

## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023 AT 7.00PM

Written reports can be viewed on the Agendas

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Cllrs: L Agabani, J Browne, T Butt Philip, S Cursley, D Denis, S Eden, D Orrett, S Powell, T Pullin (Mayor), G Robbins, T Robbins, H Siggs, I Von Mensenkampff, P Welch

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk: S Luck  
Town Clerk Assistant: C Woodland  
WCC Staff: C Hobbs  
Mace Bearer: C Price  
Somerset Councillor: T Munt  
3 members of the Public

**23/73/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
Cllrs: G Folkard and N Kennedy

**23/74/C COUNCILLOR LETTER**  
A request had been submitted from Cllr N Kennedy to be granted 6 months leave of absence. It was not necessary to discuss this as Cllr N Kennedy had attended a recent Council meeting.

**23/75/C DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**  
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

**23/76/C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2023**  
Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor. Cllr D Denis requested an update on correspondence to ICB and MP James Heapey re 23/56/C. The Town Clerk informed the meeting that he was awaiting a reply but had received acknowledgment.  
Cllr D Denis 23/64/C reported that the first Councillors' WCC Workshop had taken place with a second one planned for 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 7.15 at the Portway Annexe.

**23/77/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**  
Adrian Lawrence (Proprietor of The Crown Inn, Market Place) spoke to the meeting about the negative impact that the May Fair had had on his business as well as others in the Market Place. He questioned the suitability of Fair currently held as the Charter Fair, due to generator fumes and noise and requested that alternatives be considered such as a more traditional style Fair, perhaps organised by a local organisation.  
Cllr P Welch suggested that the matter be discussed at Full Council meeting. A discussion took place and the suggestion was that it be discussed initially at the Outside spaces meeting.

**23/78/C POLICE REPORT**  
The Police were unable to attend but sent a report (attached)  
The Town Clerk informed the meeting that youths who have been displaying anti-social behaviour in the Town Hall and around Wells are being dealt with by Police.

**23/79/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Mayor's Diary**

- i 25<sup>th</sup> May, Wells u3a 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Wells Town Hall, Deputy Mayor attending
  - ii 25<sup>th</sup> May, Lord-Lieutenant gathering, Bridgwater
  - iii 3<sup>rd</sup> Jun, Bath Mayor Making, Bath Abbey & Guildhall
  - iv 4<sup>th</sup> Jun, Book Launch, Wells Museum
  - v 7<sup>th</sup> Jun, Somerset Morris Ladies Afternoon Tea, Crandon Springs
  - vi 11<sup>th</sup> Jun, Royal British Legion Summer Concert, Bishop's Palace
  - vii 19<sup>th</sup> Jun, Summer Production of 'Oliver!', Cathedral Prep School
- Cllr T Pullin (Mayor) thanked everyone involved in the Mayor Making ceremony.

**23/80/C TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND TO ELECT COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

**Committees**

- i. Finance and Council Matters - Cllrs: L Agabani S Cursley, G Folkard, T Pullin (Mayor), T Robbins, H Siggs, I Von Mensenkampff, P Welch
  
- ii. Outside Spaces and Estates – Cllrs: J Browne, T Butt Philip D Denis, S Eden, N Kennedy, D Orrett, S Powell, G Robbins
  
- iii. Planning and Environment – Cllrs: L Agabani, S Cursley, D Denis, G Folkard, D Orrett, S Powell, G Robbins, I Von Mensenkampff
  
- iv. Staffing – Cllrs: - L Agabani, S Eden, G Folkard, T Robbins, H Siggs, P Welch

**Management Groups**

- v. Portway Annexe – Cllrs: S Cursley, D Denis, S Eden, D Orrett,
  
- vi. Bishop's Barn and Recreation Ground – Cllrs: L Agabani, S Powell, I Von Mensenkampff, P Welch

**23/81/C TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

- Police & Community Together (pact) - Cllr S Eden
- Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) - Cllr H Siggs
- District Health & Well-being Board - Cllr I Von-Mensenkampff
- Chamber of Commerce & Tourism - Cllr L Agabani
- Wells Twinning Association - Cllr J Browne
- Wells Sports Clubs – Cllrs: D Orrett, S Powell
- Citizens Advice (CA) Management Committee - Cllr D Denis
- Wells Carnival Committee – Cllrs: T Robbins, H Siggs
- Connect Centre - Cllr P Welch
- Sustainable Wells – Cllrs: D Denis, G Robbins
- Somerset Council Local Community Network (LCN) – Cllrs: P Welch, Cllr L Agabani
- Somerset Bus Partnership - Cllr D Denis
- Wells Heritage Partnership (For Wrgt) - Cllr S Powell

- City Of Wells Almshouses Trustees – Cllrs J Browne, S Cursley, S Powell, T Pullin (Mayor)
- Wells Museum Trustee - Cllr G Robbins
- Mendip Community Credit Union - Cllr T Butt Phillip

**23/82/C TO APPROVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S STANDING ORDERS AND OTHER MATTERS**

Annual Reviews To resolve that the Finance and Council Matters Committee shall ensure the following are reviewed for presentation to Council during the year:

- i. Standing Orders
- ii. Financial Regulations and related matters

iii. Committees' terms of reference and related matters  
Annual reviews required under Standing Order 5j  
Cllr H Siggs proposed to approve the arrangements for review of the Council's Standing Orders and other matters. Cllr T Butt Philip seconded. The meeting voted unanimously for the proposal.

**23/83/C OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE**

Cllr L Agabani presented the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023

i. To consider changing meeting schedule from monthly to every two months.  
The Town Clerk suggested that the Outside Spaces Committee discuss at the next meeting, a schedule which will be the most useful for them.

Cllr S Powell reported that the Open day at the Bishop's Barn welcomed 100 people and thanked M Johnson (OS Officer) for his hard work. The survey responses are in the process of being reviewed. Cllr D Denis thanked Cllr S Powell for her hard work on this Open day.

**23/84/C FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE**

Cllr T Pullin presented the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023

No questions were received

The Town Clerk reported that the Internal Audit had taken place on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

**23/85/C PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Cllr D Denis presented the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and asked that it be noted that a submission error had been made on Item 9 but this had been corrected.

**23/86/C TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS/TRUSTEES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

No reports were received.

The Town Clerk requested that any Trustees please submit any reports in good time prior to meetings to give officers time to add to the agenda.

Cllr D Denis reported that Rosa Kell is the new Manager of the Bus User Group. There will be a stand on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> June at the Bus Station encouraging people to use buses.

Cllr D Denis reported that Sustainable Wells have a poster for the Environment Network Day.

**23/87/C REPORT FOLLOWING LAST COUNCILLORS SURGERY ON 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY**

Councillors in attendance: Cllrs H Siggs and I Von Mensenkampff

No public attendance. Nothing to report.

**23/88/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCILLORS**

A report was received late afternoon on the day of the meeting and is attached.

**23/89/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT**

Cllr P Welch requested that consideration is made about another Awards ceremony after a successful event in 2021

A discussion took place about possibly combining it with Wells in Bloom, but that it is a large undertaking to organise and sponsorship is needed.

The Town Clerk suggested that dates will need to be identified as early as possible if this is to proceed.

**23/90/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Wells City Council will be **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023, 7pm**

**EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

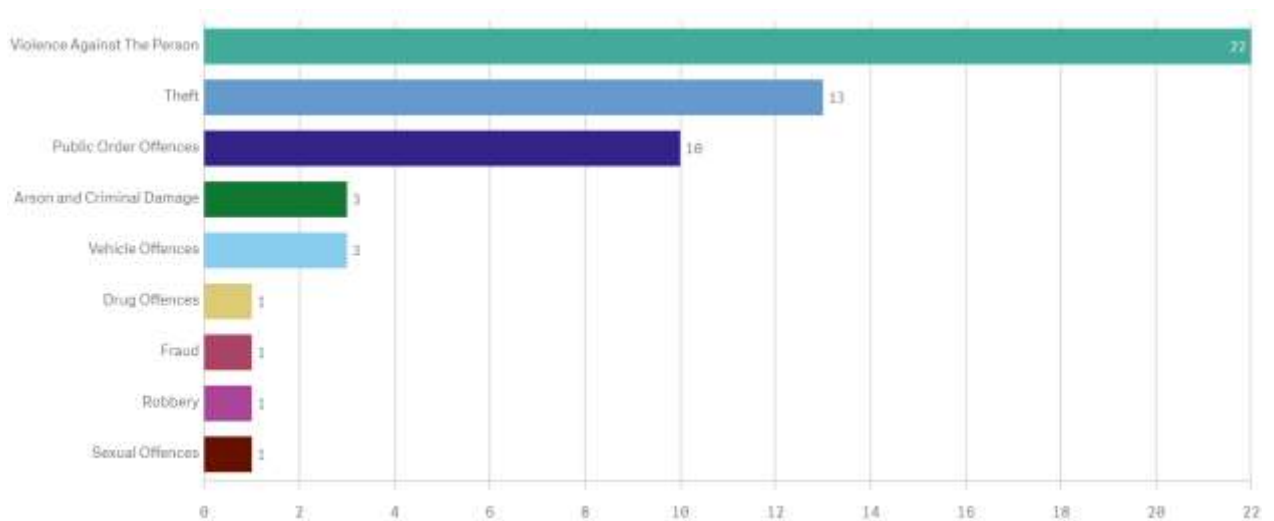
**Note:** If it is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence, it will be proposed by the Mayor that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended.

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

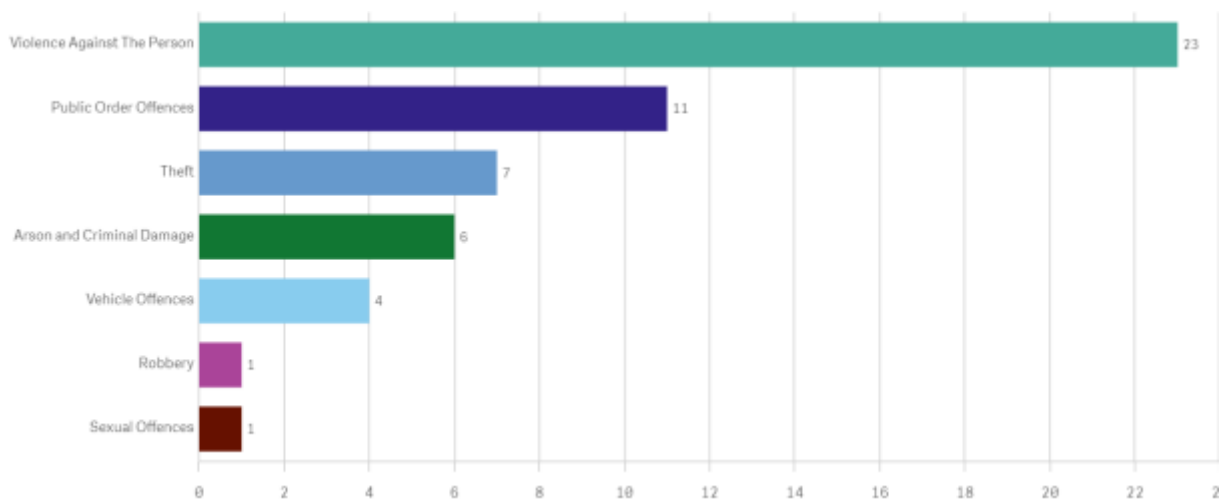
Please visit the above website, where you can enter the post code or city where you live and will be able to find a more detailed crime report by crime type and details of your local neighbourhood team with meetings and priorities that have been set for your area.

[A short summary of incidents for April 2023](#)

During the month of April 2023, the police have received 182 calls in relation to Wells City which has resulted in 58 recorded crimes with the majority being 22 Violence Against the Person Offences, 13 Thefts and 10 Public Order Offences.



We've seen a slight increase from the same time period last year, April 2022 where police received 177 calls relating to Wells City resulting in 52 recorded crimes with the majority being, 23 Violence against the Person Offences, 11 Public Order Offences and 7 Thefts. The increase is very slight and could be due to several factors. However, with the main increase being in thefts, there is a chance this could be linked to the 'cost of living crisis' or something similar.



## **PRIORITIES**

### **Anti-Social Behaviour -**

Several local businesses, residents and visitors have been approaching members of the Wells Neighbourhood Team to voice their concerns around a noticed increase in Anti-Social behaviour (ASB) in the city. The concerns raised were related to drunkenness, homelessness, begging, untidy/unsightly public areas and gathering of youths in the Cathedral Green, Market Place, and High Street areas of Wells, as well as several of the local shops and supermarkets. Our response to this was to initially make it one of the team's priorities. We then set up a team report where any reported/recorded incidents of this nature are linked all in one place. This has helped us gather intelligence and information, build a bigger picture of the issue as a whole and has allowed us to tailor our patrol plans effectively, taking any necessary action, as well as proactively engage with residents, businesses, and visitors in our city. Wells NPT will continue with the work we are doing and encourage you and anyone you may know to officially report incidents of this nature at your earliest convenience. This will help ensure we can take positive and appropriate action, whilst supporting any individuals who require it, following any potential reported incidents.

### **Speeding –**

Speeding is an ongoing and continued priority for The Wells Neighbourhood Policing Team. Local officers are regularly conducting speed checks in areas throughout Wells City and its surrounding villages at all times of the day/night. You may not always see us but if we happen to be in your area, you may receive a small note through your door stating 'you might have missed us' We have started doing this to help reassure residents that local officers are out tackling this issue even if you do not to see us. We do not always post the notes either so if you do not receive one, we may have still been nearby.

We as a team also aim to support our local Community Speed Watch (CSW) groups and often join members during their scheduled sessions. The results that come back from all sessions in our area are then fed back to Avon and Somerset Police and 'repeat speeder' visits are then conducted by The Wells Neighbourhood Policing Team. In most cases this will be in the form of an initial word of warning, followed by education. However, enforcement action can be taken if appropriate at the time.

### **Organised Begging -**

The Wells Neighbourhood Policing Team continue to engage with any beggars we come across when out on patrol. We will always begin by safeguarding these individuals in the first instance, directing them towards places of support, including the Connect Centre and the Mendip Outreach Team. We have seen a small handful of beggars re-enter the city that are known to police and have previous reports linked to them for organised begging within Avon and Somerset. We work closely with our Anti-Social Behaviour Team in order to protect our community from these individuals and will continue to do so.

## **GOOD NEWS**

**Successful Bike Marking Event Held at Halfords, Wells – PCSOs Donna President, Samuel White and Kayleigh**

Hallett held a successful Bike Marking event at Halfords this month with a great turn out. Our next event is scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> August, 15:00 – 17:00 at the Wells Recreation Ground. It would be great to see as many people there as possible so spread the word or look out for our posters/social media posts in the run up.

**Cuppa with a Copper** – This month Neighbourhood officers Dan Williams, Darren Pearson and PCSO Kayleigh Hallett attended the Wells Blue School to engage with students whilst handing out hot chocolates. This happens once a month and allows students to have a positive input from their neighbourhood team, raise any concerns they may have or to ask us any questions they have about the roles that we do, or anything else for that matter.

**Come Meet us @ Wells marketplace:** In order to remain visible to our community, Wells NPT will now have a table at the Market place every other Wednesday and Saturday (where operationally possible). This will allow member so the community to seek support advice and guidance if needed. Some tables will be themed to raise awareness of specific subjects of public interest.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June** – Come meet us @ Wells Market Place for a ‘Violence Against Women and Girls’ themed table.

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June** – Come meet us @ Wells Market Place – 10:00 – 13:00  
OR - Wells Library – 11:00-12:00

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June** – Come meet us @ Masbury Garden Centre – 11:00 – 12:00

### ANY QUESTIONS?

The police service is only as good as the relationship it has with the public. For our part we must work to build on trust and confidence by working to the highest standards and responding effectively to your needs.

I ask you to engage with your local team to let them know of any information or concerns you may have about crime or antisocial behaviour.

If this is an emergency, please use the 999 system, for reporting non-emergency incidents and crimes this can be done via 101 or online is also an effective method of keeping us informed at

We are here to serve you, so whatever you need from us, please get in touch!

## **Somerset Councillors' report to Wells City Council – May 2023**

### **Council Finances**

Work is ongoing to finalise the accounts of the county and district councils for 2022/3, and going forward one set of accounts will cover the new Somerset Council.

