



WELLS CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ESTATES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY
30TH APRIL 2026 AT 7:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs: T Butt Philip, S Eden, G Folkard, T Kolizeras, H Siggs (Chair), P Welch

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
WCC Staff: C. Hobbs
4 members of the public

26/37/E APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllrs: S Cursley, G Robbins (Vice- Chair),

26/38/E DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022.

None received

26/39/E MINUTES FROM THE ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2ND APRIL 2026

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

26/40/E ACTIONS FROM THE ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2ND APRIL 2026

No actions

26/41/E MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

C Simons spoke about agenda item 9 and requested that information on tenancy break clauses be included on the Landlord updates table and requested information regarding the terms of the lease at Wells Cinema.

The Town Clerk assured that the information regarding tenancy break clauses will be added to the Landlord updates table.

Wells Film Centre have made a rental payment based on the historical arrangement in place prior to transfer. Wells City Council have heads of terms in place and are progressing towards signing a lease. The tenant has committed to making payments in the meantime which demonstrates good will.

Cllr H Siggs reported that the Estates Committee and the Finance committee have been very patient and that should the issue have been delayed much longer then a new negotiation would commence.

26/42/E OFFICER UPDATE REPORT

The Town Clerk gave a brief update in the absence of Facilities Manager L Wassell, that negotiations are taking place regarding the tenancy of Roderick Thomas.

26/43/E ENERGY PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATION (EPC) UPDATE

Cllr H Siggs informed the committee that under new legislation, WCC as landlords have responsibilities are actively up-rating our input and when it's a tenants responsibilities, WCC are negotiating with them.

The Town Clerk presented the report that sets out the position regarding Energy Performance certificates and changes in legislation. The Facilities Manager has provided a break down of each tenant arrangement and looking to appoint a contractor to deliver and review result ratings and determine necessary works for compliance. The report seeks committees approval to look at procuring EPC arrangements in line with WCC statutory duties.

The committee gave approval to proceed.

WELLS RECREATION GROUND TRUST (WRGT)

Cllr H Siggs spoke of making progress on decisions pertaining to the Wells Recreation ground. A recent brainstorming session took place in April 2026. Cllr H Siggs asked for committee members' ideas which can then be provided to the 8 member working group. The working group consists of four members from Outside spaces and four members from the Estates committee to carry forward.

A brief discussion took place about the facilities at the Bishop's Barn and possibilities of adding external provision, the lack of accessibility to the facilities in the Bishop's Barn for people with a disability and the need to consider the historic nature of the building.

Cllr P Welch asked for information regarding the potential arrangements with the Bishop's Palace regarding the Bishop's Barn. The Town Clerk reminded the committee Wells City Council need to determine what we want as trustees before proceeding with a tender. The proposals are at a preliminary stage. The Town Clerk suggested that the working group look at the Bishop's Barn use as a priority.

Cllr H Siggs asked for ideas for the Recreation ground (24000 square metres. He spoke of a series of suggestions such as refreshing the children's area, better access from Silver Street and asked for ideas for the area previously used for football. Cllr H Siggs spoke about active sport and suggested that a running track would limit the use of the space and not of an appropriate size and that running can take place on a more linear area such as the Strawberry line.

The Town Clerk reminded the committee that at the Outside Space committee a discussion had taken place regarding meeting a draft invitation for tender associated with the play strategy, which includes play and wellbeing as a whole, including a SEND provision. Looking at the recreation ground in a wider context is necessary. Through Devolution, WCC have inherited a number of play assets.

A lengthy discussion took place about football and other options for sport which don't require the necessity for changing facilities or staffing. Other suggestions for use of area next to the play area were longer term plans, such as a water play area, zip-line, a Multi-use games area (MUGA). Increasing the capacity of the South street car park was spoken of to provide parking for park users and potentially Bishop's Barn users and take the strain off the parking provision in Wells generally.

The Town Clerk asked for Committee's view on the parking bays surrounding the Bishop's Barn. Cllr T Kolizeras mentioned that the area is cobbled and uneven and not appropriate for someone with mobility issue getting in and out of their vehicle.

The discussion continued regarding the space and moved to trees in the area. Tree Officers have spoken that although the trees have TPO's, should there be a long term plan for planting that any plan would be considered.

The discussion continued onto options for improvements for lighting and for the addition of a water fountain (drinking fountain) The Town Clerk assured that any testing would talk place as regular tests undertaken by Wells City Council. Cllr D Denis reported that Wessex water provide water fountains for free. Cllr T Butt Philip asked if the existing but not working drinking water fountain could be put back into use with a minimum of work/expense.

Options for improving the area of the recreation ground near the bandstand were discussed. Cllrs were of the opinion that the Bowls club would benefit from being better used. There are potential facilities at the location that could lend themselves to future activities. The power supply was discussed as it is not deemed to be suitable. Cllr H Siggs spoke of the lack of visibility of the recreation ground from the moat walk and suggested that the area be opened out and made more accessible and more attractive. The Town Clerk reminded the committee that events such as the food festival need to be able to access that area.

Cllr P Welch asked if the area was suitable for the location of the mosaic. This location is no longer deemed suitable by the artists.



The Town Clerk confirmed that she had noted all suggestions and pass to the working party to discuss further.

26/45/E LANDLORD UPDATES

Tenant	Location	Lease end date
Il Postino	Old Post Office, Market Hall, Market Place	19/11/2035
The Crown	8-10 Market Place	23/06/2036
The Crown	Market Place	28/09/2053
Roderick Thomas	Old Post Office, 1 Priory Road	06/07/2033
Ask	Market Hall, Market Place	29/09/2028
Wells Film Centre	Princes Road	TBC
Mr E Philips	Portway Annexe	11/02/2027
Wells City Band	Portway Annexe	10/03/2030
Wells Bowls Club	(WRGT) Wells Recreation Ground	2035

26/46/E TENANCY UPDATES

Location	Operational use	Lease end date
Underwood Business Park Wookey Hole Road, BA5 1AF	Open Spaces storage and maintenance	02/05/2028
Peak Builders Merchants Ltd – Coal Yard	Open Spaces Storage	n/a
Underwood Car and Commercial	Open Spaces additional parking	n/a

26/47/E FORWARD PLAN

Topic	Month

26/48/E ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

Cllr P Welch requested information regarding safeguarding at the Portway Annexe. The Town Clerk reported that Staff are trained in Lone working policy and that visitors are required to sign in and that all necessary safeguards are in place.

26/49/E DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 4th June 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.

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