

## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELLS CITY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WELLS TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019 AT 7.00PM

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: L Agabani, S Briton, P Crummay, S Cursley, O Hartley, A l'Anson, N Kennedy, J Linsdell, J Osman (Mayor), J Rust, P Welch (Deputy Mayor), C Wride

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Town Clerk/RFO: S Luck  
Mace Bearer: C Price  
Chaplain: A Glanville  
PC D Williams  
County Cllr T Munt  
MDC Cllrs: R Wyke (Leader), L Rogers, T Ronan, R Ayres  
SCO Cllr M Cooke  
Open Spaces Officer, M Culliford  
WCC Staff  
8 members of the public

#### PRAYERS

Prayers were conducted by the Mayor's Chaplain, A Glanville, following which the Chaplain was excused from the meeting.

#### 20/01C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr C Rees

#### 20/02C DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 27<sup>th</sup> July 2012:  
None Declared.

#### 20/03C MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2019

Minutes of the previous meetings were proposed, seconded, confirmed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

#### 20/04C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- Kirsty Harris (Recreation Ground Trust) stated their group's supporting role in supporting Mendip District Council in improve play areas at the Recreation Ground. Announced a Fun Day on 12<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020 and a Grant of £7950 awarded from the National Lottery.
- SCO Cllr M Cooke - Enquired where Parish Councils stand within the proposal for Unitary Authority. Informed that Leader of SCC and MDC will attend City Council Meeting 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020.
- Colin Price - Asked that Declarations for all Councillors are displayed online for transparency.

#### 20/05C POLICE REPORT

PC D Williams - Announced new role as Beat Manager

- Reported 2 arrests have been made in connection with vehicle vandalism in December.
- Police are targeting groups responsible for anti-social behaviour.
- Announced an Initiative at the Blue School (Cuppa with a Copper) to engage with Students.
- Reported that he has issued warnings to individuals found begging and is targeting gangs dropped off with the purposes of begging in the City.
- Reported that Boots, Superdrug and Vision Express in the High Street have been broken into.

- 20/06C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**
- i. Coffee morning 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020, Mayor's Parlour, 9.30am - 12 noon.
  - ii. Annual Parish Meeting - 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 6pm, Town Hall.
  - iii. Legal Service, Wells Cathedral, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020, 11.30am.
  - iv. The Mayor announced the sad passing of former Dean and Freeman of the City, The Reverend Patrick Mitchell.
- 20/07C MINUTES OF THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY COMMITTEE**  
Minutes of the meetings held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020:  
The Chairman presented the minutes and invited questions.  
S Briton - **Wells CAN Do** Reported that 95 people are signed up to attend Wells CAN Do Launch.  
Cllr P Welch - **Eco Conference** Reported that this was held at The Blue School and 11 Schools were represented.
- 20/08C MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
Minutes of the meetings held on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020:  
The Chairman presented the minutes and invited questions.  
Cllr A l'Anson - Thanked Cllr C Wride, former Chair of Planning.  
Cllr J Linsdell Elm Close - Reported Mendip Councillors appeared to object to the proposals but then voted for them in relation to the Elm Close development proposal at MDC Planning meeting.
- 20/09C MINUTES OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE**  
Minutes of the meetings held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020:  
The Chairman presented the minutes and invited questions.
- 20/10C MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**  
Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020:  
The Chairman presented the minutes and invited questions.  
Cllr J Linsdell - Enquired about protocol for authorising payments. The Town Clerk explained the procedure.  
Cllr A l'Anson - Enquired about Legal advice regarding the terms of lease for the Recreation ground.
- 20/11C ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REVIEWS**  
To approve recommendation from F&GP:  
  - i. Financial regulations
  - ii. Financial Risk Assessment
  - iii. Internal Financial Controls
  - iv. Reserves Policy & Investment StrategyRecommendations were proposed, seconded and approved.
- 20/12C MINUTES OF THE CITY CENTRE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**  
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020:  
The Chairman presented the minutes and invited questions.
- 20/13C WELLS RECREATION GROUND**  
To receive the Wells City Council proposal set out by Cllr Osman (Mayor) and Cllr Wride:  
Cllr Osman (Mayor) - Discussed ongoing plans to make Financial provision for taking over responsibility of the Recreation ground, play park and Bishop's Barn. Proposal to create a working group of Cllr J Osman, Cllr C Wride, Cllr P Welch, Cllr P Crummay. The working group will look at the Lease, costs and report to WCC.  
Cllr N Kennedy - Expressed concerns about the length of the lease and the potential problem if MDC want the Recreation area returned to them.  
Cllr J Osman - Responded that the working group will look at the details of the lease.

Cllr J Lindsell - Enquired if WCC have a preferred position regarding ownership/control.  
Cllr L Agabani - Questioned the timeframe for updates on this issue.  
Cllr J Osman (Mayor) Reported that meetings were planned in the next two weeks and a report would be ready for City Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020.  
It was unanimously agreed to proceed with the Mayor's proposal.

Cllr R Wyke (Leader MDC) The 3 year lease is a starting point and her desire for public involvement. MDC are open to how WCC want to proceed but explained the need for transparency but that it is a difficult legal process. Monies are ring-fenced and the capital sum for the Bishop's Barn and other assets are intact.

Cllr J Osman (Mayor) - Announced that he would like WCC to have access to the legal advice given to MDC. Cllr R Wyke (Leader MDC) will enquire as to whether this can be shared.

#### **20/14C PRECEPT 2020 - 2021**

The Precept for the year 2020 - 2021 was approved to include an extra £35,000 budget provision for the Wells Recreation Ground Trust. The Town Clerk explained the future accounting arrangements needed to operate the Trust.

Town Clerk - Informed members that monies of 20k have been set aside for the running of the Recreation Ground Trust. The Charitable Trust would need to provide separate accounts in line with the Charities Commission regulations.

Cllr J Osman - Proposed vote for addition to precept - seconded and passed.

#### **20/15C SOCIAL MEDIA**

To receive and approve draft presentation.

Cllr L Agabani - Announced the "Going Live" of new Facebook page for Wells City Council and that Standard Operating procedures are in place.

Cllr C Wride - Emergency Action procedure explained. Immediate removal of page until the issue is resolved.

It was proposed, seconded and approved to go live with the presentation.

#### **20/16C DEVOLUTION IN SOMERSET**

Cllr David Fothergill, Leader SCC, and Cllr Ros Wyke, Leader MDC re Future of Local Government in Somerset - Next Steps.

Discussion deferred to meeting on February 27<sup>th</sup> when Cllr David Fothergill (Leader SCC) and Cllr R Wyke (Leader MDC) will be present to discuss devolution.

#### **20/17C REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND FROM DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

##### **i. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & TOURISM**

Wells Chamber of Commerce would like councillors to join them for an evening of networking and discussion to create a new vision for business development in Wells on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February at Wells Town Hall from 6.30pm. The guest speaker will be Karl Taylor, Chair of the Heart of the South West LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership).

S Briton - Asked that a representative of Wells Credit Union be invited to attend a WCC meeting and speak.

Cllr C Wride - The Town Clerk confirmed that a letter requested as support for Almshouses fundraising for the restoration of the Vicars Chapel has been written.

Cllr J Osman (Mayor) - ST ANDREWS WARD - Had a meeting with the Director of CCG, the MP and Director of Public Health in relation to the consultation to close the ward. A public meeting will be held on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020 which he is jointly chairing. Cllr Osman expressed his concerns in relation to the proposed closure. Cllr P Welch with regards to Wells being a Dementia Friendly City, expressed dissatisfaction at the closure of St Andrews Ward proposal.

Cllr T Ronan (MDC) HOUSING reported that Mendip County Council is forced to take 604 new homes from Central Government and that he feels the hands of Mendip Councillors are tied.

CLIMATE CHANGE - Sustainable Wells meeting is planned for 8<sup>th</sup> February in the White Hart, Climate Change meeting at MDC on 15<sup>th</sup> February and 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

CHRISTMAS MARKETS - Market stall-holders were happy with the changes made from previous years.

Cllr A l'Anson - Pollution Air quality in Sadler Street caused by idling of vehicles - Cllr T Ronan expressed the need to measure particles.

Cllr N Kennedy - Pollution - Enquired about a mobile van for measuring air quality and informed that this method is no longer in use but continued monitoring goes on with mobile devices.

Cllr L Agabani - Housing - Asked for MP for Wells be invited to a future meeting to discuss housing and new developments. Cllr C Wride - Housing quality Concerned about the low quality of housing built in Mendips. Cllr T Ronan informed WCC that MDC have little power and that this is a National Standard.

Cllr T Munt (SCC) Reported on the following issues, Unitary Authority, Climate Emergency, scrutiny review, staff appointed. Fostering, Highways plans at College Road and Improving Lives Grant.

Cllr C Wride - Conservation Area - Enquired about the lining of the roads and road narrowing. Informed Cllr T Munt that Stoberry School is not an Academy School.

Cllr J Osman (Mayor) - Requested a map of the changes that are planned in the College Road scheme and was informed that a map will be provided and work will start in April 2020.

S Briton - Enquired if education provision with the new houses in Elm Close. Cllr T Munt responded that due to the small number of houses planned then this is not necessary.

#### **20/18C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT**

S Briton - **Pest Control** - Had been approached by several members of the public and she suggested it would be useful if the City Council had a policy to give advice.

#### **EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Note: If it is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence it will be proposed by the Mayor that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended, excluding the press and public to consider a Civic event.

#### **20/19C MAYOR'S REPORT**

- i. The Town Clerk updated members on lease negotiations regarding one of its properties.
- ii. The Mayor and members discussed the possibility of holding a future civic event. It was agreed to delay a decision until the next meeting.

#### **20/20C DATE OF NEXT MEETING will be at 7pm on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020**