

**MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 6.00 PM**

Present: Councillor M McGuffie (Chairman)
Councillors C Booth, C Govier, M Lithgow and S Pringle-
Kosikowsky and K Wheatley

In attendance: David Farrow (Town Clerk)
Darren Hill (Open Spaces Manager)
One member of the press
Five members of the public
Rosie Walker, Woodland Trust External Affairs Officer, South
West.
Councillor John Thorne

280 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

281 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

282 MINUTES

RESOLVED to agree the minutes of the meeting held on the 17 July 2024.

283 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Councillor John Thorne spoke in favour of the tree strategy items on the agenda and said that he opposed the idea of putting handrails on the War Memorial steps.

Councillor Thorne left the meeting.

284 FOOTPATH UPDATE

Steve Saunders provided an update on the footpath volunteers' work which was noted and the Committee thanked Steve for his and the volunteers' work.

At this juncture the Committee agreed to bring forward agenda item 9 – Tree Strategy

285 TREE STRATEGY

- (i) Green Corridor Woodland Creation Scheme – Rosie Walker, Woodland Trust External Affairs Officer, South West made a presentation to the committee to support the report that had been circulated in advance of the meeting. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes. The proposal was that around 3,000 native trees and shrubs be planted on 2ha of land across the Green Corridor with the Woodland Trust contributing 75% of the cost. **RESOLVED** to agree the scheme with detail to be finalised with the Green Corridor Advisory Board and to contribute £2,500 towards the cost to come from the Green Corridor Budget.
- (ii) Town Wide Strategy – a paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting detailing a three year plan for tree planting around the town. **RESOLVED** to

agree the plan with costs of £5,668 in 2024/5 to be met from the Environmental Improvements Budget.

- (iii) Tree Planters – The Open Spaces Manager explained a proposal to introduce a cycle of using planters around the town to grow trees to a certain height before moving them to permanent sites and replacing them with new trees in the planters. Additional planters were being obtained from Somerset Council at no cost. The costs that would be incurred would be renovating the planters which could be done in house and the cost of soil and trees. The Committee agreed the principle and asked the Open Spaces manager to prepare a detailed, costed plan.

286 BUDGET REPORT

The report on spend in 2024/5 to date had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted.

The Town Clerk explained the process that needed to be followed for considering next year's budget which was noted.

287 CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN UPDATE

The Town Clerk updated the meeting on work that the Climate Change Officer had been undertaking and said that in preparation for the budget setting process he would be developing a three-year programme for delivering the Climate Change Strategy.

288 OPEN SPACES MANAGER UPDATE

- (i) Gay Close – to consider quotes to remove rubber crumb and concrete from former play area bases and add topsoil ready for planting. **RESOLVED** to accept the quote from RW Gale of £2,625 to be taken from the Environmental Improvements Budget.
- (ii) Weavers Reach Bridge – to consider quotes for replacing rotting timber. Agreed that further quotes were needed before a final decision could be made.
- (iii) Burchills Hill Play Area - to consider quotes for repairing areas of the play surface. **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that officers be given delegated authority to spend up to £5,000 with further quotes to be obtained recognising that this will exceed the budget set for the Play Area.
- (iv) War Memorial - to consider quotes for installing handrails to the side of the steps of the War Memorial. **RESOLVED** not to proceed with the work.
- (v) Additional Bulb Planting – this item was no longer required as anticipated costs could be covered by existing budget allocations.

289 DORMOUSE WOOD

The Town Clerk reported on a meeting he and the Open Spaces Manager had had held with David Lohfink, Planning Director, CG Fry. CG Fry were now in a position to begin to hand over the northern part of the woodland but wanted to retain the southern part in case further mitigation was need in relation to phosphates. Once that was resolved CG Fry were still expecting to transfer that part of the land over.

290 BASINS ALLOTMENT ADVISORY BOARD

The notes of the meeting held on the 29 July 2024 had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were noted.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.50pm.

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Councillor M McGuffie
Chairman

GREEN CORRIDOR ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**24 September 2024****7pm****Council Chambers****Present:**

Councillor Mike McGuffie (Chair), Darren Hill, Stephen Tate, Rosie Walker, Steve Saunders, Olly Hill, Adam Lockyear, Jane Browne, Anita Roy

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2. WOODLAND TRUST CREATION SCHEME

A copy of the presentation made at the most recent Wellington Town Council Environment Committee meeting was circulated. Rosie Walker provided an update to the group and said that she hopes that most, if not all, the trees would be able to be planted before Christmas with the start date being 23rd November. Rosie is to liaise with board members to walk the tree planting locations and will be in touch with Council officers about volunteers and communications.

3. BOOK LOVERS WOOD

Anita Roy talked through her initial idea for a Book Lovers Wood and the board agreed that the idea had merit but asked that Anita bring a more formal proposal to the next meeting where it could be discussed in greater depth.

4. JUNIOR SPORTS PITCH FEASIBILITY STUDY

Jane Browne and Darren Hill provided an update and shared that while pitches were technically possible here, the cost was prohibitive and there would be a number of other issues with parking and facilities. They shared that they would instead like to instate a pump track in Twelve Acres which the Community Farm are supporting of. Jane was asked to come to the next meeting with further details about a pump track and a park run.

5. FUTURE MANAGEMENT PLAN/COUNCIL BUDGET 2025/6

Darren Hill asked board members to arrange meetings with him to discuss any projects they would like to raise for the next year. This will all need to be done in the next couple of weeks. The board discussed the resources that would be needed to carry forward Green Corridor projects, including Staffing resource at Wellington Town Council.

Councillor McGuffie spoke about how the Council is looking into a way to formalise incident reporting throughout its green spaces and would keep

everyone updated on progress. He also shared that additional signage in the Green Corridor was being considered.

6. MEMBERSHIP OF ADVISORY BOARD

Councillor McGuffie raised that he felt that the board needed more input from people of an arts and culture background. It was recommended that the Arts Centre are approached to see if they would like to have a representative on the board.

7. UPDATES

Members shared any additional updates verbally. The only actions raised were that Olly Hill pointed out that there is some barbed wire on fences throughout the area leftover from the land's agricultural past that should be removed for health and safety. Darren Hill agreed and said this is something that can be done by the Community Warden at a later date. Olly also shared with Darren that the plastic netting on bales in Great Meadow should be removed to allow the bales to compost down.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9:30pm.

Wellington Town Council
Summary of Income & Expenditure 2024 - 2025
All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/04/2024 and 31/03/2025)

Agenda item 8

Allotments

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
44	Allotments	2,910.00	2,080.00	-830.00	2,910.00	554.64	2,355.36	1,525.36 (26%)
92	Longforth Allotment	3,000.00		-3,000.00	3,000.00	4,650.00	-1,650.00	-4,650.00 (-77%)
148	Allotment Deposits		350.00	350.00		50.00	-50.00	300.00 (N/A)
SUB TOTAL		5,910.00	2,430.00	-3,480.00	5,910.00	5,254.64	655.36	-2,824.64 (N/A)

Earmarked Reserves

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
25	Elections							(N/A)
67	Youth Services							(N/A)
71	C.I.L							(N/A)
73	Film Festival					8,000.00	-8,000.00	-8,000.00 (N/A)
75	Railway Station							(N/A)
76	Capital Projects							(N/A)
77	Playing Pitch Strategy					4,350.00	-4,350.00	-4,350.00 (N/A)
95	Office Furniture Replacement							(N/A)
96	Post Office Provision							(N/A)
97	Cades Farm Community Hall							(N/A)
139	Cost of Living Crisis					11,927.50	-11,927.50	-11,927.50 (N/A)
181	Committed CIL					150,000.00	-150,000.00	-150,000.00 (N/A)
SUB TOTAL						174,277.50	-174,277.50	-174,277.50 (N/A)

Environment and Planning

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
46	Footpaths PRoW Maintenance		33.30	33.30	500.00	323.85	176.15	209.45 (41%)
49	Emptying Dog Bins				12,600.00	5,286.32	7,313.68	7,313.68 (58%)
50	Provision of Benches & Litter/Dog				2,500.00		2,500.00	2,500.00 (100%)
51	Planning Administration							(N/A)
52	Environmental Improvements					2,799.44	-2,799.44	-2,799.44 (N/A)
113	Electricity for Street Light				850.00	359.80	490.20	490.20 (57%)
129	Additional Street Lighting							(N/A)
131	Green Corridor				30,000.00	12,605.53	17,394.47	17,394.47 (57%)
168	Cycle Route Cont.				10,000.00		10,000.00	10,000.00 (100%)
SUB TOTAL			33.30	33.30	56,450.00	21,374.94	35,075.06	35,108.36 (N/A)

Play Areas

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
45	Tone Play Area				5,000.00	1,162.46	3,837.54	3,837.54 (76%)
145	Weavers Reach Play Area				5,000.00	2,432.84	2,567.16	2,567.16 (51%)
146	Annual Play Inspections				500.00		500.00	500.00 (100%)
SUB TOTAL					10,500.00	3,595.30	6,904.70	6,904.70 (76%)

