED** in principle that Wellington Town Council continue to explore the potential role of coordinating micro-provider support locally through the Wellington Cares pilot, subject to:

- 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

502 WACKY WEDNESDAYS

It was **RESOLVED** to approve that the Town Council take over the governance of the Wacky Wednesdays programme and provide coordination and management support.

It was confirmed that the existing programme bank account will be closed and any remaining funds transferred to Wellington Town Council.

503 BRIGHT BEGINNINGS BABY/TODDLER GROUP

It was **RESOLVED** to approve 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.

It was confirmed that room hire costs for the group will be covered by an appropriate Council budget.

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

Sign.....

Date.....



Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	18.05.26
Briefing Item	Community Development Officer Update
Author and email address	Laura Batcha – Community Development Officer laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Context

This report provides a consolidated update on community development activity across key programmes and partnerships, including the Kings Arms Community Hub (KACH), Cradle to Career (C2C), Best Start in Life (BSIL), and Wellington Cares.

This approach reflects a shift towards a more coordinated, place-based model of delivery, ensuring that activity across programmes is aligned, visible, and contributing to shared outcomes for Wellington residents.

2. Briefing

2.1 Kings Arm Community Hub

Activity within the Hub continues to grow, both in scale and in the range of support being delivered.

Between October 2025 and March 2026, the Hub recorded 1,313 resident interactions, equating to an average of approximately 50 interactions per week. This reflects consistent and sustained use of the space by residents and partners.

What this shows:

- The Hub is supporting a wide range of activity across all age groups, including:
 - Early years provision (e.g. Bright Beginnings)

- Youth engagement (In The Mix)
- Social and wellbeing activity (e.g. Monument Games Club, seated exercise)
- Health-based provision (e.g. Health Visitor Drop-In)
- Multiple partners are delivering services from the Hub, including:
 - Health services
 - Youth providers
 - Community and voluntary sector organisations

Impact:

- Residents are accessing support locally within Wellington, reducing the need to travel to Taunton
- The Hub is enabling earlier engagement and preventative support through an accessible, community-based setting
- This is reducing pressure on statutory services by supporting residents before needs escalate
- It is acting as a coordination point for partner delivery, bringing services together in one place

This demonstrates that the Kings Arms Community Hub is functioning not only as a building, but as a key part of Wellington's community support infrastructure.

Further work is underway to strengthen the consistent capture of outcomes and signposting data to support future reporting.

This reflects a shift towards a more coordinated, place-based model of delivery, supporting early intervention and reducing pressure on statutory services.

Service Update:

Chatty Café taking place Wednesday 2-4pm/ Friday 11-1pm

Attendance Numbers

- Wed 29th Apr- 19
- Fri 1st May- 7
- Wed 6th May- 14
- Fri 8th May- 5

Grief Café taking place 1st Thursday every month 11-12pm

- Thurs 7th May- 8

Kings Arm Open Day Saturday 6th June 11-3pm

- Early Years and Youth Activity
- Families, children and people invited to attend the Hub
- Supported by In the Mix, Health Visitors and Early Years Network

2.2 Warm Welcome Donations

A total of £198.37 was received through Warm Welcome activity and has been allocated to the Kings Arms Community Hub.

These funds will be used to support ongoing Chatty Café provision, contributing to:

- Reducing social isolation
- Providing low-cost, accessible opportunities for residents to connect
- Supporting continued use of the Hub during periods of higher need

2.3 Youth Provision

In The Mix - May Half Term

- KACH Tues PM – Sustainability Sessions – Booking Only
- Skate Park Time TBC – Spray and Skating Skills – Drop In

Summer Programming

- Connect Champion will facilitate a meeting with the Youth Development Steering Group
- The aim will be to develop a robust agenda of youth engagement opportunities to promote and sign post young people.
- Stakeholders will include:
 - In The Mix
 - Young Somerset
 - Somerset Skills and Learning
 - Somerset Youth Theatre
 - Reminiscence Learning
 - Churches Together
 - Somerset Sports and Activities Partnership

Report to follow delegated authority request for CEO for delivery of summer programme.

2.4 Together in Tone

An update report has been submitted to SALC and is attached for reference along with the Together In Tone LCN Presentation.

Direction of travel:

The project is evolving to focus on:

- Supporting and promoting existing activity with stakeholder invited to facilitate workshop delivery directly impacting local residents and encouraging that to “have a go”
- Encouraging greater visibility of local music groups and events, this will assist with sign posting to these activities which will in turn impact the health and wellbeing of residents who stay connect to group locally and take part in creativity

- Utilising platforms such as Visit Wellington and Town Council communications to increase reach and sharing on neighbouring LCNs Social Media.

2.5 Cradle to Career (C2C)

A clear programme structure for the year has now been established, providing greater clarity across all strands.

Position:

- Activity is underway across multiple strands, with varying levels of progress
- The focus is now on strengthening coordination, consistency, and accountability across delivery

Key development:

- Submission of the Accelerator Fund application (attached), which outlines a coordinated approach to delivery and future investment.

Further detail on delivery and funding requirements is included within the associated C2C report.

2.6 Connect Somerset / Best Start in Life (BSiL) Update

The Connect Somerset and Best Start in Life (BSiL) work continues to strengthen partnership coordination, early intervention activity and support pathways for children and families within Wellington.

A Community Breakfast is scheduled to take place at Court Fields School on 8 June 2026 at 8.30am, bringing together partners and stakeholders to strengthen local relationships and collaboration.

As part of ongoing learning and partnership development, the Community Development Officer and Connect Somerset Champion recently attended a Cradle to Career (C2C) community breakfast hosted by Holyrood Academy in Chard. This provided an opportunity to share learning between the two areas and better understand different delivery models. Chard's C2C programme has been established for a significantly longer period, providing valuable insight into long-term development and partnership working.

The Connect Somerset Champion is also supporting discussions linked to changes within education and family support systems. Schools have been advised that centrally provided funding for Parent and Family Support Advisors (PFSAs) will reduce by 20% over each of the next two years. Wellington partners are continuing discussions around future provision and how local partnership working may help support vulnerable families moving forward.

In addition, Somerset's "One Teams" model has now transitioned into a locality-based approach, with meetings taking place every four weeks across the wider locality area. Work is ongoing to understand how Wellington Town Council and

local partners can best support vulnerable residents and families within this revised structure.

Work also continues around the formal launch of Wellington's Best Start in Life (BSiL) Family Hub activity in conjunction with Somerset Council.

Being part of the BSiL programme continues to bring several strategic benefits to Wellington, including:

- Wellington remaining the only recognised BSiL Hub within Somerset
- Direct links with government advisors to help align local delivery with national priorities
- Development of consistent parenting pathways and future BSiL digital resources
- Access to government-approved data dashboards and outcome tracking aligned to Department for Education expectations
- Stronger pathways supporting early childhood education, care and school transitions
- Support for healthy babies and early years development through links to health visiting, infant feeding support and the Healthy Child Programme
- Improved partnership working between Health Visiting Teams, Early Years providers and the Cradle to Career Family Support Strand
- Earlier identification of children and families requiring additional support

Overall, the BSiL approach continues to strengthen Wellington's ability to support children and families at the earliest possible stage, helping improve school readiness, wellbeing and long-term outcomes.

2.7 Wellington Cares

The Wellington Cares project continues to focus on strengthening local support networks, improving community coordination and exploring sustainable approaches to supporting residents who require care, wellbeing or community-based support.

Current activity includes:

- Relationship building with the Community Care Coordinator and Occupational Therapy teams linked to Wellington GP surgeries
- Ongoing engagement with local micro-providers regarding challenges, opportunities and future development of local support provision
- Regular liaison with SPARK Somerset, Somerset Community Foundation partners and the Somerset Cares Alliance regarding future models of support and community coordination
- Continued partnership working with Wivey Cares and Somerset Council officers
- Attendance at unpaid carers groups, providing signposting and support where appropriate
- Promotion of Wellington Cares alongside Cradle to Career (C2C) and Best Start in Life (BSiL) activity through community engagement and improved visibility within the Kings Arms Community Hub

- Attendance at networking, training and impact measurement events, including dementia network activity

A meeting also recently took place with Rhys Davies from Somerset Council – Adults & Health Commissioning / Community Enterprise and Workforce, to provide clarity around the proposed Service Level Agreement (SLA) linked to Adult Social Care Reform Fund (ARF) recipients.

The discussion highlighted the need for further consideration regarding the most appropriate future delivery model and governance arrangements for Wellington Cares, particularly in relation to local coordination, micro-provider engagement and the role of the Town Council within the wider support system.

Following this discussion, Wellington Town Council is now reviewing a number of potential delivery approaches and local models. A further update and proposed direction of travel is expected to be presented to Committee in July.

The project continues to demonstrate the value of locally coordinated partnership working, particularly in improving visibility of support, strengthening community connections and identifying gaps in provision at an earlier stage.

3. Background Papers

- A KACH Data Summary Report (attached)
- B Together in Tone – SALC Update Report and Presentation (attached)
- C Cradle to Career – Accelerator Application (attached)

Kings Arms Community Hub (KACH) Data Summary and Key Findings (Oct 2025 – Mar 2026)

1. Overview

This report summarises recorded activity at the Kings Arms Community Hub between October 2025 and March 2026. The data reflects usage levels, types of provision, and emerging patterns of engagement to support understanding of the Hub's role within Wellington's community infrastructure.

2. Headline Figures

- Total recorded interactions: 1,313
- Average weekly interactions: ~50
- Reporting period: 6 months (approx. 26 weeks)

3. Key Activity Breakdown

Top recorded activities include:

- Bright Beginnings (Early Years): 237
- In The Mix (Youth Provision): 214
- Monument Games Club (Social / Isolation): 212
- Health Visitor Drop-In: 152
- Seated Exercise (Health & Wellbeing): 98

4. What the Data Shows

- Consistent and sustained use of the Hub across the reporting period
- Strong engagement across multiple age groups
- High demand for social, wellbeing, and early years provision
- Regular use by structured partner-led sessions

5. Range of Provision (All Age Strategy)

The Hub is supporting a broad range of provision across different life stages, including:

- Early Years – parent and toddler groups
- Young People – youth provision
- Adults – wellbeing, employment, and support services
- Older Residents – social and low-impact activity

6. Partnership Delivery

The data reflects delivery by multiple partner organisations, including:

- Youth providers
- Health services
- Community and voluntary organisations

This demonstrates that the Hub is operating as a shared delivery space rather than a single-service venue.

7. Local Access and Accessibility

The Hub enables residents to access support locally within Wellington. Many of these services would otherwise require travel to Taunton or may not be accessed at all. This supports earlier engagement and reduces barriers to support.

8. Impact and Strategic Value

The data demonstrates that the Hub is:

- Providing consistent weekly engagement
- Supporting preventative and early intervention activity
- Enabling coordinated, multi-agency delivery
- Acting as a key access point for community-based support

This positions the Hub as part of Wellington's wider community support system rather than solely a building.

9. Gaps and Next Steps

While activity data is strong, further development is needed to:

- Capture outcomes (what changes for residents)
- Record signposting and referral pathways
- Strengthen consistent data collection across all users of the Hub

This will support more robust impact reporting in future.



Community Health & Wellbeing GRANT FEEDBACK AND MONITORING FORM

This form should be completed with reference to the Project Outcomes and Monitoring & Reporting included on your grant offer letter along with the information you provided on your grant application form.

Date: 15 September 2025

Name of council: Wellington Town Council

Name of lead contact: Laura Batcha

Role in Council: Community Development Officer

Contact email address: laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

Contact telephone number: Tel: 01823 662855 (ext. 207) | Mobile: 07538 936423

Name of second contact: Andrew Govier

Role in Council: Wellington Town Council Cllr and Current Chair for Community Committee

Contact email address: andrewgovier@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

Contact telephone number: 01823 662855

Name of Project: Together in Tone – A musical collaboration for Wellbeing

Grant Amount Requested from Community Health & Wellbeing: £10 000

Please State the Minute Evidencing Approval of this Project by community Committee, Wellington Town Council: 15 September 2025

Project start date: 1 October 2025

Project end date: 30 September 2026

1. Project Outcomes (300-500 words)

(Describe the outcomes achieved by the project. Go back to your Initial Grant Application and Grant Offer Letter - compare the initial Project Outcomes with actual Project Outcomes. We're interested in what worked well as well as things that may not have worked so well. Please explain any changes in direction you may have made as the project progressed and why.)

Together in Tone was established to improve wellbeing, reduce isolation, and strengthen community connections through music across the Wellington and Wiveliscombe Local Community Network (LCN).

At the midpoint of the project, outcomes are focused on engagement, insight gathering, and shaping a realistic and deliverable model of activity. This aligns with the original phased approach, where initial activity centred on scoping and engagement prior to delivery.

Key outcomes achieved to date include:

- Engagement with over 18 music groups across the LCN, including both instrumental and choral groups
- Connection with over 10 parishes through direct and indirect engagement
- Development of a comprehensive dataset mapping local music provision, group capacity, and opportunities
- Identification of key barriers to participation, including:
 - Confidence and awareness
 - Transport and rural access
 - Capacity limitations within volunteer-led groups

This engagement phase has provided a robust evidence base which has directly informed delivery planning.

Learning from this phase has demonstrated that:

- There is already strong and active music provision across the area
- Many groups are operating at or near capacity
- Large-scale collaborative performance activity requires longer lead-in time due to group capacity and scheduling cycles
- Barriers to participation are primarily related to access, awareness, and confidence rather than lack of provision

As a result, the project is being delivered in a way that reflects the findings from the engagement phase to ensure it remains realistic, inclusive, and aligned with community need.

This refinement is not a departure from the original objectives, but a delivery approach has been informed by engagement findings to ensure that the project continues to meet its core aims of improving wellbeing, reducing isolation, and increasing participation.

The project continues to deliver against the original outputs outlined in the application. Co-created sessions and workshops are being delivered as planned, with flexibility in format to ensure accessibility and participation. These may include standalone or one-off sessions, as well as activity delivered in partnership with existing groups.

This approach remains aligned with the original intention to deliver inclusive music activity across the community and also supports engagement with residents who may not typically participate in community activity.

