



WELLS CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL SUMMONS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE MEETING OF WELLS CITY COUNCIL, WHICH MEMBERS ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND, WILL BE HELD IN WELLS TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 27TH JANUARY 2022 AT 7.00PM

Please note this meeting will be recorded for the purpose of minute-taking.

Steve Luck
Town Clerk

Town Hall, Market Place
Wells BA5 2RB
01749 673091
e-mail: townclerk@wells.gov.uk

20th January 2022

AGENDA

- 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS**
To receive any apologies for absence
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 27th July 2012
- 3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 9TH DECEMBER 2021**
To be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor
- 4 MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**
Public speaking time is normally restricted to 15 minutes in total, at the discretion of the Mayor
- 5 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - a) Update on plans for the Platinum Jubilee celebrations in Wells
 - b) Mayor's Diary
 - i 28th Jan The Somerset & Bath Lunatic Asylum Photo Exhibition, The Bishop's Palace
 - ii 2nd Feb Launch of Jean Imray's book 'Wells Old Almshouse', Almshouses
 - iii 6th Feb Evensong to celebrate 70 years since the Accession of Her Majesty the Queen, Wells Cathedral
 - iv 7th Feb Wells Cathedral School Jubilee Thanksgiving Service, Wells Cathedral

- v 13th Feb Karen Deverell celebration of MBE received for services to Children and Young People in Somerset, The Swan Hotel
- vi 16th Feb Reception for Wells Ambassadors, Wells Town Hall
- vii 25th Feb Wells Lions Charter Dinner, The Swan Hotel

6 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 13th January 2022 (attached)

7 MINUTES OF THE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meetings:

- i 16th December 2021 (held under delegated authority, attached)
- ii 20th January 2022 (to follow)

8 UNITARY & ACQUISITIONS

To receive an update from the Town Clerk

9 BID FOR REGENERATION OF WELLS HIGH STREET (attached)

To receive an update from Cllr l'Anson

10 UPDATE ON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (attached)

To receive an update from Cllr l'Anson

11 TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

To follow

12 TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS

To follow

13 ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT

14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Wells City Council will be Thursday 24th February 2022, 7pm

EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Note: If it is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence, it will be proposed by the Mayor that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended.

Circulation List:

Town Clerk/RFO	Wells City Council website	Wells Chamber of Commerce
Open Spaces Manager	WCC Internal Auditor	Wells Civic Society
Serjeants-at-Mace	Wells Journal & Wells Voice	Wells Visitor Information
Mayor's Chaplain	Mendip District Council	The Bishop's Palace
Town Crier	Wells Police Station	Wells Cathedral
Wells City Council members	District Councillors	County Councillor

AGENDA ITEM 9

Report on the bid for funds for regeneration of Wells High Street bid – 20.01.22.

1. The aim of the national high streets project for which a grant of a maximum of £15,000 is available is to:
 - animate empty shops, disused buildings and underused outdoor spaces
 - create more welcoming and attractive high streets where people want to spend time
 - ensure that the high street is inclusive and caters to all sectors of the community through good design and the provision of shops and services
 - promote good physical and mental health and wellbeing and encourage activity
 - improve the quality of the physical environment
 - increase the delivery of new housing and jobs
 - ensure high streets are places for a diverse range of businesses
 - forge/enhance a distinct identity and character

2. We are at the second stage of the bid process and this constitutes facilitation which is being provided by Annabel Osborne of Locality. All relevant information is required by the beginning of March 2022 with all quotes. The project must be capable of delivery by the end of March 2023. I have had two telephone conversations with AO and these will continue as the bid develops.

3. The bid will accord with the Objectives of the Wells Neighbourhood Plan demonstrating the importance of safe and convenient access to Wells High Street. Objectives of the "Moving Around" section of the draft Wells Neighbourhood Plan refer to improving "safe accessibility into and out of the City centre and to and from new development for pedestrians and cyclists" and maintaining and enhancing "access into and around the High Street which benefits pedestrians (shoppers) retailers and other businesses". It will be useful to provide evidence from the Market Manager as to how the market would benefit from the extra space at the top end of the High Street on market days.

4. The components of the bid are currently
 - a) traffic surveys to establish both current traffic flows and also the percentage of traffic flowing down the High Street which is through traffic as opposed to traffic which is using the City centre for access
 - b) a survey of the views of shoppers/walkers and retailers as regards partial closure of the High Street on market days
 - c) production of a scheme to close the High Street on market days save for access for shops, The Swan and disabled drivers.

5. AO has advised that discussion with SCC as the highway authority is crucial to elicit their views on
 - a) ways and means and benefit of temporary/permanent closure of the High Street
 - b) moving the bus route and stop from the High Street
 - c) impact on disabled users and potentially more parking spaces in the High Street
 - d) amended signage and
 - e) discover what traffic flow information they have and
 - f) ways and means of improving the percentage of active shops in the centre of Wells.

6. I have been in email contact with Matthew Prince, Transport Policy Officer with County Highways and have arranged a Zoom meeting with him and others on the 13th of this month. I have also had discussions with Kelly Knight of Mendip District Council and Ben Coleman of PJA Associates. The latter is producing a Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan for four Mendip towns – including Wells.

7. The Transport Data Team at Somerset County Council are at a cost of £175 carrying out a survey of vehicles passing through the High Street between the 14th and 23rd of February. The TDT have also explained that an ANPR survey, involving cameras at each end of the High Street, will provide information as to the split between through traffic and local traffic.

8. The quotations for ANPR surveys received to date are

Tracsis Cameras at 4 locations	12 hours - £3,400 24 hours - £4,250 36 hours - £5,500
Intelligent Data Collection Cameras at 4 locations	12 hours - £1040 24 hours - £1840 36 hours - £2460

9. I have obtained Air Quality reports for Wells which relate to Tucker Street and Glastonbury Road. As shown below, these indicate the improvement in air quality between 2019 and 2020 consequent on lockdown and the reduction in traffic.

Reductions of NO₂ concentrations of between 33% and 49% were experienced at roadside diffusion tube monitoring sites between April and June 2020 as can be seen from the spreadsheet below. Overall, from the average results across Mendip District Council there has been a 25% reduction in annual mean concentration relative to 2019.

10. Since writing the above, I have had the discussion with Matthew Prince referred to in paragraph 6 above. He made the following points:

- in the current climate which promotes use by buses, it is unlikely that the County Council or its successor would favour moving routes away from the High Street
- consultation on any kind of traffic scheme can be accomplished via an "Active Travel Scheme" and "Commonplace" a simple means of carrying out an on line survey based on a map of the relevant area and questions formulated by the proponent
- an Experimental Traffic Order would last some 12 to 18 months and would involve limited consultation prior to the Order being made but would be balanced by views being submitted during the life of the Order
- exemptions from a partial closure would not extend to disabled drivers as the Blue Badge Scheme applies to the individual and not the vehicle and
- he favoured a traffic calming approach based on a raised table between "Fudge Corner" and the edge of the Market Place. In his opinion, this would provide pedestrian priority at this significant point and provide pedestrians and shoppers with a safer and more convenient environment in the High Street.

11. In the light of this additional advice, the Planning Committee and then Council are asked to decide whether or not the bid should be proceeded with either in terms of closure of the High Street to vehicles on market days or the traffic calming approach referred to in paragraph 10. If the latter is the favoured approach, authority is sought to proceed with the bid based on funding for a plan for appropriate traffic calming.

Adrian I'Anson – 20.01.22.

AGENDA ITEM 10

Wells Neighbourhood Plan Update

1. Neighbourhood Plans are set in the context of Local Plans set by District Councils. The Mendip Local Plan covers all five towns in Mendip and was approved in December 2021. Neighbourhood Plans give an opportunity for individual parishes to set out their vision for the future based on planning policies and projects.
2. The Wells Neighbourhood Plan is nearing completion to a point where the Council will be asked at the February meeting to approve it so that it can go out to consultation.
3. It is anticipated that the community engagement will take place in March and April. Following any necessary re-drafting as a result of the consultation, the Plan will be submitted to Mendip and then be subject to a further consultation and examined by an independent Planning Inspector to ensure that it conforms with national and local planning policy. If it does, it will then be voted on at a referendum which needs a majority to vote for it to be made.
4. The draft WNP runs to some 70 pages with additional appendices and covers Heritage, Housing, Transport, the Environment, Retail and Tourism. The main appendices are documents which have been prepared by consultants, AECOM and comprise:
 - a Wells Design Guide
 - a Masterplan setting out options for development of the three housing sites allocated Wells by the Mendip Local Plan. These sites are land:
 - i) between the west side of the Keward estate and the sewage works
 - ii) at Tincknells bounded by Glastonbury Road and Strawberry Way and
 - iii) at the Rugby Club at Portway and
 - a Housing Needs Assessment for Wells.
5. The current draft of the Plan and the three documents referred to are all available on the web site.
6. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group which has developed the draft Plan comprises representatives from St Cuthbert Out Parish Council, our County councillor, a District councillor, individuals with planning experience, Stuart Todd our planning consultant, myself and Wells City councillors Rachel Humphreys and Jenny Rust. Our Wells City councillors wish to stand down and I am looking for at least two councillors who will bring the draft Plan through its final stages before it is made and becomes a legal document.
7. The purpose of this paper is to
 - explain where the Council is with the Neighbourhood Plan
 - appoint at least two councillors to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and
 - ensure that the Council is aware that at its next meeting, the Council will be asked to approve the Plan as a draft for consultation with or without amendments.

Adrian I'Anson
20.01.22

AGENDA ITEM 11

Report on Links with Sustainable Wells- January 2022

I have attended a monthly meeting in November in person, and a zoom monthly meeting in December then followed up with a zoom meeting with the Communications Officer, Mathilda Janicot Bale on 20 December.

I was able to explain my role as a link to the Council, and gave Ms Bale a report on recent Council proposals and actions on Climate Emergency, Neighbourhood Plan, future council structure, assets and services with regard to Unitary Council changes.

I have also worked with Emma Jakins, Sustainability Officer, and Sustainable Wells to liaise with Tom Ronan, Mendip DC Strategic Policy and Climate Change portfolio holder, to propose a pilot project for Wildflower Verges in Wells. This has been agreed in principle, by Mendip DC, and the number and location of verges that will be managed by Sustainable Wells is being researched and hopefully will be agreed, in the next 2 weeks. Sustainable Wells will then consult with the local residents to seek agreements, and support from those people living in the area. The plan is to develop signage to explain what the project is about, and Wells City Council Finance Committee has a small grant available to support the project.

Cllr Denise Denis

25/01/2022S