WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 22nd OCTOBER 2026 AT 7.00PM

Written reports can be viewed on agendas: Wells City Council website

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, J Browne, S Cursley, D Denis (Mayor), S Eden, J Edmonds, G Folkard, K Kinshaw, G Robbins H Siggs, P Welch

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
RFO: C Woodland
Estates Manager: L Wassell
Mace Bearer: C Price
WCC Staff: C Hobbs, M Groom
Somerset Cllr for Wells and MP for Wells and Mendip Hills: T Munt
7 members of the public

The Mayor spoke briefly of it being National Kindness week between 9th and 16th November. The Mayor quoted Mother Teresa "Not all of us can do great things but we can do small things with great love" The Wells Ukrainian Welcome Hub will be hosting an interactive wellbeing session focussed on kindness to themselves, family and community. WCC will host a special Friday Coffee Morning at the Portway Annexe with support from MIND and Citizen's Advice.

26/181/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Cllrs: T Butt Philip, T Kolizeras, D Orrett, S Powell, I Von Mensenkampff

26/182/C DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS
None received.

26/183/C MINUTES FROM THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24TH SEPTEMBER 2026
Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

Cllr D Denis asked for information regarding the Film Centre Lease and was informed by the Town Clerk that she had been in contact with the Film Centre.
Cllr D Denis asked if a response had gone to Mrs Montague regarding her comments regarding access on pavements with pavement licences.
The Town Clerk assured her that this will be done.

The Mayor reminded all at the meeting that the public consultations are live on the website so that residents can give their opinions on parking and 20 mile and hour limits.

The Mayor asked the Town Clerk about the "Let's celebrate Towns" bid. The Town Clerk reported that the bid has been submitted.
The Mayor conveyed thanks that had been received from the Deputy Lieutenant Mary Ellis for the support Wells City Council gave to the organisers of the Moat Race. The event was deemed a great success.

26/184/C ACTIONS FROM THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24TH SEPTEMBER 2026

Open actions not on the agenda are listed below:

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.
24.09.2026	26/157/C - The Mayor asked for regular updates for the Councils letter to the Church Commissioner associated with Palace Fields parking provision
24.09.2026	26/158/C – Response to Mr Simons from the Town Clerk required
24.09.2026	26/169/C HERITAGE TOURISM - The Town Clerk was asked to present a future paper on the expectations for the City Council to allow consideration, costing and decision.

The Town Clerk gave the following updates:

26/96/C - The Town Clerk has emailed Cllr T Butt Philip and MP for Wells and Mendip Hills, T Munt to seek support.

26/111/C - The request for quoracy will be part of a document presented to Council in December.

26/157/C – An additional response has been received and circulated to Councillors

26/158/C – A response has been provided to C Simons.

24.09.2026 - The Heritage and Tourism paper is due to be included on the next Full Council Meeting agenda.

26/185/C **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**.

Carolyn Robinson spoke to the meeting about a planned weekend event 9th to 11th April 2027, which she hopes will raise money and awareness for Accessible Wells.

A friend of Carolyn's, Keith Jansz is a quadriplegic, well-known mouth artist and recently appointed Director of The Mouth and Foot Painting Association (MFPA). He would like to support the event by holding an exhibition of his works. Another artist will join Keith to demonstrate skills with 15% of proceeds going to Accessible Wells. The weekend plans will include an auction, a secret art sale. The finer details require confirming, there is a good amount of support and Wells Town Hall as a location would be ideal. Carolyn asked Wells City Council Councillors to waive the room hire fee in order that the event be a success. This will send a clear message that disabled residents and visitors are valued.

The Mayor thanked Carolyn Robinson for her presentation. The Mayor sought guidance from the Town Clerk regarding the process.

The Town Clerk reminded the Council that as there is a Memorandum of Understanding that it could be either deferred to the next Finance meeting or the Town Clerk to investigate where the request sits within the MOU.

Cllr P Welch offered assistance with publicising the event.

Cllr S Eden, The Mayor, Cllr J Browne spoke of their support for the event although a proposal at this meeting was not appropriate.

26/186/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Sunday 8th November, 9:45am, Civic Remembrance Service and Parade, St Cuthbert's Church
- Wednesday 11th November, 11am, Armistice Day
- Saturday 14th November, 7pm, Mayor's Charity Event Comedy Supper, Swan Hotel
- Thursday 19th & Friday 20th November, Fair in the Market Place
- Friday 20th November, Wells Carnival

Mayor's Diary

i. 23rd Oct University Centre Somerset Graduation 2026, Wells Cathedral
ii. 24th Oct Tortoise & Hare Presentation Evening, White Hart Pub in Sadler Street
iii. 25th Oct Tom Winter's 'Light Lines' Exhibition, The Bishop's Palace
iv. 5th Nov Founders Day Service, Almshouses
v. 7th Nov HMS Somerset Open Day, Avonmouth
vi. 12th Nov Brittaines Charity Meeting of the Trustees, Chubb Bullied Solicitors
vii. 13th Nov Meeting the new Headmaster of Wells Cathedral
viii. 14th Nov Mayor's Charity Event, Comedy Supper, Swan Hotel
ix. 20th Nov Wells Carnival
x. 21st Nov Wells SOUP, Wells Cathedral

26/187/C WELLS RECREATION GROUND TRUST (WRGT)

Cllr L Agabani presented the minutes of the meeting held on 1st October 2026

K Kinshaw asked that the Minutes be amended to include her apology for the WRGT Meeting as it had not been documented.

The Mayor asked about the consultation process and whether it would be in place prior to the WRGT meeting in March 2027
Cllr L Agabani responded that the working group have a number of things to consider which require prioritising before the consultation commences.

Cllr J Browne left the meeting at 19.32 hrs

26/188/C ESTATES COMMITTEE

Cllr H Siggs presented the minutes of the meeting held on 1st October 2026
No questions received

26/189/C FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr G Folkard presented the minutes of the meeting held on 8th October 2026 and advised Councillors of the Budget setting meeting scheduled for 23rd October.
No questions received

26/190/C PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Cllr L Agabani presented the minutes of the delegated meeting held on 5th October and 22nd October 2026 (to follow)
No questions received

26/191/C INTRODUCTION TO MAYORS CADET

The Mayor introduced Air Cadet Francesca Nicodemi from 1955 (City of Wells) Squadron.

Francesca spoke about her time at the 1955 (City of Wells) Squadron and explained that the Air Cadets is an International organisation with which she has had involvement since she was 12. Francesca is now 17 and has gained flying and gliding experience and learned navigation skills during that time. The squadron parades on Thursday nights and attend the Remembrance parade as well as other events such as the Battle of Britain celebrations. Francesca encouraged anyone between the ages of 12 and 18 to consider joining the squadron.

26/192/C ACT TO ADAPT – ONE YEAR ON

The Mayor gave a Power-point presentation which detailed the history of Act to Adapt. An emergency Climate motion was declared in 2019. The WCC Sustainability Officer helped set up the Wells Environment Network (WEN) in partnership with 20 committed organisations, businesses, individuals in Wells. After the Sustainability Officer left WCC, the work was continued by Cllrs: D Denis, G Folkard and, D Orrett, S Powell as well as people in the community, who created a working party. WCC prepared the information for the Neighbourhood plan which is valid until 2029.

Following a conference, WCC were asked to take part in a pilot project. They set up a consultation process and collated the information into a plan.

The plan is available online on the Somerset Wildlife Trust website and the Wells City Council Website. The plan comprises of four sections. Improving green spaces, Flood prevention, Community Involvement and Co-ordination of emergency planning.

The Mayor spoke about work on the various green spaces that have been developed in Wells as well as the tree survey that has taken place. Since then WCC has developed and approved policies and procedures such as EVAG.

She also spoke about the work done with St Cuthbert Out Parish Council and nearby landowners to slow the flow of water to prevent flooding in the Torr Lane area.

A group called EVAG will visit residents to advise them on what can be done to talk to residents about what they can do to improve their situation.

The Mayor praised the various groups working together for the benefit of the environment, such as the W.I and Brownies who took part in weeding the Portway annexe and planting pollenating and drought resistant plants respectively.

The Mayor spoke of the necessity to work together for the benefit of the environment and educate ourselves regarding the emergency actions required

Cllr K Kinshaw asked how the public can become better educated on the actions that they may require to do.

The Town Clerk reassured that this is a work in process and will be issued in the next few months.

Cllr L Agabani spoke of his concerns to not cause fears to vulnerable residents regarding aspects of the emergency plan. Following the Government's statement today to be prepared and stock 3 days of rations for unknown emergency events.

26/193/C PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER CONSULTATION

The Town Clerk informed the meeting of the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) and the associated consultation and potential for local impact. There

is already a PSPO in place, adopted in 2025 for the Mendip area. The new PSPO will be Somerset wide.
There have been areas that have been highlighted by members of the public regarding Cathedral Green and the multi-use games areas (MUGA) regarding dogs being required to be on leads at those locations. Information is required by 23rd October 2026 should there be any areas that councillors feel needs including in the PSPO.
Cllr G Robbins asked how this will be enforced, with the Bishop's Palace using signs for dogs to be on a lead along Moat Walk, with the request being largely ignored and that acting by example being important.
The Town Clerk spoke of the importance of enforcement and stressed that WCC has a god relationship with the enforcement officer for the area.
The Mayor spoke of her concerns for health/hygiene in areas used to walk dogs used by people sitting on grass eating food.

The Mayor invited councillors to vote for either
Option 1: Do nothing
Option 2: Seek to add locations to PSPO for dogs on leads – specifically look to request the addition of the noted spaces of Cathedral Green and MUGA locations throughout the city and complete associated comms campaigns to support the change locally.

Cllr H Siggs made a proposal for Option 2. Seconded by Cllr G Robbins. Councillors voted unanimously for the proposal.

26/194/C SOMERSET RIVERS AUTHORITY BID

The Town Clerk gave an update on the Knap Hill catchment project and asked that WCC seek support from Somerset Rivers Authority to bid for the sum of £20k for the next stage of the project to allow topographical surveys, so that works can be completed by the Golf Club.
The Mayor proposed that the bid be submitted and ask for custodial status as WCC to hold/ring-fence any received funds.
Seconded by Cllr S Eden. Cllrs voted that the bid be submitted with 1 abstention.

26/195/C ST CUTHBERT OUT PARISH COUNCIL PARK WOOD ENGAGEMENT

The Town Clerk spoke about the associated consultation with the Church Commissioners from St Cuthbert Our Parish Council, and sought Councils endorsement to support the communications and proposed next steps.
A discussion took place about the problems caused by litter at this location as wells as the problems of litter generally.
Cllr K Kinshaw proposed to endorse the communications. Seconded by Cllr G Robbins.
Councillors voted unanimously to the proposal.

26/196/C LEISURE STRATEGY & PLAY PROJECT UPDATE

The Town Clerk updated councillors on the draft policy, consultation and next steps. The Town Clerk provided a hard copy of the timeline and explained that the timeline has been extended by approximately three weeks.

26/197/C CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Town Clerk gave an update for Q2 following endorsement from Finance Committee. There are no new risks in this quarter but a slight increase in risk

in WCC/016 and 8 risks have reduced in their tolerance levels and 2 risks requiring closure.
The Mayor asked for a proposal to accept the changes on the Risk register, listed by the Town Clerk.
Cllr G Folkard made the proposal which was seconded by Cllr J Edmonds.
Councillors voted unanimously to adopt the changes to the Risk Register.

26/198/C TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS/TRUSTEES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Mayor informed the meeting that the Wells Bus User group had reported that the 173 shuttle bus, serving "The Horringtons" to manage the diversions at Whitnall corner will continue to Christmas and has worked well. There are serious problems at the Wells depot with buses running at 71% efficiency affecting buses 174 to Bath, 373 to Street, 374 to Taunton/Bristol, 375 Bridgwater/Bristol, 376 Bristol/Taunton. Rosa Kell the WBUG Lead has taken the matter to the highest level, the Bus Advisory board and Somerset Council. First Bus have promised new buses have been promised soon. At the last AGM in May, Rosa Kell was elected Treasurer of Somerset Partnership and Richard Northey as Chair. Peter Travis has stepped back from leading but remains involved.
Cllr G Robbins spoke of her admiration and gratitude for the hard work of Rosa Kell in her campaigning for better buses for Wells.
The Mayor promised to pass her comment to Rosa.

26/199/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCILLORS

No report received.
Cllr H Siggs asked Somerset Cllr for Wells and MP for Wells and Mendip Hills: T Munt for a definitive statement regarding the access to a road sweeper.
Somerset Cllr for Wells and MP for Wells and Mendip Hills: T Munt reported that she would chase this up on 23rd October 2026

26/200/C

Full City Council Forward Plan	
Item	**Proposed date for consideration**
Avon & Somerset Police Update	November 2026
Customer Charter & Customer Journey	November 2026
Leisure Strategy & Play Project Update	November 2026
WRGT Update	November 2026
City Wide WIFI	November 2026
Parking Project Update	November 2026
Community Fridge Proposal	November 2026
Wells Rotary – EVAG Update	November 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
Leisure Strategy & Play Project Update	December 2026
Events on council land policy adoption	December 2026
Devolution Sign off	December 2026
Pilot Monthly Market feedback	December 2026
Skate Park Project Management Proposal	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 and Assessment	March 2027
Calendar of Public Meetings	March 2027
Priorities & Project Planning	April 2027
General Power of Competency	Every political cycle

26/201/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT

The Mayor informed the meeting of the resignation of Graham Woodland from the position of Serjeant at Mace due to ongoing mobility problems following a knee injury The Mayor conveyed thanks to Graham for his years of service. The role will be advertised at the earliest opportunity.

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that due to a high profile Coroner's Court case over three and a half weeks in January 2027, there have arisen some difficulties with accommodating their needs, due to established Town Hall bookings. There are 23 businesses which would be displaced with significant income reduced. The Town Clerk informed the meeting that there may be the requirement to inform the Coroner's Office that we would be not be able to accommodate them on this occasion.

26/202/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 26th November 2026 at 7pm, Wells Town Hall

Minutes signed by The Mayor……..Date ……