

## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> FEBRUARY 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, N Kennedy, D Orrett, T Pullin (Mayor), G Robbins, T Robbins, H Siggs, P Welch

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Assistant Town Clerk: C Woodland  
Mace Bearer: C Price  
Somerset Cllr: T Munt (Wells)  
Somerset Cllr E Hobbs (Mendip Hills)  
4 members of the public

#### **24/18/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

WCC Cllrs: S Powell, I Von Mensenkampff

#### **24/19/C DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022.  
None declared.

#### **24/20/C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON THE 25<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2024**

Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor. Cllr D Denis clarified that Item 24/12/C "Dark skies in Wells" won't appear on an agenda until the Climate Emergency working group are ready, but that there will be an article on Dark skies in the Wells Voice.

#### **24/21/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Christine Costello updated Wells City Council that although there had been no progress with dealing with the access issues of delivery lorries in South Street, she did thank Cllrs: D Denis, D Orrett and T Butt Philip for their support. Christine reported that she is looking forward to Somerset Council's assessment of the problem area.

Cllr G Robbins spoke of the great efforts put in by residents, assisting the victims of flooding and offered sympathy for the people affected by floodwaters.

#### **24/22/C POLICE REPORT**

No Police report was submitted.

A discussion took place regarding this item being included on Wells City Council Agenda going forward. Cllr S Eden informed the meeting that Avon and Somerset Police will submit a report at the Local Community Network (LCN) meeting so that the Wells City Council representative can filter relevant information to Full Council meetings.

Cllr E Hobbs (Chair of Wells and district LCN) confirmed that this had been discussed and he will speak about it at the next LCN on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Cllr D Denis suggested that there still be a presence at a Wells City Council meeting on an occasional basis and a brief discussion took place about that.

Cllr N Kennedy suggested that he would rather have the Police be out doing their jobs and that a written report is adequate.

## **24/23/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 7pm, Annual Parish Meeting, Wells Town Hall  
Cllr T Pullin (Mayor) requested that Committees Chairs submit their written reports by the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024 in readiness for the Annual Parish meeting.

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 3pm, Legal Service, Wells Cathedral

### **Mayor's Diary**

- i. 24<sup>th</sup> Feb - Awards evening, Wells Football Club
- ii. 26<sup>th</sup> Feb - Focus Counselling Wells, Old Glasshouse in South Street
- iii. 27<sup>th</sup> Feb - Bubwith Chapel Event, City of Wells Alms-houses
- iv. 28<sup>th</sup> Feb - The Mayor hosting local Mayors & Chairs, Mayor's Parlour
- v. 1<sup>st</sup> Mar - High Sheriff Lunch, Bath & West Showground
- vi. 3<sup>rd</sup> Mar - Axbridge Civic Service
- vii. 4<sup>th</sup> Mar - Twinning AGM
- viii. 6<sup>th</sup> Mar - Annual Parish Meeting, Wells Town Hall
- ix. 7<sup>th</sup> Mar - Showmen's Annual Civic Luncheon, Swindon - Deputy Mayor attending
- x. 7<sup>th</sup> Mar - Mayor's Pop Concert, Cedars Hall
- xi. 14<sup>th</sup> Mar - Celebration of Search & Learn, Wells Mendip Museum
- xii. 17<sup>th</sup> Mar - Legal Service, Wells Cathedral
- xiii. 22<sup>nd</sup> Mar - Wells Little Theatre AGM
- xiv. 23<sup>rd</sup> Mar - 'The Dream of Gerontius' Oratorio Society, Wells Cathedral
- xv. 26<sup>th</sup> Mar - West Horrington Circle Group Afternoon Tea, Mayor's Parlour
- xvi. 26<sup>th</sup> Mar - Abbeyfield AGM
- xvii. 27<sup>th</sup> Mar - Symphony Orchestra Concert, Cedars Hall

## **24/24/C NOMINATION OF MAYOR-ELECT AND DEPUTY MAYOR-ELECT**

To make nominations in preparation for the next Mayoral year.

Cllr T Butt Philip nominated Cllr J Browne as Mayor elect for the next Mayoral year.

No other nominations were received.

Cllr P Welch Seconded the nomination. The vote was unanimous.

Cllr T Robbins nominated Cllr L Agabani as Deputy Mayor elect for the next Mayoral year.

No other nominations were received.

Cllr S Cursley Seconded the nomination. The vote was unanimous.

