



WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CIVIC AND ARCHIVES COMMITTEE, HELD ON THURSDAY 16TH APRIL 2026 AT 6:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, J Browne, D Denis (Chair), D Orrett, H Siggs (Vice-Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
Wells City Council Archivist: J Chivers
WCC Staff: C Hobbs
2 Members of the public

26/01/CA APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS
All Councillors were present

26/02/CA DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022.
None declared

26/03/CA MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CIVIC AND ARCHIVES COMMITTEE, HELD ON THURSDAY 30th OCTOBER 2025.
The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

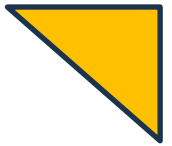
26/04/CA ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING
The Town Clerk updated the meeting on the following two actions:

- i. Following discussions with the Archivist, the Heritage days will take place between the dates of 11th to 20th September 2026
- ii. A Guide to the Town Hall has been compiled by the Archivist. A few small additions included by the Town Hall Manager. This will be circulated digitally and available if Councillors wish to show visitors around the Town Hall

Cllr D Denis reminded the Town Clerk that she had asked if Councillors could offer a Town Hall Tour. Cllr D Denis asked if it was possible for a Charters Day display to be in place to coincide with the May Fair. The Town Clerk confirmed that it would be more appropriate to be shown at the November event due to logistics and the short amount of time before May.

26/05/CA MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
J North asked for information about the uniform for the New Town Crier.
The Town Clerk reminded J North that Wells City Council had voted at the October meeting as to the actions to be deployed and that the decision would not be reviewed until at least August 2026 in line with decision making and Councils standing orders.

26/06/CA TWINNING PRESENTATION
J North gave an update from the Chair of Twinning Association of future actions of the Association. Paray le Monial was twinned with Wells in 1979. In 2029, the Twinning Association will celebrate 50 years. In 1983 Wells was twinned with Bad Durkheim and in 2033, that also will celebrate 50 years of twinning. In 2012, the association signed a Twinning agreement with Fontanellato in Italy. There are also friendship agreements with Kluczbork in Poland and Bad Berka in Germany, both these Towns are in regular contact. People from the Twinned towns visit Wells for events such as the Romulus and Remus and other events and there have been visits made in return. The Twinning Association is struggling due to diminished numbers. Fundraising events are poorly attended despite the Association having 130 members. Efforts are being made to encourage schools to become involved. The association would benefit from assistance with social media and in building websites and new members would be very welcome. J North will stand down as Chair at the end of 2026.



Cllr D Denis reminded J North that Trustees for Outside Bodies such as the Twinning Association will be allocated in May 2026.

Cllr L Agabani repeated a question raised by some that Twinning had run its course and if that is the case, is it a decision for the City Council to add to the agenda to discuss. With regard the website, there is a section on the City Council website which could perhaps have content added to it, but the City Council would not have the capability to work on a separate website.

J North answered that he felt at the moment he didn't believe Twinning had run its course and that he would like to see them reach their 50th anniversaries.

Cllr J Browne spoke of her passion for Twinning and spoke of her support for the association.

J North reminded the meeting of the fundraising Quiz night event on the 23rd May in St Thomas' Hall. Tickets are £15 each. This event will be publicised on Wells City Council websites and advertised on social media.

The Town Clerk pledged the assistance of Wells City Council with improving information on the Wells City Council website.

26/07/CA ARCHIVIST UPDATE & PROPOSED FORWARD PLAN

The Archivist reported that requests for information via email are rising slowly. In person visits are static. There is increased engagement with archives generally. Over ten days of Mayor Making week there will be a display available.

Archives are working on a display on the subject of the jail cells after gaining information from the Somerset heritage centre. Austin Little, a volunteer has taken information about Petty sessions from the Wells journal and added archive information to incorporate into a display.

There is a database planned of property history in Wells. There is no final date for this but it is getting close to being finalised.

The Town Clerk stressed that a great deal of effort goes into the Archivists work and she wanted to let the Archivist know that it was very much appreciated. This was echoed by councillors present.

26/08/CA DISCUSSION OF CURRENT STANDING ORDERS AND PROCESS

Cllr D Denis wanted to have two amendments made to Standing orders.

