



WELLS CITY COUNCIL

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A MEETING OF WELLS CITY COUNCIL,
WHICH MEMBERS ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND, WILL BE HELD IN
WELLS TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 23RD JULY 2026, 7PM**

Haylee Wilkins
Town Clerk

16th July 2026

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

Committee Members:
Cllrs: L Agabani, J Browne, T Butt Philip,
S Cursley, D Denis (Mayor), S Eden,
J Edmonds, G Folkard, K Kinshaw,
T Kolizeras, D Orrett, S Powell, G Robbins,
H Siggs, I Von Mensenkampff, P Welch

AGENDA

The Council has declared a Climate Emergency. All reports should include climate implications alongside financial, legal, and community impacts to support informed decision-making and minimise adverse effects.

Members are asked to consider whether recommendations align with the Council's corporate priorities, climate emergency declaration, resource constraints, and financial implications.

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

- 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
To receive any apologies for absence.
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct as adopted 12th May 2022.
- 3 MINUTES FROM THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25th JUNE 2026**
To be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair (attached).



4 ACTIONS FROM THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25th JUNE 2026

Open actions not on the agenda are listed below:

Date Raised	Description of Action
21.05.2026	26/96/C – Consideration of small sweeper with Somerset Council
25.06.2026	26/111/C – Request to consider quoracy of council meetings within standing orders and best practice.

5 MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Public speaking time is normally restricted to 15 minutes in total, at the discretion of the Chair.

If you wish to speak at the meeting, you are encouraged to contact

reception@wells.gov.uk to advise in advance, to aid the management of time

6 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

22nd Sep Honours Board Reception, Wells Town Hall at 6pm. All Councillors invited to attend.

Mayor's Diary

6th Aug Visit to Abbeyfield House for resident 100th Birthday

6th Aug Hiroshima Commemoration, Bishop's Palace

8th Aug Wells Railway Fraternity, Wells Town Hall

9th Aug Twinning BBQ, Wells Museum

31st Aug Moat Boat Race

4th Sep Sculpture Exhibition, Stoberry Park Garden

13th Sep Battle of Britain Commemoration, Street

16th Sep Wells Memory Café, Methodist Church Hall

19th Sep Heritage Open Day, Almshouses

7 FINANCE COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 9th July 2026 (attached).

8 PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of meetings held on 29th June (under delegated authority) and 16th July 2026 (to follow).

9 ESTATES COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd July 2026 (attached)

10 PRESENTATION FROM LEAD SOCIAL PRESCRIBING LINK WORKER WITH THE LOCAL GP PRACTICES (WEST MENDIP PCN)

To receive presentation from Keith Harrison on local implementation and impact.

11 GRANT POLICY ADOPTION

To consider the adoption of the afore mentioned policy, following endorsement from Finance Committee (attached).

12 DEPUTY MAYOR RESIGNATION

To consider the resignation from Cllr S Powell.

13 PLAY & LESUIRE STRATEGY UPDATE

To receive verbal update from the Town Clerk on the Strategy progress and next steps.

14 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS/TRUSTEES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

To receive any associated reports.

1. Wells & Rural LCN Draft AGM Minutes and Annual Report (attached).



15 TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCILLORS

To receive any associated reports.

16 FORWARD PLAN

Full City Council Forward Plan	
Item	Proposed date for consideration
Deputy Mayor Appointment	September 2026
Christmas Light Delivery	September 2026
Heritage Tourism Update	September 2026
Customer Charter & Customer Journey	September 2026
Leisure Strategy & Play Project Update	September 2026
Public Toilet Provision	September 2026
Events on Council Land Policy Adoption	September 2026
Traffic Management – 20MPH proposal consideration	September 2026
Tree Policy Adoption and Green Corridors Policy	September 2026
Tree Supplier Procurement and Appointment of supplier	September 2026
Health & Safety Handbook Adoption	September 2026
Community Resilience Plan Adoption	September 2026
Corporate Risk Register	October 2026
Leisure Strategy & Play Project Update	October 2026
WRGT Update	October 2026
Adoption of Statutory Annual Policy i. Standing Orders ii. Financial Regulations iii. Scheme of Delegation	December 2026
Adoption of 2026-27 Budget	December 2026
Corporate Risk Register	January 2027
Adoption of 2026-27 Budget (if required)	January 2027
Leisure Strategy & Play Project Update	January 2027
Corporate Risk Register & Annual Risk Profile and Assessment	March 2027
Calendar of Public Meetings	March 2027
Priorities & Project Planning	April 2027
General Power of Competency	Every political cycle



17 ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 24th September 2026 at 7pm, Wells Town Hall

EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC STATEMENT

Note: If it is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence it will be proposed by the Chair that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended, excluding the press and public, in order that confidential items can be discussed. In that instance the following statement is relevant:

Exclusion of Press and Public

The committee are required to consider passing a resolution under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information. (Note the agenda item number and name). Where possible, reference the specific paragraph from Schedule 12A:

Personal information - This report contains information relating to an individual and is therefore exempt by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Financial/business affairs (individuals) - This report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of an individual and is therefore exempt by virtue of Paragraph 2 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Commercially sensitive information - This report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information) and is therefore exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 25th JUNE 2026 AT 7.00PM

Written reports can be viewed on agendas: [Wells City Council](#) website

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, T Butt Philip, S Cursley, D Denis (Mayor), J Edmonds, G Folkard, K Kinshaw, D Orrett, H Siggs, P Welch

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
Mace Bearer: G Woodland
WCC Staff: S Glendinning
PC Darren Pearson, Wells Neighbourhood Constable
11 Member of the public

Prior to the meeting starting, the Mayor spoke about a moment of reflection for those in Wells who had been affected by the flash flooding and also those greatly affected by the severe hot weather such as the elderly, the vulnerable and parents with new born babies.

26/107/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs: J Browne, S Eden, T Kolizeras, S Powell (Deputy Mayor), G Robbins, I Von Mensenkampff

RFO: C Woodland

Somerset Cllr for Wells and MP for Wells and Mendip Hills: T Munt

26/108/C DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Cllr Butt Philip declared an interest with 26/124/C CCTV User Agreement, due to his role as Somerset Councillor.

26/109/C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 21ST MAY 2026

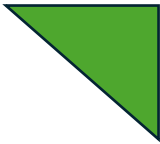
26/91/C Cllr Butt Philip wished to amend that the concerns for the 173 Bus and proposed works at Whitnall Corner should be directed to Highways at Somerset Council. The Town Clerk agreed to alter.

Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

26/110/C ACTIONS FROM THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 21ST MAY 2026

The Town Clerk gave an update on the actions listed below.

Date Raised	Description of Action
21.05.2026	26/91/C - Town Clerk to confirm consultation to bus (SOARX) program has been submitted. <i>This should read SCICT. Consultation has been submitted.</i>
21.05.2026	26/93/C – Deferral of the sponsorship policy chased. <i>Now been discussed at Finance Committee and agreed.</i>
21.05.2026	26/96/C – Consideration of small sweeper with Somerset Council. <i>Consultation has been made with Somerset Officers with the support of Cllr Butt Philip.</i>
21.05.2026	26/101/C - Clarification of WCC funding commitment associated with SALC proposal for youth summer provision. <i>This has been provided.</i>
21.05.2026	26/105/C - Update requested for the leisure strategy. <i>Update provided later in the meeting.</i>
21.05.2026	26/105/C – Request to consider filming for the forthcoming Freeman event. <i>This is being explored.</i>



26/111/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

C Simons questioned the rules around the number of councillors required at a meeting for it to be quorate. No business need be transacted unless one third of the whole number of members of councillor are present and not less than 3. There are 16 councillors on Wells City Council. Mr Simons asked for a review of the standing orders, to look at the numbers required to pass any motion.

The Mayor explained councillors are volunteers, they do not get paid. Attending meetings wherever possible is important, but sometimes other life events do not always allow this to happen. Mr Simons was assured his point will be looked at.

26/112/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor's Diary

- i. 26th June Picnic, Music and Musings, Bandstand
- ii. 2nd July WCS Symphony Orchestra Echoes of the North, Wells Cathedral
- iii. 3rd July Wells Cathedral School Speech Day
- iv. 3rd July Hilliard Society Exhibition – Private viewing
- v. 10th July WOWFest Opening Ceremony, Cedars Hall
- vi. 10th July WOWFest Concert Carmina Burana, Wells Cathedral

26/113/C FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr Folkard (Chair) presented the minutes from the Finance Committee meeting on 11th June 2026.

An amendment has been requested to 26/65/F please could we confirm for future reference that the balance sheet treatment of the Credit Union balance is intended to represent an investment by WCC rather than a donation.

The Town Clerk also explained an amendment was requested to 26/64/F by Mr Simons.

The Finance minutes will be amended and recirculated.

26/114/C PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Cllr Agabani (Vice-chair) presented the minutes from the Planning Advisory Committee meetings on 2nd June (delegated authority) and 18th June 2026 in the absence of the Chair. No questions were asked.

26/115/C OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE

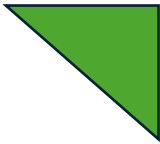
Cllr Orrett (Chair) presented the minutes from the Outside Spaces Committee meeting on 4th June 2026. Cllr Orrett expressed how useful it was to have the Police & Crime update now available. She also pointed out that the Table Tennis table was being installed very soon in the Recreation Ground.

26/116/C STAFFING & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Cllr Edmonds (committee member) presented the minutes from the Staffing & Personnel Committee meeting on 11th June 2026 in the absence of the Chair and Vice-chair. No questions were asked.

26/117/C CIVIC & ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Cllr Agabani (Vice-Chair) presented the minutes from the Civic & Archives Committee meeting on 18th June 2026 in the absence of the Chair. No questions were asked.



26/118/C MAYORS AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE

PC Darren Pearson is retiring after 25 years of service in the Community of Wells. The Mayor provided a short speech of recognition and thanks on behalf of Wells City Council. A framed certificate was presented and a photograph taken.

PC Pearson then left the meeting.

26/119/C TRANSATLANTIC SLAVERY PRESENTATION

A presentation was provided by the sub group of the Wells & Transatlantic Slavery Group. The group was formed in 2021 with the aim of creating a permanent memorial to the enslaved in Wells. The purpose of the presentation was to:

1. add the Council's logo to their materials.
2. ask for support – such as meeting space, printing agendas/minutes.
3. ask for a councillor to attend their meetings and keep all members updated as to the group's progress

A discussion and vote took place and it was agreed to provide the WCC logo for their materials. The Mayor offered the use of her Parlour for one meeting. The Town Clerk agreed to allow the small amount of printing to be provided and to look at the use of the Community Café at the Portway Annexe for their meetings where there is no charge. Cllr Agabani volunteered to attend their meetings and report progress back to council.

26/120/C TO RECEIVE THE AGAR 2025-26 FOR WELLS CITY COUNCIL

To approve the 2 sections of the AGAR as endorsed by Finance Committee:

- Section 1: Annual Governance Statement
- Section 2: Accounting Statement (Annual Return & Explanation of Variances)

The Town Clerk explained these papers had already been endorsed by the Finance Committee. The Mayor asked for all members present to vote and approve both statements. This was approved by all members present.

26/121/C INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT 2025-26

To receive the Internal Auditor's report and recommendations, and to confirm the dates of the notice of public rights and publication for year ending 31st March 2026 will run from Monday 29th June 2026 to Friday 7th August 2026.

The Town Clerk explained again that this had already been endorsed by Finance. This was noted by all present.

26/122/C LEISURE & PLAY STRATEGY UPDATE

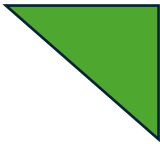
The Town Clerk presented her report, strategy for 2026-2036 and timeline for delivery. A working group will be formed in the next couple of weeks to develop the strategy.

Cllr Kinshaw questioned the climate implications and whether sustainability/adaptive implications should be built in.

Cllr Orrett asked whether external consultation would be obtained. The Town Clerk advised there would be a public consultation but this would be dealt with 'in house'.

The Mayor requested to include more opportunity for youth provision engagement. She also noted the impact on staffing and offered her support with the process of public consultation.

Cllr Kinshaw proposed to agree the Leisure & Play Strategy. This was seconded by Cllr Welch and all members were in agreement.



26/123/C SPONSORSHIP POLICY

The Town Clerk presented her report and sponsorship policy which has also been submitted to the Finance committee.

Cllr Kinshaw requested under climate implications can we mention that we will only engage with those that are sustainable/adaptive.

Cllr Orrett agreed sponsorship was a good idea. She was concerned about the staffing resource. The Town Clerk advised she was comfortable the relevant resource was in place.

Cllr Siggs proposed to accept the sponsorship policy. This was seconded by Cllr Orrett and agreed by all members present.

26/124/C CCTV USER AGREEMENT

Cllr Butt Philip left the meeting for this item to be discussed.

The Town Clerk explained this user agreement has been endorsed by the Finance Committee and will be used to form a three year agreement with Somerset Council.

The Mayor proposed to accept this CCTV User agreement. This was seconded by Cllr Cursley. All members present were in agreement.

Cllr Butt Philip returned to the meeting.

26/125/C YOUTH COUNCIL PROPOSAL

The Town Clerk presented her report. During the time Cllr Browne had been Mayor, she had looked to form a youth council. This report sets out a proposal to create this and engage with schools in September 2026 at the start of the new academic year.

The Mayor stated 6 meetings per year are suggested, she requested to change this to 4 – 6 meetings which was more achievable.

Cllr Agabani proposed to accept the Youth Council Proposal, this was seconded by Cllr Welch. All members present approved.

26/126/C CALENDAR OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

The revised calendar of public meetings June 2026 – May 2027 was presented.

Cllr Butt Philip requested changes during the month of May 2027 around the election date. This was agreed by the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk pointed out the Wells Recreation Ground Trust meeting is scheduled for 24th September 2026. The date was now known for the Bishop Bekynton Service on 10th January 2027. The Cathedral Legal Service may move to a Saturday instead of the usual Sunday to coincide with the market being in operation creating more of a public event.

26/127/C APPOINTMENT OF OUTSIDE BODIES

The Mayor presented the list of representatives and trustees of Outside Bodies.

The following changes were made:

- Include Citizens Advice – Cllr P Welch
- Wells Twinning Association – Cllr J Browne
- Wells Environment Network – Cllrs S Powell, G Folkard, D Orrett, K Kinshaw
- St Cuthbert's Out Parish Liaison Group – Cllrs D Denis, D Orrett and S Powell
- City of Wells Almshouses Trustees – Cllrs D Denis (Mayor), S Powell, S Cursley
- Wells Transatlantic Slavery – Cllr L Agabani
- Visit Wells – Town Clerk to clarify whether a representative is required



26/128/C TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS/TRUSTEES ON OUTSIDE BODIES
None received.

26/129/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCILLORS
None received.

26/130/C RESOLUTION – SKATEPARK – COUNCILLOR T BUTT PHILIP

In line with the Council's longstanding support for the redevelopment of Wells Skatepark and the Council's emerging approach to developing a wider play and leisure strategy, the Council will commit £70,000 to the Skate Park Project, in addition to the £30,000 already held as an earmarked reserve. These funds would be allocated from the Council's revenue budget, with £35,000 to be funded from the 2026/27 budget and £35,000 to be allocated in the 2027/28 budget.

Additionally, the Council reaffirms its support for the use of existing s106 money for the Skatepark Project.

Cllr Butt Philip provided additional information to the above proposal and a discussion took place.

