

**WIVELISCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL
LIBRARY WORKING GROUP MEETING
Held at Community Office, Wiveliscombe
Wednesday 15th January 2025 at 6.30pm**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr T Parker (Chair) Cllr R Wilson, Cllr B Wilson, Cllr F Higginson

CLERK: Mrs Sarah Towells

OTHER: None

APOLOGIES: Cllr Gaines

24/19LWG Apologies: As noted above

24/20LWG Declarations of interest: There were none.

24/21LWG Minutes from meeting held on 04th December 2024: It was resolved to approve the minutes.

24/22LWG Public consultation: It was resolved to defer this item to the next meeting.

24/23LWG Any other relevant issues: Cllrs B Wilson and R Wilson reported to the group how the Nether Stowey Library ran. It seems that all the other community Libraries researched really were community libraries. Most are run by a charity solely established to run the library, they fundraise independently with limited or no grant funding from the parish/town council, they have a solid team of volunteers who operate the library during opening hours, they pay no rent for premises, they offer the space and/or run additional unrelated sessions outside library opening times, they pay for either a part time librarian or a project lead.

The working group had requested feedback on users/footfall of the Wiveliscombe library from Somerset Council but are being told this is not possible and not a good use of the Librarians time to research this. Wiveliscombe Town Council need the footfall figures to enable us to find a way forward. Cllr Parker would look at a way of researching post codes within the ten parishes and this could then be sent onto Somerset Council in the hope they will then be able to let us have the figures.

24/24LWG Way Forward: Wiveliscombe Town Council will not have enough S137 money to continue funding the library as we currently are and certainly too much of a risk to enter into another like for like 7-year contract. The working group felt the best way forward was one of two ways:

- To have a single contract with Somerset Council to pay wages only and WAP or another charity take over fully running the library with all additional costs to be found via other sources of funding. OR
- To have a single contract with WAP or another charity and pay them a set amount of up to 50% of our S137 money. They take on the contract with Somerset Council to pay the librarian and all associated costs to be found via other sources of funding.

Both of the above options would come with the guaranteeing cover of any rent shortfall of the library premises, up to the current rate of £3600 per annum, if all other sources of funding have fallen short. (Note - this offer will help the charity secure a lease.)

It is therefore recommended that The Town Council agree to putting the above proposal to WAP for their thoughts and feelings before going out to public consultation.

24/25LWG Items for next meeting: There were none

24/26LWG Date, time and place of next meeting: Thursday 23rd Jan 2025 at 4.00pm in Wiveliscombe House.

Meeting closed at 8.05pm