Wellington Town Council
Summary of Income & Expenditure 2024 - 2025
All Cost Centres and Codes (Between 01/04/2024 and 31/03/2025)

Unitary Devolution

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
172	Play Area				10,500.00		10,500.00	10,500.00 (100%)
173	Toilets				22,000.00	328.15	21,671.85	21,671.85 (98%)
174	TC Planting				15,000.00	8,665.12	6,334.88	6,334.88 (42%)
175	Park Planting & Security				25,000.00	5,505.10	19,494.90	19,494.90 (77%)
176	CCTV				25,000.00	8,394.50	16,605.50	16,605.50 (66%)
177	Bus Shelters				5,000.00		5,000.00	5,000.00 (100%)
178	IT Impact				4,000.00	2,100.00	1,900.00	1,900.00 (47%)
SUB TOTAL					106,500.00	24,992.87	81,507.13	81,507.13 (98%)
Restated								(N/A)
NET TOTAL		5,910.00	2,463.30	-3,446.70	179,360.00	229,495.25	-50,135.25	-53,581.95 (-28%)
V.A.T.						10,422.93		
GROSS TOTAL			2,463.30			239,918.18		

October Open Spaces Manager Report

Depot

We have taken the keys for the new depot and have painted the small office and communal space, we have cleared the vegetation at the rear and have a plan of where we are going to store everything, we have given notice on the old storage container at Rockwell Green. This looks a great space for us, the signage will be completed this week, and racks will be installed. We had a visit from the H&S officer and the lighting and fire alarm is due to be installed in the next month or so.



Green Corridor

Mike and I had a meeting with Rosie Walker to discuss the planting, whilst we there we looked at fencing and replacement gates. These quotes can be discussed in next month's meeting. The ramp is complete; we did suffer from dogs walking across the concrete whilst it was not dry but it is not too noticeable now the concrete has set.

We have also installed keep your dogs on a leads, no parking as well as the voles sign on the Green Corridor.



Works at Gay Close Update

The Council approve works to the Play Area at Gay Close, I have been in contact with Simon Lewis, and I am drawing up a MOU, once this has been agreed works will take place and trees will be planted when they arrive.

Adams Apples

Steven and I visited Adams Apples near Cullompton to discuss supplying the fruit trees for the tree give away, it was great to meet with Tom the owner as he is stocking all English grown fruit trees, this is a massive benefit when it come to bio security. We are hoping to use this nursery going forward.



Wellington Park

The new notice board is installed on the entrance to the park.

We have received the bedding plants and bulbs; the bedding has gone in this week the bulbs will be planted next week.

We have installed new toilet dispensers in all the toilets in the park and North St.



Other Areas around Wellington

Sheldon and I have cleared areas in Tonedale, we are looking to plant some bulbs if we have some over.



We have removed the dead tree at Lancer Court and will be sorting out the beds and the tubs this week.



We have also cleared areas around Crosslands and Court Drive.

Wellington In Bloom Results



Established by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), the Britain in Bloom initiative celebrates the best of community gardening. The Mayor Janet Lloyd and Darren Hill Open Spaces Manager had the pleasure of attending the South West in Bloom Awards where Janet and Darren accepted a Silver Award for Wellington.

Darren the Open Spaces Manager

The Community Payback team, the friends of Wellington Park, Friends of the Basins, Friends of Swains Nature Reserve and Transition Town Wellington.



WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Presentation of Quotes to Council



This form is to be used to present quotations for works that do not necessarily require full background papers.

General Information			
Completed By	Darren Hill		
Presented To	Environment Committee		
Brief Introduction and Description	The Bridge repair at Burchills Hill, the timber repair is needed to the bridge we have needed to repair a few sections over the past 4 month, however, on inspection the whole of the top timbers needs to be replaced. This is now a big issue and action does need taking.		
Implications (eg. H&S)	H&S Risk and closure of the bridge.		
Financial			
Specification	To remove all timber surface and replace with non-slip Composite decking timber.		
Quote 1	Quote 2	Quote 3	
MJ Fletcher £7,260.00+VAT	KW Fancy No Quote Returned	Abacus Construction Limited £13,800.00+VAT	
Budget Code	Green Corridor		
Budget Total	£30,000	Current Budget Available	£16,234
For Office Use			
Reviewed by Town Clerk/RFO?	Y / N	Date of Meeting Presented	21/10/24
Lead Officer	Darren Hill		

Photos & Other information

Mike Fletcher has only quoted for decking timber.