Cllr Folkard questioned how this sat alongside the Play & Leisure Strategy, whether the £15k in this year's budget had been formally earmarked for the skatepark, there had not yet been a forecast for 2026/27 so he felt this was too early to agree the £35,000 spend. In addition, the 2027/28 budget was yet to be set so he felt it was not appropriate to agree a £35,000 spend from this.

The Mayor asked how much had been spent from the s106 money on the skatepark already. The Town Clerk confirmed £42,705.79 in 2021/22 had been spent on the skatepark, £23,631 is remaining. There is also a play budget of £33,182.

Both Cllr Siggs and Agabani spoke strongly to council to endorse the proposal, otherwise there was a risk of the new skatepark project not succeeding.

The Mayor proposed to alter the resolution to remove the use of the s106 money for the Skatepark as she felt this should be used as part of the wider Play & Leisure strategy thereby including others who will not use the skatepark. The resolution was agreed to change to the following:

In line with the Council's longstanding support for the redevelopment of Wells Skatepark and the Council's emerging approach to developing a wider play and leisure strategy, the Council will commit £70,000 to the Skate Park Project, in addition to the £30,000 already held as an earmarked reserve, resolving to increase the earmark to the noted £30,000. These funds would be allocated from the Council's revenue budget, with £35,000 to be funded from the 2026/27 budget and £35,000 to be allocated in the 2027/28 budget.

Additionally, the Council reaffirms its support by offering written representation to the project.

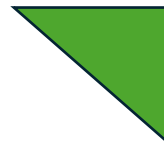
The Mayor asked for the amended proposal from Cllr Butt Philip, seconded by Cllr Siggs to be voted on. Eight gave approval, one refused. The proposal was carried.

26/131/C RESOLUTION – PRIDE CELEBRATION – COUNCILLOR L AGABANI

Wells Pride Committee ask Council to consider the request for free use of the Recreation Ground and Bandstand on 8th August 2026 from 8am to 8pm, to facilitate a social gathering and parade. Council are also asked to show their support by flying the LGBT+ from the Town Hall on the same day and supporting the provision of the flag within the noted procession.

Cllr Folkard asked for clarification on offering free use. Cllr Butt Philip felt that the use of the Recreation Ground and band stand being a public space are a different entity than hiring and paying for council rooms.

Cllr Agabani's proposal was seconded by Cllr Welch and agreed by all members present.



26/132/C FORWARD PLAN

Full City Council Forward Plan	
Item	Proposed date for consideration
General Power of Competency	Every political cycle
Customer Charter	July 2026
Internal Audit Report	July 2026
Leisure Strategy & Play Project Update	July 2026
Corporate Risk Register	July 2026
Leisure Strategy & Play Project Update	September 2026
Events on Council Land Policy Adoption	September 2026
Traffic Management – 20MPH proposal consideration	September 2026
Tree Policy Adoption	September 2026
Health & Safety Handbook Adoption	September 2026
Corporate Risk Register	October 2026
Leisure Strategy & Play Project Update	October 2026
Adoption of Statutory Annual Policy i. Standing Orders ii. Financial Regulations iii. Scheme of Delegation	December 2026
Corporate Risk Register	January 2027
Leisure Strategy & Play Project Update	January 2027
Corporate Risk Register & Annual Risk Profile and Assessment	March 2027
Calendar of Public Meetings	March 2027
Priorities & Project Planning	April 2027

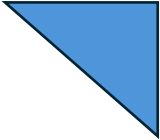
26/133/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT

Cllr Kinshaw asked whether consideration to the Somerset Chairs' awards had been made. The Town Clerk advised that only one valid application had been put forward and that this would be submitted within the timescales.

26/134/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Wells City Council will be Thursday 23rd July 2026, 7pm

Minutes signed by The Mayor.....Date



WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 9TH JULY 2026 AT 7PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, T Butt Philip, G Folkard (Chair), S Powell, H Siggs

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
RFO: C Woodland
WCC Staff: S Glendinning
MP for Wells and Mendip Hills/Somerset Cllr for Wells: T Munt
0 members of the public

26/76/F APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllrs: S Cursley, S Eden, I Von Mensenkampff

26/77/F DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022.
None declared.

26/78/F MINUTES FROM THE FINANCE MEETING HELD ON 11TH JUNE 2026

26/69/F Cllr Powell questioned whether due process had been followed in allowing the Skateboard Park earmark reserve to be increased from £15k to £30k ahead of budget setting. She felt the matter should have been considered at Finance before being submitted to Full Council.

The Town Clerk advised due process was followed as Full Council delegates to each of the committees with Full Council having the ultimate decision.

The Chair also requested that going forward, any matters of any significant financial magnitude should be referred to the Finance Committee for full consideration.

The minutes for the previous meeting were signed as a true record by the Chair.

26/79/F ACTIONS FROM THE FINANCE MEETING HELD ON 11TH JUNE 2026

Both the following actions were covered later in the meeting.

Date Raised	Description of Action
May 2026	Explore graphical reports to aid understanding of information, for both cashbook, forecasting.
March 2026	Review community grant scheme in readiness for Septembers grants.

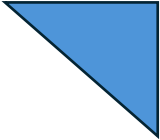
26/80/F MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

There were no members of public present.

26/81/F FINANCE REPORTING AND VARIANCES FOR WELLS CITY COUNCIL

The RFO presented her monthly finance report and answered questions.

The Profit & Loss account for the Wells YMCA had been circulated to the committee, Cllr Siggs questioned a central administration cost of £3k from the YMCA. The Town Clerk advised, the YMCA have been asked to attend the Finance meeting to enable the committee to ask questions, but she would seek clarity on this cost. The Mayor asked for a copy of these accounts to be sent to her. Cllr Butt Philip suggested that the current agreement with the YMCA be looked at to make it more specific with a set term.



The RFO also presented her figures for 2026-2027 staff costs.

26/82/F FINANCE REPORTING AND VARIANCES FOR WELLS RECREATION GROUND TRUST

The RFO presented her monthly report.

The Mayor asked for an update on the Valentine's coffee van located at Wells Recreation Ground. The RFO agreed to establish how often they are on site and current level of income generated.

26/83/F Q1 FORECAST FOR WELLS CITY COUNCIL REVENUE BUDGET

The RFO had circulated the Q1 forecast report which shows a healthy surplus on income.

The Town Clerk advised a review of insurance costs had been undertaken and as a result there were areas where our insurance provision has needed to be increased thereby increasing costs. At renewal in March 2027 it is planned to go out to tender to ensure the insurance broker remains competitive.

The RFO explained IT support/software costs were exceeding budget. The Town Clerk explained we are in an agreement until the end of the year where a review of our IT provision will be carried out to ensure the agreement remains competitive.

A new civic event has been approved which was outside of the original budget.

It was agreed to carry out a rent review of all properties.

Cllr Butt Philip questioned the underspend on public toilet supplies which the RFO agreed to investigate.

26/84/F REVISED COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY

The RFO presented a revised Community Grants policy for consideration and adoption. All grant applicants have always been invited to attend the meeting to make a presentation in support of their application. Cllr Powell felt very strongly that this should not be part of the process.

Cllr Agabani questioned whether we should be making a feature of the climate implications.

Cllr Butt Philip stated we need to change any reference to Town Council to City Council. The budget allocation should be mindful that there are two months in any year, March and September, where community grants are considered. He asked for the following to be removed:

The Council is unable to support:

- on the grounds of economic or social status
- services which should be provided by statutory funding
- projects which are the responsibility of Somerset Council

It was agreed to adopt the policy with the amendments suggested and to request successful applicants to report back on how the grant funding is spent.

26/85/F TREND DATA

The RFO presented example graphical reports to aid understanding of information for both cashbook and forecasting. It was agreed this would be useful. The Chair requested total salary cost, planned preventative maintenance but it was also agreed to delegate to the RFO to produce graphs felt to be relevant.

