

## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024 AT 7:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk: S Luck  
RFO: C Woodland  
Devolution Officer: H Wilkins  
WCC Staff: S Glendinning

**24/45/FCM APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**  
None

**24/46/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.

**24/47/FCM MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2024**  
The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**24/48/FCM MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**  
Nobody present.

**24/49/FCM FINANCE**  
The RFO presented the draft Finance Report for April 2024 and answered questions. The precept funds had been received considerably later than normal from Somerset Council. This had presented some cash flow issues, but the funds have now been received.

The accounts and expenses for April 2024 were approved by the committee.

**24/50/FCM PROPERTIES**  
The Town Clerk updated the committee on the following:

- i. Disabled lift access.  
A new disabled lift was now installed in the Town Hall and in use.
- ii. Town Hall boiler repairs.  
There is currently no heating in the Town Hall due to an electrical fault. A replacement part has been ordered, which requires three weeks for delivery.

The following items were also updated on:

- iii. Bus Station Waiting Room.  
There had been a break-in over the previous weekend and the building is now boarded up. Due to recent staff retirements, this had highlighted the fact that the keys for the building and alarm codes were not easily accessible. A new lockable key box will be purchased and installed in the Town Hall, holding keys and alarm codes for all buildings owned by Wells City Council.
- iv. Cllr Agabani asked the Town Clerk for an update on the Old Post Office building. The architect is optimistic the latest plans will be agreed and work will commence on changing its use to a restaurant. Cllr Siggs asked for SCC Cllrs to support the application.

- v. Recreation Ground. A member of the public has submitted a legal letter on some of the trees. It was agreed for the Town Clerk to respond to the individual directly without, at this stage, engaging our Solicitor and incurring costs.

**24/51/FCM ARCHIVES AND CIVIC ASSETS**

The Town Clerk advised a quote is awaited for the repair of the Town Crier's existing hat. To purchase a new hat the cost was £500.

**24/52/FCM UNITARY AND ACQUISITIONS**

- i. To receive an update on service devolution.  
The Town Clerk had introduced Haylee Wilkins, Devolution Officer, at the beginning of the meeting. Haylee has joined WCC, for two days per week, to assist with the roll out of service devolution from Somerset Council. A document has now been circulated from Somerset Council detailing the services being offered. Haylee is producing an assessment on devolving these services detailing priorities, costs and risks. The list of services is vast, including CCTV, street cleaning, bin emptying. A presentation will be prepared for the next Finance & Council Matters Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> June. All councillors will be invited to attend. It was also suggested an extra meeting be scheduled for August, when council usually do not meet.
- ii. To receive update on the Union Street toilet block  
The Town Clerk hopes to re-open these toilets by the end of next week. Various repairs have been carried out. A position for a new part-time cleaner will be advertised.

**24/53/FCM ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT**

The Town Clerk has received a request to sign the YMCA agreement.

A letter of thanks had been received from Focus after receiving their community grant agreed in the March Finance meeting.

Discussions with Somerset Council are continuing over their new roundabout sponsorship initiative.

Cllr Agabani discussed the recent Charter Fair that had taken place over the May bank holiday. He raised concern over health and safety issues and the presence of children on site. On a positive, it was noted the generator output was felt to be improved from previous years. The Town Clerk advised the Fire Officer and the Health and Safety Officer who visited on the Saturday had approved the set up to the required standard. It was felt that the Fair was not as popular with visitors and discussion should take place with the operator.

**24/54/FCM DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm, Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June 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:** .....