

WELLS CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE CITY & TOURISM FORUM MEETING HELD IN THE EAST ROOM,
WELLS TOWN HALL, WEDNESDAY 29th JULY 2015 AT 6.00 PM.

PRESENT: Cllrs: A Gibson (Deputy Mayor); C Cox; R MacKenzie
Dr P Richards, Wells Cathedral
Mr A Webb, Wells Museum/Visitor Information
Ms C Winter, Chair, Wells Civic Society
Mr M Johns, Chair, Wells Chamber of Commerce
Ms R Martin, The Bishops Palace,

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: F White
RFO: S Luck, 3 members of the public

15/10CT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Cllrs D Baker; J Osman; T Robbins; G Wilson (Mayor)

15/11CT DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
None received.

15/12CT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
Minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2015 were proposed, seconded approved and signed.

15/13CT MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
Mr McKay spoke about Visitor Information Services. Mr Webb offered to meet with him and explain how Mendip Tourism Ltd operates.

15/14CT VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES

i. Long-term strategy

It was agreed that the representatives from the Cathedral, Bishops Palace, VIS/Museum and City Council, will continue to meet to work on the long-term issues, giving feedback to the Forum meetings.

ii. Websites

There was a discussion about options for the future of the Tourist Information website. It was agreed that consideration could be given in the future to setting up a new website; the existing one is fit for purpose but seen as biased to selected business interests and is dependent on the goodwill of a few private individuals. The current voluntary provider has said that he is willing to relinquish the site, indeed wishes to do so. Wells City Council could take on the management of the existing website; it would be necessary to make a request to the Council by November for additional staffing costs to be included in the budget for 2016-17. Application for any start-up costs could be made to Mendip Tourism Ltd.

The VIS volunteers have serious doubts about handing the website over to the Council.

It was agreed that in principle the Forum would like the City Council to look into the costs of managing the website and the supporting back-office services.

iii. Touch-screens

The Chairman reported information about 'ruggedised' touchscreens; this would be a possible city-wide project for the future, costs in the region of £10 - 12 thousand pounds.

The Town Clerk reported from desk logs kept by the new Reception service at the Town Hall, the logs have shown that the reception staff are already dealing with simple visitor information enquiries and passing others on. For management reasons it has been decided to trial a 24" touchscreen during the next few months,

where the public can access selected websites – VIS, Council and other local information. This is a short-term project that will help to identify what queries can be dealt with via the website. Visitors will continue to be referred onwards to the VIS at the Museum.

The Town Clerk thanked Mr Webb for his initiative and assistance in providing his own small touch pad that had started this project originally.

iv. Locations

Mr Webb has agreement from MDC to put a VIS noticeboard at the bus station kiosk. The volunteer service at the Museum continues as before. Reception staff at the Town Hall deal with enquiries, refer visitors to the website, and on to the VIS at the Museum. Touchscreen pilot project; it may be possible to extend this in the future to assist with out-of –hours enquiries.

15/15CT FORTHCOMING EVENTS

2015

15th August: Dalek Day

31st August: Moat Boat Race

12th September: Heritage Open Day

14th – 18th September: 'Work in Wells' Week

October: Wells Literature, Food and Art-Contemporary Festivals

20th November: Wells Carnival and Fun Fair

23/24th November Christmas lights go up

Thursday 3rd December(provisional): Christmas shopping event

Sunday 6th December: The Reindeer Parade

2016

- i. Wells Brocante Fair Sunday 29th May 2016

15/16CT REPORTS FROM OTHER GROUPS

- i. The Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce will attend the August Brocante Fair in Glastonbury to observe how it functions.
- ii. Possibility that MDC may run a Christmas market in Wells - to be co-ordinated with Wells Chamber of Commerce.

15/17CT ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT

Wells Christmas lights will be put up by the City Council during 23-25th November; new features will be added, the orders have been placed

15/18CT DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: 6pm Wednesday 9th September 2015