

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 25th JANUARY 2024 AT 7.00PM

Written reports can be viewed on the Agendas

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, J Browne, T Butt Philip, S Cursley, D Denis, S Eden, G Folkard, D Orrett, S Powell, T Pullin (Mayor), G Robbins, P Welch, I Von Mensenkampff

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: S Luck
Assistant Town Clerk: C Woodland
Mace Bearer: G Woodland
6 members of the public

24/01/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
WCC Cllrs: N Kennedy, S Powell, T Robbins, H Siggs
Somerset Cllr: T Munt

24/02/C DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022.
None declared.

24/03/C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 21st DECEMBER 2023
Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

24/04/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
Christine Costello returned to express her disappointment she had not received any communication from Councillors since her address during public participation at December's meeting regarding delivery lorries having to use Silver Street for access and encroaching on her property.
-Cllrs D Orrett and D Denis said they would visit in the morning to see first-hand the situation.
-Cllr T Butt Philip said he would pass on concerns to Highways at Somerset Council.

Wells Scout Leader Heather Anderson spoke about the condition of the Scout Hut in Wells, after 40 years it is in a state of disrepair and the toilets in particular need updating to make them accessible to all.

The Town Clerk informed her there are grants available from Wells City Council and would forward the application form.

-Cllr J Browne assured her of the Council's support of the Scouting movement in Wells and the difference they make to young people.

-Cllr T Butt Philip added that there were other grants available from county wide organisations such as SPARKS.

-Cllr P Welch invited Ms Anderson to take part in a grant application workshop run by WCN that will be going ahead soon.

Cllr G Robbins took the opportunity to commend the overwhelming community effort to raise money to assist Wells Blue School with funding shelter for pupils whilst preparations are made to school buildings which have been condemned. Particular thanks to Rachel Sherman who has worked hard coordinating a lot of the effort.

- 24/05/C PRESENTATION ON KINOKOTCH FILM PROJECT BY DEBORAH RICHARDSON**
Deborah Richardson, Creative Director of Somerset Film and Digital Technology presented a short film that had been made around Wells by locals and a short discussion took place.
- 24/06/C POLICE REPORT**
None Received
- 24/07/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
Wednesday 6th March 2024, 7pm, Annual Parish Meeting at Wells Town Hall
More details to follow.
Sunday 17th March 2024, 3pm, Legal Service at Wells Cathedral
Mayor's Diary
i. 7th Feb – St Thomas Church Ladies Group
ii. 9th Feb - Mayor's Charity Quiz, Wells Town Hall
iii. 12th Feb - Almshouses Board Meeting, Almshouses
- 24/08/C STAFFING MEETING**
Cllr P Welch presented the minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2024
No questions received
- 24/09/C FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE**
Cllr S Cursley presented the minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2024
No questions received
- 24/10/C ANNUAL BUDGET**
Recommendations from Finance & Council Matters Committee:
- i **To agree the annual budget for year 2024-25**
Acceptance of the budget was proposed by Cllr S Cursley, seconded by Cllr P Welch and unanimously voted for approval.
 - ii **To agree the precept of £1,178,497 for year 2024-25 which includes contingency of £50,000 to provide any devolved services from Somerset Council, added to last year's contingency making a total of £100,000**
Acceptance of the precept and contingency was proposed by Cllr S Cursley, seconded by Cllr P Welch and unanimously voted for approval.
- 24/11/C PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**
Cllr D Denis presented the minutes of the meeting held on 18th January 2024
Following the result of the poll taking place whether to accept the Neighbourhood Plan, Cllr Denis informed the Council that a meeting of the steering group would take place the following Wednesday, to decide on its future dependent on the outcome.
Cllr P Welch gave thanks to the steering group and in particular Mr A l'Anson in seeing the Neighbourhood Plan to fruition.
- 24/12/C CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP PROPOSAL 'DARK SKIES IN WELLS', PRESENTED BY CLLR DENIS**
A discussion took place and it was thought more information was needed regarding Somerset Council's current initiative regarding dark skies and its application in Wells.
- 24/13/C DOMESTIC ABUSE AWARENESS REPORT PRESENTED BY CLLR VON MENSENKAMPFF**
Cllr I Von Mensenkampff informed the Council that the poster campaign and the booth at Portway Annexe have both had a proven positive response. However, despite asking there has been little feedback from the You Trust or Somerset Council to ascertain exact figures

and if support of the booth will be continuing, and requested the Council assist with contact.

Cllr T Butt Philip thanked Cllr I Von Mensenkampff for all their work raising awareness.

24/14/C TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS/TRUSTEES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Report received from Cllr Welch on The Connect Centre

No questions raised.

As representative to the Twinning Association, Cllr J Browne confirmed that Dawn Payne is standing down after her long service and that in general they were looking for new members to support its continuation. Their plan is to look at reinstating a youth cultural exchange.

24/15/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCILLORS

Report received from Somerset Cllr T Butt Philip.

No questions were raised.

24/16/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT

Report received from the Portway Annexe Manager.

Cllr D Orrett confirmed the Portway Annexe was continuing to be well used and repairs had taken place.

Cllr G Robbins announced that they are continuing with the idea of a Pride event in Wells in early June and has received a large amount of support and positivity in the community.

24/17/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Wells City Council will be **Thursday 22nd February 2024, 7pm**

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.

Minutes signed by The Mayor:

Date: