

## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLS CITY COUNCIL HELD VIA ZOOM ON THURSDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2020 AT 7.00PM

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT (VIA ZOOM):** Cllrs: L Agabani, S Briton, J Browne, P Crummay, S Cursley, O Hartley (Deputy Mayor), R Humphreys, A l'Anson, N Kennedy, J Linsdell, J Osman, J Parker, C Rees, J Rust, P Welch (Mayor),

**IN ATTENDANCE (VIA ZOOM):** Town Clerk/RFO: S Luck  
WCC Staff: S Glendinning, A Westwood  
SCC Cllr T Munt

**NOT PRESENT:** None

**20/101C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
None received

**20/102C DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 27<sup>th</sup> July 2012:  
Councillors were asked whether they had any declarations of interest. No declarations were received.

**20/103C MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2020**  
Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, seconded, confirmed as a true record and will be signed by the Mayor.

**20/104C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**  
No members of public present

**20/105C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
Mayor's Diary 10<sup>TH</sup> Dec – Wells Cathedral Candlelit Concert  
June 2021 – Opening of an exhibition in Wells Museum

The Mayor had conducted an interview with Points West on 26<sup>th</sup> Nov regarding Wells being placed into Tier 2. The BBC wanted to seek local reaction.

**20/106C MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020  
The Chair of Finance presented minutes and invited questions.  
Cllr l'Anson commented on Bus 67. He stated it was good news that discussion was taking place with St Cuthbert Out Parish Council. It would be positive step forward if in the future Bus 67 were able to pick up people on housing estates on the west side of Wells and bring residents in and out of the City, thereby reducing the number of cars in the City.  
Cllr Rust referred to the Financial Regulations, Section 3. No Committee was consulted in the Budget setting. Can we ensure this happens next year? All councillors should be able to attend the Budget setting meeting. The Town Clerk explained, due to Covid, normal timings were not followed as Committees were formed later. Cllr Linsdell supported Cllr Rust and requested this be included as an Agenda item for each Committee around Sept/Oct. The Chair announced on Weds 9<sup>th</sup> Dec at 7pm, the Finance Committee will be meeting to finalise the draft budget. All Councillors are welcome to observe. At the next Full Council meeting, which is scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> Dec, the budget will be approved.

**20/107C ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT**

To receive the governance and accountability reports for the year 2019-20  
The Chair of Finance presented the audit carried out by PKF and thanked the Town Clerk/RFO for his hard work.

**20/108C MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> November and 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020.  
The Chair of Planning presented the minutes and invited questions. None were received.

**20/109C PORTWAY ANNEXE**

To be discussed in the confidential section at the end of the meeting.

**20/110C WELLS RECREATION GROUND TRUST**

The Mayor reported that Cllr Ros Wyke, leader of Mendip District Council, said at a meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> Nov that Mendip wish to return the Bishop's Barn & Recreation Ground to Wells. The necessary documentation has not been subsequently received from MDC to take this forward.

Cllr Osman commented that £500,000 was received from the sale of Park Cottage and it is believed £470,000 remains, which needs to be received in order to pay for renovations of the barn. He thanked the Mayor for meeting with MDC, previous meetings have been held and nothing has been forthcoming, maybe it is now time for the Town Clerk to write and ask for their reply. Discussion took place over the best way to move this further and it was agreed for the Town Clerk to write a letter and for the Mayor to speak to Wells District Councillors for their support.

**20/111C WELLS CITY COUNCIL ETHICAL PROCUREMENT POLICY.**

To consider working party and appoint members

The Mayor proposed the working party to have 5 members made up of 3 Councillors and 2 officers. The following were proposed and agreed. Cllrs: Rust, Agabani and l'Anson and Officers: Town Clerk, S Luck and Administration Officer, K Westwood.

**20/112C CITY OF WELLS COMMUNITY AWARD**

Cllr Browne presented her proposal.

An initiative to award those in the community who have made a difference. To create a panel and choose a winner for each category. Ceremony to take place next Spring, Covid allowing. Cllr Browne has consulted with the following:

Chris Winter, Chair of Wells Civic Society.

Robert Powell, former Chair of Chamber of Commerce to help with the business community

Mark Woodlock, Headmaster of Wells Blue School for a Youth Award  
(no contact yet with Cathedral School)

Green Award – Sustainable Wells to be consulted

Mayor's Awards – Covid specific

Discussion took place and some reservations were made over making it too complicated. Cllr Rust and Linsdell did not support the initiative as having an element of competition/comparison is not right when lots of people have carried out many acts of good/kindness over 2020. A big celebration in the Market Square for the people of Wells would be more inclusive.

It was agreed to form a small working group to clarify aims and report to Full Council. Cllr Browne, Crummay, Osman, Humphreys and Hartley were proposed and agreed.

**20/113C WRITTEN REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON OUTSIDE BODIES.**

The Mayor presented his report on the Connect Centre and invited questions. None were received.

Cllr Rust reported the Wells Museum will be opening on 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December.

## **20/114C WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

A verbal report was given by SCC Cllr Munt.

- Face coverings on school transport are now mandatory.
- Climate Emergency for Somerset has been through all 5 councils (15 meetings) and has passed.
- £10 million in reserves at County Council will be spent on additional costs for social care as a result of Covid.
- Cllr Munt attended the Health & Well Being Board. Covid rates are going up in Mendip. Maybe a reflection on the number of tests taking place. Our rate is 105 per 100,000.
- At Full County Council Meeting a request was made to defer County Council Elections in 2021. This was opposed.
- Council Tax will include Adult Social Care precept in 2021. NHS staff will receive a pay award.
- The Chair of the County Council has had some issues raised in the local news. This is being dealt with by Monitoring Officer.
- Road Closure in Chamberlain Street is being sorted.
- North Road restrictions were now painted.
- Lidl Planning Application for an extension and easing of hazards from Shepton Mallet direction into Wells. Cllr Munt is encouraging them to put in place a safe crossing over Priory Road.
- Care home in Wookey has now closed. Residents are being moved out.

## **20/115C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT**

None raised.

## **EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Note: If it is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence it will be proposed by the Mayor that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended, excluding the press and public to consider confidential negotiations and financial implications.

Cllr Osman updated members on the progress with the Portway Annexe project, negotiations, valuations and possible financial implications. A further report will be given next month when more information is known and the valuation has been received.

## **20/116C DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Wells City Council will be at **7pm on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020**