



Serving Our Community

ANNUAL MEETING

GREATER WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

21ST MAY 2024

.....
IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor D Hales, Councillor Smith, Councillor C Hales, Councillor Henfrey,
Councillor Elgie, Councillor Berry, Councillor Jordan, Councillor McArdle,
Councillor Jackson,
Emma McCann, Deputy Town Clerk (DTC)

.....
Meeting started at 6.45pm

1. WELCOME

The Deputy Town Clerk welcomed everyone to Greater Wellington Town Council's Annual Meeting 2024. She thanked Councillor D Hales for her term of office as Town Mayor for 2023-2024. Councillor D Hales then stood down.

2. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

The DTC then asked if there were any nominations for the Town Mayor's position. Councillor Smith nominated Councillor D Hales
Councillor Berry seconded the nomination.
No further nominations were received.

Resolved 1. That Councillor D Hales is appointed as Town Mayor.

Declaration of Acceptance of office by the Town Mayor

After reading the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, Councillor D Hales passed the signed and dated forms to Emma McCann, Deputy Town Clerk who witnessed the signature.

3. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

Councillor Berry nominated Councillor Smith
Councillor D Hales seconded the nomination.
No further nominations were received.

Resolved 1. That Councillor Smith is appointed as Deputy Town Mayor.

Declaration of Acceptance of office by the Deputy Town Mayor

After reading the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, Councillor Smith passed the signed and dated forms to Emma McCann, Deputy Town Clerk who witnessed the signature.

4. APPROVAL OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Tinsley, Councillor Savage and Helen Cogdon Town Clerk.
Proposed Councillor Smith
Seconded Councillor Berry

Signed by the Chairperson.....
Dated: 13th June 2024

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL MEETING ON THE 16TH MAY 2023 (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

In order to facilitate business, the minutes of the last Annual Meeting had been ratified at the next available meeting on the 11th July 2023.

Resolved 1. The minutes of the 16th May 2023 as printed and circulated have already been approved and taken as a true record.

Proposed Councillor Elgie

Seconded Councillor Berry

6. TO APPROVE THE ORDINARY MEETING MINUTES HELD ON THE 9TH APRIL 2024

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 9th April 2024, as written, and circulated were agreed as a true record.

Councillor D Hales signed the minutes.

Proposed Councillor Berry

Seconded Councillor Jackson

MATTERS ARISING (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

7. TO APPROVE THE STRUCTURE, COMPOSITION AND DELEGATED POWERS OF THE COUNCIL

i) To approve Steering Groups if and when required

The DTC said this approach had been effective in previous years and suggested it continues.

Proposed Councillor D Hales

Seconded Councillor Berry

Resolved 1. To establish Steering Groups if/when required to develop projects.

ii) To appoint a Staffing Sub Committee Members

Resolved 1. To appoint a Staffing Sub Committee. Consisting of Councillor Berry, Councillor McArdle, Councillor Henfrey, Councillor Smith, Councillor D Hales, Councillor Jackson

The terms of reference are to be agreed but the committee will make recommendations to full Council if/when required following consultations.

Proposed Councillor C Hales

Seconded Councillor Elgie

Resolved 1. To appoint the Staffing Sub Committee members as listed who will make recommendations to full council for approval.

iii) To appoint the Willington and Tow Law Three Towns Partnership Board Representative

The DTC said Greater Willington and Tow Law parish council's have a seat on the AAP board. Thanks were extended to Councillor Elgie who has been on the Board for a number of years.

After a discussion with the AAP, it was agreed that we could have a main representative and a deputy who could attend if the main representative was unavailable.

Councillor Smith was selected as the main representative and Councillor Jordan would be the Deputy.

Proposed by Councillor D Hales

Seconded by Councillor C Hales

Signed by the Chairperson.....

Dated: 13th June 2024

Resolved 1. That Councillor Smith is the AAP G.W.T.C representative and Councillor Jordan is to be Deputy in the absence of the named representative.

2. That the DTC informs the AAP Coordinator.

8. TO APPROVE THE 2023/2024 DRAFT ACCOUNTS OF GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL (APPENDIX 1)

Internal Auditor, Geoff Siddle was welcomed to the meeting, and he reported as follows. This short report highlights some of the major income and expenditure shown in the financial reports. Year on year comparisons of income and expenditure in total are difficult as the Council embarks on different projects and activities from year to year.

1. Total Income year on year was broadly similar; -
No VAT reclaim this year – expected reclaim outstanding is in the region of £10k.
Income received for projects.
Fun & Food £1,619
Autumnus Mabon Feast £7,034
Welcome Space £2,026
2. Building Refurbishment
Down from £16,487 to £5,336
3. Christmas Lights
£13,478 up from £10,540
4. Family Fun Day July 2023
Expenditure £9,682
Offset by income of £2,556
5. Autumnus Mabon Feast
Expenditure £12,743
Offset by income of £7,034
6. Gone from 2023
Northern Heartlands £4,000
Home and Away £13,668
Jubilee Events £7,483
7. Utilities/Telephone fairly similar
Insurance slightly higher

Thanks were extended to Geoff for all the work he has undertaken in providing us with our internal unaudited accounts.

Geoff said that having looked at the Accounts it shows the amount of work that GWTC does for the community. He said that thanks to the Town Council that all the projects and events have been able to take place.

The information contained in the draft accounts is summarised in the Annual Return and will be submitted as part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

The DTC said the accounts were a true record of income and expenditure and recommended that the accounts are approved.

Proposed Councillor Smith

Seconded Councillor C Hales

Resolved 1. That the draft accounts represent a true record of income and expenditure.

Signed by the Chairperson.....

Dated: 13th June 2024

**9. CONSIDERATION OF THE GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
2023/2024 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
RETURN**

i) Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/2024 (Appendix 2)

The DTC said it is the Council's responsibility to ensure that there is a sound system of internal control when dealing with financial matters and the arrangements for the preparation of the accounting statements included within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. AGAR.

She can confirm that the council has taken measures to address items 1 – 9 within the Annual Governance Statement

This was approved.

Proposed by Councillor Smith

Seconded by Councillor C Hales

Resolved 1. that the Annual Governance Statement supports the council's Financial Regulations policy.

ii) Section 1 Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/2024 (Appendix 3)

The DTC said during the financial year ended 31 March 2024, the Council's internal auditor acting independently, and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2023/2024 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in the table.

Listed are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions.

With reference to Items A – M and O in all significant respects, the control objectives have been achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority. Item N was noted that to comply with the Regulations, the Council will make sure to comply with this objective of providing the electors with 30 working days to inspect the accounts.

This was approved.

Proposed Councillor McArdle

Seconded Councillor Elgie

Resolved 1. That the annual internal audit evidence that the required controls and procedures are in place to ensure effective financial management for 2023-2024 and that we comply fully with the Regulations going forward.

iii) Section 2 Accounting Statements 2022/2023 (Appendix 4)

The DTC said that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

This was approved.

Proposed by Councillor D Hales

Seconded by Councillor McArdle

Resolved 1. That the Annual Return submission process is implemented in accordance with timescale agreed with the auditor Mazars. The submission of AGAR to Mazars is the 30th June 2024. The deadline by which the unaudited AGAR must be approved and published is also 30th June 2024.

Signed by the Chairperson.....

Dated: 13th June 2024

The financial information will be available to residents for the exercise of their public rights, by appointment to commence on the 18th June 2024 for thirty working days which will end on 29th July 2024. A public notice will be published to advertise the period of public rights, including the submitted AGAR at least one day before the commencement of the 30 day period which will be the 17th

2. The deadline for publishing audited accounts and Notice of Conclusion of Audit is 30th September 2024.

3. Unaudited Accounts are approved at this meeting and published within the Annual Report.

4. Final audited accounts will be added to the Council Website.

iv) To endorse the Financial Regulations Annual Review (Appendix 5)

Financial Regulations are a key document which all councils should have. They govern, set-out and detail how your council conducts, controls and manages its financial affairs. NALC have released a new updated version of the Financial Regulations recently and it has been recommended that we take our time and review the changes so that it adapts to suit our council's size and structure. We can look at adopting these new Financial Regulations at our next ordinary meeting.

The Financial Regulations Policy has been made available to Members but due to the amount of changes required to meet our councils needs, it would be better to defer this.

Resolved 1. That the Financial Regulations are deferred until the next Ordinary Meeting of GWTC. The DTC will work alongside the Mayor and Deputy to look at the changes.

Proposed by Councillor Berry

Seconded by Councillor C Hales

v) To appoint the Responsible Financial Officer

Resolved 1. That Emma McCann is the Responsible Financial Officer for 2024-2025.

Proposed by Councillor McArdle

Seconded by Councillor Berry

vi) To approve the continuation of cheque signatories and the RFO's delegated powers for expenditure up to £500

Proposed by Councillor Smith

Seconded by Councillor C Hales

Resolved 1. That the cheque signatories are reviewed and updated. The following will be cheque signatories; Emma McCann DTC, Councillor Henfrey, Councillor D Hales, Councillor Smith and Councillor Jordan.

2. That the RFO's delegated powers for expenditure up to £500 are approved and contained within Standing Orders.

3. To continue with the two signatories per cheque rule.

vii) To appoint an Internal Auditor

Geoff Siddle has been the Internal Auditor for a number of years and provides a robust financial service.

The DTC proposed that he is retained for 2024/2025.

Proposed by Councillor Jordan

Seconded by Councillor Elgie

Resolved 1. That Geoff Siddle continues to be the Town Council's Internal Auditor.

Signed by the Chairperson.....

Dated: 13th June 2024

10. TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL RISK ASSESMENT REPORT (Appendix 6)

The DTC reported on the Risk Management Statement which is reviewed on an annual basis to inform the council’s insurance policy. The Insurance Policy is renewed in 1st June each year. The Council uses Zurich Municipal for insurance cover.

This year’s quotation is £2,442.70.

The cover is from 1st June 2024 to 31st May 2025.

The DTC has contacted other Insurers for quotes and they have not been able to match the current provision that we have.

Proposed by Councillor McArdle

Seconded by Councillor Jackson

Resolved 1. That the Risk Management Statement provides an accurate and appropriate assessment of risk

2. That Zurich Municipal provides the Town Council insurance policy 2024-2025.

11. TO APPROVE THE RFO’S DELEGATED POWERS TO UPDATE INSURANCE POLICIES WHEN NECESSARY

Emma McCann asked for approval for the delegated powers to update the insurance policies when necessary.

Proposed by Councillor D Hales

Seconded by Councillor Smith

3. That the RFO has delegated powers and continues to update the insurance cover required as and when necessary

12. TO APPROVE THE STANDING ORDERS ANNUAL REVIEW (Appendix7)

Standing Orders have been made available to members and no comments for amendments have been received.

Members are requested to endorse the Standing Orders Policy in May each year.

Proposed by Councillor Berry

Seconded by Councillor McArdle

Resolved 1. Unless affected by changes in statutory powers that the Standing Orders will continue to be subject to an annual review.

13. TO APPROVE COUNCIL POLICIES

The DTC said that the annual audit and review of council policies had been undertaken.

Councillors are able to access these documents at any time and were made available prior to the meeting.

- Protocol for member/officer relations
- Member Code of Conduct
- Equal Opportunities
- Diversity Statement
- Safeguarding Policy
- Community Engagement
- Public Participation Policy
- Anti-fraud and Corruption
- Policy on Reserves and Restricted Funds
- Publication Scheme
- Freedom of Information Charging Policy
- Councillor and Employee Expenses
- GDPR Data Retention and Disposal Policy

Signed by the Chairperson.....

Dated: 13th June 2024

- GDPR Information and Data Protection Policy
- GDPR Privacy Policy
- Allotment Policy

Resolved1. To approve the annual review of the policies identified and as described above.

Proposed by Councillor C Hales

Seconded by Councillor Smith

14. TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL REPORT

The DTC said that two events had been omitted from the Annual Report that was circulated prior to the meeting but has since been added in. New copies will be circulated following the meeting.

Proposed Councillor Elgie

Seconded Councillor Jackson

Resolved 1. That the 2023/24 Annual Report is approved with the addition of the two events.

15. TO APPROVE THE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2024/2025

Councillor D Hales asked if the Council would consider meeting on a different night in the week.

The DTC reminded Councillors that the Youth Club will be starting in June, and this will be on a Monday evening, PACT meetings are usually held on a Thursday (the third or fourth week), AAP meetings take place on a Thursday bi monthly.

After discussion, it was agreed to meet on a Thursday.

Resolved 1. To meet monthly on a Thursday after checking when PACT and AAP meetings are held.

2. To have a recess in January and August.

3. To circulate a schedule of meetings to all members and display in public spaces

Proposed by Councillor Smith

Seconded by Councillor Berry

16. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON ONGOING COUNCIL BUSINESS

Councillor D Hales gave the following update;

Following an AAP event held at Willington Cricket Club, Councillor Smith and myself made links with the Rural Design Centre, who are working with DCC to deliver UKSPF Community Infrastructure projects.

Following a series of emails and teams meetings, we have secured a grant to cover the cost of replacing the roof of our building.

We are continuing to work with Rural Design Centre on other projects to improve facilities within the building and to hopefully create a community hub, which is more appropriate to the needs of the community.

Following notification of the A690 works, I contacted Councillor Elizabeth Scott who holds the portfolio for Economy and Partnerships, and following a series of emails, Councillor Smith and I are taking part in a Teams Meeting with Rachael Smith to discuss the proposals.

As you know, we have visited the school councils from our Primary Schools and they will be coming to the Town Council to present their views on Willington and what they would like to see/do/happen. We hope you can support this.

Signed by the Chairperson.....

Dated: 13th June 2024

Finally, we have the following events taking place and I hope you will be able to support them;

National Thank You Day – 5th June 2024 at 10.30am. If you know of any unsung heroes of the Parish, we need their names. They will be invited to a small event where tea, coffee and refreshments will be available. The nominees will each receive a certificate and chocolates.

D-Day Competition – Closing date 30th May 2024. We are asking people to design a poster on ‘Liberation’.

D-Day Event 10am – George Burdon McKean Memorial – we will be joined by the school councils of our Primary Schools and Parkside Academy. A short service will be held, flags will be raised, wreaths laid. Everyone is welcome. We require three councillors to raise the flags.

D-Day Event 9pm – Prior to the lighting of the Beacon, there is an international tribute to be read out. Any councillors who would like to read part of this tribute, please let us know.

The DTC explained that the Welcome Space was due to end at the end of May but asked if this would continue a little longer. Members agreed to extend the provision until mid-July. It would end as the schools break up for the summer holidays.

17. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed.

Signed by the Chairperson.....

Dated: 13th June 2024