

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 10TH JULY 2025 AT 7PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs: S Cursley, G Folkard (Vice-Chair), H Siggs, P Welch

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
RFO: C Woodland
Non-member Cllrs: L Agabani (Mayor), S Powell
MP for Wells and Mendip Hills/Somerset Cllr for Wells: T Munt
WCC Staff: S Glendinning
2 Members of Public

25/17/F APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllrs: T Butt Philip, T Kolizeras, T Robbins (Chair), I Von Mensenkampff

25/18/F DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

25/19/F ACTIONS FROM THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 12TH JUNE 2025.

No actions required.

25/20/F MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 12TH JUNE 2025

The Town Clerk explained two amendments had been requested:

25/06/F. The final paragraph to be amended to read there would be an advice note on virements.

25/09/F. To include, the cash book would be signed off each month.

The minutes of the previous meeting were signed as a true record by Cllr G Folkard (Vice Chair) in the absence of the Chair.

25/21/F MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mr Chris Simons raised the following:

- The overspend on the PAYE & NI pensions is running at 3 ½% above wage percentage. He estimates that this is around £16,000 over budget. It may be useful to produce a future projection. The RFO confirmed she was working on a forecast for this committee for Sept/Oct.
- We are claiming back VAT on items being purchased for the market, Mr Simons understanding was that the market was not subject to VAT. The Town Clerk explained the market pitch is not a vatable expenditure, so we cannot charge VAT to the market traders. However, we can claim back the VAT associated with any expenditure that this council has in delivering the market.
- Market wages now include those staff who have been TUPE'd from IDVerde and also the Market Supervisor. All market costs have been separated out for transparency.

25/22/F TO CONSIDER GRANT APPLICATION FOR WELLS BUS USERS GROUP

Nobody from the Wells Bus Users Group attended the meeting to present their grant request.

They are requesting £500 to support campaigning activities across Somerset but with a special focus on the Wells area. This application had originally been submitted back in

March but due to an administration error it hadn't been considered, hence the reason for submitting it outside of the usual March and September for community grants.

Cllr Siggs asked the Town Clerk to clarify their dates for implementation and to check balance sheets and reserves. A vote was taken to approve the grant in principal and delegate to the Town Clerk and Chair, which was agreed by all members present.

25/23/F FINANCE REPORTING AND VARIANCES

The RFO presented her monthly report and answered questions.

Cllr Folkard stated that the format for these reports was being improved to make the information more informative, this revised format should help the committees understanding. The Town Clerk confirmed the new format will be presented Sept/Oct. She thanked the committee members for their engagement this month which was helpful in understanding concerns prior to the meeting, this was encouraged to continue.

The accounts and expenses for June 2025 were approved by the committee and Cllr Siggs agreed to sign at the end of the meeting.

25/24/F GRANTS POLICY

The RFO presented the updated grants policy.

Cllr Siggs commented that it may be too detailed. The Mayor said it was drafted to give clarity and that there is a lack of knowledge in the community that the grants scheme is available. As a result, it is often the same groups re-applying each year.

The Town Clerk agreed to look at improving the communication of the grants scheme and look at other best practice models to circulate a revised grants policy before the September meeting.

25/25/F CCS DISPLACED PEOPLE HUB (PREV CHARIS)

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update. The two year agreement with CHARIS has now come to an end. A new subcontractor agreement is now with CCS, Community Council for Somerset. Charis now just deliver to Taunton with CCS delivering the other functions. The Town Clerk is reviewing the new CCS agreement with WCN colleagues and will present this to Full Council. Cllr Siggs advised the committee should be aware there are risks involved with this contract not just finance but also under employment law. These risks will be included on the corporate risk register.

25/26/F FORWARD PLAN

Item	Proposed date for consideration
RFO Budget Report and Variances	Monthly
Income Strategy	Sept/October
Forecasting 6-month review	September

25/27/F REVIEW CORPORATE PRIORITIES DRAFT

The Town Clerk asked the committee to provide any comments on the draft at the end of the meeting.

25/28/F JOINT PROJECT PROPOSAL BY CLLR WELCH

To consider the following proposal by Cllr Welch:

"I propose Wells City Council agrees a joint project with Sustainable Wells who would deliver a monthly workshop on the themes and projects of Act to Adapt in the Town Hall. Providing the venue would be the only cost to the City Council."

Cllr Welch presented his proposal and a discussion took place.

The Mayor questioned giving rooms with no payment and setting a precedent. Also that there is no current memo of understanding between WCC and Sustainable Wells.

Cllr Munt stated that there should be some terms of reference created between the two organisations.
The Town Clerk agreed to form a memo of understanding with the entire Act to Adapt plan.

25/29/F ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

The Town Clerk explained as part of the cost cutting objective, coloured paper would no longer be used for the different committees, instead the agendas and minutes will be printed on white paper with a colour key in the top right corner. The cost of sourcing coloured paper is far higher than plain white.

25/30/F DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm, Thursday 11th September 2025

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: