

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

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: F White; RFO: S Luck.
Cllr: N Kennedy.

12/81F APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. G Wilson. Cllr Butt Philip would arrive late.

12/82F DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs: Unwin and North each declared a personal interest as a member of Mendip District Council, in matters relating to Play Areas **12/89F**.

12/83F MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14th JUNE 2012

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

12/84F MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

None present.

12/85F FINANCIAL REPORT

The accounts had been scrutinised and bank statements checked prior to the meeting. The accounts for June 2012 were proposed, seconded and approved.

12/86F ANNUAL REVIEWS

The Town Clerk gave a report from a Clerks' briefing session on the new Code of Conduct. It was agreed to recommend that council adopt the version prepared by the monitoring officers of the district and county councils of Somerset.

It was agreed that the annual reviews be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Cllr Anderson; documents to be returned to council for approval by October.

12/87F ROOF VOID INSULATION (Carbon Footprint) To consider and approve quotes.

The Chairman reported the Town Hall Manager is not satisfied with variances in the quotes received; the situation is being completely revised and will be returned to the committee in September.

12/88F ACCESS LIFTS (DDA Compliance) To receive quotes and approve actions.

The Chairman had distributed briefing notes in advance of the meeting and summarised the options.

The RFO presented information and quotes.

After discussion it was agreed that the two lifts were good in principle, and that there should be the least possible impact on the building.

The RFO then presented information about the other costs involved in preparing for the installations and the electrical work.

The total estimated for all costs, with 10% for contingencies, was £30,250.

In answer to questions, the Chairman provided further information about safety exits from the Indictment Room level.

The Chairman proposed that the scheme proceed to the next stage, to authorise the officers to allow a company to work with Mendip District Council Conservation and Planning Officers; this proposal was seconded by Cllr Unwin and agreed.

The Chairman thanked the Town Hall Manager, RFO and Town Clerk for all the work that had been done to get this far, and thanked the committee.

Cllr Kennedy thanked the committee for their decision; he said he has sought this change for years and at last the council is making this a modern Town Hall.

12/90F PLAY AREAS To respond to consultation from Mendip District Council. Consultation information was received from MDC asking whether the City Council would be willing to enter into dialogue regarding possible transfer of responsibility for Play Areas within the city. The committee's agreed response was that it would be very keen to discuss the matter and would consider taking on any number of areas *with funding*. It was agreed that the Chairman would attend consultation meetings with the Town Clerk and/or RFO. (Cllr Butt Philip arrived).

12/91F CHRISTMAS LIGHTS To receive recommendations from the City Centre Management Committee and consider quotes. The recommendations received from the City Centre Management Committee (12/32CC) would involve considerable changes. The RFO advised that the auditors now require regular review of large budgetary expenditure such as this. He reported some initial investigations into options and costs. Cllr Anderson was able to contribute valuable information from his experience of past years' displays. It was agreed that the RFO, Chairman and Cllr Anderson will work on the options and gather quotes. Cllr Price was asked to contact the Chamber of Commerce to find out what they are planning. The item will be placed back on the agenda for September when a decision must be made for Christmas 2012.

12/92F LED FEASIBILITY STUDY To receive information and approve proposals. A detailed report had been circulated. The RFO reported he was anticipating considerable savings on gas and electricity costs through a new purchasing scheme the internal auditor had advised; the savings would help to fund implementation of the LED scheme. After discussion it was agreed to re-set the figures with the new information and place the item back on the agenda for the September meeting.

12/93F TOWN TWINNING SUPPORT

i. Postage costs

Cllr Butt Philip, as the Council's representative to the Town Twinning Association, had asked the Association what they would like the Council to do for them. He reported that they were most keen to re-instate the posting of the Wells Journal to Bad Durkheim; they felt it was not necessary to post it to Paray-le-Monial or Fontanellato.

After discussion the following was proposed and seconded, a vote was taken and the proposal was agreed:

If two copies of the Wells Journal (without the Properties section) are brought weekly to the Town Hall office by the Twinning Association, the city council staff will wrap and frank them and send them to Bad Durkheim.

The cost will be in the region of £260 per year and will be met from the ordinary council stationery budget.

ii. Hospitality

Queries had been raised regarding payment for the costs of accommodation for visiting Mayors. After discussion it was agreed that only when a Mayor from one of the Twin Towns is visiting on council business, by invitation of the City Council,

will the City Council pay the cost of accommodation for the visiting Mayor and partner.

12/94F HERITAGE WEEKEND

Request for Town Hall Open Day 13TH September 2014.

Cllr Price presented a request from the heritage Group to open the Town Hall to the public on 13.09.14; this would mean no income from lettings on that day. Councillors agreed that participation in this event would be a good advertisement for the Council and for the Town Hall. Cllr North proposed the request be approved, seconded by Cllr Anderson and approved.

12/95F ANY OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT

None.

12/96F DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 20th September at 7.00pm