Financially the situation remains incredibly tight. More detail is likely to be available after the publication of the draft accounts for 2022/3.

### **Local Government Reorganisation**

Having come into existence last month, the structures of the new unitary are now becoming operational.

#### **Planning**

The first Area East Planning Committee met on 2<sup>nd</sup> May and decided upon four items. The next meeting is scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> June.

The intention is for the Area East Planning Committee to meet at 2pm on the first Tuesday of the month at Shape Mendip. Cllr Alex Wiltshire (Mendip South) has replaced Cllr Theo Butt Philip (Wells) as member of the committee.

#### **Licensing**

The new council has also now dealt with its first licensing application for Wells – the Sheep and Penguin received support from the Licensing sub Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> May.

#### **Other matters**

Many of the other functions previously delivered by the district councils continue to be delivered under the same arrangements and contracts as before, work is on-going to bring these under one set of arrangements.

### **Somerset Council AGM**

Following the Council AGM on Wednesday, the Executive for 2023/4 is as follows:

- Cllr Bill Revans (North Petherton) Leader of the Council and Executive Lead Member for Governance & Communications
- Cllr Liz Leyshon (Street) Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Lead Member for Resources & Performance
- Cllr Tessa Munt (Wells) Executive Lead Member for Children, Families & Education
- Cllr Dean Ruddle (Somerton) Executive Lead Member for Adult Social Care\*
- Cllr Mike Rigby (Lydeard) Executive Lead Member for Transport & Digital
- Cllr Adam Dance (South Petherton and Islemoor) Executive for Public Health, Equalities & Diversity
- Cllr Theo Butt Philip (Wells) Executive Lead Member for Transformation & HR\*
- Cllr Sarah Dyke (Blackmoor Vale) Executive Lead Member for Environment & Climate Change
- Cllr Ros Wyke (Mendip West) Executive Lead Member for Economy, Planning & Assets
- Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts (Taunton South) Executive Lead Member for Communities, Housing & Culture



#### \* New appointment

Cllr Mike Best (Crewkerne) remains as Chair of Somerset Council, Cllr Lee Baker (Taunton North) replaces Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey (Taunton East) as Deputy Chair of Somerset Council.

#### Local Community Networks

The first meeting of the Wells & Rural LCN will take place on Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> June at 6pm in Priddy Village Hall.

At the first meeting the LCN will elect its Chair and Vice Chair (one of whom must be a Somerset Councillor), and will likely also discuss future meetings and priorities.

Given there will be a City Council meeting the week before, the City Council may wish to add an item on its June agenda to consider the agenda for the following week's LCN.

#### **Contacting Somerset Council**

The Council's new website can be found at the same address: [www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk)

The new phone number for Somerset Council is: **0300 123 2224**, there's also a general enquiries email address: [generalenquiries@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:generalenquiries@somerset.gov.uk)

Somerset Council's Customer Service Team runs the Customer Service Point in Wells Town Hall, every Wednesday and Friday 10am-1pm, 2pm-4.30pm.

#### **Buses**

Somerset Council now owns Wells Bus and Coach Station and we hope there will be opportunities to improve the maintenance of the site in the near future – please feed back any comments on how it can be improved. We are, of course, very aware of the need to improve maintenance.

We remain in touch with the bus operators regarding replacing the out-of-date timetables.

The recently-announced extension of the bus recovery grant, and the £2 bus cap until the autumn, then rising to £2.50 for a further 12 months is excellent news, protecting the future of the of many of our bus services (including the 126 for the near future).

Conversations between Somerset Council, North Somerset Council and the bus operators continue with a view to bridging the gap between Axbridge and Weston-super-Mare, caused by the withdrawal of that leg of the 126 last year. We hope to have positive news on this in the near future.

#### **Traffic lights**

The signal recovery project remains on schedule. Work at Strawberry Way south (near Lidl) was completed on time. Work at Wookey Hole Rd/Portway has begun and will continue until the autumn, before commencement of the final works at East Liberty.

#### **20mph**

We are continuing to work to agree the necessary next steps towards implementation of a city-wide 20mph zone, and will report back on this at the next meeting.

#### **Theo Butt Philip and Tessa Munt**

#### **Somerset Councillors for Wells**

**25th May 2023**