

# Wellington Town Council

**Town Mayor**  
**Cllr Cindy Mason-Morris**



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

**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at the Wellington Civic Offices on Tuesday  
12th June 2018 commencing at 7:05pm.**

**Present:**

Cllr C. Mason-Morris – Town Mayor	Cllr G. Cook	Cllr J. Gorse
Cllr A. Lowe – Deputy Mayor	Cllr J. Alvey	Cllr S. Fikeis
Cllr F. Burns	Cllr L. Jinks	Cllr S. deLauney
Cllr P. Morris-Jones MBE	Cllr P. McCarthy	Cllr J. Harris
Cllr P. Fairclough	Cllr L. Carter	Cllr A. McClements
Cllr M. Hosken	Cllr K. Tomlinson	

**In attendance:** Karen Roper, Town Clerk and Andrew Roberts, Deputy Town Clerk, 5 members of the public and Reverend Tim Carter.

**Prayers** – Cllr Mason-Morris called on Reverend Carter to lead prayers. Prior to leading prayers Revd. Carter thanked everyone for attending at the Midsummer Fayre that had been held on the previous Saturday, which he commented was an extremely successful event.

**21/18 Welcome to the Meeting and invitation to Mr Benham from the Wellington Cottage Care Trust to address the meeting.**

The Mayor welcomed all Councillors, Members of the Public and Mr Benham from the Wellington Cottage Care Trust. She also welcomed Cllr Jamie Harris, the newly elected member at the Dohill Ward By-election.

Mr Benham was accordingly invited to address the Council meeting in connection with the recently announced impending closure of the Wellington Cottage Care Centre.

Mr Benham thanked the Council for the invitation to address the meeting, however he wished that it had been undertaken in better circumstances. He confirmed that unfortunately after many years of service to the local community the Trustees had taken the decision that the Trust would have to close its activities at the Wellington Cottage Care. He outlined the historic services that had been provided and how in recent times the level of service had been reduced due in part to the reduction of visits that the Trust had experienced. The other aspect that had led to a reduction in the number of visits by “guests” was relating to how Social Care funding was distributed. Following several months of lower income levels it had been decided to reduce opening from 5 days to 3 days following consultation with guests, their families, the volunteers and staff. These reduced hours of operation further resulted in loss of income that eventually resulted in the Trustees consulting on the proposed closure of the operation. Meetings had taken place with Telford & Wrekin Council in order to discuss whether there were any options available to keep the Trust operating. Unfortunately although suggestions had been discussed in order

for these to be successful an increase in funding would be required. As a result it had been concluded and decided that the Wellington Cottage Care Trust would close on 29 June 2018.

Members were invited to raise questions and make comments as follows:

Cllr Morris-Jones enquired as to whether the Cottage care Trust building had been sold. He also questioned as to whether the reason for the closure was due as a result of a lack of publicity. Mr Benham said it had not, although he confirmed that the only part of land that had been sold was a piece of land to the side of the building, which was NHS land. In relation to any perception of a lack of publicity, being a main reason why the closure decision had been made he indicated that although publicity was an integral part of the Trust's activities, this was not the main reason why the closure was proceeding. In recent times guests were indicating a desire to stay in their own homes. He also stated that he was unaware of any other provider which operated in a similar way to the Trust, and that publicity was extremely expensive.

Cllr McCarthy also addressed the meeting making particular reference to a family member who had attended at the Cottage Care Trust. He had held discussions with the Cottage Care Trust, who had indicated that the closure was as a result of market forces. He suggested that the closure was really as a result of a reduction in the level of funding the decision of which had been taken by Central; Government. He stated that the service provision had to be provided by T&W and it was their responsibility to provide sufficient provision.

Cllr Tomlinson referred the meeting to the model currently being operated within Newport that could be seen as a viable alternative. Mr Benham stated that the Newport model was very different to that operated at Wellington. He confirmed that Newport was able to rely on a greater volunteer basis. The Trustees at Wellington had tried on 3 separate occasions to create a Friends Group, which had proved unsuccessful. They also allowed for various rooms to be let out to various community groups, but the level of income still made the operation financially unsustainable.

