

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 30TH APRIL 2026 AT 6:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: T Butt Philip, D Denis, S Eden, J Edmonds, T Kolizeras, D Orrett (Chair), S Powell

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
WCC Staff: C Hobbs
Cllr P Welch
MP for Wells and Mendip Hills/Somerset Cllr for Wells: T Munt
6 members of the public


26/48/OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS
G Robbins (Vice Chair)

26/49/OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022.
None declared

**26/50/OS MINUTES FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
2ND APRIL 2026**
The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**26/51/OS ACTIONS FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
2ND APRIL 2026**
Cllr S Powell asked for an update on the installation of the Table tennis table at the recreation ground and was reassured that it has not been forgotten about and that it will be prioritised next week.
Cllr D Denis asked if Wells in bloom sponsorship is on the agenda. The Town Clerk responded that the sponsorship policy is coming to Finance Committee next week which as a financial policy document, will cover all sponsorship and not just Wells in bloom.
Cllr D Denis asked that there be an agenda item regarding Wells in bloom sponsorship to ensure planting offers sustainable, pollinator friendly options.
The Town Clerk reassured her that the strategy documents agreed at last full council will start that process which will address those items rather than having another item on Wells in Bloom. Cllr D Denis agreed to this.
Cllr D Denis reported that the WI had completed two sessions of work in the Portway annexe garden, which had greatly improved the space. The plants have been ordered by the Outside spaces Manager and a third working party will plant them once the plants arrive.
Cllr D Orrett asked about the herbicide policy implementation. The Town Clerk reported that all allotments had received notification and there had been no concerns raised but that the situation will continue to be monitored.
Cllr D Orrett asked about the schedule for the removal of the Map board posts outside the Town Hall. The Town Clerk responded that following the removal of the board, a work order is in place and that they will be removed next week.

26/52/OS MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
L Byrne asked about the tree report in the recreation ground and about the red circles that have appeared on the trees. The Town Clerk will investigate the red circles and that a supplier to complete a report has been identified and then a timescale will be sought. The Town Clerk reported that she hoped that by the next meeting there should be some reports and recommendations.



L Byrne asked that WCC acknowledge the fact that public consultations over use of the Bishop's barn and recreation ground have taken place but that there appears to be a lack of action. The Town Clerk informed her that the working group would be discussing potential projects on the agenda.

C Simons spoke about the Bishop's Barn. His concerns are that as one of only 900 in the country and an historic building and that it is surrounded by parked cars and the façade can't be seen clearly and that it wouldn't be deemed appropriate in front of the Cathedral. Mr Simons also asked about planters in the high street and could they be used/placed to prevent vehicles parking, driving on pavements and damaging them. The Town Clerk reminded the meeting that both the Bishop's barn and disabled/high street parking are on the meeting's agenda.

26/53/OS REPORT FROM OUTSIDE SPACES MANAGER

The Town Clerk presented the Outside Spaces Manager's report. Efforts are being made of grass cutting across the city and surrounds, refining the rounds and collecting data. The snake has been repaired at the recreation ground and other play areas have also had work.

Cllr D Denis passed on positive feedback from residents on the grass cutting swathes at Tor View, above the Cathedral and Kidderbank. Cllr D Denis hoped it would lead to better wildlife and future for the environment.

The Town Clerk mentioned that the plan was to identify areas where grass can be managed differently by leaving some areas long but manicured around edges. Plans are to plant wild flower seeds in the autumn.

Cllr D Denis spoke that volunteer S Gaddes from Wells Civic Society was carrying out surveys of land within Wells that can be mapped and how they require cutting for their various uses.

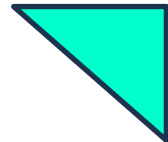
Cllr S Powell asked whether the Outside Spaces Committee should and can be consulted before any street, park or play-equipment furniture is purchased.

The Town Clerk said that Councillors would be invited to engage in the process, however there are some benches which have been repurposed after being in storage for some time and it was felt that it would be best for these to be renovated and used rather than being wasted.

Cllr D Orrett asked about the schedule for renovating of the bandstand. The Town Clerk updated the meeting that small changes to lighting will be made and that the products have been purchased in readiness for the work to proceed when the warmer weather begins. Cllr D Orrett thanked the Outside Spaces team for the cleansing of the exterior area outside of the Town Hall. Cllr S Powell praised the cutting of the grass by the bypass.

26/54/OS CCTV PROVISION 2027-2030

The Town Clerk presented the report. 17 cameras within Wells of which 10 are attributable to Wells City Council. Other three in car parks and managed by Somerset. At the moment there is an annual agreement. The intention is to have a multi-year agreement so that budgeting can be monitored accordingly. There may be opportunities to look at the cameras to consider if they are all required regarding their field of vision, duplicating etc. The Town Clerk has engaged with Somerset Police regarding the suggested changes. The suggestion is that three cameras are removed and Wells City Council work with Somerset to expand the pan of the camera. The three cameras in question are two on the recreation ground covering the same area, one on Cathedral green and one on Market Street which could be removed but the area would still be covered. Within the agreement the hours of function would change from 24/7 coverage. The live monitoring would change from Thursday afternoon until Sunday morning but



the recording takes place 24/7 so that data and information would be available if required.

