

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 2ND MARCH 2023 AT 7:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Outside Spaces Officer: M Johnson

WCC Staff: S Glendinning
1 Member of the public

Non-attendance: N/A

23/13/OSE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllrs: N Kennedy
Town Clerk: S Luck

23/14/OSE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

23/15/OSE MINUTES OF THE CITY CENTRE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 2ND FEBRUARY 2023

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

23/16/OSE MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

Nobody wished to speak.

23/17/OSE OUTSIDE SPACES

i. Skateboard park

No further update was given as this project is on hold until after the unitary process.

ii. To receive an update from the Outside Spaces Officer

The new children's bear bin in the play area had been vandalised and removed from its base. This has now been fixed more firmly on a concrete slab.
The area around all entry to Wells signs are being tidied up to improve visitors first impression when arriving in the City.
The collapsed hedges in Lovers Walk have now been removed and contact has been made with MDC who have a supply of replacement trees available.
The team have also been working at the Portway Annexe, trimming the hedge making the building more visible and the grass areas are being improved.
The gorse hedge in Mountery Road is to be tidied and wild flowers planted.

Cllr Denis raised the issue of the red brick area as you cross the A39, bottom of Portway towards the Portway Annexe, being very dangerous when icy. The placement of a grit bin in this area was proposed. This proposal was seconded and agreed. The Outside Officer to take forward and report back to the committee.

Work has been carried out on some of the apple trees in the Bishop Palace allotments, with the goal of bringing them back to better health.

The lamp in St Cuthbert Church grounds has been looked at and felt unsafe, so a report has been made to SCC for its repair before any repainting can be carried out.

Cllr Orrett asked about vermin control in Lovers Walk. Rats have been seen near the hockey pitch and near Waitrose. The Outside Spaces Officer will investigate further.

iii. **Wells in Bloom (WIB)**

Cllr Powell advised the issue over the hanging baskets in Priest Row was now resolved. The resident will be joining the WIB scheme as a sponsor and WCC will water the baskets.

Cllr Denis advised quotes had been obtained from Brown's Garden Centre for planting the bed in the bus station. This bed will be sponsored. The plants will be delivered in the week after Easter. Cllr Denis also suggested that signage should be placed in the beds to explain why certain plants are selected i.e. bee friendly, to inform visitors and local residents.

Cllr Denis advised preparations for the WIB competitions were in place. Posters were designed and an article would appear in the April Wells Voice. Judging will take place in June.

The Outside Spaces Officer confirmed he was looking at possibly reducing the winter planting within the City and increase the summer display. This would enable the summer planting to be improved with no budget implication.

23/18/OSE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

A survey will commence on 13th March, online and in paper form. An article will be in the Wells Voice. Costs have been obtained from St Andrews Press for an A5 information leaflet, which will be handed out at various events such as The King's Coronation Celebration Day on Sunday 7th May. It was agreed to print 1,000 at a cost of approximately £80. Cllr Denis asked for Councillors to help with the survey.

A discussion took place around food sustainability being encompassed within the climate emergency project. The Open Spaces Officer to contact Jon Abbott at the Food Festival. Cllr G Robbins offered to carry out some research and report back to the committee. Cllr Agabani asked whether there was an open space in Wells available to grow communal fruit/veg. It was felt the bus station or ground at the Portway Annexe could be a possibility rather than the centre of the city.

23/19/OSE CEMETERY

i. Memorial inspection

In the absence of the Town Clerk the Outside Spaces Officer confirmed the inspection is complete and any remedial work has been carried out.

23/20/OSE PORTWAY ANNEXE

Cllr Orrett reported the Portway Annexe has an Open Day on 25th March, 12 – 4pm. All groups currently using the Annexe are invited to display. WCC councillors and The Mayor are invited to attend.

Mendip Community Transport have been given notice not to park at the Annexe.

The bike racks need another coat of paint. The Open Spaces Officer agreed to take this forward.

The rental income in recent months has been greater than that predicted.

23/21/OSE RECREATION GROUND and Bishop's Barn

Cllr Powell advised a meeting had taken place with the Bowls Club, where moving the club to a different location was discussed. The current location is felt to hinder the outside space around the Bishop's Barn. A group effort is needed to raise funds for a possible move. Cllr Powell has spoken to a contact at BANES, who was involved in a similar project at Sydney Gardens in Bath, they have recommended a 'Friends of the

Recreation Group' is set up. BANES also had a full-time officer employed to take this forward. A summary of discussions will be circulated to the committee.

The Outside Spaces Officer confirmed the fire & electrical survey was completed on the Bishop's Barn. Following a check from the Insurers, their feedback is awaited. A quote had been requested to carry out a deep clean. It is still envisaged the Open Day can go ahead in April, date yet to be decided.

A request has been made to hold a film evening near the band stand and Wells City band also wish to carry out some events in the summer. The committee agreed the band stand should be cleaned prior to these events. Currently any band stand bookings should be submitted to The Outside Spaces Officer.

Cllr Powell advised English Heritage were coming to visit the Recreation Ground/Bishop's Barn on 17th March.

Cllr Powell asked whether the Cypress trees by the moat which make that area very dark could be trimmed. The Outside Spaces Officer agreed to report back.

23/22/OSE PROPERTIES

Nothing to report.

23/23/OSE ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

Cllr Denis advised the licence for Tor Hill Lane Wilding Project has been signed. There will only be one grass cut in July and they have asked whether The Outside Spaces Team can take the grass away. The use of a pick-up mower was suggested, Cllr Denis will check if this is possible. WCC currently have no area for composting. Cllr Agabani suggested contacting Palace Fields. The Outside Spaces Officer agreed to look into.

23/24/OSE DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm Thursday 6th April 2023

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: