

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ADDITIONAL MEETING OF THE CITY & TOURISM FORUM HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WELLS TOWN HALL, ON WEDNESDAY 22ND MARCH 2017 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT: Cllrs: D Swain (Chairman); R MacKenzie; T Robbins;
J North (Deputy Mayor)
Ms L Mann, Wells Cathedral
Ms T Chichester, 'B&B' representative
Mr M Johns, Wells Chamber of Commerce
Mr G LeRoy, The Bishop's Palace
Mr A Webb, Wells Museum/Visitor Information
Mr M Tobin (Vice-Chairman), Swan Hotel / Visit Somerset
Ms C Winter, Wells Civic Society

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: F White
Cllr: M Brandon
Mr S Brown, CEO, Mendip District Council
Rev. J Davies, Dean of Wells Cathedral
Mr A Fawcett, Wells & Mendip Museum, Wells Almshouses
7 members of the public

17/24CT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs: Cox, Gibson (The Mayor), Wride
Ms S Cooper, Mr D Cooper, Wells Film Centre

17/25CT DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs North and MacKenzie each declared a personal interest as members of the District Council, in any matters that might be referred on to Mendip DC for consideration.

17/26CT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 8th March 2017 were proposed, seconded approved and signed.

17/27CT MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

It was agreed that everyone present would be involved in the discussions.

17/28CT UK CITY OF CULTURE 2021

The Chairman invited Mr Webb to speak.
Mr Webb summarised the situation to date; he referred to the national guidance from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and to his own notes from the national launch event in Hull. He said that local groups have begun to exchange ideas informally; a leadership team for the bid is emerging, based around the Forum. Some specific offers have been made:

- The Bishop's Palace to lead on marketing and take press enquiries
- Wookey Hole to field general enquiries once a program is under way
- Wells Cathedral School to help with communications
- A Steering Group is forming; it is anticipated that a local 'figurehead' will be invited as leader
- Andrew Webb has accepted responsibility himself to write the bid document and has allocated his personal time to do so.

All persons present were invited to ask questions and put their views; a detailed discussion followed.

- Everyone who spoke expressed positive support for making the bid and said they felt that it would be a beneficial process for the City. There was reported to be a great deal of enthusiasm for the project from the community
- There were some concerns as to how to meet the required criteria in relation to regeneration and to having a 'critical mass' of population.
- It was generally agreed that it would be necessary to involve the wider communities in the surrounding area and that Mendip area / district council could play a key role.
- Costs: It was agreed that costs for the initial bid process (end of April) will be absorbed by each individual organisation. Thereafter it will be necessary to source specific funding.
- If shortlisted, (June) a viable budget for on-costs must be ready.
- The bid must be deliverable; it seems likely the city does not have the capability to deliver and would need to hire a specialist team.
- A list of named individuals was provided, of people ready to serve as the lead steering group, drawn from stakeholder organisations across the city.
- There was lengthy discussion about whether Wells is too small to present a realistic bid. The Dean pointed out that perhaps the strength of the bid could be in being different; in being a smaller city community in a rural setting. He offered help from the Cathedral in whatever way they can – they have a world class venue and music scene.

In conclusion, MDC Chief Executive provided outline guidance on the process of putting together a successful bid. He identified some key practical questions and will discuss further with Andrew Webb after reporting back to the Council Leader. The Chairman suggested that Andrew Webb contact the Town Clerk for any advice or information on local council processes that would help him in putting the bid together.

Mr Webb asked if members would read a draft bid if he circulates it before the deadline, and return to him with comments. This was agreed; also that he will call an informal meeting if required, the Town Clerk will assist to facilitate this where possible.

17/29CT ANY OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT

Cllr MacKenzie: CityScape produce a Jigsaw of the Wells City street map; this can be purchased online.

17/30CT DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING 6pm on Wednesday 3rd May 2017