



WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 24th SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 7.00PM

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

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, J Browne, T Butt Philip, S Cursley, D Denis (Mayor), J Edmonds, H Siggs, K Kinshaw, D Orrett, S Powell

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
RFO: C Woodland
Mace Bearer: C Price
WCC Staff: C Hobbs
Somerset Cllr for Wells and MP for Wells and Mendip Hills: T Munt
4 members of the public

26/153/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs: S Eden, G Folkard, T Kolizeras, G Robbins, I Von Mensenkampff, P Welch

26/154/C DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None received.

26/155/C NOMINATION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

Cllr L Agabani nominated Cllr D Orrett. Cllr J Edmonds seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations.
Cllrs voted unanimously for the nomination.
Cllr D Orrett took her seat next to the Mayor.

26/156/C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 23rd JULY 2026

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

26/157/C ACTIONS FROM THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 23rd JULY 2026

Date Raised	Description of Action
21.05.2026	26/96/C – Consideration of small sweeper with Somerset Council
25.06.2026	26/111/C – Request to consider quoracy of council meetings within standing orders and best practice.

The Town Clerk reported that 26/96/C the item for consideration of a small sweeper would be a carried forward action.

The item 26/111/C for clarification of quoracy of Council meetings. The Town Clerk reported that WCC are compliant with Standing Orders. Quoracy requires meeting attendance to be one third of entire members to be present. WCC have not been contrary to that at any point. Standing orders are based on the Local Government Act 1972, section 13.

The Mayor asked for an update regarding her letter to the Church Commission regarding the Palace Fields parking. The Town Clerk reported that the Church Commission replied that they understood the economic impact on the closure of the car park and were working to resolve the matter with the tenant.

26/158/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

C Simons asked for information regarding details of the lease at Wells Film Centre. He also asked if WCC were comfortable with the signs at the Wells Film centre pertaining to bag searches.

The Town Clerk assured C Simons that she would respond to his questions regarding the lease directly to him and that the signs regarding bag searches were a matter for the film centre.

Mrs Montague spoke of her difficulties moving around the Market Place due to the placement of tables and chairs outside cafes. Mrs Montague uses a mobility aid and she explained that it is very stressful. She spoke of her struggles to get access to the post box in the Market Place as a planter has been placed in front of it and for access to the vegetable stall on Market days as she is required to get off and on the pavement, to get close enough. Mrs Montague reported a damaged bin near Boots that requires looking at.

The Mayor invited Somerset Cllr for Wells and MP for Wells and Mendip Hills, T Munt to speak.

T Munt MP reported that she had been in contact with Somerset Licensing and invited them to come along to Wells so that the problems can be witnessed. T Munt suggested this visit should come on a Wednesday on Market Day to see the issues.

Cllr L Agabani suggested a visit on a non-market day would be preferable as chairs are not in place on Market days.

C Simons reported that he had send several FOI requests regarding pavement licenses but had failed to get a response after several months.

The Town Clerk reported that she had received information regarding all the pavement licenses and that she would engage with T Munt MP regarding the noted visit.

26/159/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Sunday 8th Nov, 9:45am, Civic Remembrance Service & Parade, St Cuthbert's Church. The Mayor reported that Cllrs will be wearing full regalia.

- Wednesday 11th November, 11am, Armistice Day. The Mayor asked that as many Cllrs attend to show their respects. Cllr H Siggs asked that as it's a Wednesday that there was room for the ceremony.

The Town Clerk reported that this had been addressed.

Mayor's Diary

25th Sept Cider & Cheese Festival, Wells Cathedral

26th Sept Axbridge Blackberry Carnival

27th Sept Mayor's Charity Quiz, Tramways

4th Oct Somerset YFC Harvest Thanksgiving Service, Wells Cathedral

6th Oct Friends of Wells Cathedral Divine Light Event, Wells Cathedral

6th Oct Floral Art Club, Wells Little Theatre

8th Oct Woolly Rhino Skull Launch, Wells Museum

9th Oct Wells Art Contemporary VIP Private View, Wells Cathedral

11th Oct Moat Boat Race Presentation Evening, Bishop's Palace

15th Oct Lunch at Abbeyfield House

15th Oct Licensing Service for The Revd. Sarah Cornick, St Cuthbert's Church

16th Oct Somerset Chair's Award for Service to the Community, Taunton

22nd Oct Wells Festival of Literature 2026 Event for Schools, Cedars Hall

26/160/C OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE

Cllr D Orrett presented the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd September 2026
No questions received.

26/161/C STAFFING & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Cllr S Powell presented the minutes of the meeting held on 10th September 2026
No questions received.

26/162/C FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr L Agabani presented the minutes of the meeting held on 10th September 2026
No questions received.

26/163/C CIVIC & ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Cllr J Browne presented the minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2026
The Mayor pointed out a spelling mistake in the Minutes.
No questions received.

