

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 7.00PM

Written reports can be viewed on agendas: [Wells City Council](#) website

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani (Mayor), T Butt Philip, S Cursley, J Edmonds, T Kolizeras, I Von Mensenkampff, D Orrett, S Powell, T Robbins, H Siggs P Welch

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
RFO: C Woodland
WCC Staff: C Hobbs
Project and Administration Assistant: M Woodlock
MP for Wells and Mendip Hills/Somerset Cllr for Wells: T Munt
6 members of the public

25/139/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs: J Browne, D Denis (Deputy Mayor), S Eden, G Folkard, G Robbins

25/140/C The Mayor announced that agenda item 23 has been withdrawn and agenda item 14 moved to the end of the meeting.

25/141/C DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Cllr T Robbins declared an interest in Agenda item 14 and although removed, agenda item 23

25/142/C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 24TH JULY 2025

Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

25/143/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

B Mealing mentioned that he had written to Wells City Council and had already received a written response. He asked the meeting if Wells City Council had contingency plans should asylum seekers be placed in Wells. (Terminology used by B Mealing has not been used) a member of the public challenged the language he used which was retracted by B Mealing.

Cllr T Butt Philip aligned himself with the challenge from the member of public and stressed that Wells had a long and proud history of welcoming refugees escaping persecution and war. Many residents in Wells have opened their homes to people from Ukraine fleeing war. There is very little likelihood that it will be an issue for Wells City Council, but if it did then we would work hard to ensure that people would be welcomed

The Mayor reminded the meeting that he was an asylum seeker, he concurred with everything that had been said by Cllr T Butt Philip.

M Knight resident of Sadler Street, spoke on behalf of residents living within 300 metres of the White Hart and wanted to complain in the strongest terms about the incredible volume of music played at the White Hart. Somerset Council have neglected to respond to complaints. Although not often it's the degree of amplification that is unnecessary. In spirit of good neighbourliness, it would be good to have some consideration to the levels of noise. M Knight assured the meeting that he was supportive of the White Hart's new management.

C Day resident of Portway contributed to the debate regarding noise and has drawn on comments from residents of Melbury Court, St Cuthbert Street and Portway. The Wells Beer Fest is a two-day event involving beer, food and amplified music, which took place at the Sheep and Penguin in July 2024 and July 2025. In 2024 they did not apply for a licence, in 2025 they applied for a temporary events notice for an event to take place on the 27th/28th July, with the event taking place on the 25th/26th July. The level of noise on both occasions

in nearby houses made it impossible to live in. There is only a stone wall separating the pub from neighbouring property and there needs to be guidance on acceptable noise levels. We intend to meet with the management of the Sheep and Penguin to try to negotiate a way forward. We are supportive of the establishment. The Noise Council code of practice is a document which we feel would be useful to be adopted and referred to when issuing licences of this type.

Cllr S Powell stressed that the complaints are not about preventing outdoor events with music but more about asking for respectful volumes with consideration for local residents. And compliance with licensing conditions. Cllr S Powell asked that Somerset Councillors ensure there is a clear and supportive line of communication available for residents should further issues arise. A pro-active line of communication between residents, licensing and venues would be useful in preventing problems before they occur. There had been a recent occurrence of noise complaint from an event at the Bishop's Palace.

Cllr T Butt Philip asked that Cllr S Powell email him on this subject. MP for Wells and Mendip Hills but also a Somerset Cllr for Wells reported that she had just sent an email to licensing and will work with Cllr Butt Philip.

C Simons asked for information on the Recreation Ground Trust. He asked for information on meetings that should have taken place. The Town Clerk said that there had been delays and that following tonight's meeting, future meetings would be scheduled.

25/144/C TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND THANK REVEREND SAM DENYER FOR HIS SERVICES TO WELLS CITY AND SUPPORT AS MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN. TO WELCOME TO ALISTAIR GLANVILE.

Alastair Glanville spoke that he was honoured to take on the role of Mayor's Chaplain again and thanked Sam for his services to Wells. Alastair reminded everyone that St Cuthberts' Church is a welcoming place for everyone.

**25/145/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
Mayor's Diary**

1. 26th Sept Cider & Cheese Festival Reception, Wells Cathedral
2. 5th Oct Moat Boat Race Presentation Evening, Bishop's Palace, Deputy Mayor attending
3. 10th Oct 'Through the Front Door' Production, Wells & Mendip Museum
4. 12th Oct Rev Sam Denyer last service, St Cuthbert's Church
5. 13th Oct Inclusivity Meeting with Lord-Lieutenant, Guildhall Bath
6. 14th Oct Lunch at Abbeyfield House

25/146/C OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE

Cllr D Orrett presented the minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2025
No questions received

25/147/C ESTATES COMMITTEE

Cllr H Siggs presented the minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2025. He assured the meeting that they are listening to members of the public and drilling down on costings and will produce a list of recommendations which will be produced later.

25/148/C STAFFING AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Cllr D Orrett presented the minutes of the meeting held on 11th September 2025 and welcomed M Woodlock to Wells City Council who has recently commenced in the role of Projects Administration Assistant.

25/149/C FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr T Robbins presented the minutes of the meeting held on 11th September 2025
No questions received

25/150/C PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Cllr S Powell presented the minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2025

No questions received but Cllr S Powell reminded the meeting that there are vacancies on the Planning Advisory Committee and should any members like to support the committee, to contact the Town Clerk.

25/151/C MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – ECO WEEK

The Town Clerk presented the report in the absence of Cllr D Denis.

The Town Clerk mentioned that the Act to Adapt is a wider protocol whereas the eco week event is a single occurrence event.

Councillors voted unanimously to adopt the Memorandum of Understanding of Eco Week

25/152/C MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING - ACT TO ADAPT

Councillors voted unanimously to adopt the Memorandum of Understanding of the Act to Adapt protocol

25/153/C CLLR FORMAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST

Councillors voted unanimously to accept a leave of absence of up to 6 months for Cllr G Robbins.

25/154/C CLLR ADOPTION INTO COMMITTEES & COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Council to consider and vote for the below motion:

Following the appointment of Cllr J Edmonds, through bi-election for the ward of St Cuthbert's. I propose to appoint Cllr J Edmonds to both the Planning Advisory Committee and the Outside Spaces Committee with immediate effect.

Proposed: Cllr L Agabani

Seconder: Cllr D Denis

Councillors voted unanimously to appoint Cllr J Edmonds to Planning Advisory Committee and Outside Spaces Committee.

The Town Clerk reminded Council that there are two vacancies on Planning Advisory Committee and Outside Spaces.

Cllr T Robbins proposed that the meeting delegate the allocation of committee spaces to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor.

Councillors voted unanimously to delegate authority as aforementioned. An email will be sent to all Councillors with information on committee vacancies.

25/155/C AGAR: RESTATED ACCOUNTING STATEMENT

C Woodland presented the accounting statement for endorsement of Full Council, following the restating Section 2: Accounting Statement 2024/25 Endorsed and agreed by Finance Committee.

Councillors voted unanimously to endorse the Accounting Statement

25/156/C CALENDAR OF MEETINGS & ENGAGEMENTS

The Town Clerk reported that there had been a misprint of the Civic Remembrance service and that the date is confirmed 9th November. Additional meeting dates have been added to trial an extra Planning Advisory meeting to assist with changes with Somerset Planning function.

25/157/C VOLUNTEERING POLICY ADOPTION

The Town Clerk presented the draft endorsed by the Outside Spaces Committee.

Cllr D Orrett thanked the Town Clerk for the hard work on providing the draft policy.

Councillors voted unanimously to adopt the Volunteering Policy

25/158/C PRE-PAID DEBIT POLICY ADOPTION

The Town Clerk presented the pre-paid debt policy as endorsed by the Finance Committee.

Councillors voted unanimously to adopt the pre-paid debt Policy

25/159/C CHRISTMAS MARKET UPDATE

The Town Clerk reported that Wells City Council Staff are working on organising a Wells Christmas Event on Cathedral Green on the 6th December 2026. There are already 30 stallholders confirmed. The event has not been actively publicised but this will start shortly. The event will be in partnership with the Cathedral and Bishop's Palace and businesses to ensure a Wells wide event is possible for 2026 and beyond. Engagement with Police, Fire Service and Somerset colleagues regarding permissions are already in place.

Cllr I Von Mensenkampff would like to hold an event café in the Town Hall on the 6th December for people in the community and asked for help from fellow Councillors. The Town Clerk suggested that Cllr I Von Mensenkampff meet with herself and the Mayor to clarify what is required.

Cllr T Kolizeras asked if sheds would be used for the Christmas Market. The Town Clerk reported that due to costs and time constraints the sheds acquired through the devolution process won't be used this year, but consideration would be given for future events.

25/160/C WELLS RECREATION GROUND TRUST GOVERNANCE

The Town Clerk introduced the report to endorse the governing document. For the benefit of members of the public present, the Town Clerk explained that the City Council have worked to ensure that the governance is compliant with the Trust and Charities expectations. The report is to ensure that Wells City Council are compliant and can deliver outcomes for the Wells Recreation Ground.

Cllr S Powell referred to the plan to hold meetings in September and March and how these will be reconciled to making progress. The Town Clerk assured that these are public meetings of the City Council and not meetings held by trustees. City Council will operate the day-to-day decision making associated with open spaces.

Councillors voted unanimously to:

1. Adopt Wells Recreation Ground Trust Governance, including:
 - a) Appendix A – Trust Governing Document
 - b) Appendix B – Trustee Code of Practice and Undertaking
 - c) Appendix C – Conflict of Interest Policy
 - d) Appendix D – Conflict Register
2. Delegate authority via Appendix A, to Wells City Council, with onward delegations to associated Committees of the City Council in accordance with the Councils Standing Orders for all associated matters, including financial sign off, operational matters and future strategic developments of the WRGT.
3. Aim to create a future vision for the WRGT to ensure delivery of the Trusts aims and objectives as detailed within the Governing Document (Appendix A), noting the previous community consultation completed.

25/161/C TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS/TRUSTEES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr P Welch presented a report on the Elim Connect Centre and presented the fortnightly newsletter for WCN. (Wells Community Network)
No questions were received.

25/162/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCILLORS

Cllr T Butt Phillip presented the monthly report (available online).

The Mayor asked about costs for the company that are employed to deliver the transformation.

Cllr T Butt Philip explained that collaboration with the company will take place over a period of 5 to 7 years and there will be a series of initiatives put in place. The sum of £1.5 million has been spent on work in the past few weeks and more will be spent over the next few years. The idea will be to invest and generate savings long term.

Cllr S Powell asked that any new Licences are brought to the attention of Wells City Council. Cllr T Butt Phillip said he will work on that with Somerset Council.
Cllr D Orrett asked about Sunday parking and had there been public consultation.
Cllr T Butt Phillip mentioned that as there was already Sunday parking charges that the initiative was more about providing consistency across the area.

Cllr T Kolizeras asked about the planning process and the special measures that have been put in place to reduce back logs in applications.
Cllr T Butt Phillip reported that the twelve-week temporary intervention is to get on top of the backlog of applications and has already been effective. Following this, there will be a period of review.

25/163/C FEES & CHARGES ADOPTION

To consider draft fees and charges as endorsed by Estates Committee.
Councillors voted unanimously to adopt the adoption of fees and charges laid out in the report

25/164/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT

Cllr P Welch asked if further information could be published about road closures.
The Town Clerk reported that this already happens but that information could be re issued.

Cllr S Powell asked about the accessible Wells Traffic calming plan and will this be included in the Forward Plan.

The Town Clerk reassured her that it was a standing item in the Outside Spaces agenda.

25/165/C FORWARD PLAN

Full City Council Forward Plan	
Item	Proposed date for consideration
Corporate Risk Register	October 2025
Devolution mid-year review	October 2025
Police and Crime Commissioner, Crime and CCTV overview	December 2025
Annual Budget	January 2026
Corporate Risk Register	February 2026
Annual Governance Review (Inc Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation)	February 2026
Youth Council Proposals	February 2026
Calendar of Meetings and Engagements	March 2026
Preparation for internal audit (Appropriation and Asset List)	March 2026
General Power of Competency	Every political cycle

25/166/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Wells City Council will be **Thursday 23rd October 2025, 7pm**

EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

Minutes signed by The Mayor.....Date