

# Wellington Town Council

**Town Mayor**  
**Cllr Anthony Lowe**  
B.A. (Hons)



**Town Clerk**  
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## **ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING**

**Minutes of the Virtual Annual Council Meeting held on Zoom on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 commencing at 6.30pm.**

### **Present:**

Mayor- Cllr A. Lowe	Cllr D. Roberts	Cllr J. Gorse	Cllr M. Hosken
Cllr S. Hall	Cllr J. Alvey	Cllr J. Latter	Cllr P. Fairclough
Cllr K. Tomlinson	Cllr L. Jinks	Cllr S. de Launey	Cllr G. Cook
Cllr P. Morris-Jones MBE	Cllr J. Pierce	Cllr G. Luter	Cllr C. Brittain
Cllr A. Lowe	Cllr L. Carter	Cllr A. McClements	Cllr P. Davis

**In attendance:** Karen Roper, Town Clerk, Andrew Roberts Deputy Town Clerk, Rev. Tim Carter, Inspector Gary Wade, Stuart Tyrer, Kath Howard, Dorota Sobilo, Julia Fletcher and Debbie Farley

**Public Open Session** – Cllr Lowe delivered online presentations of the Town Council Shields to the following people;

- 1.0 Police Inspector Gary Wade-** The Mayor said Inspector Wade had been a reassuring presence for Wellington being both perceptive and receptive over many years' service. Inspector Wade said he had a great respect for members, some he had known for over 30 years. He said he would always be a true friend of Wellington and was humbled to receive this award.
- 2.0 Stuart Tyrer West Midlands Search & Rescue-** Stuart had nominated by a Wellington resident for dedication to our safety. Mr Tyrer thanked the Council for the award, and stated he had 8 years' service averaging 52 call outs per year which included assisting people in the recent floods.
- 3.0 Eddie Fanneran-** Eddie was retiring and had acted as our Parade Marshall over many years at Remembrance and other civic occasions. Cllr Alvey said he would be a hard act to follow and he was thanked for everything he had done for Wellington.
- 4.0 Kath Howard** – Kath works hard for Wellington as the Chair of Friends of Bowring Park and Friends of Wellington Station. Kath said she was enjoying being involved with the groups and thanked the Council for the award.
- 5.0 Bob Coalbran-** Bob had worked for many years and had been fantastically successful with Wellington Walkers are Welcome and was also involved Friends of Wellington Station. The Mayor was thanked for his work and it was commented that his award was richly deserved.
- 6.0 Dorota Sobilo - Polish Covid 19 Support Group** – The Mayor said this group had been recognised for manufacturing top quality safety masks. Dorota thanked the Council for the award and said that more than 2,000 high quality masks had sent to local hospitals in

addition to gifts of sweets and toys. Money was also raised to purchase hand creams to help to show appreciation for the NHS staff.

**7.0 Julia Fletcher-** The Bowring Park Covid 19 Support Group was formed to help those in need and provided services such as shopping / prescription collections and general support through a phone line. She was thanked for all her work.

**8.0 Debbie Farley-** Shawbirch, Dohill, Admaston & Bratton Covid 19 Support Group was formed to help those in need. Debbie also wanted thank Julia Fletcher as they had worked together to provide a service / helpline to assist beleaguered and lonely people with services like shopping and prescription collections. More than 90 people had kindly volunteered to help and many people were still benefitting from the food shopping service. Cllr Tomlinson said Debbie was still doing a sterling job in the Admaston car park by providing a food bank for those that are in need.

**9.0 To Receive the Mayors' Diary of Events** – Members noted the Mayors diary of events that had previously been distributed.

**10.0 Outgoing Mayor's Comments** – The Mayor said he had so far raised £1,358.34 for his charities namely; Maninplace and Tact and the icon was still presently on the website.

**Cllr Gorse** recognised Cllr Lowe as being a hardworking and passionate Mayor throughout such a difficult time. She highlighted his enthusiasm, tattoo, TV and radio appearances.

**Cllr Morris-Jones** thanked Cllr Lowe for the exceedingly good job he had done despite his sometimes controversial approach to the role. He always demonstrated enthusiasm and initiative during this most difficult time for Wellington.

**Cllr de Launey** said the Mayor had Wellington in his heart and had worked extremely hard through the pandemic, and the Lib Dem members were incredibly grateful to him.

**Cllr Davis** said he would like to echo the comments from other Councillors and Group Leaders thanking the Mayor for everything he had done.

**Cllr Alvey** remarked the mayor had provided a little extra colour for Wellington.

**Cllr Hosken** commented he had been a very successful Mayor and wished him well.

**The Mayor** thanked members for their comments and called upon Reverend Carter to say prayers. Reverend Carter gave thanks for all the folk who work very hard in the community particularly during the challenge of Corona Virus. He asked members to pray for jobs and for the children returning to school. He thanked the Mayor for his energy and asked that the new Mayor would have wisdom and grace in all that they do.

## **7.05 pm Annual General Meeting**

**01/20 Election of Mayor** - The Mayor, Cllr Lowe called for nominations to elect a new Mayor: Cllr Alvey proposed Cllr Fairclough and was seconded by Cllr de Launey.

There being no further nominations, members voted UNANIMOUSLY that Cllr Fairclough be elected to serve as Mayor until the Annual meeting to be held in May 2021. She said she was honoured to accept the nomination, thanked members for her election and put on the chain of office.

**02/20 Signing by the Incoming Mayor the Acceptance of Office Form** - Cllr Fairclough duly signed the Acceptance of Office form, witnessed by the Clerk.

**03/20 New Mayor's Address** – Cllr Fairclough said was an honour to be elected. She thanked Cllr Lowe for being a great Mayor in such a testing time and said her focus will be on working with schools and Telford and Wrekin Borough to continue to build a more cohesive and helpful community.

**04/20 Election of Deputy Mayor** - Cllr Fairclough called for nominations for the Election of Deputy Mayor. Cllr Davis was proposed by Cllr Alvey and seconded by Cllr Pierce.

There being no further nominations, it was agreed UNANIMOUSLY that Cllr Davis be elected to serve as Deputy Mayor until the next Annual Meeting. Cllr Davis put on the Deputy Mayor's chain of office and thanked members for electing him commenting he felt incredibly humbled.

**05/20 Apologies** – There were no apologies.

**06/20 Declarations of Interest** – There were no declarations of interest forwarded at this point.

**07/20 Election of Policy & Resources Committee (7 vacancies + Mayor & Deputy Mayor *ex officio*)**

Cllr Fairclough called for nominations for the Policy & Resources Committee. It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that the following Councillors serve as the Policy and Resources Committee with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor (each *ex officio*) until the next Annual Council Meeting. Cllrs: Hosken, Morris-Jones, Hall, Gorse, McClements, Carter and de Launey.

**08/20 To Note the Personnel Committee as the 3 x Group Leaders** – Cllrs Hosken, Gorse and de Launey.

**09/20 Election of the Independent Grievance Panel** – Cllrs Alvey, Usman and Cook were proposed seconded and unanimously elected to serve on the panel with the Mayor as independent Chairman.

**10/20 Election of Planning Committee (7 vacancies + Mayor & Deputy Mayor *ex officio*)**

Cllr Fairclough called for nominations for the Planning Committee. Cllrs: Alvey, Roberts, Jinks, de Launey, Luter, Latter and Cook were proposed and duly seconded. There being no further nominations the above Councillors were duly elected to serve on the Planning Committee with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor (*ex officio*) until the next Annual Council Meeting.

**11/20 Election of the Events and Communications Committee (7 vacancies + Mayor and Deputy Mayor *ex officio*)**

Cllr Fairclough called for nominations for the above Committee. Cllrs: Alvey, Hall, Davis (nominated as voting member as per Standing Order ref: 4 e), Pierce, Tomlinson, Lowe and Carter were proposed and duly seconded. There being no further nominations the above Councillors were duly elected to serve with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor as (*ex officio*) on the Events and Communications Committee until the next Annual Council meeting.

**12/20 Election of active working groups and Town Council representatives on outside Bodies**

**a) Conservation Area Working Group-** Cllr Fairclough called for nominations for the Conservation Area Working Group. Cllrs Pierce, Tomlinson and Jinks were proposed and duly seconded. There being no further nominations the above Councillors were duly elected to serve as Members of the Conservation Area Working Group until the next Annual Council Meeting.

**b) Car Parking Working Group** - Cllr Fairclough called for nominations for the Car Parking Working Group Cllrs: de Launey, McClements, Gorse, Roberts and Morris-Jones were proposed and duly seconded. There being no further nominations the above Councillors were duly elected to serve as Members of the Car Parking Working Group until the next Annual Council Meeting.

**c) Climate Change Emergency Working Group** – Cllr Fairclough called for nominations to the above committee; Cllrs Davis, Latter, Lowe, Alvey and Luter were proposed and seconded. There being no further nominations the above Councillors were duly elected to serve as members of the Climate Change Emergency Working Group until the next Annual Council Meeting.

**d) Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC) - Wrekin Area Committee (WAC) (2 vacancies)-** Cllr: Fairclough called for nominations. Cllrs Alvey, Ahmed and Davis were proposed and seconded. Following a vote Cllrs Davis and Ahmed were elected. Cllr Alvey was thanked for all his work on the WAC and on SALC.

**e) Telford Bus Users Group (2 vacancies) -** Cllr Faiclough called for nominations Cllrs Roberts and Cook were proposed and duly seconded. There being no further nominations it was agreed Cllrs Roberts and Cook should represent the Town Council on the Telford Bus Users Group.

**f) Wrekin Forest Partnership –** Members agreed to defer this item to allow for further clarification.

**g) Walkers are Welcome-** Cllr Fairclough called for nominations, Cllr Roberts was nominated but said she wished to stand down after being the Town Council representative for the past 10 years. She was thanked for the work she had done. Cllr Pierce was proposed and duly seconded. There being no further nominations it was agreed that Cllr Pierce would represent the Town Council on Walkers are Welcome.

**13/20 To Appoint the Internal Auditor for 2020/21-** Cllr Fairclough called for a proposal from members. Cllr de Launey proposed Harjinder Atwal of HKA Accountax to be appointed as internal auditor for 2020/21, he was seconded by Cllr Hosken and the appointment was confirmed unanimously by members.

**14/20 General Power of Competence –** A comprehensive briefing note had been previously circulated to all members. Cllr Morris Jones asked that the benefits of the Power be explained. Following an explanation from the Clerk and the Chairman of Policy and Resources members agreed that Wellington Town Council satisfied the following three conditions for eligibility to exercise the General Power of Competence:

Resolution: the council must resolve at a meeting that it meets the criteria for eligibility relating to the electoral mandate and relevant training of the clerk.

Electoral mandate: at the time the resolution is passed, at least two thirds of the Council must hold office as a result of being declared elected (i.e. not co-opted).

Qualified Clerk: At the time that the resolution is passed, the clerk must hold a recognised professional qualification (e.g. Certificate in Local Council Administration, Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy) AND pass the 2012 CiLCA module relating to the General Power of Competence.

As a result of satisfying the above criteria it was proposed by Cllr Ahmed, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Cllr de Launey and agreed unanimously by the Council to pass the following resolution:

Wellington Town Council resolves from 8th September 2020, until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council, that having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence)(Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, to adopt the General Power of Competence.

**15/20 Receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11th August 2020 –** It was Proposed: by Cllr Morris-Jones, seconded by Cllr Cook and RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th August 2020 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a true and accurate record.

**16/20 Matters Arising**

**a) Clifton Site –** The Clerk reported she had received an acknowledgement from the Enforcement Officer re the untidy site. Cllr Jinks asked that the Clerk press for a timescale. Cllr Alvey said work on the site was due to start Feb/March 2021.

**b) Speed Indicator Device** - The Clerk reported the order had been placed for a 2<sup>nd</sup> Unit and an application would be made for funding to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

**c) Reopening the Retail Sector**– The Clerk reported the planters for Church Road to Market Street are slightly delayed and would be delivered within the next 2 weeks. Some Traffic monitoring will also take place in this area.

**d) Music For the People Grant** – An email had been received from the group on 2<sup>nd</sup> September, the Clerk had confirmed to them the requirements of P&R prior to payment.

**e) Police and Crime Commissioner Questionnaire**- The Clerk confirmed she had received 8 responses from members. Closing date is Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

**17/20 To receive the minutes of Wellington Town Council Committees and to consider the recommendations therein.**

**a) Policy and Resources Committee 01.09.20** – Cllr de Launey made the following comments

- **Parade Toilets** - No problems / increase in vandalism had been reported and Healthmatic had also taken over the Bowring toilets.
- **Terms of Reference for the Events and Communications Committee** - Cllr Roberts stated she was very disappointed these changes have been made as it appears the Festival Committee which included outsiders has been done away with. Cllr de Launey said the Festival Committee will be appointed by the Events and Communications Committee and there would be no change to its composition of Councillors and Non Councillors whose contribution is greatly appreciated. It was also confirmed that the Communications function of the new committee will endeavour to liaise with all community groups throughout Wellington. Cllr Roberts felt that the Communication committee would be overwhelmed. Cllr Lowe endorsed Cllr de Launey's comments and said he saw this as an exciting opportunity to improve communications and the split of the functions will help to achieve this. The Mayor said that Cllr Burns had made efforts when he was Deputy Mayor to reach out to outside organisations and she would like to continue in that vein and strive to improve communications with our community groups.
- **Independent Grievance Panel** – Cllr de Launey said the Committee had now approved an up to date Grievance policy.
- **Walkers are Welcome (WAW)** – Cllr Roberts had requested support for a 10 year anniversary event for WAW in March 2020 just before the lockdown, and there was general support to donate up to £100.00.

**b) Planning Committee 12.08.20** – Cllr Alvey presented the minutes and commented that on item 250/19 it was good to see members of the public, councillors and officers working together to resolve this issue. He added that work had now started to refurbish the Cock Hotel.

**c) Planning Committee 02.09.20** – Cllr Alvey presented the minutes there were no questions.

**18/20 Report from the Climate Change Emergency Discussion Forum** – Members had received a written report from the initial discussion forum meeting. Cllr Lowe commented 5 members have been elected tonight so we can now move forward.

**19/20 Proposal received from Cllr Hosken 2<sup>nd</sup> by Cllr Roberts** – The Clerk requested members agree to suspend Standing Order 9b to enable this item to be discussed as it was received outside of the required 10 working days. This was proposed by Cllr Alvey,

2<sup>nd</sup> by Cllr de Launey and it was agreed unanimously by members to discuss this item.

**Proposal from Cllr Hosken 2<sup>nd</sup> Cllr Roberts;**

- a) That the one-way system on Ercall Lane is removed
- b) That the cycle track on Ercall Lane is removed

**Cllr Luter proposed the following amendment;**

*'In order for the Town Council to ascertain a more complete understanding of the scheme and make a more meaningful and constructive contribution to the on-going consultation that we request T&W highways to present to the P&R committee with the Ercall Ward Councillors invited to engage in the process. The amendment was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Cllr Davis.'*

Cllr Roberts was unhappy at the amended proposal stating that Ercall Lane is dangerous to walkers and cyclists due to heavy traffic particularly at weekends and the amendment would delay any action. Cllr Alvey agreed stating that action was required as soon as possible and should not be delayed for another month.

Cllr deLauney sympathised with the situation but felt we need to understand the view from highways and would agree this issue should be moved to P&R. Cllr Tomlinson agreed.

Cllr Carter proposed the amendment be put to the vote.

Cllr Morris-Jones said he had strong feelings that ward councillors should know what is going on and he was already unimpressed by Highways. The timescale is important, something should be done immediately.

Cllr Carter commented that this motion does not compel the highways authority to do anything immediately, it merely informs a submission to a consultation that Wellington Town Council want to make on an area which is outside of our parish.

Cllr deLauney requested moving the amendment to a vote and requested a recorded vote on the amendment.

Members against were: Cllrs Brittain, Morris-Jones, Roberts, Hall, Hosken, Jinks, and Alvey (7)

Members for were: Cllrs Lowe, Davis, Tomlinson, Latter, Pierce, Luter, Carter, Cook, Gorse, McClements, Ahmed and de Launey.(12)

The amendment was therefore carried.

Members were then asked to vote on the substantive motion which was lost to 11 votes in support of the amended substantive motion.

**20/20 Date of Next Meeting** - Cllr Morris-Jones said he would like to spend time with people not computers, he felt the last item was not good for anyone watching to see. Wellington Town Council is spending thousands of pounds on regeneration and we are encouraging the High Street and businesses to reopen. He said we should be leading by example and proposed the next Town Council meeting is held face to face. Cllr Jinks 2<sup>nd</sup> his proposal and said our heroes, Nurses and Doctors have worked throughout the pandemic and our most precious children have now returned to school. We are leaders and should be facing this fear and returning to reality meetings not hiding in the shadows. We should face this fear head on, our lives are no more important than anyone else's.

Cllr de Launey called a point of order that this item is not on the agenda.

The Mayor said that she felt we should be guided by the rules and regulations. Cllr Roberts said a neighbouring parish had met face to face over a month ago. She and other councillors had invited other members into their home for this meeting and it would probably be safer at a face to face meeting as the appropriate rules can be applied. Cllr Alvey said he felt 8 people could safely meet for Planning in the Committee Room.

Cllr Tomlinson said this item is not on the agenda.

Carter said he was massively disappointed at the description of people who have been shielding to protect loved ones as 'hiding in the shadows' and he hoped that the Councillor would reconsider using such emotive language. No one is trying to dodge anything or hide away and Councillors each have personal circumstances that need to be respected. He added he would support returning to normal but not until it was safe and he had not seen any risk assessments. Cllr Gorse said she would support Cllr Carters' view as COVID is still a very serious situation and pointed out that Bolton had just been returned to a lockdown situation with just 8 hours' notice. We are leading by being sensible and we should not be rushed into changing back to face to face meetings, people should realise the danger is still there.

The Clerk said she appreciated that on line meetings are difficult for both staff and Councillors. Members were also reminded that Wellington Town Council had not missed a Full Council, Policy and Resources or Planning meeting during the pandemic when many other Councils had not met. She said staff are working normally, delivering the services and administration requirements of the Council through a mixture of working from home and attending the office when required to do so.

The Clerk agreed to look into the feasibility of returning to face to face meetings.

**The date of the next Full Council Meeting** – Was agreed as 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020, the Mayor thanked members for their attendance and commented that it is not easy for the Council to function at the present time.

Chairman.....Date.....