26/164/C PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Cllr S Powell presented the minutes of meetings held on 16th July 2026, 31st July 2026 and 17th August 2026, under delegated authority and 17th September 2026
No questions received.

26/165/C PRESENTATION FROM LEAD SOCIAL PRESCRIBING LINK WORKER WITH THE LOCAL GP PRACTICES (WEST MENDIP PCN)

Item deferred.

26/166/C POLICY ADOPTION

To adopt the following policies as agreed by Committees

1. Tree Policy
2. Staff Handbook
3. Health & Safety Handbook
4. Severe Weather Policy
5. Community Emergency Plan

The Town Clerk reported that all policies have been through the relevant committees.
The Tree Policy necessary due to devolution of assets to WCC.

The Staff Handbook required updating due to changes in the Employment Act 2025 and there may be further changes in the next few months.

The Severe Weather Policy allows WCC to be transparent with staff regarding expectations and risk management.

The Health and Safety Policy is hopefully self-explanatory.

The Community Emergency Plan is a document which follows a protocol set with support from Somerset Council. The plan will give hints and tips to the community, should there be an emergency.

The Mayor asked that if under delegated authority could there be included in the handbook that mobile property requires returning at the end of the contract. She would also like the issue of staff working whilst their children/family members are in the building to be included. The Mayor then referred to the Health and Safety handbook and stated that the terrorism section had some wording amendments. The Mayor's final comment on the above policies was that she felt it a good idea to bring the community groups referenced in the policy together in a community day/conference to work through issues raised together.

The Mayor then asked if Cllrs were happy to adopt the above policies in principle and suggested they be adopted en-masse.

Cllrs voted unanimously to adopt the policies.

26/167/C CHRISTMAS LIGHT PROVISION 2026-27

The Town Clerk presented an image of Icicle Christmas lights in a High Street setting. She reported that there had been concerns with the infrastructure of fixings in Broad Street, High Street and Queen Street. These issues had been presented to the recent finance committee who had approved the decision to provide string icicle lights instead of the traditional Christmas lights. This option will then ensure the health and safety risks are managed. This will be the case for 2026 and 2027.

Cllr J Browne asked what would happen to the original lights.



The Town Clerk reported that the original lights are safe and in storage until such time further decisions are made after the two-year scheme.

Cllr K Kinshaw asked that communication to the public be managed with sensitivity.

The Town Clerk assured the meeting that she is aware of this and will also include in the communications the priority for safety, along with information about the Christmas tree which this year is provided by WCC rather than a local business.

Cllr S Powell spoke of her approval of the icicle lighting and thought they were aesthetically pleasing.

26/168/C 20MPH SCHEME PROPOSAL

The Town Clerk presented the final draft proposal based on changes requested at the previous Full Council meeting. The changes requested were around Kennion Road, Ash Lane, and other locations around the school. Following a meeting with Cllr T Butt Philip, there remains an outstanding question regarding Beryl Lane and Bath Road in terms of location of signage to gain best coverage. That will be resolved before the scheme is in place. The next step will be an open consultation with the community and then will return to Somerset for the scheme to be refined as required and seek timescales for delivery.

A brief discussion took place about there being a blanket 20mph zone and the number of signs that would be required with multiple zones. The conversation continued with acknowledgement that it is progress and the first phase of possible later adjustments.

The Mayor asked that Cllrs vote to approve the proposal.

Cllrs voted unanimously to approve the proposal.

26/169/C HERITAGE TOURISM

The Town Clerk reported that the Heritage and Tourism group met two weeks ago and is making progress with a Community Operating Board (CIO) being developed and a number of proposals around tourism being developed. To date WCC has not committed officer time for specific projects and maybe there is a need to understand how much time, support and engagement will be needed with tourism projects.

Cllr D Orrett explained that the purpose of the group is to combine the excellence of the historic venues, community participation, heritage, music, education, volunteers to improve the experience of visitors.

A discussion took place regarding the expectations of the working group when it comes to the of financial and time commitment and limitations from the working group.

Cllr L Agabani stressed that any requests will be required to go through the Finance committee.

The Town Clerk was asked to present a future paper on the expectations for the City Council to allow consideration, costing and decision.

26/170/C LET'S CELEBRATE TOWNS BID 2026

The Town Clerk explained that the Bid is run by a number of banks and offers up to £25k funding for High Street provision. That funding may be for engagement, marketing and suchlike. There are numerous businesses in Wells who are keen for this Bid to be put forward as a proposal to secure funding to work on marketing Wells. This Bid sits outside the Heritage Tourism group. The Town Clerk proposed to make a Bid by WCC on behalf of the city.

Cllr L Agabani believes that the Bid should come under the tourism umbrella but is supportive of the Bid application.

A brief discussion took place about the Bid process and brief ideas for which functions the funding would be used for.

The Town Clerk was asked to prepare a Bid on behalf of the City Council.

26/171/C DEVOLUTION

The Town Clerk reported that the papers have been through the Outside Spaces Committee regarding land/asset transfers. Each parcel of land has been given consideration to determine the impacts on management. The Town Clerk gave an outline for each section of land and explained the nuances pertaining to the title deed and acknowledged that there were deviations from previous devolution agreements



The Mayor invited proposals to proceed with the land/asset transfers as laid out by the Town Clerk.

Cllrs voted 6 for proceeding with land/asset transfer with 3 abstentions.

- 26/172/C** The Mayor asked for a motion to move confidential – PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION CONFIDENTIAL - THRIVE WELCOME HUB items into a closed session at the end of the meeting.

Cllrs voted unanimously for the motion.

26/173/C CONFIDENTIAL – PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION

To receive the confidential paper for consideration, from Finance Committee.

Exclusion of Press and Public - The committee are required to consider passing a resolution under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information: item 20 – Public Toilet Provision.

Personal information - This report contains information relating to an individual and is therefore exempt by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Commercially sensitive information - This report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information) and is therefore exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

26/174/C CONFIDENTIAL - THRIVE WELCOME HUB

To receive the confidential paper for consideration, from Finance Committee.

Exclusion of Press and Public - The committee are required to consider passing a resolution under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information: item 21 – Thrive Welcome Hub.

Personal information - This report contains information relating to an individual and is therefore exempt by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Commercially sensitive information - This report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information) and is therefore exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

26/175/C PLAY & LEISURE STRATEGY UPDATE

The Town Clerk explained the next steps and introduced Media and Communications Officer M Groom. The Draft will be brought before the next meeting for consideration and following that a period of public consultation. The draft will map play areas that can be reached within an 8–10-minute timescale, which will identify areas in need of play provision.

26/176/C TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS/TRUSTEES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr P Welch was not in attendance. The Mayor thanked him for producing the report which was attached to the agenda.

Report from the Connect Community Trust based at the Connect Centre which has been renamed Elim Church Wells.

26/177/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCILLORS

None received.

Full City Council Forward Plan	
Item	Proposed date for consideration
Customer Charter & Customer Journey	October 2026
Leisure Strategy & Play Project Update	October 2026
Events on Council Land Policy Adoption	October 2026
Corporate Risk Register	October 2026
WRGT Update	October 2026
Adoption of Statutory Annual Policy i. Standing Orders ii. Financial Regulations iii. Scheme of Delegation	December 2026
Adoption of 2026-27 Budget	December 2026
Corporate Risk Register	January 2027
Adoption of 2026-27 Budget (if required)	January 2027
Leisure Strategy & Play Project Update	January 2027
Corporate Risk Register & Annual Risk Profile & Assessment	March 2027
Calendar of Public Meetings	March 2027
Priorities & Project Planning	April 2027
General Power of Competency	Every political cycle

26/179/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT

Cllr L Agabani reported that the Moat race had been very successful and thanked WCC for its support. Insurance monies have been raised to cover the event in 2027. Cllr L Agabani thanked the input of Cllr H Siggs and Archivist for their input regarding researching the names for the new consort board and for the staff who helped at the unveiling reception.

Cllr K Kinshaw spoke of her concerns for the lack of parking in Wells with the loss of the Palace Fields car parking and asked that WCC explore parking solutions within Wells' boundary. Cllr K Kinshaw put forward a proposal to:

"Request that the City Council explore parking solutions within its boundary, opportunities to support either directly or sympathetically, including the scoping of possible land for future development for parking provision."

A discussion took place about the Palace fields parking provision. Cllr H Siggs spoke of the cost of providing more spaces and the monetary figure which would be required. The discussion continued with varied views regarding parking necessities. The Mayor asked that the proposal be read out again. A discussion took place with suggested amendments to the wording of the proposal. The Town Clerk read out the amended proposal.
Proposal –

"Request that the City Council explore parking solutions within its boundary and surrounding areas, opportunities to support either directly or sympathetically, including the scoping of possible land for future development for parking provision."

Cllrs voted unanimously for the proposal.

Cllr S Powell reported that traffic management during the Pride event caused some problems in Chamberlain street and was backed up. Marshalls did not seem to be used. The Town Clerk assured Cllr S Powell that she was meeting with Somerset for a Washup meeting with organisers and will give feedback.



Cllr D Orrett asked how to become informed better as a Councillor on changes within commerce sector in Wells.
The Town Clerk responded that she is meeting with the Chamber of Commerce and will give feedback.

The Town Clerk advised the service at St Cuthbert's Church on Thursday 15th October for the installation of the new vicar clashed with the date and time of the Planning Advisory Committee meeting. She suggested moving this meeting by a week to take place on Thursday 22nd October at 6pm before the Full City Council meeting. This was agreed.

26/180/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 22nd October 2026 at 7pm, Wells Town Hall

Minutes signed by The Mayor.....Date