

WELLS CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY CENTRE AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WELLS TOWN HALL ON
THURSDAY 1ST DECEMBER 2016 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT: Cllrs: A Gibson (Mayor); M Brandon; C Briton; N Kennedy;
J North (Deputy Mayor); D Swain (Chairman)

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: F White
RFO: S Luck
Cemetery/Open Spaces Manager: M Culliford
2 members of the public

16/65CO APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Cllrs: C Cox; C Price (Vice-Chairman)

16/66CO DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS
None declared.

16/67CO MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
Minutes of the meeting held on **6th October 2016** were proposed, seconded approved and signed.

16/68CO MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
Two plot holders from the Bishops Palace allotments spoke; they were pleased with a recent site meeting with the Cemetery/Open Spaces Manager.

16/69CO MINUTES OF THE CITY & TOURISM FORUM

**Please
also see
16/69.iCO
below
(page 3)**

- i. To receive the minutes of the City and Tourism Forum meetings held on 12th October and 9th November 2016: Noted.
- ii. To note the progress of the 'Visit by Coach' project and consider proposals. See attached project proposals, with committee responses inserted.
The committee was pleased to hear that local businesses are devising a voucher scheme for coach drivers.
The poor state of the bus station was noted and will be taken up by District Cllr North.
- iii. VisitWellsSomerset website - the RFO provided an up-date:
The City Council Administrator is working on this new responsive website being provided and funded by the City Council. She has met with the Cathedral and the Bishop's Palace as key tourism stakeholders; other consultation meetings are planned. She is working with the Visit by Coach team adviser on google analytics; Visit by Coach is enthusiastic about this website and keen to take it forward. Letters have gone out to the B&B providers inviting them to take part. It is hoped information will be returned in time for the launch of the site planned for early in the new year.
The Chairman reported he has met with Mr Webb to explain that the City Council is constructing this website in response to requests from the City and Tourism Forum. Mr Webb appears to have concerns around forum members having input into the website. The Chairman has said that all suggestions and content from forum members will continue to be welcome; direct administrative access will remain with the City Council as the providing body, in the usual way.

16/70CO CHRISTMAS LIGHTS up-date

All lights are now up and switched on, except Queen Street, where their own 'switch-on' event will take place this weekend.

Particular thanks were given to James' Photographic, Robert Powell Shoes, and Protec; each has provided additional support when other businesses did not assist.

The tree at the end of the High Street, once again, proved very difficult to put up and staff received verbal abuse and obstruction from the public whilst doing it.

This feature will be reviewed.

The team were thanked for all their work; the Deputy Mayor said the lighting display looks stunning.

16/71CO OPEN SPACES REPORT (attached, page 4)

The Manager talked members through the report and answered questions.

Winter Grit

All winter grit bins throughout the city have been checked, topped up and mapped for future reference, by the Open Spaces Team.

Conduit Fountain

It was noted that MDC have done repairs to the water Conduit Fountain in the Market Place, whilst the water was turned off. This was due to it increasingly leaking onto the road causing a public hazard.

Allotments

Former Councillors Parkes and Anderson have retired from cutting the paths in the allotments so this will be undertaken by the Open Spaces Team in future.

Mower

The grass mower has been replaced free of charge due to manufacturing faults.

Chapel

The Cemetery chapel has no heating and has not been decorated for 18 years. It is proposed to repoint one of the walls, fix the guttering and then redecorate inside: approved.

Tree Survey

For the purposes of insurance it has become necessary to have a more detailed and comprehensive tree survey; quotes are currently being sought for cost of the survey.

16/72CO MAINTENANCE REPORTS

Referred to the office for reporting.

16/73CO ANY OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT

No further matters.

16/74CO DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 6pm, Thursday 2nd February 2017

16/69.iCO Visit by Coach

Following the verbal summary provided at the Forum, the Visit by Coach steering group and the consultant will approach the District Council on the issues identified (and summarised below) and **would appreciate the support of the City Council.**

Wells Visit by Coach Initiative – Issues for consultation with Mendip District Council

1. We would like to put in place a “Meet and Greet” scheme where ambassadors greet drivers and passengers on the triangular pavement area of the coach station and provide them with maps and other literature

SUPPORT IN PRINCIPLE

2. We would like to cover the boarded-up windows of the commercial property situated behind the car wash with photographic images of the city (e.g. Cathedral, Bishop’ Palace, Vicars Close etc.) with one bearing the words “Welcome to Wells”. We have the consent of the building owner who is liaising with the tenant.

SUPPORT IN PRINCIPLE

3. We would like to propose that the Sadler Street bay remains accessible for coaches carrying passengers with mobility challenges but that the bus station in Wells is prioritised as the coach drop-off bay for the city. This is based in part on health and safety considerations in Sadler Street as well as feedback from coach drivers to the city. This will involve changes in signposts.

THE COMMITTEE UNDERSTANDS THERE IS A MEETING SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE BETWEEN COUNTY CLLR OSMAN, WELLS CATHEDRAL, AND OTHER RELEVANT PARTIES TO CONSIDER THIS MATTER

4. We wonder whether the existing exit from the bus station – which involves walking through the car park with no pedestrian walkway – will suffice from a health and safety perspective with increasing numbers of coach passengers. As a suggestion we would ask that MDC consider whether it would be safer to re-open the blocked opening into Market Street allowing exit directly from the bus station.

MEMBERS ARE AWARE THAT THIS OPTION HAS BEEN REJECTED IN THE PAST FOR REASONS OF PUBLIC SAFETY, HOWEVER, ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE OF MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL, IT IS THEIR DECISION

5. We would also be grateful if you and the relevant councilors would be kind enough to raise the concept of some form of flowering displays in the bus station with the Wells in Bloom Committee – we would value their views on how the area might be made more attractive to visitors.

WELLS IN BLOOM DOES NOT FEEL ABLE TO TAKE ON ANY ADDITIONAL AREAS. IT SUGGESTS THAT AS MDC, THROUGH THE LANDSCAPE GROUP, PROVIDES FLOWERING BEDS IN OTHER TOWNS, IT COULD BE ASKED TO DO SO IN WELLS BUS STATION.

WELLS CITY COUNCIL IS VERY MUCH IN SUPPORT OF ENHANCING THE APPEARANCE OF THE BUS STATION AND WOULD HOPE TO BE ABLE TO ASSIST IN FUTURE

Kind regards

Andy Webb

for the Visit by Coach Steering Group

CAPITALS INDICATE RESPONSES DETERMINED BY THE CITY CENTRE AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE, WELLS CITY COUNCIL, 01.12.16 F White, Town Clerk.

Open Spaces Report December 2016

Skateboard Park

Work commencing on replacing damaged/worn skateboard surfaces.
Small jump ramp being replaced with a more suitable Grind box/rail.

Relief Road / Maintenance

Pathways being cleared of leaves etc.
Drainage gully grids in High Street / Broad Street / Queen Street / Market Street inspected and cleared as necessary on a daily basis.
Inspection carried out on city grit bins to establish condition and current stock levels.
Conduit cleaned and waterways cleared.

Christmas Lights

Christmas lights are up and working.

Wells in Bloom

Winter plant-out has taken place.

Allotments

Meeting taken place with Bishops Palace allotment holders.
Plot 12, Burcott Road cleared of damaged greenhouse in readiness for new tenant.

Cemetery

Grass cutting ceased. Servicing of all machinery taking place.
Leaf clearing/ topping up and levelling of graves on-going.
New guttering and downpipes installed on cemetery chapel.

Cemetery Trees

Quotes being obtained for a thorough detailed survey.

Mark Culliford
Cemetery/Open Spaces Manager