

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 7.00PM

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, J Browne, S Cursley, A l'Anson, S Johns, N Kennedy, T Leach, S Powell, T Robbins, J Rust, P Welch (Mayor)

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk/RFO: S Luck
Town Clerk Assistant, C Woodland
Open Spaces Officer, M Culliford
WCC Staff: S Bristow, A Westwood
Mace Bearer, M Goody
SCC Cllr T Munt
MCD Cllr T Ronan
3 Members of public

21/138/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM MEMBERS

Cllrs: R Humphreys, J Osman, T Pullin

21/139/C DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 27th July 2012:

- i. Cllr l'Anson declared a Personal and Prejudicial interest in **21/143/C PRESENTATION ON THE OLD DEANERY PROJECT** as he is the Director of the Old Deanery Project.
- ii. Cllr Agabani declared a Personal and Prejudicial interest in **21/149/C GRANT FOR THE REGENERATION OF THE HIGH STREET** as he has a business interest in this.

21/140/C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 22ND JULY 2021

- Cllr l'Anson pointed out that 21/121/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC should read Jenny Williams (not Jane). This will be corrected accordingly.
- Cllr Powell - 21/129C MINUTES OF THE WELLS RECREATION GROUND TRUST COMMITTEE - The Town Clerk informed the meeting that paperwork had been received from Solicitors and that the information will be forwarded to Councillors.
- Cllr Rust 21/132/C BUS BACK BETTER CAMPAIGN: Please include thanks to Cllr Pullin.

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

21/141/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The presentation on the Old Deanery Project (21/143/C) by Bill Lloyd was brought forward to this point.

Bill Lloyd presented an interesting summary on the Old Deanery Project which was well received by all present. Questions were invited. Discussion took place and Cllr Agabani thanked Bill for his work on this project.

The Mayor thanked Mr Lloyd

for his presentation and invited any other members of the public to speak. No-one else wished to speak.

21/142/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- i. Wells wins the Coach Friendly Destination award for a second year running.

- ii. Wells & Mendip Museum announced they received an award from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Mayor's Diary

- i. 19th Sept - Commemoration of the Battle of Britain, St Cuthbert's Church
- ii. 19th Sept - Mayor's Sunday, Glastonbury Town Hall
- iii. 24th Sept – Macmillan Coffee Morning at Crandon Springs Care Home
- iv. 25th Sept - Centenary Celebrations, First Bus Wells Depot
- v. 30th Sept - Afternoon Tea, Abbeyfield House
- vi. 2nd Oct - 200th Anniversary & refurbishment, Wells United Church
- vii. 3rd Oct – Young Farmers' Harvest Festival, Wells Cathedral
- viii. 9th Oct - 'Gert & Daisy' Life During Lockdown, Wells Town Hall
- ix. 10th Oct - Wells Food Festival
- x. 10th Oct - Heads Up Charity Event, Wookey Hole Inn
- xi. 13th Oct - Dedication Festival, Wells Cathedral
- xii. 17th Oct – Start the Wells Memory Walk, Bishop's Palace
- xiii. 17th Oct - Quiz in aid of Mayor's Charity, Wells Town Hall
- xiv. 19th Oct - Reception for the Wells Ambassadors, Wells Town Hall
- xv. 26th Oct - Wells Twinning Association AGM, Wells Town Hall

21/143/C PRESENTATION ON THE OLD DEANERY PROJECT

Please refer to 21/141/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC where this item was brought forward on the agenda.

21/144/C MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2021.

The Chair presented the minutes and invited questions.

- i. Cllr Powell referred to item 21/86F GRANT APPLICATIONS - vi and vii - the reason for applicants to be asked to re-submit their application should read because they did not submit their forms (not because no representative was present at the meeting).
- ii. Cllr Rust referred to item 21/87F PROPERTIES UPDATE. Cllr Rust asked for an update on the non-payment of rents. It was confirmed that this is confidential information. However, the Town Clerk confirmed that there is no resolution at present and it is in the hands of the solicitors.

21/145/C MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meetings held on:

- 5th August
- 19th August held under delegated authority
- 2nd September
- 16th September

The Chair thanked K Westwood for handling the overflow of public attendance on the last meeting.

Cllr Rust thanked Cllr l'Anson for his effort in bringing together the developers and residents. The Mayor agreed and thanked both the Chair and Vice-chair for their work.

The Chair presented the minutes and invited questions. Responses as above.

21/146/C MINUTES OF THE CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 29th July.

The Vice-chair presented the minutes and invited questions.

- i. Cllr Rust referred to item 21/14CBEC MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC c. Cllr Munt produced a plan plotting land between St Thomas St. and Budgens. Cllr Rust has not had sight of this as yet. Vice-Chair: also has not seen such document and will hope it will be available at the next Planning meeting.
- ii. Cllr Rust referred to item 21/15CBEC APPOINTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER c. and asked what the projects were. The Town Clerk answered that she is working on the sustainability of the buildings. She is making contact with

local organisations and MDC. Emma is in discussion with A Westwood re ideas on the promotion of sustainability on Facebook and websites. She will be asked to keep us informed of developments. However, please bear in mind she has only recently taken up the position of Sustainability Officer.

21/147/C MINUTES OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd September.

The Chair presented the minutes and invited questions. No questions received.

21/148/C PORTWAY ANNEXE COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 16th September.

The Chair presented the minutes and invited questions.

- i. Cllr Rust asked about Community Asset Transfers, relating to the Business Plan, asking is there evidence to support this purchase? What is the projected rate of increase in the precept?

Cllr Agabani explained that the Business Plan is a working document that is being used to model the opening year.

The Town Clerk does not anticipate an increase in precept. The income depends on how the project expands.

- ii. Cllr Munt reported she had been dealing with SCC about the Community Asset Transfers since November 2020 without success.

21/149/C GRANT FOR THE REGENERATION OF THE HIGH STREET

An update was provided by Cllr l'Anson and will report back on further development.

Cllr Robbins volunteered that he would like to be involved on this project.

21/150/C CIVIC AWARDS

The new date of 4th December 2021 was confirmed by the Mayor.

Cllr Browne thanked the Town Clerk, Town Hall Manager and A Westwood for helping with the launch of the Civic Awards. Closing date for nominations is the 8th November and anyone is allowed to nominate, including Councillors.

21/151/C COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

1. To consider draft structure
2. To confirm membership of committees

The Town Clerk presented the proposed new structure of the committees and asked councillors to consider and come forward for positions within the new structure.

Discussion took place and the new structure was agreed by members: Proposal by Cllr Robbins, seconded Cllr Kennedy, all in favour.

21/152/C COUNCIL TERM OF OFFICE

To consider response to letter from SALC - asking for opinion on bringing Parish Council elections in line with the new unitary elections. This would in affect bring elections forward to May 2022, shortening current councillors' standing to 3 years instead of 4.

Discussion took place and it was agreed that the Town Clerk will respond to the SALC and also write to the MP. Proposal: Cllr Cursley, suggesting the Town Clerk writes to SALC in favour of the councillors serving 4 years' service. All voted in favour.

Cllr Powell proposed that Climate & Biodiversity Emergency be considered in every agenda item in the new committee structure. This was seconded by Cllr Browne, all voted in favour.

21/153/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Wells Mendip Museum Trustee Report (attached)

Cllr Rust presented the report and talked of the Museum facilities which will be upgraded and a programme will be initiated utilising the National Lottery Heritage grant received by the museum. Cllr Rust will keep the council updated.

21/154/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS
Cllr T Ronan presented a report on MDC (circulated prior to the meeting).

SCC Cllr Munt - apologies for no written report. An update was given on Stoberry Avenue parking and also residents parking for Tor Street. Highways are investigating the dangerous Bristol Hill crossing point and a bridge over the road is one solution being considered. SCC Cllr Munt will keep the city council updated.

21/155/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT
Cllr Robbins volunteered to stand as the city council's representative on the Carnival Committee. All present were in agreement.

21/156/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING
The next meeting of Wells City Council will be the revised date:
Thursday 21st October 2021, 7pm

Wells and Mendip Museum Trustee Report

The Wells and Mendip Museum has been undergoing a programme of gallery refurbishment and general updating during the past eighteen months. Since re-opening it has presented a very popular exhibition on the inhabitants of the old Somerset and Bath Asylum plus a range of art exhibitions. It is also welcoming back local groups to its suite of meeting rooms and has hosted wedding and christening receptions in the beautiful garden. With its Heritage Partners it is running a number of schools' activities in connection with the Gormley project. Its research facilities are available but initial contact with the Curator, Archivist or Librarian is advisable.

The Wells and Mendip Museum is volunteer-led. We are fortunate to have so many people who give up their time on a regular basis to maintain it, staff it and run it.

Jenny Rust
Council Trustee
September 2021

Minutes signed by The Mayor: **Date:**