

## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> JULY 2021 AT 7.00PM

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillors: L Agabani, S Briton, S Cursley, R Humphreys, A l'Anson, S Johns, T Leach, S Powell, T Pullin, T Robbins, J Rust, P Welch (Mayor)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk/RFO: S Luck  
WCC Staff: C Hobbs, A Westwood, K Westwood, Mace Bearer C Price  
Cllr T Munt (County Council), Cllr A Ayres (Mendip District Council)  
4 Members of public

**21/118/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM MEMBERS**  
Cllrs: J Browne, J Osman

**21/119/C DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 27<sup>th</sup> July 2012:  
None received.

**21/120/C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021**  
Cllr Briton commented as follows:

- I. 21/108/C Cllr l'Anson agreed to raise with St Cuthbert Out PC the impact of the Third Party submission to the Armchair Field Planning Appeal which was funded by Wells and St Cuthbert Out residents.
- II. 21/109/C Interviews for the Sustainability Officer post to take place in late July.
- III. 21/112/C Votes against to include my name.

21/115/C Cllr Briton asked if the report to Full Council from our County Councillor could routinely be made available on the WCC website. The Town Clerk agreed.

**21/121/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**  
Jenny Williams (Member of the public) enquired about the Staffing Committee procedures after the resignation of Cllr O Hartley and was assured by the Town Clerk that the Vice Chair will step in until the next meeting.

**21/122/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- I. The Mayor asked for a Minute's Silence to mark respect for Nancy Dodd who was a Freeman of the City of Wells and who had passed away.
- II. Welcome back to Cllr T Robbins.
- III. Arrangements are being made for a joint concert between the Cathedral School and the Blue School to raise money for the Mayor's Charity.
- IV. The Tourism Brochure which the city council supported financially has gone to press.
- V. The Unitary Authority decision had been made and the One Somerset version was successful. Discussions with leaders of Somerset County Council and Mendip District Council will take place.

#### **Mayor's Diary**

1. 18<sup>th</sup> July – Tortoise & Hare Ride. Cllr Cursley attended Wells Football Club to start the ride, select the best bike and present the awards.
2. 24<sup>th</sup> July – Wells Community Day & evening event at Cedars Hall.
3. 25<sup>th</sup> July – Little Eat: Wells pop-up market was cancelled due to weather warnings.
4. 13<sup>th</sup> August – Abba Sensation concert at Bishop's Palace, attending with the Mayoress.
5. 5<sup>th</sup> September – Climate Change Emergency seminar at Wells Cathedral.
6. 19<sup>th</sup> Sept – Commemoration of the Battle of Britain, St Cuthbert's Church.

- 21/123/C ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR**  
Cllr Humphreys nominated Cllr Cursley and Cllr l'Anson seconded. All Councillors voted for the proposal. Cllr Welch (Mayor) welcomed Cllr Cursley as the new Deputy Mayor.
- 21/124/C MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021.  
The Chair presented the minutes and asked for questions.  
Cllr J Rust requested that with reference to page 2 of the minutes, that the consideration of Portway Annexe being devolved to Wells from Somerset County Council might be approached again. S Luck (Town Clerk) confirmed that an enquiry would be made again.
- 21/125/C MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
To receive the minutes of the meetings held on 1<sup>st</sup> July and 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021.  
The Chair presented Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> July and Vice Chair presented minutes for the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July and asked for questions. None received.
- 21/126/C MINUTES OF THE ARCHIVES & CIVIC ASSETS COMMITTEE**  
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July and asked for questions. None received.
- 21/127/C MINUTES OF THE PORTWAY ANNEXE COMMITTEE**  
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> July  
Cllr Briton thanked Cllr l'Anson and Cllr Agabani for their work on the Community Day and Public Consultation. The Open Day at the Portway Annexe will be held on 31<sup>st</sup> July between 10am and 4pm.  
Cllr J Rust enquired re 21/44PAC and the payment schedule of the drawdown loan. The Town Clerk informed her that the repayments would be 6-monthly.  
Cllr Rust enquired as to the proposed method of distribution for public consultation. Cllr l'Anson responded that the decisions are still to be made, but the Wells Coronavirus Network may help and the consultation will be online too.
- 21/128/C MINUTES OF THE CITY CENTRE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**  
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> July. The Open Spaces team were commended on their hard work during the pandemic.  
I. Submission made for the new design of the Skatepark..  
II. Cllr l'Anson commented that in section 21/09 there is a reference to Market Street bollards and should read Market Place bollards.
- 21/129/C MINUTES OF THE WELLS RECREATION GROUND TRUST COMMITTEE**  
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021.  
The Town Clerk informed the meeting that paperwork had been received from Solicitors and that the information will be forwarded to Councillors and that there has been significant progress.
- 21/130/C CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY EMERGENCY COMMITTEE**  
To discuss the WCC support for the Stop Ecocide international campaign.  
<https://www.stopecocide.earth/>  
Cllr Briton recommended that Wells City Council sign up to this Global campaign for the protection of the environment that makes environmental damage a criminal offence. Cllr l'Anson suggested that support be sought from the Wells MP and that a vote should be taken.  
Cllr Powell voiced some reservations regarding individuals being held to account, rather than larger bodies.  
Cllr Briton explained that the campaign is an attempt to hold people to account for damage caused.  
Cllr Rust praised the campaign and suggested that Councillors sign as individuals rather than sign up as a Council.

Cllr Humphreys confirmed she would sign and enquired as to who had signed individually. Cllr Briton confirmed that she had done so.  
Cllr Briton clarified that a proposal was not required but for the meeting to take a vote. The meeting voted against the proposal.

**21/131/C AWARDS WORKING GROUP**

An update will be available at the next Council Meeting in September 2021.

**21/132/C BUS BACK BETTER CAMPAIGN**

Cllr Rust thanked Cllr Powell and Cllr Pullin for their completed questionnaires and urged other councillors to participate.

**21/133/C DRAFT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**

To agree, subject to changes following Committees review in August.  
The Town Clerk informed the meeting that 26<sup>th</sup> August has been allocated to discuss the council's committee structure and has requested that Councillors give the matter consideration beforehand.

**21/134/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

None received.

**21/135/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Munt (County Council) – Expressed her sadness on the passing of Nancy Dodd and acknowledged the contribution she made to Wells. Cllr Munt confirmed that the decision had been made on Unitary and that all 4 District Councils and the County Council will be abolished and the One Somerset unitary proposal adopted. Cllr Munt requested that Wells City Council consider by-elections returning to only taking place on Thursdays to minimise confusion.

MDC Cllr Ayres – Reported that low staffing and Covid are still having an impact on bin collections but that the service is trying not to miss collections in the same place. Cllr Ayres announced that grant and funding deadlines have been extended. New funding for Community and Eco projects extended to 30<sup>th</sup> September and others to Friday 13<sup>th</sup> August. Regional final of Young Trader of the Year would take place on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

Cllr Agabani requested that the workload of the member of staff responsible for cleaning the Wells City streets be considered and suggested that further assistance is required to cope with the workload.  
Cllr Pullin echoed this and that due to increased visitors to the City, the bins in the park are piled high and are a risk to children playing there.

**21/136/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT**

Cllr Rust made the meeting aware that the St. Thomas ward electoral register is incorrect and that there is a discrepancy with some addresses in Wookey Hole Road actually in St Cuthbert Out parish. This could have an impact on by-election results. Mendip District Council have confirmed that challenges to election results need to be made within 21 days of the election.

**21/137/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Wells City Council will be at **7pm on Thurs 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021**

**Minutes signed by The Mayor:** ..... **Date:** .....