Cllr Alvey sought confirmation as to whether the Cottage Trust Hospital had been sold already in the sum of £600,000 and that the building would be developed into apartments. Mr Benham stated that the building had not been sold, although he did confirm that the Trustees had spoken to a land agent.

Cllr Gorse commented that there was a crisis in Social Care funding and that Telford & Wrekin Council should not be blamed but that any crisis in funding was caused by Central Government.

Cllr Carter thanked Mr Benham for attending the meeting and providing an update to the Town Council. He suggested that in order to provide further background he suggested as to whether the relevant T&W Cabinet Member and Senior Officer be invited to the next Full Council meeting in order that fuller information could be provided. He stressed that it was important for the Cottage Care Trust and T&W should continue their work together in order to provide a suitable solution. He also enquired as to whether there was a "turn-around plan". Mr Benham stated that the situation had developed fairly quickly however the proposed closure was the only remaining step as the Trust were losing approximately £5,000 per month and that these losses meant that the operation was unsustainable.

Cllr McClements thanked Mr Benham for attending the meeting. Her view was that she had hoped that the Cottage Care Trust should have approached the Town Council earlier. However she stated that she took offence at Cllr McCarthy's comments as she felt that Telford & Wrekin Council were doing the best job it could do in the current circumstances.

Cllr Morris-Jones commented that there was not a great deal of time available until the 29 June he questioned as to whether the closure date could be extended in order to consider further options. Mr Benham stated that, the Trustees could not extend the closure date, given that they had investigated the situation further and had explored all available options during the collaborative work that had taken place with T&W, however there appeared to be no current solution that would remove the current deficit position.

The Mayor thanked Mr Benham for attending Full Council to provide an update into the Cottage Care Trust situation and asked if he could provide further updates to the Town Clerk.

**22/18 Mayor's Report** – The Mayor outlined her civic duties that she had undertaken since the previous meeting:

Wednesday 9th May 2018	Treasured Memories Dementia Café at Oakwood House, Shire Living
Wednesday 16th May 2018	Bayley Mile Road Races
Thursday 17th May 2018	Twinning Association Reception
Friday 18th May 2018	Formally opened new Tourist and Visitor Information Centre, Wellington Rail Station
Friday 18th May 2018	AGM 2nd Wellington Scout Group
Sunday 20th May 2018	Formal Dinner with the Twinning Association
Tuesday 22nd May 2018	65th Anniversary of the Wellington Fire Station
Thursday 24th May 2018	Telford & Wrekin Council – Mayor Making
Saturday 26th May 2018	Charity Event at The Gardeners Lodge in Roseway
Saturday 26th May 2018	Formally opened the new Telford Maker Space at the Belfry Theatre
Sunday 3rd June 2018	Wellington Civic Society Lunch at the Buckatree Hotel
Sunday 3rd June 2018	RBL Church Service and Parade in commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Bligney
Tuesday 5th June 2018	Opened new business venture in the Market: Tillies Trotters Emporium
Saturday 9th June 2018	Wellington Midsummer Fayre
Monday 11th June 2018	Visit to Branches (Telford Aftercare Team) at Strickland House

**23/18 Apologies** – Were received from Cllr C Brittain, Cllr S Hall and Cllr D Roberts due to illness and Cllr G Luter due to another commitment. Apologies accepted.

**24/18 Declarations of Interest** – None forwarded.

**25/18 To receive and approve the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 8th May 2018**  
Proposed by Cllr Alvey, and seconded by Cllr Gorse and RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th May 2018 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a true and accurate record.

**26/18 Matters Arising**  
**a) EDL March** – It was reported that the recent march had proceeded without incident. It was noted that a further event had been planned but that this had recently been cancelled. The Clerk indicated that further discussions would take place at a future Policy & Resources Committee meeting as to how any future proposed events could be dealt with by the Town Council and its external partners

within the Town.

**b) Wellington Regeneration Board** – It was reported that the Regeneration Board had not met since the previous Council meeting. However, there had been mention of the Regeneration Board’s activities within the recent edition of the Wrekin News.

**c) Dothill Vacancy** – It was confirmed that Cllr Jamie Harris had been elected to serve as Town Councillor for the Dothill Ward at the recently held by-election. Cllr Harris had signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Disclosable Pecuniary Interest Form, which had been submitted to the Monitoring Officer at Telford & Wrekin Council. Cllr Harris had previously been welcomed previously in the meeting.

**27/18 To receive the minutes of Wellington Town Council Committees and to consider and deal with the recommendations therein.**

**a) Planning Committee 16.05.18** – Cllr Alvey presented the minutes which were seconded by Cllr Burns and agreed as a true record.

**b) Planning Committee 06.06.18** – Cllr Alvey presented the minutes which were seconded by Cllr Jinks and agreed as a true record.

Cllr Alvey referred Members to the items relating to the consideration of the planning application under reference TWC/2018/0435: Site of Bowring Hall, 300 Holyhead Road, Wellington.

Other items noted included the erection of the sign at Silicon Valley shop in New Street, Wellington, which has been reported to Telford & Wrekin Council Planning Services. Members were further referred to the question of encroachment into New Street from some of the retail traders, beyond the designated “pavement”.

**c) Promotions & Liaison Committee 23.05.18** – Cllr Carter presented the minutes which were seconded by Cllr Fairclough and agreed as a true record. Cllr Mason-Morris referred members to the item in connection with the October Festival and the major event planned for the 21 October 2018, at 2:30pm being a concert with the Brighthouse & Rastrick Brass Band.

**d) Policy & Resources Committee 05.06.18** – Cllr deLauney presented the minutes which were seconded by Cllr Hosken. Cllr deLauney made the following comments.

- **Election of Chairman** – Cllr deLauney commented that he had been elected as Chairman of the Committee again for the ensuing year. He acknowledged the support of Members who had elected him for the role again.
- **Election of Deputy Chairman** – Cllr deLauney confirmed that the Committee had agreed to only appoint one Deputy Chairman this year with Cllr Morris-Jones having been so elected.
- **ICM** – Members were advised that Insp. Gary Wade would be invited to attend at the next Policy & Resources Committee on the 3rd July.
- **Clifton Group** – it was noted that the confidential report had been considered and the recommendation as agreed by the Committee was as stated on the confidential minutes that had been circulated to all Members. Members were advised that should any member require a full discussion on specific items of the proposed terms that there would be a need to proceed with the discussion in a confidential session.
- **Bowring Café** – it was reported that a further advert had been published in the local Shropshire Star and on the Town Council’s social media accounts. It was

further noted that there had been a larger response than had been the position previously. It was hoped that any submitted Expressions of Interest would be considered at the next meeting of the Committee. Cllr Morris-Jones requested that a speedy decision be made as he was anxious to avoid any unnecessary delay and that delegated authority should be given to the Policy & Resources Committee to grant the required lease or any other arrangement following the consideration of any EOI's. Following a further discussion it was proposed by Cllr Morris-Jones, seconded by Cllr Jinks and RESOLVED that the Policy & Resources Committee be granted specific delegated authority to commence with any specific discussions and to grant the subsequent sub-lease limited to the Bowring Café following consideration of any EOI's that were received following the publication of the recent advert.

- **Tourism Office** – it was noted that the Tourism Office had recently been opened on Wellington Railway Station.
- **Police Survey** – it was noted that all Members were being requested to complete and return surveys and that copies of the survey form were available.
- **Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements** – Members were referred to this particular item which was a separate agenda item and would be dealt with later in the meeting.
- **Public Works Loan Board Borrowing Application** – Members were informed that this had been submitted but Cllr deLauney reported that the DCLG had requested a full business case which would be prepared in due course.
- **Toilet of the Year Award** – it had been agreed to be recommended that the Town Council should submit an application for this award scheme as in previous years. Members were reminded that the Town Council Toilets had been awarded the top prize in previous years.
- **Boundary Review** – it was reported that further investigations would be commenced on how this particular item could be progressed further, particularly in view of the impending developments on the edge of the Town.

**28/18 To approve the Annual Governance Statement and to authorise the Mayor's signature on the Annual Governance Statement**

Cllr deLauney reported on the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee that had received copies of the Annual Governance Statement for 2017/18 and that following consideration and review of the same the Committee had RESOLVED to RECOMMEND its approval and to request that Full Council duly authorise signature by the Mayor. Members had all received paper copies of the Annual Governance Statement and the Internal Auditor's report. Cllr. deLauney informed members that the Internal Auditor had given the Town Council a clean and clear audit report commenting on how well the financial records of the Town Council were maintained.

It was proposed by Cllr deLauney and seconded by Cllr Hosken and RESOLVED that the Annual Governance Statement for the year 2017/18 be approved and that the Mayor be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement on behalf of the Council. All were in favour. The Annual Governance Statement was duly signed by the Town Clerk and the Mayor in the presence of the Members.

**29/18 To approve the Town Council's Accounts for 2017/2018 and to authorise the Mayor's signature on the Annual Accounting Statements**

Cllr deLauney reported on the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee that had received copies of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return for 2017/18 and

that following consideration and review of the same the Committee had RESOLVED to RECOMMEND their approval and to request that Full Council authorise signature of the same by the Mayor. Members had all received paper copies of the Annual Accounting Statements and the Annual Return.

It was proposed by Cllr deLauney and seconded by Cllr Hosken and RESOLVED that the Annual Accounting Statements and Annual Return for the year 2017/18 be approved and that the Mayor be authorised to sign the relevant documentation on behalf of the Council. All were in favour. The Annual Accounting Statements and the Annual Return was duly signed by the Town Clerk and the Mayor in the presence of the Members.

Cllr Hosken requested that the Deputy Town Clerk should be congratulated on the tremendous work in the continued maintenance of the Town Council Accounts and the preparation of the Annual Accounting Statements and the Annual Return for the year ending 31st March 2018. These comments were unanimously endorsed by all Members.

**30/18 Motion – Proposed by Cllr Alvey, seconded by Cllr Hosken (due to the absence of Cllr Roberts)**

“We are very concerned at news of the imminent closure of Wellington Cottage Hospital and would ask the Borough Council to investigate this to see what can be done to save this very valuable resource for Wellington.”

This facility was initially bequeathed to the people of Wellington by the Crump Bowring Family and the Carers of Wellington will have to go out of the area if this facility is lost.

Cllr Alvey proposed the motion and outlined his own personal voluntary work over many years at the Cottage Care Trust. He referred to the previous discussions that had been mentioned during the earlier agenda item. He called on the Town Council to support the Trust and requested that further discussions be held between the Trust and the Borough Council in an attempt to reverse the closure decision. He reminded members of the tremendous work that was provided for the benefit of the Community and that the impending closure of the Trust was a huge detriment to local residents.

Cllr Hosken seconded the motion (in the absence of Cllr Roberts from the meeting). He stated that the proposed closure was devastating in his view the business model had unfortunately failed and that the Trust should be fully supported. He was fully aware of the fantastic service that was given to the Community and perhaps the Trust should have come earlier to the Town Council

Cllr McCarthy reminded members that his relative was a regular attendee at the Trust and that we needed to be aware that the broader issue was a case of an overall funding crisis.

Cllr Carter commented that the situation was a little late and that the crisis commenced a long time ago, and repeated his earlier suggestion that the relevant Cabinet Member and Senior T&W Officer be invited to attend at the next Full Council meeting.

**31/18 To receive urgent matters (for information only)**

The Clerk informed members that there was an issue with both her own and the generic [wellingtontowncouncil@telford.gov.uk](mailto:wellingtontowncouncil@telford.gov.uk) email accounts and that any emails that had been received to this account would be “lost”, however the issue was being investigated and the issue being resolved in early course.

**32/18 The date of the next Full Council Meeting – was agreed as 10th July 2018, commencing at 7:05pm.**

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