KW Fancy quoted for non-slip decking made in their workshop.





WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Presentation of Quotes to Council





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General Information			
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Implications (eg. H&S)	H&S Risk and closure of the bridge.		
Financial			
Specification	To remove all timber surface and replace with non-slip timber decking with added gripper decking timber.		
Quote 1	Quote 2	Quote 3	
MJ Fletcher £4,660.00+VAT	KW Fancy £10,366.35+VAT	Abacus Construction Limited	
Budget Code	Green Corridor		
Budget Total	£30,000	Current Budget Available	£16,234
For Office Use			
Reviewed by Town Clerk/RFO?	Y / N	Date of Meeting Presented	21/10/24
Lead Officer	Darren Hill		

Photos & Other information

Mike Fletcher has only quoted for decking timber.

KW Fancy quoted for non-slip decking made in their workshop.





WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Presentation of Quotes to Council





WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Presentation of Quotes to Council



This form is to be used to present quotations for works that do not necessarily require full background papers.

General Information			
Completed By	Darren Hill		
Presented To	Environment Committee		
Brief Introduction and Description	Quote 1 is to collect the large black metal planter to be added around wellington, these will match the ones we have in the high street and other areas, we will require a vehicle with a tail-lift. Locations will be Tone, Waterloo Rd and other location to be agreed with SC Highways Quote 2 is for WTC staff to add topsoil and additional planting once in place.		
Implications (eg. H&S)	No H&S		
Financial			
Specification			
Quote 1	Quote 2	Quote 3	
Riverside Plant Nursery £390.00+VAT	WTC topsoil and additional planting £720.00+VAT		
Budget Code	Environmental Improvements		
Budget Total	£40,000 (reserve)	Current Budget Available	£34,217
For Office Use			
Reviewed by Town Clerk/RFO?	Y / N	Date of Meeting Presented	21/10/24
Lead Officer	Darren Hill		

Photos & Other information





WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Presentation of Quotes to Council





WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Presentation of Quotes to Council



This form is to be used to present quotations for works that do not necessarily require full background papers.

General Information			
Completed By	Darren Hill		
Presented To	Environment Committee		
Brief Introduction and Description	To cut back the area ready for the planting of the trees in the Great Oak field.		
Implications (eg. H&S)	H&S risk to planting teams as they are unable to see and access the area, they are working in.		
Financial			
Specification	To cut the area with tractor mounted equipment.		
Quote 1	Quote 2	Quote 3	
Justin Perry- Jones £150.00+VAT			
Budget Code	Green Corridor		
Budget Total	£30,000	Current Budget Available	£16,234
For Office Use			
Reviewed by Town Clerk/RFO?	Y / N	Date of Meeting Presented	22/10/24
Lead Officer	Darren Hill		

Environment Committee Budgets

1. Introduction

1.1. As the Council enters the budget setting process, each of its Committees need to review the budgets they are responsible for and assess any budget requirements for any newly proposed projects for the 25/26 year.

2. Background

2.1. At the last meeting, a report was circulated detailing the specifics of each of the Committee's delegated budget codes.

2.2. Councillors were asked that any new projects to be considered for inclusion in the 25/26 budgets were detailed on a project initiation form and submitted to Officers. No forms have been received to date.

2.3. A spreadsheet has been submitted by Cllr McGuffie with several items relating to spending that might be overseen by the Committee but mostly within the Green Corridor. Given the date of receipt, it has not been included in this report as it requires further extensive review by Officers. The sheet suggests spending between £266,000 and £832,000. This will lead into the work being carried out by the Open Spaces Manager to create a multiyear maintenance plan for the Green Corridor with items being graded on priority. Information will be presented to a future budget meeting for consideration on inclusion in the budget.

3. Updated Draft Budgets

3.1. Attached at appendix 1 is the first draft copy of the budget codes that are delegated to the Committee. For comparison purposes, it details information for previous (23/24), current (24/25) and two future years (25/26 and 26/27). It should be noted that the 26/27 figures are only indicative at this time.

3.2. Notes to figures provided for each section are listed below

3.2.1. Cost Centre – Allotments

3.2.1.1. Allotments – line to be renamed Basins Allotments for clarity. Income based on 97 plots with rental increasing £2 per year (£32 in 25/26 and £34 in 26/27). Suggested payments budget based on average spending in 23-24 and 24-25 (to date).

3.2.1.2. Longforth Allotments – Site not yet open Income based on 30 plots at £100. Committee to review charges at appropriate time. Payments budget based on spending as above for Basins Allotments. Some further set up work required, committee to review this moving forward. Possible use of CIL?

