

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WELLS TOWN HALL, ON THURSDAY 9TH MARCH 2017 AT 7.00PM

- PRESENT:** Cllrs: C Briton; J North (Deputy Mayor); C Price; T Robbins (Chairman); H Siggs; D Swain (Vice-Chairman); G Wilson
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk: F White
RFO: S Luck
2 members of the public
- 17/24F APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
None received
- 17/25F DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 26th July 2012:
Cllr Robbins declared a personal and prejudicial interest as close associate of the applicant, in community funding application ref. 17/16F; he left the room during consideration of this item.
Cllrs North and Siggs each declared a personal interest as member, in any matter relating to Mendip District Council.
See also 17/27Fii.
- 17/26F MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2017**
Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, seconded, approved and signed.
- 17/27F MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**
i. The Treasurer of St Thomas' Church PCC presented the funding application at 17/16F and answered questions.
ii. A representative of Wells Food Festival spoke and made a request for funding. See 17/33Fii.
Cllr North declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest as he had facilitated funding from the District Council in a previous year.
- 17/28F FINANCE REPORT**
To receive the financial reports for February 2017
The bank statements and accounts had been checked prior to the meeting. The accounts for February 2017 were proposed, seconded and approved.
- 17/29F COMMUNITY FUNDING APPLICATIONS COMMUNITY FUNDING APPLICATIONS**
St Thomas Church PCC
(Cllr Robbins left the room; Cllr Swain, Vice-Chairman, took the Chair)
After careful consideration it was agreed not to make a grant.
- 17/30F ANNUAL REVIEWS**
i. Financial & General Risk Assessments
ii. Council Properties Asset Register
Draft documents were presented for review; these were proposed, seconded and approved for recommendation to Council.
RECOMMENDED
The above documents are recommended to Council for adoption.

17/31F

BUS 67 up-date

A summary of the situation to date was received from Somerset County Council. The committee discussed all the information available; the following points were noted:

- a. The sums being suggested would be a significant amount for Wells and a notable increase in the precept
- b. This would be a long-term, on-going, commitment
- c. A precedent would have been set; there would be implications if other local bus routes were reduced in future
- d. Council should consider its responsibilities to its own parishioners and ensure best value in use of funds raised by the Wells precept
- e. The route does not appear to be viable and there is no reason to suppose this situation will improve
- f. To operate any project in conjunction with several other parishes is challenging; there would have to be total commitment from all parishes on the route before this project could be considered
- g. The council would expect the cost-sharing to be based on usage rather than precept; it is anticipated that user figures will start to become available soon

Cllrs. Briton and Price were thanked for their diligence on behalf of the City in respect of this matter.

In conclusion it was agreed:

- i. The committee cannot make any recommendation to Council at present.
- ii. Any agreement must be based on full commitment from all the parishes involved.
- iii. To set a target date of the next meeting, 13th April, to make a definitive recommendation to April full Council meeting.

17/32F

PROPERTIES up-date

- i. Bus Station Toilets/Ticket Office
The Lease and Licence to Occupy are complete; City Council has begun the process of maintenance and cleaning required in order to bring the premises up to an acceptable standard.
- ii. 1Priory Road
2017 Review recommendations were approved.
- iii. Post Office, Market Place
The RFO gave a full report of the situation to date, the structural report and subsequent discussions. It was agreed the Council has done everything possible at this stage; the Officers were instructed how to reply to the Post Office.

17/33F

MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

- i. The Chairman reported on arrangements he has made to assist the Wells Lions by providing temporary weather protection at the front of the Town Hall for the May Pole dancing on May Day. He and the staff were thanked for their efforts.
- ii. Wells Food Festival (ref. 17/27Fii.)
It was agreed that the organisers should be directed to complete a grant application in the usual way, stating what they want, and submit it with a copy of their accounts.
- iii. The RFO requested and received formal permission to use Council documents in his CiLCA qualification portfolio submission.
- iv. 'Changing Places' project
Cllr Swain (Vice-Chairman) spoke about the significance of this type of facility for severely disabled visitors to the city. He was asked to investigate the options and report back to the committee.

17/34F

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm Thursday 13th April 2017