

Wellington Town Council

Town Mayor
Cllr P. Davis



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POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2ND NOVEMBER 2021

Held at Civic Offices and livestreamed on Facebook on Tuesday 2nd November 2021 commencing at 7.00pm.

S. de Launey (SdL)	A. McClements (AM)	S. Hall (SH)
P. Morris-Jones (PMJ)	J. Gorse (JG)	M. Hosken (MH)

Also in attendance - John Campion (JC) Police and Crime Commissioner, Sergeant Matt Hartley Safer Neighbourhood Team and Karen Roper Town Clerk.

93/21 Chairman's Welcome – The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced our guest speaker, Police and Crime Commissioner, Mr John Campion who was invited to address the meeting. All members had been requested to forward questions prior to this meeting and Mr Campion answered them in turn.

Mr Campion said he was re-elected in May this year and his term of office was for the next 3 years. He thanked members for the opportunity to attend this evening and said he appreciated that WTC is proactive and it is important that he engages with community leaders who in terms of the electorate are the closest to the public.

In view of recent events, could you tell us what precautions are being taken to protect women from attacks in public?

Domestic violence attacks are increasing. Are response times treated as a priority when the incidents are reported? Especially if children are involved.

Do the Police Force have any programme in place to offer any help or advice to men who physically or mentally abuse women? If the Police do not have anything in place, who is responsible for organising this kind of help?

There are Anger Management and Better Driving Programmes. Should domestic violence crimes should be treated in a similar way.

Mr Campion said responses to domestic violence are prioritised. Good 'Perpetrator' programmes are being introduced delivered by the local authorities, voluntary and community sector organisations The right interventions are there to stop crimes and invest in building healthy relationships. *AM asked how the programmes are assessed and how is the success measured.* Currently people are not forced to attend and the programme is not developed enough to measure effectiveness. More time is needed to measure the success. Every local authority is delivering the programme at senior school level.

Telephone 101 is still causing huge problems and people are constantly complaining about it. Can this service be improved as a priority please? This has been reported to you at every meeting you have attended at WTC.

Mr Campion said 101 is receiving 10,000 calls per week and the target is to answer

80% of those calls in 30 seconds. There have been problems with teams of staff off ill with Covid and over the past 6 months there have also been I.T challenges. However things were improving again and the alternative way to report is online via the website/Facebook/twitter accounts which are all treated equally together with telephone reports. Going forward the service will continue to work towards achieving the target for answering the 101 calls.

PMJ asked if there would be any advertising of the reporting systems – JC responded indicating the ‘Neighbourhood Matters’ carried the information and it all needs time to embed.

AMc said there was a lack of confidence in 101 and residents were ringing 999 for small matters because they cannot get through. JC responded 101 remains the non-emergency number 999 is about crimes in progress. The message from him is don’t give up on the phone – it will be answered or use the I.T / social media alternatives.

“Many residents have raised concerns about the lack of response to incidents late in the evening/early hours. Could you inform us how many police officers are currently deployed to cover the late night shift across Telford each evening, in particular over the weekends when incidents may be at a higher number” JC responded by saying there are at least 5 shifts / 20 officers on duty at any one time 24/7, plus armed response teams on call. There is the ability to resource up when needed. ‘Our problem isn’t lack of resources it’s that we are not good at managing the caller.’

In view of the many fatal motor crashes may I request that the PCC urges ministers to push for air bags to be inbuilt in all new vehicles? JC said he understood that supplementary restraints were being built into all new vehicles.

What can be done regarding cyclists racing through our pedestrian streets with no concern for pedestrians? PMJ added he felt the problem was getting worse with people racing from the top of the town to the bottom irrespective of it being a clearly defined pedestrian only area. JC said we need to make sure signage is appropriate and have high visibility officers who will all challenge anti-social behaviour, he felt this was a very important issue which was causing harm to communities. Sergeant Hartley said enforcement can be done by Police Officers & PCSO’s but the signage needs to be very clear and it was his intention to have a higher Police presence in the town on a regular basis. SdL said we were currently in the process of upgrading the signage but the cost was £3,800 the PCC said he had a fund that may help with that.

MH asked why the Special Constables are not used more. JC said the force had lost roughly 200 Specials and Covid had affected recruitment. Training has been an issue that would have been restarted earlier but for Covid. Efforts are now being made to bring the numbers back up to 400 over the next few years.

7.50pm The Chairman thanked Mr Campion and Sergeant Hartley for attending this evening and they left the meeting

94/21 **Apologies for Absence** - Were received and accepted from Cllrs Carter and Roberts.

95/21 **Declarations of Interest** - Cllr Morris – Jones declared an interest in Item 10 on the agenda relating to the Orbit.

96/21 **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 5th October 2021** - The minutes were proposed by Cllr Hosken as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr Morris-Jones and unanimously agreed by members.

97/21 Matters Arising

- a. **George Evans Tribute** – The Clerk reported that the rock could be moved for the sum of £700 and be repositioned in a suitable place in the Peace Garden. A price for appropriate planting to be installed around it was awaited. The Chairman said that the signage will also be upgraded as previously agreed.
- b. **Cyclist Dismount Signs** - The Clerk reported she had now received a quotation for the enforceable signs of around £3,846.96. Cllr de Launey proposed acceptance of the quotation, he was seconded by Cllr Hosken and all were in agreement. Members were appreciative that the PCC had offered to help with the cost.
- b. **SIDs** – The Clerk reported that the solar panels were currently being fitted. A request had been received from Cllr John Thompson to add a second unit to North Road. Members asked for further information regarding the most appropriate positions before the decision is taken.

98/21 Finance (Appendix 2)

Cllr Hosken proposed acceptance of items 6a-d listed below, he was seconded by Cllr Gorse.

- a. **To agree receipts** for September 2021
- b. **To agree payments** for September 2021
- c. **To Agree Petty Cash** for September 2021
- d. **Receipts/Payments** compared with budget as at 30th September 2021
- e. **Bank** – The Clerk said the TSB said they are unable to offer the Town Council a suitable account. Members asked the Clerk to write to the Chief Exec. of the TSB and question their response and to seek alternative options.

99/21 To reconsider the Stay & Thrive grant application for £300 as requested by Full Council on 12th October 2021 – The Chairman said that Full Council had requested the Grants Panel reconsider this application. Cllr McClements said the reason given for refusal was that there seemed to be a lot of money in the applicants' account but this was not a good reason to refuse a grant request of £300 as they also have large outgoings. They rely on donations supporting organisations operating in Wellington such as Maninplace, Stay, and YMCA. Cllr McClements proposed that the requested grant of £300 is paid she was seconded by Cllr Gorse, Cllr de Launey voted in favour there were 3 abstentions, Cllrs Hosken, Hall and Morris-Jones.

100/21 Regeneration Partnership Meeting held 20th October 2021 – The Chairman asked if members had any questions on the report. None were raised.

101/21 To receive a report from the Community Action Team (including the WEST) – The Town Clerk had circulated the reports. An email relating to the CCTV system had failed for some members because of its size. The Clerk would resend.

102/21 To agree the Town Council acts as loan guarantor for the Orbit. – The Chairman explained that the Orbit would like to take on a mortgage to buy the building and had asked that the Town Council act as guarantor, the building itself would offer the security for the loan. T&W Borough would need to release the Town Council from its current position of loan underwriter for the original Pride In Your High Street funding. Once the Orbit own the building it they can apply for grants to help to refurb the remainder of the building. The Chairman said he thought this was a great community asset. Cllr McClements proposed acceptance of the proposal for the Town Council to act as guarantor for the loan stating it was a fantastic community asset. She was seconded by Cllr Gorse, members McClements, Gorse, de Launey, Hall and Hosken voted in favour

with Cllr Morris-Jones abstaining.

103/21 The next meeting date was agreed as 7th December 2021

104/21 Closure of the meeting – Cllr de Launey proposed to close the meeting to the press and public during consideration of the next items of business in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Local Government Act 1972 and was seconded by Cllr Gorse. Cllrs. de Launey, Gorse, Hosken, Hall, McClements and Morris-Jones voted in agreement.

Chairman.....7th December 2021