At midpoint, the project is progressing in line with its original objectives, with delivery sequencing reflecting practical engagement findings rather than a change in scope

Output	Status	Comment
Recruit Facilitator	Complete	Facilitator in post since Jan
Engage with groups & residents	Complete	15+ groups, 10+ parishes engaged
Visit groups & encourage participation	Complete	Ongoing outreach delivered

Output	Status	Comment
Deliver co-created sessions & workshops	In progress	Sessions being delivered in line with original proposal (including standalone and partner-based delivery)
Shared repertoire (songs)	In progress	Introduced through engagement activity with participating groups
Original song creation	Not feasible within current timeframe	Requires longer-term coordination and rehearsal planning
Performances at events	In progress	Being explored in line with group capacity
Directory creation	In progress	Dataset complete, development underway
Documentation (photo/video)	In progress	Activity commenced

All outputs are either in progress or planned, with the exception of original song creation, which is not feasible within the current timeframe due to the level of coordination required.

2. Monitoring and Reporting (300-500 words)

(Refer to your Grant Offer Letter and consider the monitoring and reporting criteria stated on it. Please explain how you gathered the information as well the information gathered.)

Monitoring and reporting for Together in Tone has followed a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection, in line with best practice guidance shared through the SALC evaluation sessions.

Quantitative data collected:

- Number of groups engaged: 15
- Number of parishes connected with: Over 10

Qualitative data collected:

- Feedback from music groups regarding:
 - Capacity
 - Interest in collaboration
 - Barriers to participation
- Insights from parish councils and community stakeholders
- Observations/ communication from facilitator-led engagement

This reflects a process evaluation approach, focusing on:

- How the project is developing
- what is effective and where adjustments are required
- How context (rurality, volunteer capacity) is influencing delivery

The project has also followed a Plan–Do–Study–Act (PDSA) approach:

- Plan: Original concept of large-scale collaborative music activity
- Do: Engagement with local groups and parishes
- Study: Identification of barriers and limitations in delivery approach
- Act: Adaptation towards more accessible, community-led participation opportunities

This approach ensures the project remains responsive and evidence-led.

In response to the request for specific information, the project holds the following evidence:

- A live dataset of engaged groups, including contact details, group type, size, and activity (this is being added to on a regular basis).
- Records of parish engagement via email, phone and in-person contact
- Notes from facilitator-led meetings, rehearsals and events attended
- Social media outputs and engagement tracking
- Early-stage documentation of digital content development

This dataset is actively being developed and will form part of the final monitoring return.

This approach ensures that monitoring reflects both delivery progress and emerging community insight

3. Final Budget

(Provide a breakdown of how the grant was used. Consult your original grant application form and compare the estimated income and expenditure with the actual spend. Please add additional rows as required.)

Income:

Description	Amount
LCN Link Officer in kind approx - 20 hours	
Community Development Officer in kind - approx 20/25 hours	
Rebecca Hunt, Comms WTC	10 hours
Actiontrack Partnership and Mentoring plus use of studio and/or outside recording	£3,500
SALC Community Health & Wellbeing Grant	£10,000
Total:	£13,500

Expenditure (add rows as required)

Description	Amount	Spend to Date
Project Co-ordinator	£5000	£2000
Artist fees (workshops/perf.)	£2,250	0
Actiontrack Partnership and Mentoring plus use of studio and/or outside recording	£3,500	0
Digital content & documentation	£1000	0
Event materials & logistics	£1000	0
Marketing & Community Communications	£250	0
Refreshments / Volunteer support	£500	0
Total:	£13,500	£2000.

Budget explanation and elaboration:

(Please explain any changes from your original estimates, underspend or overspend or match funding that wasn't secured. Detail any 'in kind' provisions from your original budget)

At the “midpoint” (Co-ordinator has been in post since Jan) of the project, spend is broadly in line with expectations, with the majority of expenditure focused on:

- Project coordination and facilitator costs to carry out
 - Engagement and outreach activity
 - Initial planning and development

Following discussion at the LCN meeting, there was no objection to the proposed direction of travel. Spend is planned for the next quarter.

- 3 quotes for Videographer (Digital content & documentation)
- Delivery of Workshops (artist fees/ Marketing & Community Communications, Refreshments / Volunteer support)

4. Sustainability and Next Steps (max 200 words)

(Outline plans for sustaining, or building on, the project beyond the grant period. Please also explain if you plan to drop the project in the future or move the project in a different direction)

The next phase of Together in Tone will focus on:

- Delivering accessible participation opportunities
- Developing a local music directory to improve visibility of existing groups
- Producing digital content to promote engagement and legacy
- Exploring transport and rural access solutions, where feasible
- Delivering a final showcase aligned with project scope, which may combine performance and digital outputs

The project will continue to be shaped through:

- LCN feedback
- Stakeholder engagement
- Ongoing evaluation

There is also recognition that longer-term sustainability may require extended planning cycles, particularly within the arts sector, where groups typically plan activity well in advance.

5. Evidence and Supporting Documents

Please forward relevant documents such as photographs, videos, promotional materials, reports, photo consent forms and any other relevant material to the email address below. If you have large files or folders let us know and we will work with you to find a suitable way to share with us.

Summary of confirmed media coverage

Somerset Council – Newsroom (April 2026)

New community music project strikes a chord across Wellington and Wiveliscombe

- Confirms project funding through the SALC Community Health & Wellbeing Programme
- Highlights partnership delivery between Somerset Council (LCN), Wellington Town Council and Actiontrack
- Includes endorsement from the Lead Member for Public Health, positioning the project within preventative health and wellbeing priorities [\[somerset.gov.uk\]](https://www.somerset.gov.uk)

Wellington Weekly News (April 2026)

New project uses power of music to reduce rural isolation and improve wellbeing

- Focuses on rural isolation and accessibility
- Emphasises music as a tool for improving mental wellbeing and social connection
- Reinforces relevance to dispersed communities across the LCN area

[\[wellington...oday.co.uk\]](#)

Around Wellington – Community Media (April 2026)

Community music project strikes a chord

- Describes Together in Tone as a community-led, inclusive initiative
- Highlights participation and connection between local music groups
- Includes quotes from Somerset Council and Wellington Town Council officers, supporting credibility and partnership working [\[aroundwell...gton.co.uk\]](#)

Wellington Weekly News – Pre-launch coverage (November 2025)

New initiative announced seeking to bring community together through music

- Early public announcement of the project concept and aims
- Sets out intentions around cross-parish collaboration, skill-building, and long-term cultural legacy
- Demonstrates early transparency and community engagement ahead of delivery

[\[wellington...oday.co.uk\]](#)

Wellington Town Council – Official Project Page

Together in Tone

- Live public project webpage outlining aims, partners, funding, and opportunities to get involved
- Acts as the central reference point supporting all external media coverage
- Provides clear public accountability and information for residents and partners

[\[wellington...ncil.co.uk\]](#)

Key themes evidenced across media coverage

- Music as a preventative wellbeing tool
- Reduction of social and rural isolation
- Accessible and inclusive participation
- Strong partnership working across councils and community organisations
- Celebration of local talent and community identity

Facebook WTC:

23 March 2026

Wellington Choral Society

15 April 2026

Caz Besterman contact

21 April 2026

Skintight Samba

28 April 2026

Examples of Facebook Posts

Wellington Town Council
April 13 at 3:02 PM · 🌐

Do you play a wind instrument or percussion?
Join in with The Big Blow at Wellington School on Saturday 18th April.
More info via the event link below!
[#TogetherInTone](#)



The Big Blow!
Saturday 18th April 2026
Wellington School
South St
Wellington TA21 8NT
£10 for Wind Band Association member
£20 for non-members

Sat, Apr 18
The Big Blow - Tiverton
Wellington
6 people went

☆ Interested

Wellington Town Council
2h · 🌐

As part of our [#TogetherInTone](#) initiative, we will be highlighting our local music groups. This month we are looking at [Skintight Samba!](#)

Skintight Samba are a large community samba band based in Wellington. If you have ever been to a street market in town you may well have heard their funky beats! The group meets to practice every Tuesday between 7pm and 9pm and are always ready to welcome new members.

Skintight Samba perform throughout the county and their most recent performance was at Wellington Independent Market on 4th April. They will be at events throughout the summer so check out their social media pages to stay up to date.

Together in Tone is funded by [SALC - Community Health & Wellbeing](#).



Wellington Town Council
20h · 🌐

As part of our [#TogetherInTone](#) project we will be sharing how music benefits our health and wellbeing.

Becoming part of a community music group is great for socialisation and can help you meet new people of all ages and backgrounds. The friendships formed within music groups can even go beyond practice, with bandmates keeping touch long after they stop making music together.

If you would like to learn more about Together in Tone, please follow this link: http://www.wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk/comm_/together-tone

Together in Tone is funded by [SALC - Community Health & Wellbeing](#)



THE BENEFITS OF MUSIC	PART 2: SOCIALISING
<p>When you play a wind instrument or percussion, you are able to do things you wouldn't be able to do as an individual. This forms a strong bond between bandmates.</p> <p>When you join a band or choir you are able to do things you wouldn't be able to do as an individual. This forms a strong bond between bandmates.</p>	<p>When you join a band or choir you are able to do things you wouldn't be able to do as an individual. This forms a strong bond between bandmates.</p> <p>Community music groups have members of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. Click here to learn more</p>

Wellington Town Council Community Committee Reporting:

[Community Committee - Wellington Town Council](#)

Wellington & Wiveliscombe LCN meetings:
Notes attached October 2025, January 2026

Declaration

I confirm that the information provided is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: _____

Name: _____ Laura Batcha _____

Date: _____ 29.04.2026 _____

Please return this form, or direct any questions to:

Lilly Keeley Watts

Community Health & Wellbeing Support Officer Somerset Association of Local Councils

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Cradle to Career Accelerator 2026

Wellington – “Action for Opportunity”

Cradle to Career Partner Details

Trust / Organisation:

BEP (Court Fields)

Cluster Name:

Wellington

1. Impact of Wellington’s Cradle to Career Model

Wellington’s Cradle to Career (C2C) model, *Action for Opportunity*, has established strong foundations for a connected, place-based system supporting children, young people and families from early childhood through to adulthood.

Since Spring 2024, and through partnership with the Reach Foundation, the network has moved from shared intent to demonstrable impact across:

- education
- family engagement
- local system coherence

The work has focused on:

- earlier identification of need
- coherent pathways of support
- stronger relational bridges between families, schools and services
- integrated local infrastructure enabling sustained follow-through

Kings Arms Community Hub

A central feature of this work has been the opening of the Kings Arms Community Hub.

The Hub functions as:

- a trusted
- non-stigmatised
- accessible entry point into support

Developed through extensive community consultation and embedded within Wellington Town Council’s Community Development Plan, the Hub acts as an operational base for early intervention.

The Hub currently hosts:

- early years provision
- youth activity
- wellbeing services
- multi-agency support

This enables families to engage earlier and more informally than through traditional statutory routes.

Early case study evidence demonstrates:

- reduced anxiety
- increased parental confidence
- improved engagement with specialist services

Educational Coherence

Within education, cross-phase coherence has strengthened significantly.

Court Fields School has led the development of multi-agency Primary Inclusion Meetings, improving earlier identification of need, particularly around SEND.

These meetings now include:

- early years providers
- primary schools

This strengthens transitions into statutory education.

Enhanced:

- universal pathways
- SEN pathways
- Transition+ pathways

have contributed towards improved:

- readiness
- behaviour
- attendance

as pupils move from Key Stage 2 into Key Stage 3.

The C2C model has also provided an ethical and sustainable framework for school development at Court Fields.

Reading Town

Reading has emerged as a unifying educational and community priority.

A whole-school reading strategy delivered through:

- tutor reading
- SPARX Reader
- disciplinary literacy

has generated measurable gains, including reading interventions averaging more than two years' progress over six months.

This work is now extending beyond school through the development of a wider "Reading Town" approach, helping create coherence between:

- home
- school
- community spaces

Local System Coherence

At a system level, a multi-agency Steering Group and regular Community Breakfasts have established durable partnership infrastructure.

These forums support:

- shared insight
- collaborative problem-solving
- aligned decision-making

across:

- education
- health
- local government
- voluntary sector organisations

The Wellington Cradle to Career Conference in February 2026 represented a significant milestone.

Through Ed Vainker's keynote, the partnership publicly aligned around Reach Foundation's core conditions for success:

- coherent education

- consistent relationships
- connected local systems

The conference reinforced a shared understanding that inequality is often driven by systemic fragmentation rather than isolated service failure, and that long-term impact requires civic, place-based solutions.

Wellington is now moving intentionally from partnership-based activity towards a coordinated local system where:

- early identification
- timely intervention
- connected support

work together more effectively.

This work is increasingly shaped through:

- agreed milestones for success
- an emerging Theory of Change
- shared cradle-to-career outcomes

ensuring activity is aligned rather than operating as disconnected initiatives.

2. Potential for Deeper Impact Across the Cradle to Career Pipeline

Opportunities for Increased Impact

Wellington is well positioned to deepen its Cradle to Career impact due to:

- strong leadership
- mature partnerships
- established community infrastructure

The model aligns closely with:

- Wellington Town Council's Community Development Plan
- the Best Start in Life Family Hub pilot
- local early intervention priorities

A committed cluster of schools now spans:

- early years
- primary
- secondary education

with Court Fields providing system leadership alongside supportive education partners.

Emerging relationships with:

- Taunton College
- Richard Huish College

also strengthen opportunities for a coherent 0–21 pathway.

Strong Partnership Environment

Cross-sector relationships are a key strength.

Strong working links now exist between:

- early years providers
- health visiting
- primary care
- One Team
- PSFA services
- youth services
- libraries
- voluntary organisations

These relationships support:

- shared understanding of need
- coordinated responses
- stronger local pathways

Reading Town & Mobile Phone Project

The Reading Town strand provides a powerful mechanism for whole-system coherence.

Reading offers:

- an inclusive entry point
- family engagement opportunities
- literacy development
- improved wellbeing outcomes

Similarly, the Wellington Mobile Phone Project aligns with:

- emerging national policy
- international research
- growing concerns around smartphone use

The project aims to support both:

- families
- organisations

through education, engagement and prevention-based approaches.

Potential Barriers to Further Impact

System Fragmentation

Families can still encounter multiple disconnected access points rather than a single coordinated pathway into support.

Early years providers, health visitors and community organisations often identify need early, but referral routes are not yet consistently joined up.

Data and Shared Insight

Organisations currently hold valuable qualitative and quantitative information independently, but there is no shared local system bringing this together effectively.

Additional capacity around data and impact would strengthen:

- tracking
- evaluation
- place-based decision making

Infrastructure Challenges

Wellington is a rapidly changing town, with increasing pressure on:

- GP services
- dentistry
- wider infrastructure

Access to wider Somerset Council services is also impacted by ongoing financial pressures.

Capacity and Sustainability

Since 2024, significant progress has been achieved through relationship-building and network development.

Accelerator funding would provide additional:

- staffing capacity
- implementation support
- sustainability

allowing the work to move from coordination into deeper long-term impact.

3. Leadership Capacity

Core Leadership Group

The Wellington Cradle to Career model is led through a multi-agency leadership group representing:

- education
- early years
- local government
- health
- community provision

Core leaders include:

- Adam Sturt
- Andrew Govier
- Claire Joyce
- Dave Farrow
- Emma Clements
- Laura Batcha
- Peter Joint
- Polly Matthews
- Sarah Westwood
- Zoe Buffkin

The Steering Group is supported by strand leads across:

- Early Years

- Employability
- Reading Town
- Mobile Phones
- Family Support

Leadership Approach

Leadership in Wellington is intentionally:

- collaborative
- distributed
- place-based

The C2C network is centred on the town rather than a single institution.

Regular:

- Steering Groups
- Community Breakfasts
- wider leadership meetings

help build:

- trust
- shared understanding
- aligned decision making

Leadership has increasingly shifted from:

“heroic leadership”

towards:

“civic stewardship”

with leaders focusing on building the long-term infrastructure of opportunity rather than delivering all solutions themselves.

4. Timing

Five-Year Vision

Over the next five years, Wellington aims to establish a coordinated Cradle to Career system where children, young people and families experience:

- clear

- consistent
- accessible pathways of support

from birth through to employment.

The five interconnected strands focus on:

- Early Years
- Employability
- Reading Town
- Mobile Phones
- Family Support

Progress will be measured against:

- developmental milestones
- agreed outcomes
- system-wide indicators

Why This Is the Right Time

Wellington has already established:

- strong partnerships
- community trust
- the Kings Arms Community Hub as a recognised coordination point

The Best Start in Life pilot further strengthens Wellington's credibility as a place-based early intervention model.

Accelerator support would now allow Wellington to:

- deepen implementation
- improve coherence
- evidence long-term impact
- strengthen sustainability

The programme would support Wellington in moving from:

- effective collaboration

towards:

- embedded local infrastructure of opportunity.



Title	Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) – Room Hire Extension Request
Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	18.05.26
Action Required	Approval to extend room hire provision at no cost for DWP outreach delivery at Kings Arms Community Hub until the end of the financial year
Report Author and email address	Laura Batcha – Community Development Officer laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

This report seeks approval to extend the current arrangement allowing the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to deliver outreach provision from the Kings Arms Community Hub (KACH) at no cost.

The request is based on demonstrated outcomes, including employment success and improved wellbeing for residents accessing the service locally.

This request reflects a shift towards locally delivered, preventative services that improve outcomes while reducing demand on centralised provision.

2. Background

DWP outreach sessions have been delivered from the Kings Arms Community Hub as part of a community-based approach to employment support.

This model enables residents to access Jobcentre services within Wellington, rather than travelling to Taunton, improving accessibility and engagement.

The outreach has particularly supported individuals who:

- Experience anxiety or barriers to attending traditional Jobcentre settings
- Require a more flexible, person-centred approach

- May otherwise disengage from employment support

Recent reporting from DWP demonstrates both employment and wellbeing outcomes:

Employment Outcomes:

- 10 residents have been supported into work
- This reflects consistent, tailored support delivered through outreach sessions, strong engagement from work coaches, and effective links to local employment opportunities

Wellbeing Outcomes:

- At least 5 residents with significant barriers have shown noticeable improvements in confidence and engagement
- These individuals initially presented with low mood, anxiety, and difficulty attending appointments
- Following outreach engagement, they have:
 - Re-engaged with support services
 - Demonstrated increased confidence
 - Begun taking steps toward employment or improved daily functioning

This highlights the value of delivering support within a familiar and accessible community setting, enabling engagement from individuals who may not access traditional services.

3.Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

This approach supports the Council's vision to create an inclusive, safe and supportive community by:

- Improving access to services for vulnerable residents
- Supporting individuals into employment and improved wellbeing
- Reducing social and economic barriers to engagement
- Enabling preventative, community-based support

The delivery of services within a local, accessible setting contributes to early intervention and reduces pressure on statutory services.

4.Financial Implications

The proposal is to continue providing room hire at no cost to DWP for outreach delivery.

While this represents a loss of potential hire income, the arrangement provides wider value through:

- Direct employment outcomes for residents
- Increased engagement from individuals who may otherwise not access support
- Delivery of services within the community, reducing reliance on external provision

This is considered a strategic use of the Hub, where the social and economic value generated through employment outcomes and improved wellbeing outweighs the notional loss of hire income.

If the committee were to retain funds from allocated budgets to approve this request the recommendation would be to utilise the Community Development Budget.

Committee previously agreed to subsidise room hire costs until the end of June 2026. Approval is therefore requested for continued subsidised use of the Hub from July 2026 until 31 March 2027. Based on the current arrangement, the estimated value of the subsidy is approximately £1,080.

5.Risks

- If the arrangement is not extended:
 - Outreach provision may reduce or cease locally
 - Residents may need to travel to Taunton, creating barriers to access
 - Individuals at risk of disengagement may not receive support
- If extended:
 - Continued demand may increase pressure on space within the Hub (to be managed operationally)

6.Considerations

Members are asked to:

1. Approve the extension of room hire provision at no cost for DWP outreach at the Kings Arms Community Hub until the end of the financial year

7. Appendices

- A. Outreach overview – attached

Wellington Outreach Monthly Overview

The Wellington Outreach initiative continues to demonstrate strong and meaningful progress, supporting customers into work and improving wellbeing outcomes for some of our most vulnerable individuals. Over the recent period, the team has delivered impactful, person-centred support that is translating into both employment successes and significant improvements in confidence and engagement.

Key Achievements

1. Employment Outcomes

We were really pleased that the outreach has directly contributed to 10 customers successfully moving into work.

This achievement reflects:

- Consistent, tailored support provided during outreach sessions
- Strong engagement from work coaches
- Effective links with local employers and opportunities
- Improved customer motivation and readiness for employment

These results highlight the value of bringing Jobcentre support into the community, ensuring individuals who may not engage with standard office-based services still receive the help they need.

2. Wellbeing Improvements

In addition to employment outcomes, the outreach has been instrumental in supporting customers who are facing significant personal challenges.

At least **5 customers** who engaged with our Disability Employment Advisors (DEAs) have shown noticeable improvements in outlook and confidence. These customers arrived:

- Extremely low in mood
- Struggling with anxiety
- Finding it difficult to attend appointments or engage consistently

After meeting with DEAs through outreach sessions, these individuals have:

- Returned to appointments more positive and willing to engage
- Demonstrated improved confidence in discussing their barriers
- Begun taking small, achievable steps toward employment or improved daily functioning

This shift highlights the importance of the DEAs' empathetic, specialist approach, and the value of meeting customers in a familiar and supportive community setting.

Planning for a Wellington Jobs Fair

As part of our ongoing commitment to strengthen local employment opportunities and increase community engagement, we are in the early stages of planning a Wellington Jobs Fair.

