

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 5TH OCTOBER 2023 AT 7:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: D Denis, D Orrett, S Powell (Vice-chair), G Robbins

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: S Luck
WCC Staff: C Hobbs
No members of the public attended

Non-attendance: None

23/92/OSE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllrs: J Browne (Chair), T Butt Philip, S Eden, N Kennedy
Outside Spaces Officer: M Johnson

23/93/OSE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022
None received.

23/94/OSE MINUTES OF THE CITY CENTRE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER 2023

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

23/95/OSE MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CITY CENTRE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7TH SEPTEMBER 2023

23/69/OSE Cllr D Denis requested feedback regarding progress of the tender for the pop-up vendor in the recreation ground. The Town Clerk explained that it would be on the next Outside Spaces & Estates Committee meeting agenda.
Cllr D Denis asked about responsibilities for "No Mow May". The Town Clerk informed the meeting that Somerset Council are responsible.

23/71/OSE Cllr S Powell requested information regarding Health and Safety protocol for the Charter Fair. The Town Clerk explained that he will know more following a meeting on the 13th October 2023 and that Wells City Council will likely be the Event Management and that there will be also be a meeting with a representative from the Showman's Guild regarding the Event Management Plan. The Town Clerk explained that an S11 Licence is required for vehicles that are placed on a public highway and that before and after photographs will be taken.
Cllr S Powell asked if the Public toilets would be open on the night of the fair and she was assured that they would be open and will be covered by CCTV.

23/72/OSE Cllr D Denis requested information regarding the herbicide/pesticide policy. After a brief discussion, the suggestion was that publicity might be useful to come from the Wells Environmental Network to prevent usage by householders.

23/77/OSE Cllr S Powell asked how the Hire pricing had been agreed for the Bishop's Barn. The Town Clerk informed that it will go to the next Outside Spaces & Estates Committee but that the prices were simply a starting point and changes can be discussed in more depth.

Cllr D Denis requested that "Properties" be added to Outside Spaces & Estates Committee so that focus not be lost on the subject.

23/76/ OSE Cllr D Orrett updated the meeting on a suggested site for a mosaic created by Mr & Mrs Ames White. An offer of the wall space next to the public toilets at the side of the Town Hall is not favourable but the preferred option is on the side wall of the Town Hall.

The Town Clerk responded that the Town Hall is a Grade 2 listed building and in a Conservation Area so listed building and planning applications will be required to be submitted by Mr & Mrs Ames White.

Cllr D Orrett will explain the application process to them.

23/96/OSE MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No members of the public were in attendance.

23/97/OSE OUTSIDE SPACES

The Town Clerk reported the following:

i. Mower acquisition

The Town Clerk reported that the new mowers have been acquired, of a type which picks up cuttings, so appropriate for areas such as the recreation ground where people sit on the grass.

A brief discussion took place about locations that historically have been the responsibility of Wells City Council and how in the future these areas may be added to. Small repairs to paving slabs could be carried out by the team if Wells City Council could gain permission by delegated authority. The Town Clerk reported that all members of the Outside Spaces Team are Chapter 8 trained (Safe working on the Highways).

ii. Wells in Bloom

The Town Clerk reported that the hanging baskets and planters had been a success. Areas of improvement are at the "Welcome to Wells" locations. Feedback has been very positive from the public generally. Andy Allen has handed over the Wells in Bloom role to Nathaniel Bell in the Outside Spaces Team who is keen to take on some Wells in Bloom work. There is 1 temporary member and 3 permanent members of staff on the team.

iii. Hedge works

The Town Clerk reported that the Outside Spaces had responded to complaints in areas overgrown with brambles and had tidied areas where the roadworks took place. Wells City Council have received many grateful responses following the proactiveness of the Outside Spaces Team.

iv. Plans for next summer

Cllr D Denis asked that should trees be planted, that more mature trees are acquired rather than saplings so that they have a better chance to thrive.

Cllr D Denis asked if volunteers might be permitted to clear weeds in areas such as Union Street. The Town Clerk said that there are concerns regarding liability and insurance.

Cllr S Powell asked for a copy of the tree survey and was informed it will be available at the next Outside Spaces meeting on 2nd November 2023

A brief discussion took place about the cost of the tree survey, the process for annually surveying trees, the condition of the trees in the recreation ground and a brief explanation of recommendations for trees in the recreation ground.

23/98/OSE CLIMATE EMERGENCY Cllr Denis to present:

i. Climate Working Group report (attached to agenda)

Three volunteers attended a stall in the Market Place on the 4th October and gave out many survey leaflets.

Cllr D Denis has commenced training on a Carbon literacy course.

A discussion took place about the application for grants. The Town Clerk assured that he will continue applying for grants.

ii. Wells Environment Network meeting report (attached to agenda)
Looking ahead to a big event next year but it is very much in the early stages.

23/99/OSE WELLS IN BLOOM

i. Wells in Bloom awards.

Cllr Denis reported that plans for the Wells in Bloom awards taking place on the 6th October 2023 were all in place and all concerned are looking forward to a successful event.

ii. To consider setting up a new review

Cllr D Denis reported that a small working group may improve income from sponsors and suggested involvement of two Councillors from the Finance committee. Cllr D Orrett asked to join the working group. Review needed for areas already sponsored. Perhaps more pollenating plants rather than formal planting, which may be more expensive initially but less so in subsequent years.

A discussion took place about current sponsors and the suggestion was to have a working group review planting locations and styles of planting. The meeting requested that bulbs be planted in the planters at the bus station.

The Town Clerk suggested that should a review take place, to keep in mind what is currently working successfully with regards to current sponsors and asked that any person/organisation wishing to have an involvement in the organisation or sponsorship to write formally to The Town Clerk at Wells City Council.

23/100/OSE PORTWAY ANNEXE

Minutes of the PA meeting (attached to the agenda) were presented by Cllr D Orrett. The boiler is non-functioning and is beyond repair. The basement has flooded recently and although now cleared, it is below the water table and likely to happen again. The plan is that a new boiler will not be located on the floor in the basement. An affordable replacement is being investigated bearing in mind its economy, efficiency, cost, environmentally friendliness.

LED lights have been replaced in Chamberlain Hall and other places are planned for replacement.

Liz Webber's suggestion of Friday morning coffee mornings have been a success.

The Town Clerk reported that there had been an appointment of the Hub assistant.

23/101/OSE ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

Cllr D Orrett has been approached by a busker who has expressed a wish to busk. The Town Clerk reminded the meeting that busking is not illegal but that there are guidelines in the Buskers charter. There is an enforcement officer at Somerset Council who can deal with buskers who do not adhere to the guidelines but generally there are not usually any problems.

23/102/OSE DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm Thursday 2nd November 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: