

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 14TH DECEMBER 2023 AT 7:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, S Cursley (Chair), G Folkard, T Robbins, H Siggs, I Von Mensenkampff, P Welch

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: S Luck
WCC Staff: S Glendinning
Somerset Cllr: T Munt
2 members of the Public

23/113/FCM APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Cllr: T Pullin (Mayor)

23/114/FCM DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022.
None received

23/115/FCM MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9TH NOVEMBER 2023:
The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.

23/116/FCM MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
Karen Deverill spoke in support of a potential Youth Club in Wells, run by the YMCA. A presentation was given to Full Council in November. Karen had worked for the YMCA for around 20 years and is fully aware of the benefit informal education can bring to our young people. Wells does not have any Youth Club facilities available. The Committee thanked Karen for her comments and she left the meeting.

23/117/FCM FINANCE
i. To receive the Finance Reports for November 2023
The Town Clerk presented the November monthly reports and clarified details when asked to do so by members. The accounts and expenses for November 2023 were approved by the committee.

23/121/FCM UNITARY AND ACQUISITIONS

The Town Clerk brought this agenda item forward in the meeting to discuss before the Budget

The Town Clerk advised that Somerset Council have signed a further contract with IDVerde until April 2025. As a result, this prevents Wells City Council from taking over the control of these assets. There is, however, some suggestion that the toilet block in Union Street Car Park maybe dropped from the contract and passed to Wells City Council.

In January 2024 it has been agreed for five local City/Town Clerks to meet with senior Somerset Officers with a view to all working together on the devolution of services and assets.

23/118/FCM BUDGET 2024-2025
The Town Clerk presented 'draft three' of the budget. It was proposed to increase the contingency to £100,000 for any devolution of services from Somerset, this will be ring-fenced and can only be spent with the agreement of the Finance Committee. The budget also included a £15,000 provision for Youth work.
This was proposed by Cllr Robbins and seconded by Cllr Welch and agreed by a majority vote.

The budget was agreed and will go to Full Council in January 2024 for approval. The proposed precept is £1,178,497 showing a rise of 2.54%.

23/119/FCM BUS STATION WAITING ROOM

A proposal has been received to set up a small café in the Bus Station waiting room, offering teas/coffee and small snacks like biscuits/cake. It was felt the bus station area was quite bleak and this would provide bus users with the ability to obtain refreshments whilst waiting to travel. After a discussion with the members it was agreed that the Town Clerk would consult with Somerset Council and First Bus and assess the viability of this proposal.

23/120/FCM ARCHIVES AND CIVIC ASSETS

Cllr Siggs advised he was awaiting some information in order to finalise the Civic Review.

23/121/FCM UNITARY AND ACQUISITIONS

This agenda item was discussed earlier in the meeting. See above.

23/122/FCM ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

The Town clerk advised a Planning Application has been submitted for the Old Post Office for change of use to a restaurant.

23/123/FCM DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm, Thursday 11th January 2024

EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Note: It is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence, it was proposed by the Chair that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended to allow a private report.

Minutes signed by The Chair: **Date:**