

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM ON THURSDAY 15TH OCTOBER 2020 AT 7.00PM

COUNCILLORS PRESENT (VIA ZOOM): Cllrs: L Agabani, S Briton, P Crummay, S Cursley, O Hartley (Deputy Mayor), R Humphreys, A l'Anson, N Kennedy, J Linsdell, J Osman, J Parker, J Rust, P Welch (Mayor)

IN ATTENDANCE (VIA ZOOM): Town Clerk/RFO: S Luck
WCC Staff: S Bristow, A Westwood
Mayoress, Mrs C Welch
SCC Cllr T Munt
1 member of the public

NOT PRESENT: Cllr C Rees

20/96C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Cllr J Browne

20/97C DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 27th July 2012:
Councillors were asked whether they had any declarations of interest. No declarations were received.

20/98C MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 24TH SEPTEMBER 2020
Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, seconded, confirmed as a true record and will be signed by the Mayor.

20/99C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
No one wishing to speak.

20/100C MINUTES OF THE ARCHIVES & CIVIC ASSETS COMMITTEE
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 1ST October 2020:
The Chair conveyed his appreciation and thanks to both the Archivist and Cllr Rust for their significant input. He presented the minutes and invited questions.
Q. Cllr Rust: re 20/13A of the minutes, Archives Assistant post - can responses to the previous questions which were emailed to councillors be appended to the Archives report? The Town Clerk agreed this will be done. (See attached note at the end of these minutes.)

20/101C MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 1ST October 2020:
The Chair confirmed that the last meeting was also the last meeting with Cllr Wride and wished to thank Celia Wride for her time on the Planning Committee both as Chair and Vice-Chair.
The Chair presented the minutes and invited questions. No questions.

20/102C MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 8th October 2020:
The Chair presented the minutes and invited questions.
Q. Cllr Rust: (i) re 20/58F, Council's ethical procurement policy; how is this going to be instigated in the future?
Response: The Chair referred the matter to the Town Clerk who said that this would have to go onto a future Finance Committee agenda as the matter has financial implications.

Q. Cllr Rust: (ii) No-one took the Chair when Cllr Agabani had to leave the last meeting, as per his declaration.

Response: The Chair said that this was not intentional and apologised for the mistake.

20/103C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor thanked Cllr Osman and his wife for their long service as Mayor and Mayoress.

The Mayor also said it was a great honour to be the Mayor of Wells.

Mayor's Diary:

- i. Sunday 18th October - Thanksgiving service for the NHS at the Cathedral.
- ii. Remembrance Day, Sunday 8th November, arrangements - due to the Covid restrictions there will not be a parade this year and wreaths will be laid at the altar in the church. The Mayor and Mayoress will represent the City Council as numbers have been restricted by the church.

On Wednesday 11th November at 11am all councillors are invited to congregate at the conduit for the 2-minute silence.

- iii. Monday 9th November - opening the new care home, Crandon Springs, on Glastonbury Road.

Objectives for the year ahead:

- i. Work for the return of Wells assets handed to Mendip District Council in 1974, including the Market Place, Recreation Ground and Bishop's Barn, with the resources to maintain them.
- ii. Seek to secure the Portway Annexe for community use.
- iii. Pursue our Green agenda, including Cllr Joe Parker's tree sapling initiative.
- iv. Ensure we continue to keep party politics out of city council business.
- v. Annual meeting to be open house in the Ballroom.

20/104C TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES

Committees

- i. Finance
- ii. Planning
- iii. City Centre and Open Spaces
- iv. Staffing
- v. Archives and Civic Assets
- vi. Climate Emergency

The Town Clerk announced all the new committee members. Please see attached list.

20/105C TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES (attached)

The positions were discussed and representatives appointed.

Cllrs Briton and Crummay will be conducting a review of this list and will report back to the council.

20/106C TO APPROVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S STANDING ORDERS AND OTHER MATTERS

To resolve that the Finance Committee shall ensure the following are reviewed for presentation to Council during the year:

- i. Standing Orders
- ii. Financial Regulations and related matters
- iii. Committees' terms of reference and related matters

Annual reviews are required under Standing Order 5j.

This item was approved by all councillors present.

20/107C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Apologies were received from Cllr Munt for not having submitted a written report on this occasion.

20/108C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT

Cllr Rust raised how saddened she was by the loss of Celia Wride from the council. Cllr Rust continued saying that Celia is a passionate supporter of the city of Wells and that she would like to pay tribute to Celia in the current full council meeting.

Cllr Briton requested an update on the Somerset Skills & Learning building and where the process is at the moment.

Cllr Munt asked about the PACT meeting and when the next meeting might be planned, obviously online under the current circumstances.

The Town Clerk will consult with the police and report back.

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 private property matters.

The public and staff were asked to leave the meeting at this stage in order for confidential matters to be discussed regarding council properties.

20/109C DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Wells City Council will be at **7pm on Thursday 26th November 2020**

Ref: 20/100C

At The Archives meeting a question was asked regarding the funding of the archives assistant post.

Over the last 12 years we have had 5 students on this placement in our archives. It is arranged through the Bath Spa University/National Archives and funded through government grants to encourage students into archive work.

The post lasts for 2 years maximum, but in the past students use it as a stepping stone to a new career and have stayed for various lengths of time.

We could have 2 students on this project but our Archivist is happier dealing with one placement.

The future funding is unknown. I have asked the question but had no reply as I believe a lot of people are still furloughed who deal with archives.

The post at the moment has been working very well prior to furlough and is 1 year into the placement, I know the archivist is happy with the work being done and likes the extra help.

I have spoken to several local universities and colleges about placements and apprenticeships, I stated we will look at any funded posts for students in local government in the future as this seems a popular way of obtaining funding from central government.