26/86/F CONSIDERATION FOR FUTURE GROWTH AND SAVINGS

To receive verbal request from Chair of Committee for any known/expected in year growths or savings to inform forecasting.

This item was discussed within 26/83/F.

26/87/F FINANCE PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

To receive verbal update from the Chair of Committee of associated processes for expenditure, monitoring and budgeting.

This item was discussed within 26/78/F. The Chair had requested any matters of any significant financial implication be referred to the Finance Committee for full consideration before going before Full Council.

26/88/F FORWARD PLAN

Topic	Month
RFO Budget Report and Variances	RFO Budget Report and Variances
Q2 Forecasting report	October 2026

26/89/F ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

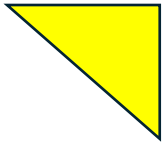
Cllr Powell stated that a WCN newsletter had stated they had received free use of the band stand. A policy needs to be in place in order for there to be consistency over the hiring of the band stand and recreation ground. The Town Clerk confirmed a paper will be produced in September/October 2026.

26/90/F DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 10th September 2026 at 7pm, Wells Town Hall

EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Note: It is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence, it was proposed by the Chair that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended to allow a private report.

Minutes signed by The Chair: **Date:**



WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY ON 29th JUNE 2026 AT 9AM AT WELLS TOWN HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs: S Powell (Chair), L Agabani

IN ATTENDANCE: Estates Manager: L Wassell

26/79/P PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FOR CONSIDERATION

All planning applications can be viewed in detail on <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/> Members of the Public are welcome to express their views at the Parish Council Planning Advisory Committee as well as direct to Somerset Council. Click on planning application reference numbers to link to Somerset website for further details or comments.

- 1** [2026/1101/VRC](#)
Removal of condition 1 (Temporary Permission) and variation of condition 3 (Hours of Use), condition 4 (Consumption of Food/Drink-Front of the premises) and condition 5 (Consumption of Food/Drink-Side of the premises) on consent 2025/1106/VRC (Application to vary conditions 3, 4 & 5 (Use & Times) of planning approval 2012/1196 (Change of use of premises from A1 (retail) to A4 (public house) to extend use times, Weekend and Bank Holidays 0700hrs to 0130hrs, rear garden/front garden 0800hrs to 2200hrs. [Addendum: public houses are now sui generis.]
Location: 18 Priory Road Wells Somerset BA5 1SY

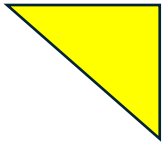
Object – Surrounding community impact due to additional proposed opening hours on a Thursday.
- 2** [2026/1025/LBC](#)
Removal of timber gates to workshop for repair and rehanging following repairs.
Location: 12 Market Place Wells Somerset BA5 2RB

Support (2) Design and Appearance
- 3** **PAVEMENT LICENCE**
Stage 1 SC847916972

The closing date for any objections made against the application is 29/06/2026.

Deferred to Planning Authority; Members of the Planning Committee noted that Wells City Council receives income from the market operating on the site affected by the proposed pavement licence. Under the Council's Code of Conduct, although a non-registered interest could have been declared to avoid any perception of bias or predetermination, members confirmed that they did not feel able to comment on the application. As a result, they did not participate in forming a view on the proposal's licensing merits.
- 4** [2026/0586/FUL](#)
New signage applied to existing shopfront and new kitchen extract.
Location: 1 Market Place Wells Somerset BA5 2RN

Support (2) Design and Appearance



5 [2026/1180/FUL](#) and [2026/1181/LBC](#)
Reinstatement of Covered Veranda and minor external alterations to courtyard
Location: 69 High Street Wells Somerset BA5 2AG

Support (2) Design and Appearance

26/80/P **DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm, Thursday 16th July 2026**

Minutes Signed by the Chair Date



WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ESTATES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 2ND JULY 2026 AT 7:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, G Folkard, T Kolizeras, G Robbins

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
Estates Manager: L Wassell
WCC Staff: S. Glendinning
Somerset Cllr for Wells and MP for Wells and Mendip Hills: T Munt
1 member of the public

26/50/E APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllrs: S Cursley, H Siggs (Chair), P Welch

26/51/E DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022.
None received.

26/52/E APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair the Town Clerk invited nominations for Vice Chair of Estates. Cllr G Robbins was nominated.
No other nominations were received.
Councillors voted unanimously for Cllr G Robbins for Vice Chair of Estates.

In the absence of the Chair, Cllr G Robbins chaired the rest of the meeting.

26/53/E MINUTES FROM THE ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30TH APRIL 2026

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

26/54/E ACTIONS FROM THE ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30TH APRIL 2026

Date Raised	Description of Action
30.04.2026	To provide an update on the legal position of the Wells Film Centre and confirmed date for contract signature. <i>The Town Clerk advised if the position was not concluded by the end of July, the committee will be consulted to agree what action to take.</i>

26/55/E MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No public wished to speak.

26/56/E LANDLORD UPDATES

The Estates Manager provided an update on the following:

Tenant	Location	Next Break Clause	Lease end date
Il Postino	Old Post Office, Market Hall, Market Place <i>No update</i>	20/11/2030	19/11/2035



The Crown	8-10 Market Place <i>Energy Performance Certificate, more energy information is still required from the Crown before the certificate can be issued.</i>	N/A	23/06/2036
The Crown	Market Place	N/A	28/09/2053
Roderick Thomas	Old Post Office, 1 Priory Road <i>Advise has been sought on the sub-let. Cllr Butt Philip asked for legal advice to be sought. The Town Clerk agreed to approach a third party.</i>	06/07/2029	06/07/2033
Ask	Market Hall, Market Place <i>No update</i>	N/A	29/09/2028
Wells Film Centre	Princes Road <i>See 26/54/E</i>	TBC	TBC
Mr E Philips	Portway Annexe <i>No update</i>	3 months' notice	11/02/2027
Wells City Band	Portway Annexe <i>No update</i>	3 months' notice	10/03/2030
Wells Bowls Club	(WRGT) Wells Recreation Ground <i>No Update</i>	TBC	2035

26/57/E TENANCY UPDATES

The Estates Manager advised there were no updates to the following:

Location	Operational use	Next Break Clause	Lease end date
Underwood Business Park Wookey Hole Road, BA5 1AF	Open Spaces storage and maintenance	N/A	02/05/2028
Peak Builders Merchants Ltd - Coal Yard	Open Spaces storage	One months' notice	n/a
Underwood Car and Commercial	Open Spaces additional parking	tbc	n/a

26/58/E PLANNED PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE QUARTER 1 ANALYSIS

The Estates Manager presented her report. There were no questions asked.

The committee considered the proposal and requested additional options be explored before being presented to Full City Council.



26/59/E PUBLIC TOILET CONFIDENTIAL REPORT

This item was delayed to the end of meeting for it to be discussed in private session.

26/60/E FORWARD PLAN

The Town Clerk advised there were no detail on the forward plan, the committee were asked to advise of any additions. None were requested.

Topic	Month

26/61/E ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

The Town Clerk asked for two volunteers to join the Wells Recreation Ground Trust working group from the Estates Committee. Cllrs G Folkard and G Robbins agreed to join.

The Estates Manager advised she had received quotations for work on the external areas of the Portway Annexe. This will be submitted to the next Finance meeting as the cost exceeds the Town Clerk spend threshold. The work will look at rotten woodwork on the roof where asbestos is possibly present, so specialist contractors are likely required. It is likely that the Annexe will be required to shut whilst the work is carried out, so any other maintenance that can be carried out during this time will also be scheduled to make most use of the time. The Estates Manager agreed to obtain timescales for the likely closure period planned which will be during the school holidays, when bookings are reduced, to minimise impact.

