

## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2025 AT 7:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: L Agabani, J Browne (Mayor), S Cursley (Chair), T Robbins, H Siggs, I Von Mensenkampff

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk: S Luck  
RFO: C Woodland  
Devolution Officer: H Wilkins  
WCC Cllrs: T Butt Philip, S Powell, P Welch  
WCC Staff: S Glendinning  
1 x Members of Public

**25/01/FCM APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Cllrs: G Folkard, T Pullin

**25/02/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.

Cllr T Robbins declared an interest as a Somerset Councillor.

**25/03/FCM MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2024**

Mr Chris Simons raised again that the amount in reserves should cover three month's salary.

The Mayor asked if Wells & Mendip Museum had been contacted about their grant. The Town Clerk confirmed he had set up a face to face meeting.

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

**25/04/FCM MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Mr Chris Simons spoke. The current year fund is currently reducing by £120,000 per month. The year fund stands at £190,078, with three months of the year left, was this a concern. The RFO explained there were some large quarterly payments due to be received.

**25/05/FCM FINANCE**

C Woodland (RFO) presented the draft Finance reports for December 2024 and answered questions.

Cllr Siggs asked for clarification over the Portway Annexe British Gas monthly payment of £2,418.28. The RFO confirmed this was a monthly figure and that a new contract has been negotiated going forward. Cllr T Robbins pointed out that the gas figures at the Town Hall are much lower. It was agreed for the RFO to provide clarification.

Cllr Agabani asked whether the new contract has now been signed on the Old Post Office. It was agreed for a deadline to be set where if this is not met, it would be brought back to this committee to consider putting the property back on the market. It was agreed for the Town Clerk to give them a four-week deadline and if no response by the February meeting, he would ask the committee to consider what further action to take.

**25/06/FCM ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REVIEWS**

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

The three documents had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was proposed, seconded and approved to present these to Full Council on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

Cllr Agabani sought clarification that any of these documents can be amended at any point throughout the year. This was confirmed.

**25/07/FCM NEW AND REVISED POLICIES**

- i. Safeguarding Policy
- ii. Councillor Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy
- iii. Complaints Policy
- iv. Ethical Procurement Policy
- v. Employee Handbook

These documents had also been circulated prior to the meeting. H Wilkins, Devolution Officer, pointed out where changes had been made.

All were proposed, seconded and approved and will be submitted to Full Council on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

Cllr Siggs asked for a Redundancy Policy to be introduced in line with the Somerset policy. H Wilkins agreed to take this forward.

**25/08/FCM LCN YOUTH PROVISION PROPOSAL**

H Wilkins explained she had been working with Cllr Denis on this proposal and advised a further update will be provided in February.

The Town Clerk advised the YMCA had joined in discussion. We are looking to work with them and other parishes.

Cllr Butt Philip advised he was at the LCN meeting where it was discussed. The intention is that in working across the parishes, two grant bids will be submitted to Somerset Association of Local Councils who are administering health and well-being grants with public money from Somerset Council:

- £1,500 for a scoping exercise
- Up to £35,000, which will need to be match funded.

He advised it would be wise for this committee to put in a grant application for the scoping exercise now, this does not need to be match funded.

Cllr Siggs pointed out we have £15,000 for youth in next year's budget. This year our youth budget was used to support the YMCA. Cllr Butt Philip explained once the scoping exercise is completed we would then decide on how the money will be spent.

A vote was taken to put forward a grant bid of £1,500 for the scoping exercise. This was proposed, seconded and agreed. H Wilkins agreed to take this forward

**25/09/FCM DEVOLUTION**

H Wilkins advised there was no update. A further update from Somerset Council is expected on 29<sup>th</sup> January.

**25/10/FCM ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT**

The Mayor asked who was responsible for lighting the Cathedral Green. Feedback is that it is badly lit. H Wilkins will look into.

**25/11/FCM DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm, Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 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:** .....