

WELLS CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ARCHIVES AND CIVIC ASSETS COMMITTEE HELD AT WELLS TOWN HALL, AT 6:00PM ON THURSDAY 29TH JUNE 2017

PRESENT: Cllrs: C Price; T Robbins; H Siggs (Chairman); D Swain

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: F White. Archivist: Dr J Wood
Cllr. J North (The Mayor)
County Cllr. T Munt

17/12A APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs: R Ayres; C Cox; D Unwin; C Wride (Deputy Mayor)

17/13A DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

17/14A ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Cllr Price was proposed, seconded, and elected as Vice-Chairman.

17/15A MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on Thursday 16TH FEBRUARY 2017

Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, seconded, approved and signed.

Matters Arising:

i. 17/05A 'City of Wells' Project

It was agreed to write a letter to the Heritage Lottery Fund in support of the Wells and Mendip Museum grant application for funding this project.

ii. 17/09A Bishop Bekynton service

The Chairman presented draft wording for use by the Mayor at the tomb; the Town Clerk will contact the Dean to open a dialogue about this.

17/16A MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The Mayor asked that the committee commence the Civic Review as soon as possible.

17/17A REPORT FROM THE ARCHIVIST

To receive the Archivist's Report to the Committee (attached): Noted.

The Archivist drew members' attention to the success of the partnership exhibition currently open at the Bishop's Palace; she provided positive feedback from the visitors' book.

The Archivist had brought to the meeting a recent discovery from the Archives, a book of items from Mayor Making during the 1800s; members examined this with interest after the meeting.

17/18A HERITAGE OPEN DAY Saturday 9th September, Wells Town Hall

Plans are progressing well, with several exhibitors booked to attend.

The Archivist requested:

i. The City Council to produce a joint leaflet of participating sites: agreed.

ii. Assistance with stewarding on the day: Offers were made by those present; it is hoped that all members of the committee would help.

17/19A CONSERVATION OF PAINTINGS

The Archivist has arranged for two expert quotations to be made. Payment of their travelling expenses costs was agreed.

17/20A ANY OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT

i. Cllr North: A request from Cllr Wride to consider Councillors' hats was deferred until she could be there to present it.

ii. The Archivist: a) Two undergraduates from Strode Collage have donated their projects to the City Archives.

- b) What type of labelling would be appropriate for pictures and other items on display in the Town Hall? - referred to the RFO.
- iii. Cllr Price: Request for pictures to break up the walls in the old Court Room. It was agreed to look at the pictures stored in the Museum Archive.
- iv. Chairman: The Civic Review - it was agreed the process will be shared between members, in a similar way to last time.

17/21A DATE OF NEXT MEETING 6pm Thursday 19th October 2017 at Wells & Mendip Museum, open from 5.30pm to view the Archives.

Report from the Archivist

“Crime and Punishment in Victorian Wells” exhibition

This exhibition ran at Wells Museum from 6th to 26th April 2017 and was a great success, receiving much positive feedback. It was based on data brought to light by volunteers at the monthly Archives Box-Listing Sessions run by the Archivist at the Museum. It had run for a day at the Town Hall at Heritage Open Day 2016, and volunteers provided supplementary information for this longer showing at the Museum.

“Snapshots in Time: Mapping Wells” collaborative exhibition

This joint exhibition at the Bishop’s Palace opened on 6th May and will run to 30th September 2017. It is a collaboration between Wells City Archives, Wells & Mendip Museum and The Bishop’s Palace. It has given the opportunity for three of the most significant charters from the City Archives to go on public display for five months: the King John Charter, the Bekynton Charter and the Queen Elizabeth I Charter of Incorporation. A full-size reproduction of the 1860 Sewerage Plan of Wells is also on display. The collaboration has been a very successful and positive experience.

History of Wells United Church exhibition

This colourful exhibition is on display in the Town Hall, and marks the centenary of the United Church in Wells. Many thanks are extended to Tanya Climo and Ian Mills for preparing the displays.

Archives display at Mayor Making

The Archivist prepared a display of original documents for the reception immediately after the Mayor Making ceremony. This included two of the medieval City Charters: the Charter of Bishop Reginald (1174-1192) and the Charter of King Henry III (1231). One of the documents recently restored by Somerset Heritage Centre was also on display: a scale plan of Wells stations dating from the 1880s, showing the Priory Road and East Somerset railway stations.

“Firefighting in the Mendips” exhibition

In response to popular demand, the “Firefighting in Wells” exhibition of 2015 is being followed up by a “Firefighting in the Mendips” exhibition. Reproductions of City Archives documents will again be included. The exhibition will run at Wells Museum from 5th August to 13th September 2017.

“Snapshot in Time” of Mayor Making 2017

As complete a record as possible of this year’s Mayor Making is being assembled by the Archivist, who is grateful to all those who have contributed material.

City of Wells Galleries

As the project for establishing the new galleries at the Museum develops, the Archivist continues to play a significant role in it.

Training courses

In February the Archivist attended a day’s course in Bristol run by The National Archives and entitled “Meet the Funders” and, in May, a “Know Your Place: West of England Collections Workshop” in Bath.

Heritage Open Day

Wells Town Hall will be open on Saturday 9th September 2017, from 10.00-4.00. Volunteers are preparing a new local history display on “Prisons of Wells”, covering the medieval period up to the twentieth century.

Talks

The Archivist gave talks on the City Archives to the Street Society in February and Glastonbury U3A in March.

Dr Julia Wood 15.06.2017