

**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

283 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

284 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

285 MINUTES

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

286 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.

287 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

288 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.

289 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.

290 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.

291 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.

292 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.

293 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