

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 7th DECEMBER 2023 AT 6:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: J Browne (Chair), S Eden, G Robbins, D Orrett, S Powell (Vice-chair)

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: S Luck
WCC Staff: C Hobbs
Somerset Councillor: T Munt
4 members of the public

23/113/OSE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllrs: T Butt Philip, D Denis, N Kennedy

23/114/OSE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

23/115/OSE MATTERS ARISING FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5TH OCTOBER 2023 (Outside Spaces, Wells in Bloom, Portway Annexe)

The minutes were signed as a true record.

- i. Cllr D Orrett gave a brief report relating to the Portway Annexe. The boiler is now functioning, which is good news as bookings were at risk due to the building being cold.
- ii. The rehearsal room will be fitted with soundproofing which has been donated through a contact of Nigel Fraser.
- iii. Tina Blackwill, the new member of Staff, is settling in well.
- iv. Takings in November were £4,585 but are estimated to be down in December, which is historically quiet due to term time only activities.

The Town Clerk reported that following a discussion with a Tree Officer regarding Trees in the Recreation ground, M Johnson (Open Spaces Officer) has contacted MTL to look at the essential work required as they are a trustworthy firm and contractors of Somerset Council. Hopes are that the work will take place before the end of the winter period but that it is slow progress.

23/116/OSE MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Lavinia Byrne asked for M Johnson (Open Spaces Officer) to be congratulated on his team making such a good job of clearing up in the Recreation ground after the Food Festival. Lavinia also praised Wells City Councils for its work towards tending the trees in the Recreation ground.

Shirley Garner thanked M Johnson for his support of elderly allotment holders. But also mentioned that some crops have gone missing at the allotments and asked that Wells City Council look at improving security.

The Town Clerk reassured the meeting that he would discuss the matter with M Johnson to address the issue.

23/117/OSE OUTSIDE SPACES

The Town Clerk presented a report provided by M Johnson (Open Spaces Officer)

- i. Summer plants have been removed and where possible, retained over winter in the hope that this will reduce costs in 2024. Winter planting is completed and bulbs have been planted at the Bus Station.

- ii. Admin work regarding the Allotments has taken place.
- iii. Christmas lights are installed which followed a busy period of clearing up after the Wells Carnival. Some sets need replacing due to their age.
- iv. M Johnson has been in touch with the National Trust re advice for a seed mix for Tor Hill Woods.
- v. The new mowers are now registered for road use.
- vi. The Outside Spaces team were busy working on blocked drains to reduce flooding after recent wet weather. Not a responsibility of Wells City Council but necessary work. Wells City Council are considering purchasing sand bags for public use.

The Town Clerk reported that Somerset Council has now granted permission for Wells City Council to start repairing small pavement defects and trip hazards. Staff are trained in the necessary Chapter 8 course. M Johnson will undertake further training to ensure compliancy.

Cllr S Powell asked if there had been any feedback regarding the Fair in the Market Place on Carnival night. The Town Clerk reported that Wells City Staff had marshalled the event and it did appear to go smoothly. The Town Clerk also reported that he was in discussion with the Fair operators for future fairs and suggesting quieter, smaller generators.

Cllr D Orrett made reference to a recent report of Wells' pavements and asked if there was a Councillor specifically interested in accessibility by people with limited mobility. Cllr T Munt said that the report had been circulated to the Director for climate and places, Cllr Mike Rigby (Highways and digital), Somerset's Equalities and diversity team, Chief executive of Somerset. Cllr Val Keitch (Associate lead member), a mobility scooter user will attend the rally on the 21st December 2023.

Cllr T Munt reported that she is aware of the areas in Wells lacking dropped kerbs.

23/118/OSE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Cllr J Browne presented the report in the absence of Cllr D Denis.

Cllr S Powell commented on the subject of streetlights being turned off during night time hours and that it was her understanding that a public consultation was required prior to a decision.

23/119/OSE WELLS IN BLOOM

Cllr D Orrett reported that there had been discussions to increase income for the Wells in Bloom scheme by making changes to the Corporate sponsorship section. A suggestion of splitting larger areas into four rather than having a single sponsor.

23/120/OSE ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

None received

23/121/OSE DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm Thursday 1st February 2023 (Bishop's Barn & Recreation Ground)

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: