

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 4TH JUNE 2026 AT 7:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
RFO: Claire Woodlock
Outside Spaces Manager: Matt Johnson
WCC Staff: C Hobbs
4 members of the public

26/62/OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS
G Robbins

26/63/OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12th May 2022.
None declared

26/64/OS MINUTES FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30th APRIL 2026
The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

26/65/OS ACTIONS FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30TH APRIL 2026
Open actions not on the agenda are listed below:

Date Raised	Description of Action
30.04.2026	Confirm placement of the table tennis table within the recreation ground
30.04.2026	To provide details of pollinators within the 2027 planting of the city.
30.04.2026	Confirmation of the removal of the map board posts outside the Town Hall.
30.04.2026	Town Clerk to review "red circles" marked on trees in the recreation ground.


Cllr D Denis requested information regarding W.I. planting at the Portway Annexe which was delayed due to the weather.
M Johnson confirmed that the plants are ready.

Cllr D Denis asked about the Bandstand and was informed that work had been delayed due to staffing issues.

Cllr D Denis was pleased to see the decision regarding the removal of the CCTV camera on Market Street had been reconsidered due to the high proportion of incidents in the area.

Cllr D Orrett asked if the play strategy would be referenced.
The Town Clerk informed the meeting that the framework would be presented to next Full Council Meeting.

26/66/OS MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
David Thompson spoke of his concerns which cover the Palace lawn, the dirty benches along the moat, the planters across Wells and Wells Bus Station.
The Town Clerk reported that Moat Walk has recently been tidied by Wells City Council as a gesture of goodwill to Somerset Council. The agreement has now been established with the Church Commissioners for the benches and the grass, but the benches remain



an issue due to pigeon defecation. With regard to Cathedral green, it has now been cut. Weeding is only done on a best endeavours basis. Conversations are taking place with Somerset partners regarding the bus station planters to see how the space can be managed more productively.

Elizabeth O Sullivan

Spoke of her concern about safety, regarding crossing the road at Ash lane junction with the A39. Each headmaster of the schools has written a letter of support. Following the article in Wells Voice, support from the public is increasing and statistics are being collected.

Liz Pedley

Reported that she and L O Sullivan had conducted traffic counts. Pedestrians and local people had been asked how they feel about crossing at this location. There are high traffic counts during school run times and there are many schoolchildren being driven across the junction rather than enjoying a safe walk to school. Children are not learning about active travel and are missing out on important life skills or learning independence. The Accessible Wells groups assessed the junction and rate it as medium to high likelihood of a high impact accident. The bus stops appear to be in odd places and block visibility. There are very multiple signs at this location as well as a "No right turn" which many drivers ignore. It would be great to have the speed measured and the group would be grateful of access to a SID. Tessa Munt MP has been contacted and the suggestion was to talk to Wells City Council.

Cllr T Butt Philip supports the addressing of issues at this location, but admitted that the current campaign for 20mph zones will not cover this particular area. Cllr T Butt Philip offered support in gathering the information needed and will meet with Elizabeth and Liz.

The Town Clerk spoke of the 20mph zones and confirmed that the junction is listed in the areas of concern and asked for the data collected to be shared with her. There is not a SID at Wells City Council at the moment but this is being worked on. There is a newly formed Speed-Watch group.

26/67/OS REPORT FROM OUTSIDE SPACES MANAGER

M Johnson presented his report, summarising that the Outside spaces team are in the middle of the cutting season with multiple parks and allotments having being cut, along with hedges. Much of the planting has taken place. M Johnson acknowledged the dates for removal of winter plants had gone a little awry this year. Torr Hill woods planting has taken place with much public interaction. Composting area has been created at Black Dog gardens.

Some items of play equipment and benches have been painted. A very busy month what with May fair etc.

The team have supported Mendip Hospital Cemetery. The Outside spaces team also support Market provision including the new Sunday market. The table tennis table will be installed at the start of July.

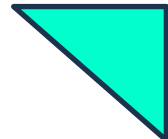
Cllr T Butt Philip asked for information regarding grass cutting schedules.

M Johnson responded that there will be a document which explains the different areas and rationale for the cutting styles in those areas.

A discussion took place about grass areas being raked and the potential for new machinery for specific tasks and sustainability.

Cllr T Kolizeras asked about Tinknells roundabout sponsorship.

The Town Clerk responded that Charlie Bigham's sponsor the roundabout but that sponsorship is passed to Somerset with a portion passing back to WCC to maintain. Conversations are taking place about the planting and it is acknowledged that it's not working well at that location and improvements are planned. The Town Clerk confirmed that she had not had feedback from Charlie Bighams.



M Johnson confirmed that when sponsorship changed, the idea was to plant wild flowers, which doesn't look good alongside the formal planting.

Cllr T Butt Philip suggested that WCC discuss sponsorship with Somerset.

Cllr S Powell asked for further information about the benches along moat walk and the process for resolving the problems.

The Town Clerk confirmed there is an agreement between Savills and Somerset Council which includes upkeep and replacement if required. If Somerset find that difficult, WCC could potentially take the work on if we were recompensed. Upkeep does not cover washing.

Cllr S Powell asked if it could be a consideration to remove the worst benches due to the frequency of being fouled on.

Cllr S Powell asked for information regarding the ice cream vendor at the Market.

M Johnson responded that Olly's Lollys are happy to attend when the bicycle vendor is not able to trade.

Cllr D Denis asked about overhanging trees on Whiting Way. The Town Clerk will report this as it's a Somerset function.

Cllr D Denis asked if perennials could be planted to prevent periods of untidiness when plants get to the end of the season.

M Johnson acknowledged that this would be possible but that plants removed in the winter are retained where possible to save wastefulness.

Cllr S Powell asked about the tree guards on Cathedral green as are now too small

M Johnson acknowledged he had also been informed of this by MTL.

A brief discussion took place about the positive feedback that has been received from members of the public with the new summer planting.

Cllr T Kolizeras made an observation about the pace of work allocated to Somerset workers who are contracted to repair very many damaged pavements.

A discussion took place about delivery traffic damaging pavements and gullies and the weight of vehicles coming down the High street. Cllr T Butt Philip suggested it would be a good idea to have benches, planters mapped so that it could be determined where they could be placed to perhaps prevent damage to pavements.

26/68/OS TRAFFIC UPDATES

The Town Clerk reported that the redesigned 20mph scheme has been sent off to Somerset and there will be a 6 to 8 week design timeline which should be ready for the September Outside Spaces agenda.

The application to the Avon and Somerset Police innovation fund for obtaining Speed Indicator devices (SID) was unsuccessful, but the costings for a SID will be taken to Finance committee. Devices that can monitor traffic numbers will be researched.

Cllr T Butt Philip asked if consultation with Somerset Highways colleagues would be helpful so that when Phase 2 takes place to the 20mph zone that the equipment purchased would be useful.

26/69/OS POLICE AND CRIME UPDATES

The Town Clerk presented the report. 91 Incidents in March and 80 incidents in April. All information including breakdowns of crime and trends are available on the Avon and Somerset Police website as well as the breakdown of types of crime. Offences are down slightly in May. Sgt S Lancey attended Full Council in May.

A brief discussion took place about shoplifting crime in Wells.



Cllr K Kinshaw spoke about the campaign to reduce violence against women and the lack of street lighting in certain areas. Gate lane was referred to and there were deemed to be other areas in Wells where there are dark areas.

The Town Clerk reminded that street lighting is a Somerset provision and that reviews of streetlighting do take place and that she would enquire as to when a review is due again. The Town Clerk also suggested that a walk around with the Outside Spaces manager would be useful and make recommendations.

Cllr D Denis reminded the meeting that Dark skies are important for nocturnal animals. The ideal scenario having street lights that are motion centred as in France.

Cllr T Butt Philip mentioned that there is a programme of works taking place with streetlighting.

26/70/OS RECREATION GROUND TRUST (WRGT)

The Town Clerk reported that at the meeting on 3rd June 2026 the Trust approved a grant process for the upkeep an ongoing maintenance. There is a headline plan and key themes and visions were approved and there will be a meeting in September to progress change at the recreation ground.

A discussion took place regarding the Working Group Members. Cllr K Kinshaw has volunteered to be added into the working group. As Cllr S Eden is no longer on the Outside Spaces Committee, K Kinshaw will replace her.

Cllr T Kolizeras expressed a wish to join the working group. Cllr S Powell stepped down as she has been on the working group for some years.

The four members in the working group, made up of 2 members from the Estates Committee and 2 members of Outside Committee are Cllrs: T Butt Philip, H Siggs, K Kinshaw, T Kolizeras

26/71/OS PUBLICATION OF POLLINATORS INFORMATION

Cllr D Denis expressed her pleasure at the work that had taken place on the pollinators publication.

The Outside Spaces Manager reported that the entrances to the city would have native pollinating planting.

26/72/OS PROPOSAL TO CREATE A MANAGED FORAGING AREA AT TORR HILL WOODS

A discussion took place to consider the three options below:

Option 1 - Do nothing

Option 2 - Plant the saplings directly on arrival in November

Option 3 - Recommended option: pot on, overwinter and plant out in spring as a managed foraging area

Cllr D Orrett asked a member to make a proposal

Cllr T Kolizeras proposed that Wells City Council create a managed Foraging area at Torr Hill Woods

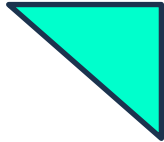
Cllr K Kinshaw seconded the Proposal

Cllrs voted unanimously for the Proposal

The Town Clerk suggested that the Outside Spaces officer have the responsibility delegated to him, to make the decisions regarding optimum planting times in line with the climate.

26/73/OS FORWARD PLAN

Topic	Month
Operational Land Classification	September 2026
Christmas Light Update	September 2026
Leisure & Play Strategy	September 2026
Knapp Hill Project Update	September 2026
Dog Fouling Policy and Publication	September 2026
Police and crime updates	Every Month
Traffic updates	Every Month
Recreation Ground Trust (WRGT)	Every Month



26/74/OS ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

Cllr D Denis asked about the map board removal outside the Town Hall and made the suggestion of a map similar to the type used in Castle Cary. The Outside spaces Officer confirmed that the removed board is being kept in storage should it be required. A brief discussion took place about current map provision with suggestions about the improvement of the information on maps.

Town Clerk reported that due to inconsistency with signage on public toilets, the information is in the process of being made clearer both at each location and on websites. The toilets are also planned to be opened during Summer period between 8am and 8pm. Inconsistencies in this information were highlighted by Cllr T Butt Philip

26/75/OS DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 3rd September 2026, 7pm, 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:**