

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 3rd NOVEMBER 2022 AT 7:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani (Chair), T Butt Philip, D Denis, S Eden, D Orrett, S Powell

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk/RFO, S Luck
Outside Spaces Officer, M Johnson
SCC Cllr T Munt
WCC Staff: S Glendinning
2 Members of the public

Non-attendance: Cllr E Knott

22/61/OSE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllr N Kennedy

22/62/OSE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 26th July 2012.
None declared.

22/63/OSE MINUTES OF THE CITY CENTRE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 6TH OCTOBER 2022

The minutes were presented and agreed and signed as a true record.

22/54/OSE The Town Clerk gave an update on the heritage trees in the allotment.

22/55/OSE Cllr Denis advised the Skateboard park fund raising event held at Cedars Hall on 8th October raised £2,000.

22/58/OSE Cllr Denis asked whether the windows in the offices at the Town Hall could be fitted with secondary glazing to cut down on the heat loss. The Town Clerk explained this was not possible as they are the old galvanised window style.

22/64/OSE MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

Nobody wished to speak.

22/65/OSE OUTSIDE SPACES

- i. Skateboard park
The Town Clerk advised an email had been received from the skateboard charity asking for an update on the land at the leisure centre. As this is all tied up with unitary, no further action can be taken currently.
- ii. To receive an update from the Outside Spaces Officer
The Outside Spaces Officer stated that the team were preparing for the winter plant out in the City.

Wells in Bloom (WIB)

Cllr Agabani explained he had attended a meeting with Cllrs Powell, Denis and the Outside Spaces Officer to take a review of WIB. Cllr Powell advised there is a shortfall in the WIB scheme. £7,000 is received from all WIB sponsorship but the cost is around £11,000 (this figure does not include staff costs). They are looking into the following:

- to increase sponsorship by approaching larger local companies to make the scheme cost neutral
- to advertise all sponsors involvement via the WCC Website/Facebook.
- to use more drought tolerant plants to cut down on watering.
- to review the perimeter of planting.
- to involve volunteers.
- to ensure staff working out of hours should be given time in lieu.

The same group will meet again in a month's time.

Cllr Denis gave an update on the WIB presentation evening which had taken place on 14th October. It was promoted in the local press before and after the event, 75 people attended and the presentation given by the volunteer judges was excellent. Only two WCC councillors had attended. A post event meeting has been arranged to review and consider improvements for next year on Monday 14th November, 2pm, at the Town Hall. Councillors were invited to attend and get involved.

22/66/OSE CEMETERY PRICE LIST

There is a 5% increase on costs for 2023. This has been set after a review of local cemeteries. The committee agreed to proceed with the new price list.

Cllr Powell questioned what the provision was for purchasing extra land at the cemetery. The Town Clerk explained there wasn't any further land available adjoining the current location. It is estimated that in around 40 years the cemetery would be full, decisions would need to be made as to whether the older cemetery graves would be re-used or whether land would be purchased elsewhere.

22/67/OSE PORTWAY ANNEXE

Cllr Orrett gave an update.

She has met with Alex Westwood, The Portway Annexe Manager and had been concerned with a few cancelled classes over half term. The Town Clerk explained this was typical and always happens at the Town Hall, due to the children being off school many groups automatically stop.

The Town Clerk advised that the Connect Centre have made the decision to no longer accept commercial bookings, and as a result The Portway Annexe has been approached by many of these groups looking for a new venue, so bookings were increasing.

The railings have recently been painted and the contractor was returning to clear up some paint that had been left on the steps.

The outside has been greatly improved now that rubbish has been cleared.

Cllr Orrett asked whether The Portway Annexe was being offered as a 'warm space'. The Town Clerk explained there was a safeguarding issue with having an open door policy, but they were happy to accommodate supervised events. Local libraries and churches were also getting involved. It was suggested any referrals should be made through WCN.

The job vacancy for Portway Annexe Venue Assistant has been advertised. Closing date 18th November.

The Town Clerk advised the heating system has a few teething problems, with some areas being too hot. If windows are badly fitting/left open, it creates the boiler to overwork and throw out extra heat. This is being looked at.

The insulation is being fitted in the next couple of weeks.

22/68/OSE RECREATION GROUND and Bishop's Barn

- i. The Outside Spaces Officer gave an update:
A formal application at a cost of £150 is being prepared for a Preservation Officer to visit The Bishop's Barn from MDC.
Quotes are being obtained for sand blasting, drainage and works on doors.
- ii. The Outside Spaces Officer gave an update on initial works and upgrades to play equipment.
A contractor has assessed the play park area and they have made some recommendations on accessible equipment. Costs are awaited.

A 'Teddy' children's bin has been ordered (£200) for positioning within the play area.

Cllr Powell advised she had placed an article in the Wells Voice advertising the proposed Recreation Ground Management Group and she has had 5 responses. A meeting will now be set up.

Cllr Powell asked whether the lease with The Bowls Club needed to be changed as we are now the new trustee. The Town Clerk advised this was not necessary. A further meeting is to be set up with The Bowls Club.

Cllr Denis asked for a wild flower area to be considered within the Recreation Ground. This will be reviewed by the Management Group.

22/69/OSE PROPERTIES

The Town Clerk advised there had been a leak in the Town Hall through the roof and rain water had entered the building. A contractor has already made repairs.

22/70/OSE ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

Cllr Orrett raised an issue with trees in the Recreation Ground. A member of public who lives in Carlton Mews has limited daylight into his property due to the trees. The Outside Spaces Officer advised there is a TPO on these trees. Bo Walsh, Tree Preservation Officer at MDC, has been consulted previously and there has always been a reluctance to touch the trees as they were in situ prior to the homes being built. It was agreed for the Outside Spaces Officer to obtain a tree surgeon report.

Cllr Denis advised she was taking part in some tree measuring training organised by the Bio-Diversity Officer at MDC on 29th November within the Recreation Ground. The measurements taken will be passed to the Outside Spaces Officer.

Cllr Agabani asked how a member of public joins the Wells City allotment waiting list. Contact should be made with reception at Wells Town Hall.

Cllr Agabani also asked what the procedure was for planting trees in public places. Referral should be made to the Outside Spaces Officer.

The Town Clerk advised the first draft of the budget had been circulated. For the Outside Spaces Budget there is now a split between the Cemetery and the Outside Spaces. SCC Cllr Munt recommended building in extra resilience for projects to make properties more energy friendly. In 2/3 years it is likely Parish Councils will be capped. Councillors should advise the Town Clerk if they wish to include any further projects in the budget.

All Councillors were invited to submit any budget requests and to attend the next Finance & Council Matters meeting on 10th November. The second draft will go to Finance in December and final sign off will be at Full Council in December.

22/71/OSE DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm Thursday 1st December 2022

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 property report.

Minutes signed by The Chair:

Date: