



Wells City Council

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Subject	Reaffirmation of the General Power of Competence
Date of report	23.10.2025
For consideration at	Full City Council
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To reaffirm Wells City Council's eligibility to exercise the General Power of Competence (GPC) in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, following the Town Clerk's successful completion of the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA).

Reaffirming the GPC enables the Council to continue acting innovatively and flexibly in the interests of the community, without reliance on specific statutory powers. This supports the Council's strategic objectives and its commitment to effective, empowered local governance.

Background

The General Power of Competence (GPC), introduced under the Localism Act 2011, provides eligible parish and town councils with the legal capacity to do anything that an individual can do, unless specifically prohibited by law.

This includes activities undertaken for the benefit of the council, its residents, or the local area, provided such actions are not restricted by other legislation.

To be eligible to exercise the GPC, a council must meet the following criteria:

- At least two-thirds of the total number of councillors have been elected (not co-opted); and
- The Clerk to the Council holds a recognised qualification, namely the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA).

Wells City Council previously resolved to adopt the General Power of Competence at its meeting in May 2022 (22/69/C). The power remains in place until the next Annual Council Meeting following an ordinary election, when eligibility must be reaffirmed.

Clerk's Qualification

The Town Clerk has now achieved the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA), confirming professional competence in local council governance and administration. This qualification ensures

the Council continues to meet the statutory eligibility requirements for the General Power of Competence.

Recommendation

That Wells City Council, having met the conditions of eligibility prescribed in the Localism Act 2011 and the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, resolves to reaffirm its adoption of the General Power of Competence, acknowledging that:

- At least two-thirds of its members are elected; and
- The Town Clerk holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA).

Consultation - Suggested Questions

General Awareness & Understanding

1. Before today, were you aware of Wells City Council's plans for the next two years?
2. Do you feel the proposed priorities reflect the needs of Wells and its residents?

Financial Sustainability and Governance

3. How important do you think it is for the Council to strengthen its governance and financial planning?
4. Are there specific services or areas where you feel better financial management is most needed?

Climate and Asset Management

5. The Council plans to focus on the sustainability of its own buildings and land. Do you support this localised approach to climate action?
6. What improvements would you like to see in how the Council manages its assets (e.g. public buildings, green spaces)?

Council Services

7. Are there any council services you feel are at risk and should be prioritised for protection?
8. Would you support the Council generating income through better use of its assets if it helps maintain services?

Tourism and the Local Economy

9. What role should the Council play in supporting tourism and local businesses in Wells?
10. How can we make sure tourism benefits the city without negatively impacting residents?

Open Feedback

11. Which of the four priorities is most important to you personally?
12. Is there anything missing from the Council's plan that you think should be included?