

WELLS CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT WELLS TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 9th FEBRUARY
2012 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Cllrs: T Robbins (the Chairman); C Price (Deputy-Mayor) ;
D Anderson; M Brandon; T Butt Philip.

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: F White; RFO: S Luck.
Cllr N Kennedy.

12/13F APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

D Unwin (The Mayor); Cllrs: S Davies (approved); H Siggs (substitute for Cllr Davies); J North.

12/14F DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST None.

12/15F MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12th JANUARY 2012

Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, seconded, approved and signed.

12/16F MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Cllr Kennedy was invited to speak to items arising later in the meeting.

12/17F FINANCIAL REPORT

The accounts were scrutinised and bank statements checked prior to the meeting. The accounts for January 2012 were proposed, seconded and approved.

12/18F IT AND WEBSITE REVIEW

All office contracts and services are being systematically reviewed; information was presented by the Town Clerk and RFO; some contracts have been re-negotiated. Problems arise due to complexity and inflexibility of current IT services; options were discussed and quotes will be sought. It was agreed in principle to reduce the number of IT providers involved and bring some services in-house.

12/19F CIVIC EVENTS COSTS

The Committee is aware two Freedom Awards, visit by HMS Somerset, Olympic Torch and Games, Queen's Diamond Jubilee, will all take place in the next few months. It was agreed that any under-spend in the current year's Hospitality Budget will be earmarked into 2012-13, to help cover the costs.

Members are asked to be aware that costs arising in relation to forthcoming civic events should be notified to the RFO for the attention of the F & GP Committee by the end of March if possible.

Cllr Price reported from a briefing meeting at MDC regarding the Olympic Torch: The Torch will pass through Wells on 22nd May; everyone attending the briefing was obliged to sign a confidentiality agreement, so no other information can be disclosed. The City Council has been asked to return a Risk Assessment for the event to MDC by 17th February.

12/20F TOILETS AT 2 TOWN HALL BUILDINGS

The Chairman summarised the situation and reported on urgent remedial work required; after careful consideration it was agreed no further redress can be sought from the designer or supplier. It was proposed and seconded that the Council accept full responsibility for the maintenance of the toilet block and the Town Clerk and RFO be authorised to arrange for the necessary work to be done

as a matter of urgency. A vote was taken and the motion carried: RESOLVED.

12/21F EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was be proposed by the Chairman that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended, excluding the press and public, due to the confidential nature of the next two items considering business contracts: RESOLVED.
(Cllr Kennedy was invited and remained present).

12/22F PROPERTY LEASE

Matters relating to a property lease were considered.
All the Council's properties were inspected last year in the course of insurance valuation inspections.

12/23F SURCHARGE ON LATE PAYMENTS

To make a surcharge of 2% after 28 days on late payments, at the discretion of the RFO: proposed and seconded; a vote was taken and the motion carried: RESOLVED.
A specific case was considered; the action recommended by the RFO was approved.
The meeting was re-opened to the press and public.

12/24F ANY OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT

- i. The Town Clerk reported from the Urban Forum meetings with Mendip District Council:
 - a. There is potential for changes to the MDC Public Toilets contract after 2014.
 - b. The current Ground Maintenance Contract has been extended for the 2012 season; MDC is tendering a new Core Contract; additional services will be available for town and parish councils to buy into.
 - c. The subject of the next Forum will be Strategic Asset Transfer.

The Committee agreed to write to MDC expressing concerns about changes to the Ground Maintenance contract and the cost implications; the City Council needs details of any changes in time for the next budget.
The Chairman will ask District Councillors to answer questions on these matters at the next City Council meeting.

- ii. The Mayor had asked the Chairman to convey an invitation to the Council to attend Evensong at the Cathedral followed by the unveiling of the Harry Patch Memorial Stone at the Museum on Sunday 6th May.

12/25F DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be at **7.00pm on Thursday 8th March 2012**