

## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024 AT 7:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: L Agabani, S Cursley (Chair), G Folkard, T Robbins, H Siggs, P Welch

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk: S Luck  
WCC Cllr: T Butt Philip  
Somerset Cllr: T Munt  
WCC Staff: S Glendinning  
0 members of the Public

**24/12/FCM APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Cllrs: T Pullin (Mayor), I Von Mensenkampff

**24/13/FCM DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**24/14/FCM MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2024**

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

**24/15/FCM MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Somerset Councillor, T Munt spoke. Somerset Council have proposed for a traffic regulation order to be introduced in the Market Place to stop the right to park. This would be subject to the following three exceptions:

- 1) Blue Badge parking up the central bollard line (except on Weds and Sat when the market is in place). Cllr Munt advised in the last 3 years 1,400 new blue badges have been issued to citizens within the three wards in Wells
- 2) Loading for businesses in the Market Place
- 3) Access to the Town Hall, Town Hall Buildings, Bishop's Palace, The Crown

Cllr Munt asked the Town Clerk to take this forward at a cost of £2,000. It was questioned whether this fee would alleviate any further costs for other events such as the Charter Fair. Cllr Munt agreed to clarify this. The Town Clerk requested for Wells City Council to be sent the full details of the order including costs and he would submit back to the committee for approval.

**24/16/FCM FINANCE**

The Town Clerk presented the January monthly reports and clarified details when asked to do so by members. The accounts and expenses for January 2024 were approved by the committee.

Cllr Siggs raised a question over the Bishop Barn rates. The Town Clerk agreed to look into and provide a breakdown to everyone on the committee.

**24/17/FCM ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

- i. Standing Orders
- ii. Financial Regulations
- iii. Scheme of Delegation

The three documents had been circulated prior to the meeting and amendments had been incorporated. It was proposed, seconded and approved to present these three documents to Full Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024.

**24/18/FCM PROPERTIES**

It was agreed for the committee members to be given a tour of the town hall to assess future maintenance projects. A Monday evening was agreed as room bookings are less busy. The Town Clerk agreed to set a date and advise all.

Cllr Siggs raised the issue of the two disabled lifts not being operational. The Town Clerk advised costing are being obtained in order to consider an upgrade.

**24/19/FCM ARCHIVES AND CIVIC ASSETS**

The Civic Review had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was proposed, seconded and approved to present this revised document to Full Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024.

**24/20/FCM UNITARY AND ACQUISITIONS**

The Town Clerk provided an update following a meeting that had taken place with Clerks and Senior Officers at Somerset.

The future of the markets was discussed and improvements were suggested, Somerset are now looking at different options. Cllr Agabani suggested consultation should take place with the market traders to obtain their views.

The idea of ceasing CCTV coverage was discussed and concerns were raised. The suggestion of city councils/local parishes contributing to the cost of running was debated. There was limited information available on what would be provided and the benefits. The Town Clerk is awaiting further clarification.

The IDVerde contract will end June 2025. Somerset Council had suggested a contribution payment of £24,000 to keep the toilets open and serviced in Union Street. It was felt the cost of running this could be less expensive if taken in-house. The Town Clerk will obtain further details.

Cllr Welch presented his LCN meeting minutes (attached). Active Travel, Cllr Denis was suggested to be the nominated member to join the working party. The Town Clerk was requested to raise at the Full Council meeting.

**24/21/FCM ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT**

There were no matters raised.

**24/22/FCM DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm, Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

**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 and Rural LCN meeting 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024

Venue: Coxley Memorial Hall

Chair: Councillor Tony Hathway

Present: Somerset councillors Tony Robbins, Tessa Munt, Ros Wyke, Heather Shearer

16 parish councillors and residents

14 parish councillors and residents online

Apologies: Councillor Edric Hobbs

**Police:** PCSO Supervisor Jason Wyatt reported that he had no new information but the crime figures were on the police website. It was very difficult to give crime figures for parishes as LCN boundaries do not match police areas. Philip Welch said a police officer used to attend Wells City Council's monthly meetings to give an update on crime in the city but none had attended since March last year and their last written report was received in May 2023.

Residents raised concerns about speeding, dangerous junctions and street begging in Wells. Road deaths in Somerset had increased, said Ros Wyke.

**Flooding:** A Dinder resident was worried that the recent flooding may not have been caused by a natural event. He was assured that it was a natural event. A Godney resident said the road from their village to Glastonbury was closed for weeks and Ros Wyke said please report it to Somerset Rivers Authority. Scott Macmillan of Volunteer Network said many flood victims had not known who to report the flooding to.

**Funding:** A trustee of The Lawrence Centre in Wells said they were losing their grant from Somerset Council and that communication from the council was very poor.

**Volunteer Network:** Scott Macmillan said that Volunteer Network, which is based in Glastonbury but support people in a wider area, provide warm spaces for the vulnerable, receive cases of domestic abuse and homelessness, and run "Come and Do" sessions.

**WCN:** Philip Welch told how the Wells Coronavirus Network, a voluntary organisation formed in March 2020 to help residents through the pandemic, transformed into the Wells Community Network to expand its activities by forming a Wells Welcome Hub for refugees from Ukraine, buying a trishaw to give vulnerable people free rides around the city, and organise events like January's Community Day in Wells Cathedral which attracted thousands of people. Philip thanked the LCN for putting him in touch with Voluntary Network with whom WCN would like to cooperate.

**Filo Project:** Gail Norris explained that they provide private day care for people living with dementia and the challenges of old age.

**Warm Hub:** A working group was trying to coordinate what different groups are doing for isolated, hungry or cold residents.

**Active Travel:** Parishes are being asked to nominate members of a working group to make walking and cycling easier, looking at problems across the LCN such as stiles that need repair and inadequate signage. There was a need to find funding so they could be more ambitious.

**Devolution:** Ros Wyke said Somerset Council needs to devolve costs but not revenue.

**Next meeting: Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March at Godney Village Hall**

Councillor Philip Welch  
2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024