Cllr D Denis asked about the Market Street camera as she felt that safety at the bus station be preserved as well as concerns from local residents regarding incidents of anti-social behaviour in that area. The Town Clerk reassured that there is room for movement regarding the proposal. The cost of a camera is almost £3000 per camera.

The Town Clerk asked if the Committee would endorse the report ahead of the Finance Meeting on the 7th May 2026

A brief discussion about potential removals as well as high risk areas of anti-social behaviour the Town Clerk agreed to gain some further information regarding the fields of vision of the cameras in question. She believed the cameras would cover the area of concern to Councillors.

The Town Clerk asked that if Councillors were comfortable that Finance Committee receive the information she has promised to provide and that the proposal be debated on the 7th May 2026, rather than defer.

The Committee agreed to the decision being transferred to the Finance Committee.

26/55/OS POLICE AND CRIME UPDATES

The Town Clerk reported that the Police were unable to attend this evening but that Insp. Rachael Clark and Sgt Simon Lancey would attend at the next Meeting on the 21st May 2026.

Cllr D Denis spoke of her concerns for the figures indicating a reduction in violence and sexual offences and whether this was case or was it that reporting of these crimes had reduced.

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that Sgt Lancey had spoken of a national project called Moonstone, addressing points about violence and encourage Councillors to look at the project.

The Town Clerk presented data regarding the report and the trends regarding shoplifting and encouraged the Committee to look at the details regarding Project Moonstone ahead of the Full Council Meeting.

26/56/OS TRAFFIC UPDATES

The Town Clerk reported that she had only recently received these updates and spoke of the proposals discussed at Full Council. There has been some clarification on the questions posed to Somerset but requests for Full Council to look at other areas can be accommodated without significant extra cost or extended timeline. A small £2000 increase will be required. More data for Bath Rd would be required. A SID may be useful at that location to collect data. The police innovation fund will consider our request for SID devices in two weeks.

A discussion took place about locations in Wells which are areas of concern. The Town Clerk reported that a St Thomas St resident had recently asked that a pedestrian crossing had been requested at that location and had been included in the proposals. Cllr S Eden mentioned that a community speed-watch scheme was in the process of being set up in Wells.

26/57/OS PLAY STRATEGY UPDATE AND DRAFT INVITATION TO TENDER (ITT)

Three documents have been written to invite tenders for additional support. The Town Clerk explained that the documents are for the provision of a ten year leisure play strategy. It's for play, wellbeing and wider leisure facilities in the City. Not necessarily for WCC to provide but to improve in partnership. It's an invitation to tender to seek support from other bodies to provide data to what is currently in place and where opportunities sit. Provisions are listed within the document.

The documents were not available at the meeting. To enable progression of the Draft Invitation to tender and following a discussion the committee delegated the responsibility to the Town Clerk to progress with the tender process and as there is a cost implication that the item go through the Finance committee.



The Town Clerk will circulate the documents, invited comments and will schedule the item on to the Finance agenda.

26/58/OS RECREATION GROUND TRUST (WRGT)

The Town Clerk presented the report and explained that this item is to discuss the list of suggestions highlighted at a brainstorming session held in April 2026. The session is to review the list and enable a clearer idea to emerge of the items which councillors would definitely like to see being included. Hard copy maps were provided.

Councillors spoke of their aspirations for the area which covered making better use of the space and how the space is shared by the play area, bowls club and the open spaces around the band stand and play area.

Cllr D Denis Councillor D Denis asked for planting to be environmentally influenced and suggested that there be a short term plan and long term plan. Short term plans achieving quick wins, such as signage.

The Town Clerk assured the committee that she would break the report into short medium and longer length projects.

A brief discussion took place about the organisations, festivals etc that currently use the recreation ground and band stand. Cllr T Butt Philip expressed a wish to see the band stand being greater used.

26/59/OS FORWARD PLAN

Topic	Month
Christmas Light Update	May 2026
Leisure & Play Strategy	June 2026

26/60/OS ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

Cllr D Denis spoke of the stress caused by schoolchildren struggling to get to and from college due to First bus timetabling and reliability. Cllr D Denis asked that a letter be written to First Bus on the subject.

The Town Clerk reported that she had already written to First bus on this subject and had been informed that she could expect a response in the next week.

Cllr T Butt Philip spoke of the concerns of residents along the Bath road regarding the timetable of the 173 when scheduled roadworks begin.

MP T Munt reported that she has received reports of incidents relating to reoffending shoplifters, untaxed cars, hare coursing and poaching on the outskirts of Wells. There appear to be delays with Police and DVLA in processing paperwork. MP T Munt expressed a wish to attend when Avon and Somerset Police are in attendance.

The Town Clerk will include an invitation to Avon and Somerset Police to attend the next Meeting.

26/61/OS DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 4th June 2026, 6pm, Wells Town Hall

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 Chair: **Date:**