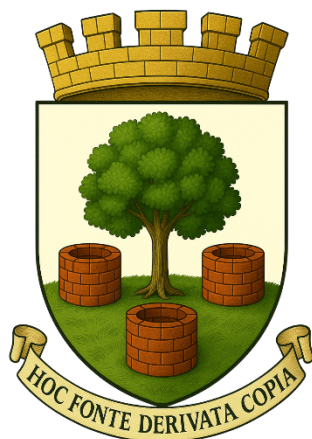
26/62/E DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 1st October 2026, 7pm, Wells Town Hall

EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Note: If it is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence it will be proposed by the Chairman that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended, excluding the press and public, in order that confidential items can be discussed.

The Vice-Chair asked for a vote to be taken to move to closed session to discuss 26/59/E Public Toilet Confidential Report. Members of the public left the meeting at this point.

Minutes signed by The Chair: **Date:**



Wells City Council

Community Grant Policy

Purpose	
Additional Papers	
Reviewed By	
Adopted	
Review Date	

Wells City Council has adopted the General Power of Competence (Localism Act 2011); under this power, the Council can choose to award grants in much the same way as an individual might give funds to a good cause. However, the Council must consider its responsibilities and duties to its electorate and has therefore laid down the procedures set out here, to guide equitable and transparent use of public funds. The Council's power to give grants is delegated to the Finance Committee.

Equality

In putting this policy into practice, no aspect of the procedure will discriminate on the grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, religion, politics, marital status, disability, politics, union membership or any other grounds.

Grants & Application Criteria

The maximum amount that can be applied for per application is **£500**.

Grants will be considered at September or March meetings of the Finance Committee. Dates of the meetings, application deadlines, and application forms are available on the City Council's website or Town Hall reception.

Applications must be received no later than the deadline advised on the City Council website. Extensions to the application deadline will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the Town Clerk.

Only one application to each grant scheme from any organisation will be considered each financial year from the **1st of April to 31st March**.

Applicants should complete the application form and return it using the contact details at the end of the document along with a copy of the organisation's accounts for the previous financial year. If the organisation does not produce a full set of accounts, the applicant must provide the organisation's latest bank statement, and a comprehensive budget and business plan may also be required.

The City Council may also request a copy of the following from the organisation:

- **Committee structure.**
- **Constitution or set of rules.**
- **Equal opportunities statement.**
- **Insurance policy.**
- **Photographs, plans and project costs.**
- **Bank account details and latest bank statement.**

All applicants are asked to send a representative to the meeting of the Committee, to present background information relating to their application and answer questions from Councillors. If you are unable to attend this may result in your application being delayed or refused.

The Selection Process

In awarding funding, the Committee members will be mindful at all times that the grants are given from public money raised from the council tax payers of the City of Wells.

The applicant must satisfy the Committee that the grant will be used for the benefit of those living, working or studying in the City.

The applicant must satisfy the Committee that there is financial need for the grant to be given, and provide evidence of financial status including accounts and good management.

The financial contribution that can be awarded is taken from an annual budget based on the financial year April to March and the total amount of grants awarded are restricted within this budget.

Applications must have objectives that support one or more of the following aims for the relevant scheme:

- **Have community benefits in Wells.**
- **Support the City Council's Corporate Priority on Climate Change and accessibility**
- **Support the voluntary and community sector.**
- **Work on improving the quality of life for residents of Wells**

Application Guidelines

Applications are accepted from the following:

- **Charitable Organisations.**
- **Community Interest Groups.**
- **Sports Clubs and Arts Groups.**
- **Advice Organisations.**
- **Supporter or 'friends of' groups.**
- **Groups seeking seed-funding who will become one of the above.**
- **Resident's Associations.**

Rejected Applications

The Council is unable to support:

- **General appeals.**
- **Individual appeals or sponsorship.**
- **Commercial enterprises which aim to generate a profit.**
- **Projects with party political links.**
- **Retrospective applications for events or projects which have already happened.**
- **Ordinary or regular staff salary costs (although hiring in an external specialist is acceptable if the benefit to residents can be demonstrated).**
- **Applications submitted by members of staff or Councillors of Wells City Council. (Wells City Council staff and Councillors may be involved in or members of applicant organisations. However, to ensure transparency and neutrality, applications must not be submitted directly by Council staff or Councillors).**

In these instances, the RFO will contact the applicant to explain the reason(s) why their application will not progress.

Organisations receiving statutory funding are not eligible to apply for a community grant unless they can prove that their application fits outside of their statutory funding requirements. Where possible, these organisations are encouraged to apply via any supporting group e.g. schools a 'friends of' or their respective PTA.

Should an application be received by an organisation which or whose representatives have made public comment(s) about the City Council within the last 12 months which may or potentially amount(s) to being defamatory in nature, generally or with reference to Community Grants schemes, the Finance Committee will be informed and can decide to defer the application on these grounds.

The Finance Committee will consider the following as part of their decision-making process:

- **Whether the budget is flawed or unsustainable.**
- **Does the project offer value for money.**
- **The quality of application.**
- **Whether the project could be considered high risk.**
- **The number of recipients and the impact of the project.**
- **If a grant has recently been awarded to the same group for similar project from Wells City Council.**
- **Whether feedback has been received if previously awarded a grant by Wells City Council.**
- **Whether a clear breakdown of costs has been provided.**
- **Whether or not they support each of the items contained within the breakdown of costs on the application form. They may remove any item(s) on a grant application if they don't agree with how the money will be used and it will not impact the overall project. This may result in a partial grant being awarded.**

Where a Councillor is involved in either a voluntary or paid capacity with the organisation applying, they must be clear in their declaration of interest and whether they are abstaining from the vote or leave the meeting room for that item if required.

The Finance Committee will seek to fund projects in full. Where this is not possible, it may remove specific elements of an application to ensure transparency in decision making and that projects are realistically funded and deliverable.

Minutes of the meeting will be circulated and all applicants, whether successful or not, will be informed of the decision within two weeks of the meeting. The decision of the Finance Committee is final.

Successful applicants will be invited to the Town Hall to take a photograph with the Mayor of Wells for promotional purposes. The photos will be shared on the City Council's website and may appear in social media and printed media.

Grant Payment

Funds will be transferred to the organisation via BACS within three weeks of the meeting. Funds will not be paid to an individual. If an organisation does not have a bank account, they can arrange for another community organisation to receive and hold the funds.

Occasionally conditions may be applied, which the applicant will need to address as part of the approval before payment can be made. Where a grant is awarded for a project that is relying on match funding from other organisations, the funds will not be released until the organisation has reached the target set by the Finance Committee.

If the organisation is relying on a grant from the City Council, it should not commence the activity until the award of a grant has been confirmed. The grant must only be used for the purpose for which the application was made.

Monitoring

Successful applicants will be subject to monitoring to ensure good use of funding. This may include requests for annual reports detailing expenditure or other results.

Proof of purchase is required to confirm that the grant funding was spent on items applied for. Failure to do this may jeopardise future grant applications or the City Council may request the return of the awarded grant.

All recipients are required to complete the feedback form stating the purpose of the grant, what has been delivered, the effect the project, activity or event has had on those taking part or

receiving it and provide evidence of positive recognition given to the City Council. Recipients will be contacted for this purpose.

Recipients are required to give positive recognition to the City Council through publicity and promotions and where possible are expected to invite the Mayor to attend events relating to the project, activity or event after the grant has been awarded.

Withholding, Suspending and Repayment of Grant

The City Council's intention is that the grant will be paid to the recipient in full.

However, without prejudice to the Council's other rights and remedies, the Council may at its discretion withhold or suspend payment of the grant (and/or require repayment of all or part of the grant) if:

- The recipient uses the grant for purposes other than those for which they have been awarded.
- The Council considers that the recipient has not made satisfactory progress with the delivery of the project.
- The recipient is unable to use the grant for the purpose it was awarded and within the stated timescale.
- The recipient is, in the reasonable opinion of the Council, delivering the project in a negligent manner.
- The recipient obtains duplicate funding from a third party for the same (or part of the) project, activity or event.
- The recipient provides the Council with any materially misleading or inaccurate information.
- Returned funds will be added to the relevant grants budget for that municipal year and split evenly across all remaining meetings.