The aim of the event is to:

- Bring a wide range of employers directly into the heart of the community
- Showcase local vacancies across multiple sectors
- Provide an accessible space for customers who may find travelling to Taunton challenging
- Strengthen employer relationships and highlight Wellington as an active, job-ready community

Initial plans include:

- Identifying a suitable local venue with good accessibility
- Engaging employers who have current and upcoming vacancies
- Coordinating with partners such as training providers, wellbeing support organisations, and community groups
- Promoting the event through outreach sessions, the Jobcentre, and wider community networks

A Wellington Jobs Fair will complement the success of the outreach programme and further reinforce our commitment to making employment support as accessible and community-focused as possible.

Impact on the Community

The continued success of the Wellington Outreach is reinforcing:

- Stronger trust between the Jobcentre and the local community
- Increased visibility of support
- Better access for individuals who feel uncomfortable or unable to access the main Jobcentre building
- A positive reputation as a safe, supportive environment

The outcomes to date show that outreach work is not just beneficial—it is essential for reaching those who otherwise risk becoming disengaged or lost to the system.

Conclusion

The Wellington Outreach initiative is performing exceptionally well.

With 10 job outcomes and at least 5 individuals showing significant wellbeing improvements, the outreach is proving its value both in measurable results and in transforming lives.

The planning of a jobs fair in Wellington will build on this momentum and further enhance employment opportunities within the community.

Continued investment in this approach will ensure even more customers receive the personalised, accessible support they need to thrive.



Title	Cradle to Career (C2C) – Funding Request for Delivery and Partnership Investment
Meeting	Community Committee
Date of meeting	18.05.06
Action Required	To approve allocation of C2C funding to support delivery across key strands and strategic partnership investment
Report Author and email address	Laura Batcha Laura@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

1. Introduction

This report sets out a proposed allocation of remaining Cradle to Career (C2C) funding to support delivery across priority strands and enable access to external investment opportunities.

Since the previous committee, further work has been undertaken to clarify delivery plans across strands and align activity into a more coordinated programme.

2. Background

At the previous committee, members approved an initial allocation of £14,300 from the C2C budget.

Since this point:

- Delivery plans have been developed across key strands
- An Accelerator Fund application has been submitted (shared with members)

This has provided greater clarity on how the remaining funding can be utilised to deliver outcomes across Wellington.

3. Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

An inclusive, safe and secure town

Where everybody is supportive of each other and offers particular care for more vulnerable members of the community.

Possible links may include:

- Safeguarding
- Community wellbeing
- Inclusion and accessibility
- Early intervention and support
- Youth engagement
- Partnership working
- Support for vulnerable residents

A town with a diverse, thriving and resilient local economy

Possible links may include:

- Skills and employment

The proposed investment supports the Council's vision by:

- Improving outcomes for children, young people, and families
- Supporting access to education, employment, and wellbeing
- Enabling early intervention and preventative approaches
- Strengthening partnership working across the town

The coordinated delivery model supports long-term reduction in demand on statutory services by addressing needs earlier.

4. Financial Implications

The following allocations are proposed:

Delivery Investment

- **£7,500 – Mobile Phone Pouches (Digital Wellbeing Strand)**
Supporting schools to implement mobile phone-free environments, aligned with engagement

- **£7,000 – Family Support Strand**
Supporting early intervention and family-based provision aligned with Best Start in Life

Partnership Investment

- **£4,000 – Reach Foundation (Historic Commitment)**
Previously agreed contribution to support partnership working. Note we have £2,500 – C2C SALC Funding. Recommendation this goes towards the historic spend request of Reach Partnership costs. **Total left to request £1,500**
- **£4,000 – Reach Foundation Accelerator Partnership (3-year access)**
Enables access to the Accelerator Fund, providing potential to secure up to £300,000 over three years
- emerging national policy direction
- **£7,000 – Reading Town Strand**
Supporting delivery of a town-wide reading programme to improve literacy and

Total Requested: £27,000

This funding enables both:

- Delivery across all key strands
- Strategic positioning to secure significant external investment

5.Risks

If funding is not approved:

- Delivery across key strands may be delayed or reduced
- Opportunities to improve outcomes for children and families may be missed
- The C2C Partnership may not be able to access Accelerator funding

If approved:

- Delivery must be coordinated effectively across strands (ongoing work)
- Monitoring and reporting must be strengthened to evidence impact

6.Considerations

Members are asked to:

- Approve the allocation £7,500 – Mobile Phone Pouches (Digital Wellbeing Strand) from the C2C Budget
- Approve the allocation £7,000 – Family Support Strand from the C2C Budget
- Approve the allocation of £1,500 – Reach Foundation (Historic Commitment) from the C2C Budget
- Approve the allocation of £4,000 – Reach Foundation Accelerator Partnership (3-year access) from the C2C Budget
- Approve the allocation of £7,000 – Reading Town Strand from the C2C budget.

7. Appendices

- A Cradle to Career Accelerator Application (previously circulated)
- B Strand Delivery Plans Family Support and Reading Strand
- C Strand Delivery Plans Family Reading Strand
- D Mobile Phone Pouch Paper

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Trust / Organisation:

BEP (Court Fields)

Cluster Name:

Wellington

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across:

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- mature partnerships
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The model aligns closely with:

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- the Best Start in Life Family Hub pilot
- local early intervention priorities

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also strengthen opportunities for a coherent 0–21 pathway.

Strong Partnership Environment

Cross-sector relationships are a key strength.

Strong working links now exist between:

- early years providers
- health visiting
- primary care
- One Team
- PSFA services
- youth services
- libraries
- voluntary organisations

These relationships support:

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- coordinated responses
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Reading Town & Mobile Phone Project

The Reading Town strand provides a powerful mechanism for whole-system coherence.

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Capacity and Sustainability

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Accelerator funding would provide additional:

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3. Leadership Capacity

Core Leadership Group

The Wellington Cradle to Career model is led through a multi-agency leadership group representing:

- education
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Core leaders include:

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- Dave Farrow
- Emma Clements
- Laura Batcha
- Peter Joint
- Polly Matthews
- Sarah Westwood
- Zoe Buffkin

The Steering Group is supported by strand leads across:

- Early Years

- Employability
- Reading Town
- Mobile Phones
- Family Support

Leadership Approach

Leadership in Wellington is intentionally:

- collaborative
- distributed
- place-based

The C2C network is centred on the town rather than a single institution.

Regular:

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- wider leadership meetings

help build:

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towards:

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4. Timing

Five-Year Vision

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from birth through to employment.

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Accelerator support would now allow Wellington to:

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- strengthen sustainability

The programme would support Wellington in moving from:

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towards:

- embedded local infrastructure of opportunity.



Cradle to Career – Strand Delivery Plan (2026-27)

Purpose: This template is to be completed by Cradle to Career strand leads to capture delivery activity in a consistent way. Information provided will be used to inform the Wellington Community Development Plan (CDP), committee reporting, and future budgeting decisions.

1. Strand Overview

Strand name: Family Support (Relationships Coherence)

Strand lead (name, role, organisation): Peter Joint, WTC & Andrew Govier, Somerset Council

Key partners involved in this strand: Early Years providers, Health Visiting Service, Somerset Council (including SEND services), Kings Arms Community Hub, voluntary and community sector organisations, Parent and Carer Forums.

12-month ambition: To design and implement a joined-up Family Support pathway aligned to the Best Start in Life model, strengthening early identification, improving parent participation, and coordinating universal and targeted support so that children and families receive help at the earliest possible opportunity.

