

## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2022 AT 7.00PM

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Cllrs: L Agabani, S Cursley, D Denis, A l'Anson, S Johns, N Kennedy, T Leach, S Powell, T Robbins, P Welch (Mayor)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk: S Luck  
TC Assistant C Woodland  
WCC Staff: K Westwood, A Westwood, C Hobbs  
Archivist: Dr Julia Wood  
Mace Bearer: M Goody  
SCC Cllr T Munt  
8 members of the Public

**22/47/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM MEMBERS**

Cllrs: A Bayley, J Browne, R Humphreys, J Osman, T Pullin, J Rust

**22/48/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.

**22/49/C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 24<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022**

Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, seconded, confirmed as a true record and were signed by the Mayor.

**22/50/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

The Mayor informed Wells City Council members that a letter had been received from Elim Connect Centre in relation to the provision of Outreach work and removal of their funding by Mendip District Council. This letter has been distributed to all city and Mendip district councillors, as well as county Councillor Munt. Cllr L Rogers (MDC) has sent a written response to the Town Clerk.

P Kingston (Outreach worker from Elim Connect Centre) reported on the Centre's dismay at the removal of the Outreach service from them after 10 years' service by Mendip District Council and refuted the claims made against the service.

A brief discussion took place about the uncertainty surrounding the consultation process and the possibility of the Elim continuing their work. A suggestion was made that a MDC Officer be invited to give an explanation to a City Council meeting.

N Fraser (Member of public) spoke briefly to thank Wells City Council for the purchase of the Portway Annexe for the Community.

Cllr A l'Anson thanked N Fraser for his support on the project.

**22/51/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor's Charity started with a target of £3000 but is now approaching £15000

**Mayor's Diary**

30<sup>th</sup> Apr Mayor's Charity Fundraising Concert, Wells Town Hall  
1<sup>st</sup> May Mayor greets 300 Harley Davidson motorcycle ride through Wells  
2<sup>nd</sup> May Jazz Collective concert for Mayor's Charity, Wells Market Place  
2<sup>nd</sup> May Civic Night, Wells Little Theatre  
7<sup>th</sup> May Opening of Wells May Fair, Market Place  
8<sup>th</sup> May Somerset Day Evensong, Wells Cathedral  
10<sup>th</sup> May Open Coffee Morning, Heads Up

**22/52/C**

**RETIREMENT PRESENTATION TO DR JULIA WOOD**

A presentation was made to Archivist Dr J Wood by the Mayor on her retirement after working for Wells City Council for 13 years.  
Dr Wood thanked the Council and relayed her pride that the City and Cathedral Archives have been retained within the City. She expressed her thanks for being given the privilege to have worked with such a wonderful collection of archives. She also said how much she enjoyed working with the Staff and Councillors.

Cllr N Kennedy was presented with his Freeman of the City badge by the Mayor.

**22/53/C**

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022

Cllr A l'Anson reported that an application has been made proposing 50 houses in Armchair Field in St Cuthbert Out which was recommended for refusal on five points.

Cllr A l'Anson asked that anyone with objections should submit them to MDC.

The Mayor thanked Cllr A l'Anson and Cllr J Rust for their hard work on the Planning Committee.

**22/54/C**

**MINUTES OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE**

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Cllr L Agabani reported that the Outside Spaces has a busy time ahead with the acquisition of the Bishop's Barn and Portway Annexe. He expressed his thanks to Cllr J Osman for alerting the City Council to the possibilities of buying the Portway Annexe as a venue for the Community and his passion and drive in initiating the business plan.

**22/55/C**

**UNITARY AND ACQUISITIONS**

The Town Clerk reported that the 28-day period of public consultation on the transfer of the Wells Recreation Ground Trust started on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April. The start of June looks hopeful for the transfer of the Bishop's Barn and recreation ground to Wells City Council. Discussions are taking place with MDC regarding the centrally managed contract for the maintenance of the grounds.

The Town Clerk and Town Clerk Assistant have attended online meetings with the Unitary Team. Pilot schemes of the local community networks are ongoing. Practicalities of local government reorganisation in relation to Wells City Council are being looked at regarding assets and services.

A new Councillors Code of Conduct has been adopted and will be ready for the new Council.

**22/56/C**

**CALENDAR OF MEETINGS AND ENGAGEMENTS**

The new Calendar of events was presented to the meeting.

Cllr N Kennedy requested information about attendance of Councillors at the May Fair.

**22/57/C**

**TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr S Johns reported that the Sports Club is facing a problem with the business rates that it pays. Mendip District Council has said that the club is no longer eligible for 100% rate relief due to the rifles club coming under the Sports Club lease which means that the club technically has two properties. This would mean that the football club alone would have to pay £11,124 per annum. In total the whole club would be paying £15,033 every year. It is possible to claim 50% rate relief but the district council has not yet confirmed this.

The Sports Club committee decided to seek legal advice on this and £1000 will be put aside to cover the cost in the first instance.

WCC would like to take on the freehold of the club post local government reorganisation which would mean we will be collecting the rent but not have any say over the rates.

The amount paid in rent is also substantial, the football club alone pays £8,539.

The football club has decided to expand its car park to add another 24 parking spaces including 3 disabled spaces. This will be at the expense of the junior football pitch. What type of surface they use for it will very much depend on the budget.

The Mayor had asked if they would like to give some demonstrations for the jubilee celebrations in June. The rifles club is only licensed to shoot in the club and the club hosts a junior football tournament the weekend prior so they are talking to the Mayor about involvement.

Cllr T Robbins suggested that perhaps the rates issue regarding the joining of the clubs having an impact on rate relief should have been considered. He hoped that other avenues be sought prior to any loss of Junior football pitches.

Cllr E Hobbs (MDC Councillor) also expressed his concerns should there be any loss of junior pitches in favour of parking spaces.

**22/58/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

Cllr T Munt reported that she is collating statistics regarding accidents that occur in Queen Street and requested that any information from anyone who has been injured please forward that information.

A suggestion was made to request information from certain shop keepers and alternatively Wells Community social media. Cllr T Munt explained that it would not be appropriate for her to gain information herself but she is available should anyone have relevant information on the subject.

Cllr A l'Anson reported that a meeting had taken place with SCC Officer M Prince and MDC Officer K Knight regarding traffic calming schemes.

**22/59/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT**

The Mayor thanked all members of the City Council and all City Council Staff for hard work during his time as Mayor.

Cllr N Kennedy thanked the Mayor for his successful chairmanship and community work in the past 18 months which had been appreciated by everyone.

Cllr T Munt (SCC) explained that until 31.03.2023 Mendip District Councillors will still be in post.

Cllr A l'Anson said he has enjoyed his years on Wells City Council, he is not standing as a Councillor next term and he praised his fellow Councillors for their hard work. He also thanked the Town Clerk and all the Staff for their hard work running the Council. He hopes to return after the election to work on the Neighbourhood Plan steering group.

**22/60/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Wells City Council will be Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022, 7pm

**EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Note:** If it is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence, it will be proposed by the Mayor that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended.

Please visit our Wells Neighbourhood Plan page at [www.wells.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan](http://www.wells.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan) to view documents.

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