

WELLS CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT WELLS TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 12th APRIL 2012
AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Cllrs: T Robbins (Chairman); C Price (Deputy-Mayor);
D Anderson; M Brandon; T Butt Philip; J North.

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: F White; RFO: S Luck
Cllrs: C Briton; H Siggs.
R Wright, Chairman, Wells Operatic Society.

12/36F APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Cllr. S Davies.

12/37F DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Brandon declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a Member, in the grant application from Wells Operatic Society; she left the room during consideration of the application.
See also 12/41F and 12/43F.

12/38F MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8th MARCH 2012

Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, seconded, approved and signed.

Matter Arising Information requested regarding costs of paper: details were provided by the RFO; the matter was referred for discussion under 12/47F.

12/39F MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The Chairman of Wells Operatic Society was invited to speak at item 12/41F.
Councillors present were invited to take part in discussion of items as they arose.

12/40F FINANCIAL REPORT

The accounts had been scrutinised and bank statements checked prior to the meeting. The accounts for March 2012 were proposed, seconded and approved. The RFO reported the 2011-12 year-end has been completed and prepared for audit. The balance sheet has been prepared showing the capital receipt and the ear-marked reserves – a detailed list of these was attached.

Councillors felt that the presentation of the council's financial position is excellent; the RFO was thanked for his hard work and the clarity of the accounts.

It was made clear that the Wells in Bloom reserve consists of monies raised separately, held by the council on behalf of the group; the reserve is necessary as the program is dependent upon raising sufficient sponsorship each year.

12/41F GRANT APPLICATIONS

Wells Little Theatre (LGA 1972 S145)

(Cllrs. Brandon, Briton and Siggs left the room.)

The Chairman of Wells Operatic Society spoke about the application.

After discussion Cllr North proposed a grant of £1,000, seconded by Cllr Anderson, a vote was taken and the grant was approved.

(Cllrs. Brandon, Briton and Siggs returned.)

12/42F DOG FOULING BIN

Junction of Beryl Lane / Little Entry (Litter Act 1983 S5,6)

A request from a resident was read out. The cost of the recommended bin would be £232.20 excl.VAT. Mendip District Council has confirmed the bin would be emptied free of charge. After consideration of the location, the environmental issues and the cost, it was agreed to monitor the situation for the time being.

- 12/43F SID for 2012-13** at A39 Bristol Hill £350 (LG & Rating Act 1997 S26-29)
A letter was received from Somerset County Council and the matter was discussed. Cllr North proposed funding the SID on Bristol Hill for a further 12 months, seconded by Cllr Robbins; a vote was taken, the majority voted against, so the motion was defeated.
(Cllr. Siggs declared a personal interest as member of Somerset County Council with responsibility for Highways matters)
- 12/44F PROVISION OF SIGNS**
DPP Alcohol Consumption Restriction Order (LG & Rating Act 1997 S.31)
It was agreed to defer this matter to the next meeting, for further information to be obtained.
Councillors commented on the number of signs and the necessity to have due regard to reduction of sign clutter; the current move towards a coherent signage policy for the City; the provision has not been budgeted for.
- 12/45F WEBSITE**
The RFO gave a summary of the progress so far; all the matters raised at the previous meeting have been addressed; it is hoped that design choices will be ready to bring to the next meeting.
- 12/46F ART COMPETITION (EXHIBITION)** Proposal from Cllr Briton.
Cllr Briton spoke about his idea for a Council Art Exhibition, to run during Somerset Art Works 15th – 30th September. The concept received a very positive reaction; following an animated discussion Cllr Robbins proposed that the scheme be supported, seconded by Cllr North; a vote was taken and the project was unanimously approved.
Cllr Briton was asked to lead the project forward and agreed to do so.
There were some concerns about the practicalities of the display side of the project; it was noted that the walls of the Council Chamber are bare because it is occasionally used as a legal court room (where no adornment is allowed) by the Coroner. There was concern that after removal of displays the walls might need redecorating and this would not be an acceptable outcome. It was emphasised that Cllr Briton would need to liaise closely with the Town Hall Managers to find a workable method.
- 12/47F RECORDING AND REPORTING OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**
The Town Clerk gave a briefing on the legal framework and answered questions. Cllr North requested that all council minutes be recorded on white paper, with confidential information on pink paper; he felt this would improve clarity and would have the additional benefit of a small cost saving. There was a long discussion about the merits of various schemes, use of coloured papers and methods of copying and printing in red.
In conclusion the Chairman asked if everyone would agree to remain with the current system of coloured papers for committees, with any confidential matters to be printed on red paper; this was agreed.
- 12/48F ANY OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT**
Cllr Siggs was invited to speak and gave an up-date from the Court Room Project Group; he wished to make members aware that the group has formed its recommendations and now needs to have drawings made; there will be some costs involved.
- 12/49F DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
The next meeting will be at **7.00pm on Thursday 10th May 2012**