2. Strategic Context and Rationale

The Family Support strand is grounded in the Wellington Cradle to Career 5-Year Plan and focuses on improving early childhood outcomes by strengthening coordination between education, health, and community-based support. Year 1 delivery prioritises early intervention, addressing health and educational inequalities, and establishing sustainable mechanisms for collaboration and parent voice.

3. Year 1 Priorities (Aligned to 5-Year Plan)

- Develop a clear Family Support pathway showing how children, young people, and families can access support at the earliest opportunity.
- Embed the Best Start in Life model to support early identification of children with additional educational and health needs.
- Strengthen joint working between Early Years providers and Health Visitors to reduce health inequalities and improve developmental outcomes.
- Establish parent participation groups to shape Family Support provision and improve engagement, particularly in hard-to-reach communities.
- Use Kings Arms Community Hub as a focal point for delivering and promoting Family Support services.

4. 12-Month Delivery Plan (2026–27)

Priority Area	Key Activities	Lead / Partners	Timescale
Family Support Pathway	Map existing services; co-design a clear, accessible Family Support pathway with partners and parents; align with Early Years strand.	C2C Family Support Lead; Somerset Council; Early Years providers; Parent Forums	Q1–Q2
Best Start in Life Implementation	Agree shared identification and referral processes; promote recommended Best Start in Life programmes to families.	Health Visiting Service; Early Years	Q1–Q3

		providers; C2C partners	
Joint Working (Health & Education)	Establish regular meetings between Early Years settings and linked Health Visitors; share data and intelligence where appropriate.	Health Visiting Service; Early Years providers	Q1–Q4
Parent Participation and Engagement	Set up parent and carer participation groups; engage hard-to-reach communities; test communication approaches.	C2C partners; VCS organisations; Parent Forums	Q2–Q4
Community Hub Delivery	Use Kings Arms Community Hub to host and promote Family Support services and early intervention activities.	Kings Arms Community Hub; Service providers	Q2–Q4

5. Expected Outcomes and Measures

- Improved Good Level of Development for children in pre-school and Reception.
- Earlier identification and support for children with additional needs and their families.
- Improved joint working between Early Years providers and Health Visitors.
- Increased engagement of parents and carers in shaping Family Support services.
- Increased use of Kings Arms Community Hub for early intervention and family support.

6. Governance, Reporting and Review

Progress against the delivery plan will be reviewed quarterly through the Wellington Cradle to Career partnership. Delivery updates and learning will inform committee reporting, the Community Development Plan, and future commissioning and budgeting decisions.



Cradle to Career – Strand Delivery Plan (2026-27)

Purpose: This template is to be completed by Cradle to Career strand leads to capture delivery activity in a consistent way. Information provided will be used to inform the Wellington Community Development Plan (CDP), committee reporting, and future budgeting decisions.

1. Strand Overview

- **Strand name: Educational Coherence (Wellington Reading Town)**
- Strand lead (name, role, organisation):
Katy Chick, Library Outreach Officer, Somerset Council - Libraries
- Key partners involved in this strand:
 - Ruth Weston, Read Lead, Court Fields School
 - Daisy Paton, Library & Information Officer, Somerset Council – Libraries
 - James Denslow, Library Supervisor, Somerset Council – Libraries
 - Wellington Town Council
 - Kings Arms Community Hub
 - Somerset Skills & Learning
 - In The Mix
 - Local schools (primary + secondary)
 - Community organisations (e.g. Transition Town, bookshop)
- 12-month ambition: to establish Wellington as a ‘Reading Town’ with a consistent town-wide reading programme that strengthens educational coherence, engaging children, families and residents through regular sessions, targeted outreach and a flagship “reading week” to build habits and visibility.
- Primary Cradle to Career outcomes this strand contributes to:
Improved literacy engagement
Increased family engagement
Early support and readiness for education
Community cohesion and wellbeing

2. Rationale & Need

What need is this strand responding to?

- Current provision is fragmented across education, library and community
- Engagement with families is inconsistent and often limited to school-based activity
- There is demand for accessible, informal literacy opportunities
- Opportunity to use existing activity (e.g. Summer Reading Challenge) and strengthen with a community-led approach

Add to that there has been a significant decline in reading for pleasure in children, young people and adults. The National Literacy Trust 2025 report found that –

- Only 1 in 3 children between 8-18 say they enjoy reading.
- Only 1 in 5 children say they read something daily in their free time
- Only 18.7% of 8 – 18 year olds and 44.5% of 5 – 8 year olds read daily

Also:

Only 53% of adults read regularly

40% of adults say they haven't read a book in over a year.

Why is this activity important in Wellington?

- Wellington faces a combination of educational, social, and community-level challenges that make a Reading Town initiative an essential project. The evidence shows the importance of promoting reading for pleasure to help improve educational outcomes and strengthen community learning culture.
- The figures from The National Literacy Trust show disengagement from reading that directly impacts language development, school performance, mental wellbeing and future opportunities. Wellington Library and the Cradle to Career team are taking action to reverse the decline by making reading resources more visible, more accessible, and more community-embedded.

Wellington needs to be a Reading Town because:

- Literacy and reading outcomes nationwide are falling, and local children are part of this trend.
- Wellington is in an area that contains pockets of significant deprivation. Research consistently shows that higher levels of deprivation are closely associated with lower literacy skills and reduced access to reading opportunities.
- Somerset families face barriers to services and cultural opportunities, making community-based reading initiatives essential.
- Wellington has the infrastructure and strong community partnerships to make a Reading Town successful.
- Becoming a Reading Town supports key Cradle to Career outcomes, improves life chances, and strengthens community cohesion.

3. Planned Activities (Next 12 Months)

- Monthly reading engagement sessions (library, park, Kings Arms)
- Summer Reading Challenge (enhanced with C2C layer)
- Quarterly author / engagement events
- Family-based literacy and creative activities (linked to SS&L provision)
- Pilot outdoor / creative reading experiences (e.g. story walks, park sessions)
- Continued consultation to shape Reading Town direction
- Exploration of Reading Town event (long-term planning)

4. Delivery Responsibilities

- Library team → lead delivery of core programme
- Town Council → funding support, integration with wider C2C
- Partners → delivery support (SS&L, In The Mix, schools)
- Volunteers → support delivery of sessions

5. Outputs & Outcomes

Outputs:

- Minimum 12 sessions delivered annually
- 3–4 larger engagement events
- Participation from families and young people
- Engagement across multiple community locations

Outcomes:

- Increased engagement with reading
- Improved family participation in learning activities

- Stronger community awareness of literacy opportunities
- Improved connection between services

6. Data, Monitoring & Evidence

- Attendance tracking (sessions + events)
- Feedback from families
- Ongoing consultation responses
- Case studies (qualitative impact)
- Partner feedback

7. Budget & Resourcing

Reading Town – Proposed Year 1 Budget

Total recommended budget request: £7,000

This budget will support a modest, deliverable first year of Reading Town activity. The focus is on establishing regular community-based literacy engagement, testing what works, and building evidence before scaling the programme in future years.

Budget Area	Proposed Allocation	Rationale
Author / facilitator sessions	£1,500	To fund up to four author, storyteller or facilitator-led sessions across the year, based on an estimated day rate of around £300 plus contingency.
Monthly engagement delivery	£1,200	To support 12 monthly reading engagement activities across locations such as the library, Kings Arms Community Hub, parks and other community spaces. This may include books, craft resources, puppets, instruments, outdoor story materials and activity supplies.
Communications and promotion	£1,000	To promote Reading Town activities consistently through posters, flyers, social media graphics, website updates and simple branding. This will help improve visibility and encourage family participation.
Loyalty / reward scheme	£500	To support a stamp-card style participation scheme, including printing, small prizes and occasional prize draws. Local business donations will also be explored to extend the value of this budget.
Venue hire and refreshments	£1,000	To cover venue-related costs and light refreshments for sessions where required. Refreshments will help create a welcoming environment and support informal family engagement.
Visible reading asset / pilot reading space	£1,800	To test one visible “Reading Town” feature, such as a reading bench, small reading zone, signage, mural or outdoor literacy space. This will provide a tangible public-facing outcome and help raise awareness of the programme.
Total	£7,000	

Summary

The proposed budget provides a practical first-year foundation for Reading Town. It avoids overcommitting to a large-scale festival before the programme is fully developed, while still delivering visible activity, family engagement, author-led inspiration, community promotion and a small public-facing reading asset.

This approach allows the strand to build momentum, gather feedback, strengthen partnerships and shape a more ambitious Reading Town offer in future years.

SUMMARY TABLE

Area	Budget
Author sessions	£1,500
Monthly delivery	£1,200
Comms & promotion	£1,000
Rewards scheme	£500
Venue & refreshments	£1,000
Visible reading asset	£1,800
TOTAL	£7000

8. Dependencies & Risks

Key dependencies (e.g. staffing, venues, funding):

- Limited staff capacity (library + partners)
- Over-ambition (festival delivery too early)
- Engagement challenges with families

Mitigation:

- Start with manageable monthly programme
- Build gradually based on demand
- Use partnerships to share delivery

9. Alignment & Integration

- Links to Best Start in Life (early years)
- Links to youth provision (In The Mix)
- Links to wider community activity (Kings Arms)
- Supports Cradle to Career literacy outcomes

10. Forward Look

- Continue consultation to shape Reading Town model
- Develop partnership group / steering support
- Explore Reading Town event (Year 2–3)
- Align with wider town events (e.g. Wellington Day)

Appendix A – Cradle to Career Mobile Phones Strand Background and Rationale for Mobile Phone Pouches

1. Background

Mobile phone use has been identified locally as a significant and growing issue impacting wellbeing, sleep, behaviour, concentration and learning outcomes for children and young people within Wellington.

As part of Wellington's Cradle to Career (C2C) programme, the Mobile Phones Strand has been developed to support digital wellbeing, healthier routines, improved relationships and stronger boundaries around smartphone use across schools, families and the wider community.

This work aligns with both Wellington's local Cradle to Career priorities and emerging national policy direction linked to the proposed Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill.

2. Local Evidence and Concerns

Evidence gathered locally through school surveys and stakeholder engagement has highlighted:

- very high levels of smartphone ownership
- heavy daily usage among young people
- significant late-night phone use
- concerns around sleep deprivation
- increased anxiety and reduced concentration
- exposure to online risks including cyberbullying and harmful content

Partners across Wellington's Cradle to Career network have identified mobile phone use as an issue affecting educational engagement, emotional wellbeing, peer relationships and readiness to learn.

3. Cradle to Career Mobile Phones Strand

The Mobile Phones Strand forms part of Wellington's wider Cradle to Career approach and includes both a 12-month delivery plan and a longer-term 5-year strategic approach.

Key aims include:

- improving digital wellbeing
- supporting healthier relationships with technology

- strengthening consistency between schools, families and professionals
- improving focus, wellbeing and social interaction
- creating shared community expectations around smartphone use

The introduction of mobile phone pouches represents one practical intervention within this wider strand.

4. Proposed Use of Mobile Phone Pouches

Court Fields School is proposing the introduction of secure mobile phone pouches which students lock at the start of the school day and unlock at the end.

The proposed system would:

- remove phones from lessons, corridors and social spaces during the school day
- reduce disruption and distraction
- improve consistency in implementation
- reduce conflict around phone enforcement
- support face-to-face interaction and engagement
- maintain safeguarding and emergency access through controlled unlocking systems

The approach is intended to be relationship-led, preventative and supportive rather than punitive, in line with Wellington's wider Cradle to Career principles.

5. National Context and Emerging Policy Direction

Nationally, there is increasing focus on the impact of smartphone use on children and young people's wellbeing, attention, sleep, social development and educational outcomes.

The proposed Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill signals increasing expectations around schools formally restricting mobile phone use during the school day.

Schools nationally that have implemented secure mobile phone pouch systems have reported:

- calmer school environments
- improved concentration
- reduced disruption
- improved attendance and punctuality
- reduced conflict around enforcement

- stronger social interaction between students

6. Evidence from Schools Using Mobile Phone Pouches

Experience from secondary schools nationally that have introduced secure mobile phone pouch systems demonstrates a range of reported positive outcomes.

- **Improved behaviour and reduced disruption:** Schools report calmer corridors, fewer lesson interruptions and a reduction in low-level behavioural incidents linked to phone use.
- **Improved mental health and wellbeing:** Students report reduced anxiety, improved concentration and stronger face-to-face social interaction when phones are removed from constant access during the school day.
- **Reduced internal truancy and corridor roaming:** Removing phones reduces opportunities for lesson avoidance behaviours, messaging during lessons and unsupervised movement around school buildings.
- **Improved attendance and punctuality:** Clear and consistent systems reduce disputes and delays linked to mobile phone checks or confiscation at lesson start times.
- **Improved staff confidence and consistency:** Staff report reduced conflict and greater consistency in implementation when responsibility shifts from individual enforcement to a transparent whole-school system.

Evidence from other schools also suggests that pouch systems are most effective when introduced alongside:

- clear communication with families
- wellbeing education
- consistent expectations
- relationship-led implementation approaches

This aligns closely with Wellington's wider Cradle to Career principles.

7. Risks and Considerations if Funding Is Not Approved

If funding is not approved, there is a risk that:

- implementation of a consistent school-day mobile phone restriction system may be delayed or reduced in scope
- inconsistency in enforcement approaches may continue
- opportunities to strengthen digital wellbeing and concentration may be limited

- a key practical delivery mechanism within the Cradle to Career Mobile Phones Strand may not progress at the intended pace

Court Fields School has also highlighted that, although national policy direction is increasingly moving towards formal school-day restrictions on mobile phone use, schools are not currently being provided with dedicated central government funding to support implementation.

As a result, introducing a consistent and effective pouch system would place significant financial pressure on the school without external support.

Given the growing evidence base around the positive impact of secure pouch systems, the school considers the intervention sufficiently important to seek implementation at the earliest possible opportunity.

8. Strategic Fit with Wellington Town Council Priorities

The proposal supports Wellington Town Council priorities by:

- improving children and young people's wellbeing
- supporting positive educational environments
- reducing risk factors linked to anxiety and online harm
- strengthening early intervention approaches
- supporting long-term resilience and life chances

The proposal also aligns with the Council's wider preventative and community-focused approach through Cradle to Career.

9. Supporting Documents

- Cradle to Career Mobile Phones Strand Delivery Plan
- Cradle to Career Mobile Phones 5-Year Plan
- Accelerator Application Documentation