## **24/25/C OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE**

Cllr D Denis presented the minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024

No questions received

## **24/26/C FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE**

Cllr S Cursley presented the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024

No questions received

## **24/27/C GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

Wells City Council voted to adopt the following policies approved by the Finance Committee:

- i. Standing Orders - The vote was unanimous to adopt the Standing Orders Policy
- ii. Financial Regulations - The vote was unanimous to adopt the Financial Regulations
- iii. Scheme of Delegation - The vote was unanimous to adopt the Scheme of Delegation
- iv. Civic Review - The vote was unanimous to adopt the Civic Review

## **24/28/C PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Cllr D Denis presented the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024

No questions received

**24/29/C PROJECTS ARISING FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

To consider setting up a task and finish group.

Cllr D Denis reported that 10 project areas were identified. The Town Clerk suggested setting up a task and finish group made up of Cllrs from all committees to work on projects rather than solely from the Planning Committee.

A discussion took place about the potential workload and dynamics of the proposed group.

Cllr L Agabani suggested that if it did go to Planning at this point, that involvement could still be undertaken from Non Planning Committee members.

Cllr D Denis proposed that Planning Committee take on the task of setting up the Task and finish group but as it is an onerous task, that the group approach Full Council as and when assistance is needed with projects. All Councillors supported the proposal.

Cllr D Denis commended A l'Anson for his years of hard work and suggested that he be given appropriate gesture of gratitude.

**24/30/C TO CONSIDER A WELLS CITY COUNCIL INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT**

Cllr D Denis suggested that the Instagram account that is set up for Wells City Council, but currently not used, be put to better use to promote positive events that take place in Wells.

A discussion took place and the consensus of opinion is that it is a good idea but should be administrated by Staff at Wells City Council and not Councillors.

Cllr J Browne proposed the Instagram Account be put to use. Cllr D Orrett seconded the proposal. The vote was unanimous for the proposal.

**24/31/C YMCA YOUTH PROVISION**

Cllr P Welch clarified that this was not a proposal about Youth Provision but an update and that he had met with Mark Wilcox, the YMCA Manager. Cllr P Welch had visited Elim Connect Centre and a member of staff, Peter Naylor, had been identified as a potential contact for the Youth Work. Other locations have been researched, but the Elim Connect Centre are keen to proceed and have reassured that the Youth Provision will not be of a religious nature. Cllr P Welch reported that April be a possible start time.

Cllr P Welch read a statement out from a Youth who had benefitted from accessing Youth Provision. There was also a statement provided from Karen Deverell OBE who vouched for the suitability of the YMCA.

Cllr J Browne asked for details of how the service would be promoted. Cllr P Welch replied that it would be through local schools and social media.

Cllr H Siggs confirmed that although the funding is in place and he supports Youth Provision, Wells City Council need to know that it will continue after the first year.

A discussion took place about alternative providers being researched for comparison. Cllr P Welch asked that alternatives be suggested by Cllr T Butt Philip. Cllr T Butt Philip will research some alternatives. The discussion continued and the suggestion was that April would not be feasible. Cllr P Welch said that he will follow up any suggested alternatives.

**24/32/C HEDGEHOGS R US**

Cllr D Denis gave a brief explanation of the Hedgehogs R Us project which provides Hedgehog Highways.

Following a brief discussion, it was suggested that more information was required

Cllr S Cursley proposed that this is presented before the Finance Committee.

Cllr T Robbins seconded. All Councillors voted for the proposal.

**24/33/C TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS/TRUSTEES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr D Denise reported that Rosa Kell of the Bus User group has cleaned bus shelters at the Bus Station and has worked hard to keep the subject of buses in the foreground. There are plans to install a Real Time Information board at Wells Bus Station.

Cllr G Robbins requested information about a proposal for a café going into the building at the Bus Station.

Cllr H Siggs replied that there had been a discussion at some point but that nothing had progressed by the interested party.

Cllr J Browne reported that a Twinning visit had been proposed between the Blue School and a school in Bad Durkheim and there are hopes that this will go ahead.

Cllr D Denis presented a report from Citizens Advice Somerset.

**24/34/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCILLORS**

Cllr T Butt Philip presented the report from Somerset Council

Cllr L Agabani asked if progress had been made as it seems that Wells City Council even though it has been prepared after Unitary, does not seem to be progressing.

Cllr T Butt Philip informed the meeting that Idverde's contract extension until May 2025 had taken the pressure off any immediate action from Wells City Council. Devolution deals have been undertaken in areas such as Bridgwater to protect vital services. Cllr T Butt Philip said that work was continuing and hopefully there would be news in the next few months.

**24/35/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT**

No matter arising

**24/36/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Wells City Council will be **Thursday 28th March 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:** .....