



WELLS CITY COUNCIL
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES
COMMITTEE, WHICH MEMBERS ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND,
WILL BE HELD AT WELLS TOWN HALL
ON THURSDAY 7TH DECEMBER 2023 AT 6:00PM

Please note this meeting will be recorded for the purpose of minute-taking.

Steve Luck
Town Clerk/RFO

30th November 2023

Town Hall
Market Place
Wells BA5 2RB
01749 673091
e-mail: townclerk@wells.gov.uk

Committee Members:

Cllrs: J Browne (Chair), T Butt-Philip, D Denis,
S Eden, N Kennedy, D Orrett, S Powell,
G Robbins

AGENDA

Wells City Council has declared a climate emergency. Each agenda item must consider the impact on any policy and decision.

- 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022.
- 3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5TH OCTOBER 2023 (Outside Spaces, Wells in Bloom, Portway Annexe)**
- 4 MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**
Public speaking time is normally restricted to 15 minutes in total, at the discretion of the Chair.
- 5 OUTSIDE SPACES**
The Town Clerk to provide an update.
- 6 CLIMATE EMERGENCY**
Cllr Denis to present:
 - i. Wells Environment Network meeting report (attached below, pages 3,4))
 - ii. Climate Emergency Working Group Report (attached below, page 5)
- 7 WELLS IN BLOOM**
Cllr Denis to provide an update.

8 ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm Thursday 1st February 2023 (Recreation Ground & Bishop's Barn)

EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Note: If it is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence it will 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, in order that confidential items can be discussed.

Agenda Item 6(i)

WEN Notes from Meeting Held 8 November 2023

Apologies – Jo Stevenson, Simon Nash, Deborah Aubrey. Atha Murphy, Gordon Folkard, Georgie Robbins, Barbra Lakin, James Mochrie

Present- Sarah Powell, Maddy Milne, Deborah Orrett, Pete Newberry, David Coghlan, Les Cloutman, Bob McCartney, Guy Braga, Stewart Crocker, Denise Denis

1. WEN Events 2024-Cathedral School and Blue School are happy to collaborate in finding a date next October for events to take place in Cedars Hall and possibly on site at the Blue School, bearing in mind half term holidays and the Blue School restrictions on staffing out of hours. Possible weekend could be 11/12/3 October. DD suggested that Bob and Pete liaise directly and then get back to WEN.
2. Bob McCartney informed the meeting that the Lands Tribunal has imposed the application from Cornerstone (on behalf of Vodafone) to erect a 14m tall 5 G mast on the Beckynton Playing Fields and work is due to start 24/11/23 and complete early 2024. The Cathedral had put in an opposition to the application in 2020 but are unable to counter this decision at this stage due to the legal decision. There will be a monitoring of the radio wave frequencies after the mast is erected. Denise added that the Council has recently voted to abandon the 5G Precautionary Principle due to the legal restrictions and cost on making objections.
The Cathedral School has pledged to give the £9000 compensation monies to Wells environment groups. Denise asked the Wells groups such as Wells and District Wildlife, Strawberry Line and Sustainable Wells to send in a request for funding based on what they feel would help improve local biodiversity and involve young people and communities in Wells.
3. Updates:
Wells and District Wildlife Group- are holding monthly wildlife talks in the Museum through the Winter, have organised a pond repair at Mendip Cemetery and Fungi Foray at Stockhill Woods and are looking to start working with Beavers/Cubs and Brownies to offer activities like pond dipping. Barn owl box available to offer to the Cathedral School. Currently need more members to step up to become proactive and join the committee.
The Cathedral School- 2023 Annual Review of Sustainability was very good. Electricity is from a Zero Carbon supplier, Air Conditioning and other appliances are powered by a ground source pump, no glyphosphates, electric powered vehicles are being introduced, and food is locally sourced.
The Blue School- Also working well to support biodiversity- planting 350 trees, clearing ponds, creating wildflower meadows with 30 students on a vocational programme. Pete is also a Natural England Warden at Ebbor Gorge.
Sustainable Food Somerset- 2023 Food Trail was a success- 165 enterprises took part and several 1000 people were engaged in learning where food is produced locally. The next big event will be a 2-day Conference at the Bath and West Show Ground in November 2024, in conjunction with Somerset Council and will showcase the food system from farming through production to the food on our tables.

SWT Team Wilder – Guy introduced himself as working with projects all over the county to kick start communities to take on wilding in their own areas such as churchyards, parks, cemeteries, verges. Recent workshop in Glastonbury Town Hall led by Climate Change Officer delivered a Climate Adaptation Toolkit. Will refer the interest expressed by Wells City Council to replicate in Wells.

Deborah Orrett- Well City Council has had request from a resident to make a Sensory Garden in the Recreation Ground, and this could have elements that encourage biodiversity.

There is a desire to introduce a 20mph speed limit throughout Wells- which is being explored.

Streetlighting- Wells CC could request night-time dark skies after midnight, which is being explored.

Sustainable Wells- Make and Mend on 29 November, Next Freecycle and Repair Café will be 27/28 January. There will be a compostable Xmas wreath-making workshop 11 December at the Portway Annexe.

Tor Hill Lane Project- SW is applying for an extension of the licence in December. It has been a successful project to date with some unusual insects like the oil beetle being spotted. The grass was recently cut by the Somerset contractors (in error) so the volunteers will do a rake up this coming weekend and plant wild flower seeds.

Sarah Powell- 4 Councillors attended 3 zoom sessions from the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) Course in October which has resulted in plans to develop resilience and look at improving biodiversity in Wells City

Denise Denis- attended CAT Carbon Literacy Course which will help inform the mitigation and adaptation needs of Wells- recent online survey has helped provide feedback from local community. Wells CC Outside Spaces team have taken on an allotment to provide a base for more sustainable management of the planters, 4 at the bus station are being trialled for a more sustainable planting of perennials and bulbs.

4- Next meeting date – Tuesday 16 January 2024 at 6pm in the Town Hall

Agenda Item 6(ii)

Climate Working Party Report- 23/11/2023

Outcomes from meeting held 3 November.

1. Improved knowledge of grants and means to achieve energy savings in older properties through Somerset Council and Centre for Sustainable Energy which is looking to set up a monthly drop in in Wells.- Cllr Denis liaising with Atha Murphy (Centre for Sustainable Energy) who will provide a drop in advice session at the Portway Annexe on 8/12/23 and is looking to book a stand on Wells Market with a view to a monthly drop in in Wells next year. Also, Maddy Milnes Avalon Community Energy can provide small grants and advice and is looking to partner with Mendip Councils. She is now in touch with Atha Murphy (CSE) and a small grant was given for a carpet to an applicant as a result.

2. EPC ratings-James Mochrie checked out the following: bulk Energy Performance Certificate information. The resource is [Energy Performance of Buildings Data England and Wales](#). You need to create an account (it's free) and search the area you need and download. Wells properties coming at category D or less, this was under 5000.

We need to decide how and if and why EPC ratings are useful- many maybe out of date. Infra Red Sensors maybe be useful to assess areas needing to be targeted if energy information and grants are to be targeting energy-leaky homes.

3. Bulk purchasing solar panels in a community- no action as unlikely to be effective at present. Cllr Denis has been informed of a planning application from Rode, Frome which maybe of interest-Bluebell Wood Solar Farm, and it is now live and available to view on the [council website](#).

4. Dark Skies- reduce hours for street lighting. Cllr Powell provided the link <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/reduction-in-street-lighting-in-somerset/> Somerset :will also work and support local Parish, Town, and City Councils in reducing the number of streetlights we leave on during the hours of darkness, when vehicles and pedestrians are least likely to be present. This must be driven and supported by the residents, and is known as part night lighting, which means switching off the lights in suitably identified areas between 12 midnight and 5.30am **Any part night conversions to existing street lights must be funded by the local Parish, Town, or City Council's. This needs to be a Council decision- This Group would like to make a proposal to Full Council to proceed with a consultation with residents in 2024 under the Climate budget.**

5. Encourage our schools and other public buildings to decarbonise and install renewable energy. Assistant Deputy Clerk Claire Woodland attended an online Salix training session for information on decarbonisation and installation of renewable energy through Government funding. The Portway Annexe is undergoing a major repair and renewal of more energy efficient parts to the boilers. The Portway Annexe should then be able to meet a higher EPC rating along with the other energy efficiency improvements eg loft insulation and pipes lagging.

The Town Clerk is preparing to provide quotes for window repairs at the town Hall- will need Planning Application.

Other carbon reductions-linen tablecloths and serviettes for civic ceremonies (no longer disposable) and caterers have been reminded of plastic free policy.

6. Climate Emergency Risk Assessment – Cllr Denis met with Town Clerk (Steve Luck) and it was agreed the current risk assessment needs updating for contact numbers, recognising current changes in climate and potential effects on Wells communities. This will be a suitable task for the apprentice who is joining the staff on Monday 27 November. **This group will request that Outside Spaces becomes a depot for sand as well as grit (Climate Budget?)**

Cllr D Denis 27.11.23