Scheme Governance

This policy is issued by the Finance Committee of Wells City Council, which is comprised of nine Councillors, who will meet two times per year to consider applications based on the criteria outlined in this policy. All applications received by the City Council will be considered on their own merits.

The scheme is managed by the Town Clerk, and the day-to-day administration of the process is delegated to the RFO / Customer Service and Governance Manager, within a GDPR framework which protects the confidentiality of individuals and any sensitive or personal data.

Contact Details

Completed application forms and supplementary information can be returned either by post to:

Council Grants, Wells City Council, Wells Town Hall, Market Place, Wells BA5 2RB

Or by email rfo@wells.gov.uk

If you would like help completing the application form, or for any further information on the scheme, please call 01749 673091.

ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION

Name of organisation	
When was your organisation formed?	
Is your organisation a registered charity?	
Is your organisation part of, or affiliated to, any national organisation?	
Briefly describe the aims and objectives of your organisation including details of events, services, projects, and activities currently provided. If you are new, describe what you plan to provide.	

ABOUT YOUR PROJECT, EVENT, OR ACTIVITY

Project	Start Date	/ /
	Finish Date	/ /
	Total Cost	£
	Grant Applied For Please note the maximum is £500	£
If you are not applying for the full amount, please specify where the remaining funds will come from.		

Describe the project, event, or activity for which you require a grant:

Please be specific about what you will achieve and how you will achieve it.

If the money requested only forms a part of the overall cost, what would this grant be specifically spent on in the context of the project or activity?

Please explain how you have identified a need in the community for this project, event or activity and what difference a grant will make.

If applicable, what is the demographic of those people who would benefit? (e.g. youth, older adults, disabled people)	
---	--

Approximately how many people will benefit in Wells? Please be as specific as possible.	
---	--

Please list any supplementary information in support of your application (for example additional literature, leaflets or a recent annual report).	
---	--

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Please provide a breakdown of your costs, detailing how each aspect of the grant would be spent if your grant application is successful.

Description Not supported: Ordinary or regular staff salary costs (although hiring in an external specialist is acceptable if the benefit to residents can be demonstrated); general appeals	Total Cost	Amount requested from Wells City Council
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
Total	£	£

Have you received a Wells City Council grant within the previous two years?	Amount £
	Year:

Are you seeking funding support from any other organisation? Examples include other Authorities, local supermarkets, businesses and other national and local organisations.

Organisation approached	Purpose	Amount approved
		£
		£
		£
Total		£

Are you seeking Match Funding?	
--------------------------------	--

If you have not made applications to other organisations for funding, please give your reasons.	
---	--

If applicable, please give details of your fundraising efforts and how much has been raised towards the cost of the project, event, or activity:

Type of activity	Amount raised	Amount still to raise
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
Total	£	£

If your organisation has financial reserves, for what purpose are they held?

Amount	Purpose
£	
£	
£	

APPLICATION CHECK LIST

All questions have been answered accurately.	☐
You have been clear on the amount of grant required and provided a detailed breakdown of costs.	☐
You have included the organisation's latest full set of accounts (income and expenditure) or the organisation's latest bank statement and are prepared to provide the organisation's comprehensive budget and/or business plan if required.	☐
You have included a copy of relevant insurance policies, where applicable.	☐
You are aware of the dates of the meetings and have submitted this application more than three weeks in advance of the meeting at which you would like your application to be considered.	☐
You have included the separate Grants Scheme Applicants Information Form.	☐
You have signed the declaration on the last page of your application.	☐

DECLARATION

I declare that:

I have read and accepted the policy and conditions of funding and have answered all questions fully and truthfully. I also declare that any grant made will be used solely for the purpose outlined in this application.

I understand that:

Wells City Council may ask for additional information at any stage in the application process.

The Finance Committee may reduce the final amount awarded to me if they don't agree to fund an item on my application, this may be due to lack of support for the item or availability of funds.

If the grant is only partially used it is my responsibility to return these unallocated funds to Wells City Council and cannot be used for any unspecified items.

Wells City Council reserves the right to reclaim the grant in the event of it not being used for the purpose specified.

I must provide positive recognition to the City Council through publicity and promotions, and I am encouraged to invite the Mayor where possible to visit my project, event or activity.

Details of this application will be made public in the agenda and reports for the Finance Committee. Private and sensitive data, such as contact information and bank details, will not be disclosed to the public, however Committee members may request and be shown items such bank statements, insurance details, etc.

Signature:

Name:

Date:

Agenda Item 14

Wells and Rural LCN AGM Notes

Meeting held on Monday 3 July.

Attendees- P Welch and D Denis(WCC Councillors) , Cllr Edric Hobbs(Somerset), Cllr Jim Reeves(SCOP), Cllr Jon Abbot(Binegar), Rachel (Binegar Clerk), Cllr Simon Shimmin (N Wooton) plus 4 members of the public.

Denise Denis announced she would not stand again as Chair, Cllr Ros Wyke had sent apologies and confirmed prior to meeting she would continue as Deputy if no one else stood to be elected. Edric offered to stand as Chair and it was agreed by those present to accept his offer. Edric canvassed those [resent on what would be of value to the next year of meetings and there was a discussion on efficacy of LCNs and what will result from Electoral Boundary Changes.. It was suggested a meeting on Flood, Fires, Highways issues are all of common interest.

Denise and Charlotte Griffin submitted the attached annual report.

Denise gave a presentation on the Somerset Council Draft Local Plan Scoping Consultation highlighting the timetable and SWOT Analysis as key to note, especially as the deadline for this survey is 24 July. The members of the public were concerned that this was a very short notice- and only a month given to do. They requested that parish councils could advertise such consultations more widely. Smaller parishes sent out the information in a parish newsletter. It was recognised that there is a problem of circulation in social media and local press in Wells.

Other AOBs- Jim Reeves requested a Hierarchy Map of Somerset Departments and Officers, and a return to being able to contact Senior Officers for accountability.

Next Date- Monday 21 Sept 7pm

Wells and Rural Local Community Network

Annual Report 2025/26



Wells and Rural LCN



Parishes	11
LCN Chair	Cllr Denise Denis (Wells City Council)
LCN Vice Chair	Cllr Ros Wyke (Somerset Councillor/Westbury-sub-Mendip Parish Council)
Link Officer	Charlotte Griffin
Contact	wellsandrurallcn@somerset.gov.uk

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Introduction

The Wells and Rural Local Community Network (LCN) encompass the city of Wells and a wider surrounding network of rural communities, covering a total of 11 parishes characterised by a mix of historic urban centre and dispersed villages set within an environmentally significant landscape. The area includes parts of the Mendip Hills National Landscape (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), with its distinctive ridge and rural topography shaping both the identity of the area and the needs of its communities. This geography creates a diverse context in which Wells serves as a key service and population hub, while the surrounding parishes are more rural, with agricultural, environmental and connectivity considerations playing an important role. The LCN brings together Somerset Council, parish and town councils, statutory partners and residents to support partnership working and community-led approaches to improving outcomes for local people.

Within this context, the Wells and Rural LCN focuses on a set of locally agreed priorities that reflect both the opportunities and challenges across the area. Key themes for 2025–2026 include strengthening provision for young people, particularly in relation to mental health, resilience and access to youth services; improving active travel infrastructure to support safer and more accessible walking and cycling links between communities; and addressing highways and transport issues, including road safety, speeding and better communication around infrastructure projects. Additional areas of interest include flooding, community safety and health and wellbeing, reflecting the needs of both urban and rural populations. The LCN delivers this work through regular network meetings and dedicated working groups, particularly focused on highways and active travel, which provide forums for detailed discussion, collaboration and the application of local knowledge to inform decision-making. Overall, the Wells and Rural LCN represents a collaborative, place-based approach that recognises the varied needs of its communities and seeks to strengthen connections, engagement and outcomes across this diverse and largely rural part of Somerset.

Chair's Reflections



It has been a pleasure to Chair the Wells and Rural LCN this year. I would like to thank our Link Officer, Charlotte Griffin, for her excellent support in helping to shape agendas, coordinate speakers and identify suitable venues across Wells and the surrounding rural parishes. This support has been invaluable in my first year as Chair and has helped ensure that each of our full LCN meetings has focused on issues that are relevant and meaningful to our local communities.

At our first meeting, the LCN agreed a set of priorities for 2025–2026 that reflected the shared concerns and ambitions of Wells City Council, rural parish councils, Somerset Councillors and local partners. Over the course of the year, good progress has been made in taking forward many of these themes through full LCN meetings, working group discussions and ongoing partnership conversations.

LCN priorities for 2025–2026

- Youth provision and outreach (e.g., mobile youth services, youth-led initiatives).
 - Speeding and traffic enforcement.
 - Flood prevention and inter-parish collaboration.
- Improved communication and networking between parishes.
 - Access to funding and budget transparency.
 - Better stakeholder engagement (e.g., police, health, SRA).

Progress and outcomes

1. A seed funding bid achieved for youth provision in the Parishes- and a report sent to all the parishes in the LCN with a follow up meeting for Stakeholders with Jessica Lewin, Street in September. The offer of SALC funding for this Summer's Youth activities in the rural parishes has been explored and Wells Council has offered to facilitate.
2. Speeding and Traffic Enforcement was debated - we were very fortunate to have Clare Moody, Police Crimes Commissioner, plus 3 officers including (Simon Lancey, Road traffic senior officer) to answer questions at our December meeting and this was followed by further questions at the Highways Sub group meetings, to the Police and Highways, from the rural parishes in particular, for more speed reduction measures. We were assured at both meetings that the methods surveillance of traffic disorders were increased but not always visible to the public. Local issues to various parishes had some common themes- and the Crime Commissioner heard the concern that all the parishes were concerned that lack of visibility of police officers was more likely to lead to increased crime.
3. Flood Prevention and Inter-parish collaboration- Cllr Ros Wyke and I both attended a workshop set up by the Somerset Rivers Authority to look at Emergency Planning across the whole of Somerset- and how prepared are we in our parishes. This is clearly a greater issue for some than others, but even if we are not in a flood plain it became evident that surface water flooding, blocked gullies, severe rainfall in short periods can cause considerable disruption and the officers gave us guidance on how we can develop our planning. I would recommend that all parishes try to attend the next Somerset Parishes Conference to meet and engage with the SRA and Environment Agency.
4. Improved communication and networking- the venues have be rotated between, Godney, Binegar, Wells Golf Club and Coxley. Some have been better attended- others less so, but all have had a blended meeting option for online attendance. There have been opportunities for introductions for everyone to feel more included, but I regret the LCN meetings do not seem to be achieving the popularity it was hoped for. I understand that Somerset Council is reviewing the way forward for LCNs and we may find our attendance figures will be taken into account.

I hope that this will give the next Chair a good base to work from- My mantra always has been-together we are stronger. I look forward to this in 2026-27.

Best wishes, Denise Denis (Wells City Council/Chair of Wells and Rural LCN)

Link Officer's Reflections

Since taking on the Link Officer role, I have valued the opportunity to work with parish and town councils, Somerset Councillors, community partners, statutory agencies and local stakeholders across an area that brings together the Wells and Rural LCN.

Over the past year, the LCN has provided an important forum for discussion, information sharing and partnership working. Main meetings have enabled local representatives and partners to explore shared priorities including youth provision, highways and traffic concerns, flooding and emergency planning, community safety, health and wellbeing, and active travel.

Alongside the formal main meetings, much of my role has focused on the important work that takes place between meetings. This has included building relationships with parish councils, Somerset Council colleagues, statutory partners and voluntary and community organisations, as well as creating links between partners so that local issues can be better understood and responded to collectively. I have also supported communities and partners during periods of flooding, helping to share information, strengthen communication routes and connect local representatives with relevant services and support. In addition, I have attended Health Determinants Research Collaboration training, which has helped to strengthen my understanding of how evidence, data and wider determinants of health can inform place-based working and support more preventative approaches across the LCN.

Looking ahead to 2026–2027, the Wells and Rural LCN has a strong base to build on. The priorities identified this year show the value of continuing to focus on practical, place-based issues that matter to local communities, while also strengthening the links between local insight and wider Somerset Council and partner activity. As the wider Community Working Review progresses, there will be an important opportunity to reflect on what has worked well and how LCNs can continue to support meaningful engagement and partnership working in the future.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to and supported the Wells and Rural LCN this year. In particular, thank you to Cllr Denise Denis for Chairing the LCN, Cllr Ros Wyke for supporting as Vice Chair, and to all parish representatives, councillors, officers and partners who have given their time, knowledge and commitment to the network.

Charlotte Griffin

LCN Link Officer

Highways Working Group

Highways and road safety were identified as key priorities for the Wells and Rural LCN during 2025–2026, with particular emphasis on speeding, traffic enforcement, road closures and diversions, drainage, surface water, maintenance concerns and the need for clearer communication around reporting routes and decision-making. The working group has helped to bring these issues together thematically, supporting a more coordinated approach to understanding common challenges across the area.

Topics covered have included:

- Speeding and traffic enforcement
- Road safety and evidence-led reporting
- Road closures, diversions and traffic management
- Drainage, surface water and flooding impacts on the highway network
- Use of the “Report It” system and highways reporting routes
- Localised parish highways concerns and the role of site-specific knowledge
- Communication between parishes, Somerset Council Highways and partner agencies



A word cloud of terms related to highways and road safety. The words are arranged in a cluster, with 'Highways' being the largest and most central word. Other prominent words include 'Speeding', 'Safety', 'Potholes', 'Traffic Lights', 'Parking', 'Gullies', 'Enhanced Highways Maintenance', 'Crossing', 'Avon and Somerset Police', 'Evidence', 'Data', 'Maintenance', 'Lining', 'Resurfacing', 'Signs', 'Surface Dressing', and 'Crossing'.

Active Travel Working Group

Active travel was identified as one of the LCN's priorities for 2025–2026, reflecting the importance of safer, more accessible and better-connected routes for residents, visitors and communities across the area. The group has provided a useful space for local knowledge to be shared, helping to identify barriers that may prevent people from walking, cycling or wheeling safely and confidently.

Topics covered have included:

- Safer walking, cycling and wheeling routes across Wells and surrounding rural parishes
- Continuing engagement with Somerset Council officers and relevant partners
- Accessibility for disabled users, older residents, families and people using mobility scooters or wheelchairs
- Dropped kerbs and local access improvements
- Links between active travel, health and wellbeing, and reducing reliance on car travel
- Public transport connections and how active travel can support wider transport access
- The emerging Somerset Local Plan and Transport Plan
- Opportunities to influence future infrastructure, planning and funding decisions
- The importance of local knowledge from parish councils, residents and community partners
- Cross-boundary working where routes connect with other LCN areas
- The Strawberry Line and opportunities for onward links

Police and Crime Commissioner

In January 2026, the Wells and Rural LCN welcomed the Police and Crime Commissioner, Clare Moody, alongside police and road safety colleagues to provide an overview of current policing priorities and to hear directly from local communities about the issues affecting rural areas.

The session helped strengthen links between the LCN, neighbourhood policing teams, Somerset Council officers and parish representatives, with discussion focused on neighbourhood policing, road safety, rural crime, anti-social behaviour, victim support and public confidence in policing. Attendees raised practical concerns including speeding, drug driving, road closures following collisions, unlicensed music events, local police visibility and routes for reporting intelligence.