3.2.1.3. Management Software – Officers are in the process of moving to a specific digital management software to be finalised before the new site is opened. Rental income from both sites offsets the cost.

3.2.1.4. Allotment Deposits – for office use.

3.2.2. Cost Centre – Environment

- 3.2.2.1. Footpaths & PROW – This line currently covers hosting of the Welly Walking website and contributions to strimmer training for the Rights of Way volunteers. It is likely that overall works to PROW will be absorbed into the Open Spaces team. The aforementioned items could also possibly be absorbed into other Open Spaces line, to be reviewed during the next FY.
- 3.2.2.2. Grass Cutting & Weedkilling – legacy lines not included in 24/25 to be deleted. These items are accounted for within the Open Spaces budgets.
- 3.2.2.3. Emptying Dog Bins – this is absorbed into the Open Spaces budgets.
- 3.2.2.4. Planning Admin – legacy line to be deleted.
- 3.2.2.5. Environmental Improvements – Spending from this line currently drawn from an earmarked reserve. The current estimated closing balance will be c£34,000.
- 3.2.2.6. Electric for St Light – budget increase based on current quarterly bills.
- 3.2.2.7. Additional Street Lighting – legacy line to be deleted.
- 3.2.2.8. Land at Westford – merged into the Green Corridor line in 24/25.
- 3.2.2.9. Cycle Route Contribution – awaiting confirmation from Greenway about when the invoice for the feasibility report is expected. Max funding of £4,000 agreed at Oct P&F.

3.2.3. Cost Centre – OS Depot & OS Overheads (new)

These cost centres are included for information. Most lines remain at the same level as previously presented to and approved by Full Council. Some lines, however, will change as the devolution process develops. A reduced cost for bin emptying is expected, for example. The salaries line has updated since being presented to Full Council as it now includes costs for the OSM and current warden role. The general salaries line will adjust accordingly.

It will be the Officers' recommendation that they are added to the Scheme of Delegation as codes which may be spent by Officers for ease of general operations.

3.2.4. Cost Centre – Open Spaces Maintenance (new)

These items relate to activities the Committee should review and approve maintenance plans etc. for. The Open Spaces Manager (OSM) will present items to future meetings.

- 3.2.4.1. Green Corridor – Plan to inform spending requirements, so figure likely to change. OSM to work with Cllr McGuffie and Town Clerk to provide figures for 25-26 and 26-27. With a draft plan to be presented to the committee in the coming months.

Suggested reduction as many activities that are currently contracted will be able to be absorbed into the general Open Spaces work. E.g. grass cutting.

- 3.2.4.2. Signage – for improved signage in general, as well as replacement signage once ownership of spaces is transferred hence higher amount for 25-26 vs 26-27.

- 3.2.4.3. PA Planned Maintenance – Figures formed by data provided by Somerset Council in the Devolution process which indicates the expected lifespan of play equipment in each area. SC figures suggest £18k in 25/26 and £36k in 26/27. However, there is some cross over of potential works required in the same area in both years which could be carried out at the same time for efficiency. Totalled figures above, rounded and split between both years to equalise the impact.

Important – The data provided by SC suggests possible spending required for replacement equipment c£215k over the next 13 years (27/28 – 39/40). The committee should bear in mind how this is funded, a new earmarked reserve to spread the cost burden over multiple years of precept, for example.

- 3.2.4.4. Provision of Benches & Litter/Dog bins – this is an existing line recoded to the Open Spaces section. Previously the Council has committed to funding two new benches each year, for example.

- 3.2.4.5. Weed Management – included as this was part of the like for like comparison with SC's open spaces services. Committee to consider a plan/policy in future.

3.2.5. Cost Centre – Play Areas

This cost centre is absorbed into the Open Spaces budgets.

4. Next steps

- 4.1. Having reviewed each budget line, the committee should make an overall recommendation to the Policy & Finance Committee that it's Cost Centres be included in the budget, either as presented or amended. It may make resolutions to update or change the budget lines as it sees appropriate. There will be a specific meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee to review the budget in November.

5. Officer Recommendations

5.1. To bring the Environmental Improvements back into the main body of the Council's budget; it is **recommended** that, at the end of the current financial year, the balance of the Environmental Improvements reserve (current balance c£34k) be closed with the funds being transferred back into the general fund. This process means the suggested £30k budget for the same line in the main 25/26 budget is offset by funds already held.

Alice Kendall
RFO/Deputy Clerk

October 2024

