



Serving Our Community

**ANNUAL MEETING  
GREATER WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL  
16th May 2023**

.....  
**IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillor Henfrey, Councillor Smith, Councillor Elgie  
Councillor Berry, Councillor Tinsley, Councillor D Hales, Councillor C Hales,  
Councillor Jordan, Councillor McArdle  
Emma McCann, Deputy Town Clerk  
Helen Cogdon, Town Clerk  
.....

**1. WELCOME**

The Town Clerk welcomed everyone to Greater Wellington Town Council's Annual Meeting.

She thanked Councillor Henfrey for his term of office. Councillor Henfrey then stood down.

Councillor Tinsley expressed his appreciation of Councillor Henfreys service in the community.

**2. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR**

The Clerk then asked if there were any nominations for the Town Mayors position.

Councillor Smith nominated Councillor D Hales.

Councillor Berry seconded the nomination.

No further nominations were received.

**Resolved 1.** That Councillor Dorothy 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 Helen Cogdon, 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 Angela 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 Helen Cogdon, Town Clerk who witnessed the signature.

Signed by the Chairman.....  
11<sup>th</sup> July 2023

**5. APPROVAL OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Savage.

**6. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL MEETING 17<sup>th</sup> MAY 2022  
(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 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

Resolved 1. The minutes of the 17th May 2022 as printed and circulated have already been approved and taken as a true record.

Proposed Councillor Tinsley

Seconded Councillor Henfrey

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

i) To approve Steering Groups if and when required

Councillor Hales said this approach had been effective in previous years and suggested it continues.

Proposed Councillor Berry

Seconded Councillor Hales

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

ii) To appoint a Staffing Sub Committee

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

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

Proposed Councillor Berry

Seconded Councillor C Hales

**Resolved 1.** To appoint a Staffing Sub Committee who will make recommendations to full council for approval.

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

The Clerk said Willington and Tow Law parish council's have a seat on the AAP board.

Councillor Elgie was selected

Proposed by Councillor Tinsley

Seconded by Councillor Henfrey

**Resolved 1.** That Councillor Elgie is the AAP G.W.T.C representative

**2.** That the Clerk informs the AAP Coordinator.

**8. TO APPROVE THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022/23**

The Clerk gave the following financial report.

She has worked with the council's accountant to carry out the Internal audit and the draft statement of accounts.

Financial highlights of some of the major expenditure for the year ending 31 March 2023 in the financial reports show that;

Year on year comparison of income and expenditure in total are difficult as the council embarks on different project and activities.

1) Total income was slightly higher than the previous year largely due to VAT rebates of £18,262.

Signed by the Chairman.....

11<sup>th</sup> July 2023

- 2) Continuing building refurbishment cost £16487 lower than the previous years £45820.
- 3) As in previous years the Council provided Christmas lighting at a cost of £10540 which is very much in line with past expenditure.
- 4) The accounts show expenditure in advance of £5088 relating to the Family Fun Day 2023.
- 5) Events and activities relating to the Queen's Jubilee cost £7483 offset by related income of £2957.
- 6) Activities under the Home and Away banner cost £13668 offset by related income of £2957.

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

Proposed Councillor Berry

Seconded Councillor Hales

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

## 9. CONSIDERATION OF THE 2022/2023 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN

### i) Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 (appendix 2)

The Clerk said it is the Councils 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 Berry

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

### ii) Section 1 Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/223 (appendix 3)

The Clerk said during the financial year ended 31 March 2023, the Councils 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 2022/23 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 this table.

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

With reference to Items A – 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.

This was approved.

Proposed Councillor Elgie

Signed by the Chairman.....

11<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Seconded Councillor Smith

**Resolved 1.** That the annual internal audit evidences that the required controls and procedures are in place to ensure effective financial management.

**iii) Section 2 Accounting Statements 2022/2023 (appendix4)**

The Clerk said that for the year ended 31 March 2022 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 Berry

Seconded by Councillor Smith

**Resolved 1.** That the Annual Return submission process is implemented in accordance with timescale agreed with the auditor Mazars. The submission by email date is 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023. The deadline by which the unaudited AGAR must be approved and published is also 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

The financial information will be available to residents for the exercise of their public rights, by appointment on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 for thirty working days.

**2.** The deadline for publishing audited accounts and Notice of completion 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

**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)**

The Financial Regulations Policy has been made available to Members and no comments have been received.

Members are requested to endorse the Financial Regulations Policy and an annual review in May each year.

Proposed by Councillor Berry

Seconded by Councillor Smith

**Resolved 1.** That the Financial Regulations provide appropriate guidelines for the management of the Councils business and financial matters.

**v) To appoint the Responsible Financial Officer**

**Resolved 1.** That Helen Cogdon is the Responsible Financial Officer

Proposed by Councillor Berry

Seconded by Councillor Smith

**vi) To approve the continuation of cheque signatories and the Town Clerks delegated powers for expenditure up to £500**

Proposed by Councillor Berry

Seconded by Councillor Hales

**Resolved 1.** That the existing cheque signatories remain the same, namely Councillor Tinsley, Councillor Henfrey, Councillor Elgie, Councillor Smith and Helen Cogdon. New members will be added to the account.

Signed by the Chairman.....

11<sup>th</sup> July 2023

New Members will need to submit the necessary paperwork to the Co Operative Bank and supporting identity evidence to proceed.

2. That the Town Clerks 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 provided a robust financial service.

The Clerk proposed that he is retained for 2023/2024.

Proposed by Councillor Smith

Seconded by Councillor Hales

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

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

Helen Cogdon 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 1<sup>st</sup> June each year. The Council uses Zurich Municipal for insurance cover.

This year's quotation is £2308.15.

The cover is from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024.

Councillor Smith asked for two more insurance quotations.

Proposed by Councillor Smith

Seconded by Councillor Hales

**i) To approve the Town Clerks delegated powers to update insurance policies when necessary.**

Helen Cogdon asked for approval to continue with the delegated powers to update the insurance policies when necessary.

Proposed by Councillor Hales

Seconded by Councillor Berry

**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 2023-2024.

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

**11. 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 Hales

Seconded by Councillor Smith

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

**12. TO APPROVE COUNCIL POLICIES**

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

Signed by the Chairman.....

11<sup>th</sup> July 2023

The documents have been circulated to members and hard copies given in Induction Packs.

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

After due consideration and discussion, all existing policies due for their annual review were approved.

Staffing policies are to be reviewed throughout the year. Until this time, if necessary, members and staff will follow Durham County Council guidelines and regulations contained in The Green Book.

Proposed by Councillor Hales

Seconded by Councillor Smith

**Resolved 1.** To approve the annual review of the policies identified and as described above.

#### **14. TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL REPORT**

Proposed Councillor Hales

Seconded Councillor Elgie

**Resolved 1.** That the 2022/23 Annual Report is approved

#### **15. TO APPROVE THE SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2022/2023 (APPENDIX 8)**

**Resolved 1.** To meet the second Tuesday of the month on a bi monthly basis.

**2.** To have a recess in January and August.

**3.** To approve the draft timetable of meetings and to meet at 6pm.

Proposed by Councillor Hales

Seconded by Councillor Smith

#### **16. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Town Council 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 6.00pm

Annual Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 at 6.00pm

Annual Parish Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 at 6.30pm

Signed by the Chairman.....

11<sup>th</sup> July 2023