The talk provided a useful opportunity for communities to better understand how enforcement and prevention activity is being prioritised, including the role of Community Speed Watch data, dashcam submissions and local engagement with neighbourhood teams. Overall, the session supported the LCN's role in bringing partners together, improving communication between communities and statutory services, and identifying shared priorities for safer, more resilient rural communities.



Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service joined the Wells and Rural LCN meeting in April 2026 to talk about community safety, prevention and local resilience. The session was a useful chance to hear more about the support available for residents, parish councils and local partners, including practical fire safety advice, prevention messages and how to identify people who may need extra support or signposting.

It also helped strengthen links between the LCN and emergency service partners. The discussion highlighted how parish councils, local groups and community representatives can help share important safety messages across Wells and the surrounding rural communities. This linked well with wider LCN priorities around resilience, prevention, flooding, emergency planning and partnership working.



**DEVON &
SOMERSET**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Connect Somerset

Connect Somerset was invited to speak to the Wells and Rural LCN as part of the wider discussion about how we can better support children, young people and families locally. Previous conversations had highlighted the need to improve early help, make people more aware of the support already available, and help communities connect with services before problems become more serious. The session helped members understand how Connect Somerset brings different services and partners together, with a focus on earlier support and making it easier for families and professionals to find the right advice and guidance.

The presentation also fitted well with the role of the LCN in bringing people together. It helped strengthen links between parish and city councils, Somerset Council, health partners, schools, voluntary organisations and local community groups. For Wells and the surrounding rural parishes, this was especially relevant, as families can sometimes face extra challenges because of distance, transport and access to services. The discussion helped members think about how local knowledge, existing relationships and community networks can support a more joined-up approach to helping families earlier.



Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care in Somerset plays an important role in helping adults with a wide range of needs — including older people, people living with disabilities, mental health conditions and long-term illness — to live safely, independently and well within their communities.

For Wells and Rural LCN, this is particularly relevant because the area includes both Wells as a key service hub and a number of smaller rural parishes where residents may face additional challenges linked to transport, isolation, access to services and awareness of available support.

Adult Social Care colleagues attended a Wells and Rural LCN meeting to provide an overview of how the service is structured in Somerset and to explain the different teams, pathways and points of contact available. This helped members build a clearer understanding of how residents can access support, what services may be available, and how local networks can help identify and connect people who may need advice or assistance.

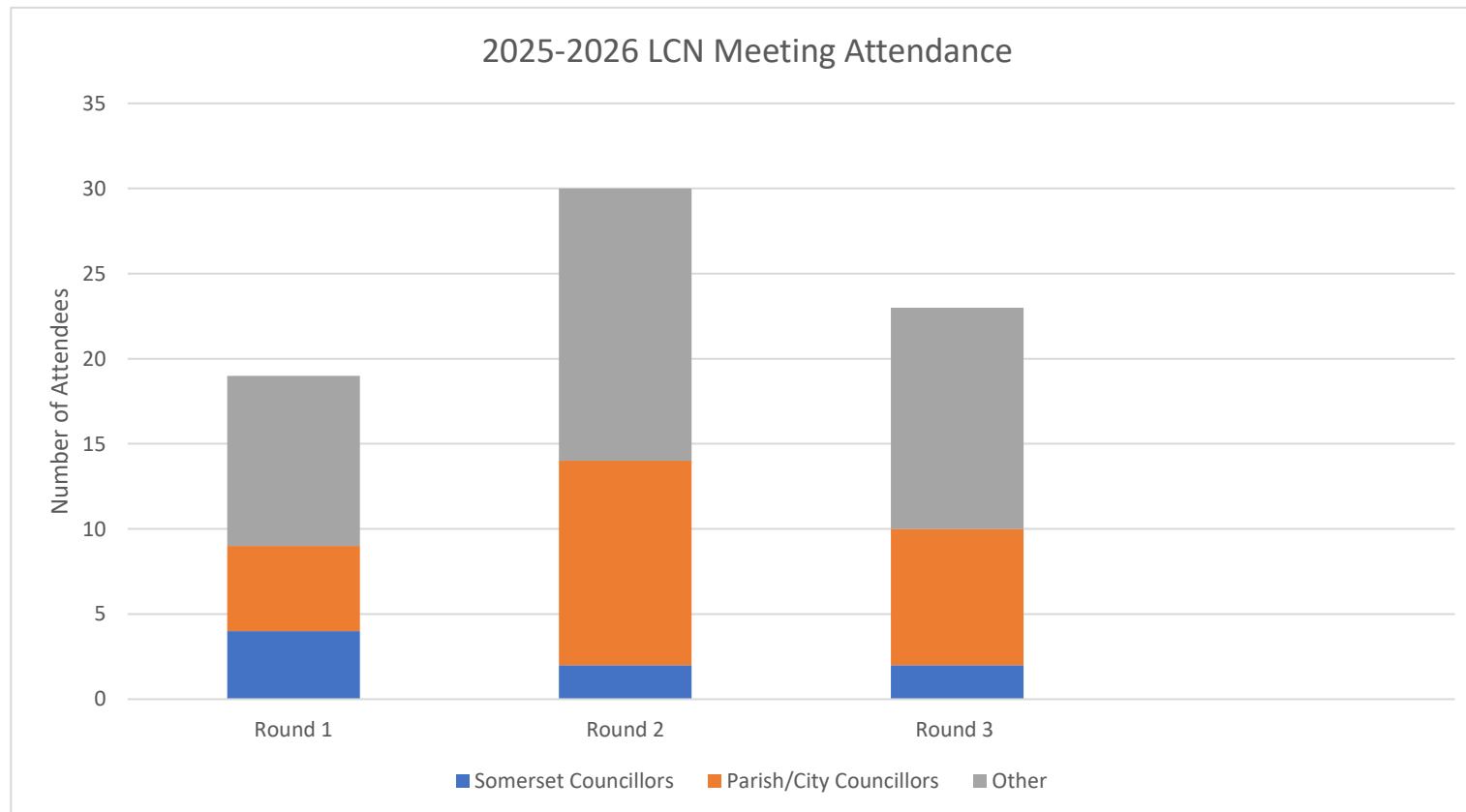
Areas covered included:

- Main Adult Social Care services available
- Mental health and social work teams
- Safeguarding
- Transitions for adults with learning disabilities
- Hospital interface teams
- Intermediate care pathways
- Somerset Independent Living Centres (SILC)
- Signposting routes and local contact points



Main Meeting Attendance

All previous and upcoming agendas and notes can be found through this link: [Local Community Network Meetings](#)



Looking Ahead 2026-2027

Looking ahead to 2026–2027, the Wells and Rural LCN will continue to build on the strong foundations established during the past year. The priorities identified by local representatives remain highly relevant, particularly around youth provision, highways and road safety, flooding and emergency planning, active travel, community safety, health and wellbeing, and improving communication between parishes, partners and Somerset Council. The LCN will aim to maintain its role as a practical forum for sharing local knowledge, identifying common issues and strengthening partnership working across Wells and the surrounding rural communities.

A key focus for the year ahead will be ensuring that discussions lead to clear outcomes, with continued emphasis on working groups and partner engagement where these can add value. This includes supporting further conversations around rural youth outreach, improving understanding of highways reporting routes and evidence-led road safety concerns, strengthening local resilience in relation to flooding and emergency planning, and exploring opportunities to improve walking, cycling, wheeling and wider transport connectivity. There will also be opportunities to continue linking local priorities with wider Somerset Council strategies, including emerging work around transport, planning, prevention and community wellbeing.

The outcome of Somerset Council's Community Working Review will also help shape the future direction of LCNs. For Wells and Rural, this provides an important opportunity to reflect on what has worked well, address challenges around engagement and attendance, and ensure that future arrangements continue to support meaningful local involvement. By keeping the focus on practical action, strong relationships and shared local priorities, the Wells and Rural LCN can continue to play an important role in connecting communities, partners and services across this diverse area.