

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLS CITY COUNCIL HELD VIA ZOOM ON THURSDAY 25TH FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.00PM

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

IN ATTENDANCE (VIA ZOOM): Town Clerk/RFO: S Luck
WCC Staff: S Bristow, A Westwood
C Price, Mace Bearer
MDC: Cllr L Rogers, Cllr T Ronan
SCC: Cllr T Munt
5 members of public: Adrian and Bev Smith, June MacFarlane, Paddy O'Hagan, Tony Robbins

21/20/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr S Briton

Cllr P Crummay, who also sent her best wishes and was sorry she could not be present at what would be her last meeting.

Cllr J Parker

21/21/C DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 27th July 2012:

Councillors were asked whether they had any declarations of interest. No declarations were received.

21/22/C MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 28TH JANUARY 2021

Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, seconded, confirmed as a true record and will be signed by the Mayor.

21/23/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mr C Price spoke on:

- i. Wells Skate Park - he requested an update on when the lease ends and the future of the skate park.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the lease has already expired and discussions are underway with a community group regarding the future of the skate park. Meantime, it is currently being maintained at its present location.

Adrian and Bev Smith, who are heading the community group in question, were introduced by the Mayor. They confirmed Cllrs J Rust, J Browne and L Rogers have joined the group. They have received much enthusiasm and support about the skate park, its usage/upkeep and a possible new site, especially from local young people. Cllr Munt will chase up her enquiries with the Head of Property at SCC and will keep WCC informed.

The Mayor offered support and suggested that the Skate Park Community Group keep in touch with Cllr Munt and Mr Price.

- ii. Mr Price also spoke about the history of Bus 67 and noted it was being discussed later in the meeting.

21/24/C PRESENTATIONS:

1. Regarding the display of the Antony Gormley statue at Wells Cathedral
Mr O'Hagan talked about the plan to obtain this statue on loan, and display it on the West Front of the Cathedral, which would encourage tourism. This idea was well received by those present and support given. Mr O'Hagan urged the WCC to promote this installation, which potentially will take place at the end of August, for a loan period of 18 months.
2. PACG, Portway Annexe Community Group
The Town Clerk holds a key to the Portway Annexe, should anyone wish to visit.

21/25/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Resignation of Cllr J Linsdell and Cllr P Crummay
The Mayor expressed his thanks to the above councillors and his best wishes for their future
2. 5th February – vaccination photocall at West Mendip Hospital
This was to encourage locals to obtain their vaccinations.
3. Wells Community Network directorship
The Mayor has now taken up an unpaid directorship of the WCN which will act as a forum for community groups in Wells and provide a database for volunteers.
4. 21st March – Legal Service in Wells Cathedral
No confirmation has been received yet.
5. 26th March – Giving speech at Wells Operatic Society's AGM on Zoom

21/26/C MINUTES OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2021:
The Chair of Staffing presented the minutes and invited questions. None were received.

21/27/C MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2021:
The Chair of Finance presented the minutes and invited questions. None were received.

21/28/C MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 4th and 18th February 2021:
The Chair of Planning presented the minutes and invited questions. None were received.

21/29/C WELLS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REPORT

Cllr l'Anson presented his report.
Cllr Osman requested more detailed information and Cllr l'Anson will provide an extensive report to a future meeting.

21/30/C BUS SERVICE 67 - WEDMORE TO WOOKEY HOLE

1. To receive email and report from SCC
2. Members agreed with the proposal presented by SCO and Wookey Parish Councils to split the route.
3. WCC agree with the proposal and will pay for this year only and no further payments as it will become a commercial route provided by Mendip Community Transport. Proposer, Cllr O Hartley, seconded by Cllr J Rust, vote unanimous.

21/31/C WELLS RECREATION GROUND TRUST

It was agreed to proceed with the transfer of the trust from MDC to WCC working with the Charity Commission subject to agreement on financial and outstanding liabilities.
Proposer, Cllr N Kennedy, seconded by Cllr J Osman, vote unanimous.

21/32/C ACQUISITIONS WORKING GROUP

Recommendations:

1. WCC consider the formation of a new committee to manage the Portway Annexe project to include representatives from the community.
2. WCC consider the formation of a new committee to manage the Wells Recreation Ground Trust and the disbandment of the working party.

WCC consider the amalgamation of the acquisitions and unity working parties.

Cllr J Osman reported on the above proposal to form two new committees and invited questions. Discussion took place following which the proposal to accept the recommendations was put forward by Cllr Osman, seconded by Cllr N Kennedy, vote unanimous.

The Town Clerk requested that members email their interest in sitting on the new committees, in readiness to propose at the next council meeting.

21/33/C AWARDS WORKING GROUP

Cllr J Browne reported on the Awards Working Group. 23rd October 2021 is provisionally booked at the Town Hall for the Awards Ceremony. Local businesses will be used as much as possible in the running of this event, including caterers. A request for a grant for this event will be put forward. Wells Civic Society want to be included in the process of this event and will be invited to sit on the panel. Having lost a member of the group, Cllr Crummay, a new member would be welcome to join.

The Mayor thanked Cllr Browne. Cllr Cursley, Chair of Finance, said that the request for a grant will be considered at the next Finance meeting.

21/34/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Wells and Mendip Museum Report (attached)

Cllr Rust presented the report on the museum and encouraged all present to look at the museum media links and leave supporting comments. The Mayor thanked Cllr Rust for all her help.

21/35/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS

MDC Councillors' report previously submitted (attached)

Cllr Ronan added: Markets are now open 9am-2pm Wednesday and Saturday.

Phosphates calculator will be available on MDC website. Planning consultation on District Landscape Character Assessment closes 28th March. Census day 21st March.

WCC's Planning Committee were generally happy with the part of the draft report which related to Wells. Cllr l'Anson will send comments on the report to MDC before the 28th.

Cllr T Munt gave her apologies that she had not submitted a written report and gave a verbal report on the meetings which she has attended. Matters raised included: Constitution Standards Committee vacancy. Missed collections of bins unfortunately being unavoidable because of the Covid restrictions. £400,000 grant has been given to CAB. Cllr Nigel Taylor is unwell and will not be carrying out any council duties. Cllr Munt will continue to pursue the Strawberry Line project. Cllr Munt invited any questions. No questions raised.

21/36/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT

None.

21/37C DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Wells City Council will be at **7pm on Thursday 4th March 2021**