Cllr D Denis would like the Civic review to take place earlier in the year, such as in December rather than March, to give more time to raise an action.

The Town Clerk assured that as long as the review is an annual event, it would not work if earlier than December as the timescale would not work with the auditing process.

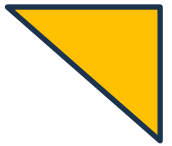
The Town Clerk reported that a vote was not needed on the change as it is an operational but that it needs to take place alongside financial regulations.

Cllr D Denis also wanted an amendment made to the standing up when speaking at Full Council meetings. This is that she feels some Councillors may struggle to stand and that bobbing up and down is a distraction and the microphone is low down and stooping is undignified.

A discussion took place with Cllrs L Agabani, H Siggs, J Browne spoke of their willingness to keep the standing orders unchanged.

The points made were

- i. It makes it clear to members of the public who is speaking
- ii. The microphones can pick up a voice without it being necessary to stoop



iii. The process of standing ensures that a Councillor has considered what they are going to say and stands only once.

Cllr D Orrett asked about the use of microphones. The Town Clerk stated that microphones ensure that the City Council are compliant and will be used at all meetings.

The committee discussed and recognised the importance of this process against other committees and agreed to confirm the standing orders as they are, with no changes. This will see the continuation of standing at Full City Council, if able.

Anyone who cannot stand will need to ask permission of the Mayor at a meeting, this can be requested once, it is not required at each meeting.

The Town Clerk reported that the statement could be clarified at the start of the meeting and that the ergonomics of the room will be looked at regarding rising microphones

26/09/CA CIVIC SERVICE UPDATE

The Town Clerk reported that there will be two awards presented at the May Fair. One by the Mayor to the Showmen and one from the Showmen’s guild to the Town Crier as a long standing supporter of the event.

A working group has been formed regarding the Freeman award. That work is ongoing and updates will come to this meeting as it progresses.

Mayor Making is progressing with the display being an additional item.

26/10/CA CIVIC GUIDE

The civic guide was approved by Full Council

Cllr D Denis reported that she had submitted questions to the RFO regarding bank accounts. Rehearsal date for Mayor Making is Wednesday 13th May 2026 at 1pm.

26/11/CA REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION OF OPENING PRAYER

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that there had been a request from a member of the public to consider reinstating a prayer prior to Full Council Meetings.

It was confirmed that there was no legal duty and that it is the Mayor’s prerogative to manage the meeting accordingly, as such, it was agreed by the committee that the Town Clerk will discuss with each incoming Mayor annually to determine their preferences.

The Town Clerk will write to the member of the public who raised the request.

26/12/CA PROPOSAL OF MAYORESS/CONSORT ROLE

To receive the proposal from the Mayor to introduce and uphold a Mayoress/Consort Role in addition to the Mayoral Role.

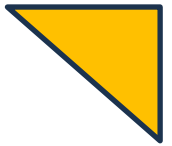
The Mayor spoke of his wishes to gift a Roll of Honour of Mayor’s Consorts to Wells Town Hall to mirror the Mayoral Roll of honour opposite. The Mayor feels that the role of Consort is important and that he valued the assistance of his consort during his Mayoral year.

Cllr H Siggs spoke of his thanks to the Mayor for the idea for this Roll of Honour but that there may be some difficulties with some Mayor’s historically changing consorts.

A brief discussion took place as to the placement of the new Roll of Honour board. The committee voted unanimously for the gift. The Mayor will work with the Town Clerk on this.

26/13/CA FORWARD PLAN

Civic and Archives Committee Forward Plan	
Item	Proposed date for consideration
Robe and Regalia Review	TBC
Town Hall Crib Sheet Update	TBC



Cllr D Denis asked that the Civic work plan was added to the Forward plan. The Town Clerk assured her that it would be added.

26/14/CA ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

Cllr J Browne asked that a roving microphone be available for members of the public to use. The Town Clerk confirmed that there is a wireless microphone available.

26/15/CA DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 18th June 2026, 6pm

Minutes signed by The Chair: Date: