

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 21ST OCTOBER 2021 AT 7.00PM

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, A Bayley, J Browne, S Cursley, A l'Anson, R Humphreys, S Johns, T Leach, J Osman, S Powell, T Pullin, 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: C Hobbs, A Westwood
Mace Bearer, M Goody
8 Members of public

21/157/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM MEMBERS

Cllr D Denis

21/158/C DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

21/159/C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 23RD SEPTEMBER 2021

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

21/160/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

A minute's silence was taken to mark Wells City Council's respect for Sir David Amess, the murdered MP for Southend.

Tricia Fine, a member of the public, made a request to Wells City Council asking for its support for the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill which has its second reading in Parliament on 29th October 2021. The Chair informed the meeting that the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill will be on the agenda of the next Council Meeting.

Chris Simons asked if written reports from Mendip District Council and Somerset County Council could be made available ahead of the Council Meeting. He also requested if the fire risk assessment for the Portway Annexe was available. The Town Clerk informed the meeting that the assessment had been completed but not yet received.

21/161/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- i. Gert and Daisy's show in the Town Hall raised £910 for the Mayor's Charity. Thanks to Cllr Agabani for kindly sponsoring the event and Cllr Munt for attending.
- ii. Quiz Night held at the Town Hall. 24 teams took part and raised £1250 for the Mayor's Charity.

Mayor's Diary

- i. 25th Oct - Give talk on Unitary at St Cuthbert Out Parish Council
- ii. 29th Oct - Poppy Appeal Concert, Wells Town Hall (*since been cancelled*)
- iii. 9th Nov - Wells Floral Art Club, Wells Little Theatre
- iv. 14th Nov - Remembrance Day Parade, St Cuthbert's Church
- v. 23rd Nov - Brittaines Charity meeting at Chubb Bulleid

21/162/C MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE

- i. To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 14th October 2021
 - ii. To receive the External Audit Report 2020-21 and consider action required
- The Lead Councillor, Cllr Cursley, presented the minutes and invited questions. None received.

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that the issue of public access to the accounts had to be amended and will be corrected on the next annual return. Due to lockdown, the dates were incorrect.

21/163/C MINUTES OF THE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 14th October 2021.
The Deputy Lead, Cllr Rust, presented the minutes and invited questions. None received.

21/164/C UNITARY & ACQUISITIONS

- i. To receive a report on meetings held with SCC
 - ii. To receive presentation from the Town Clerk regarding possible transfer of assets and services
 - iii. To consider implications on the Year 2022-23 precept
- The Mayor informed the Council that meetings have taken place with Somerset County Council, the five Mendip towns and rural parishes regarding the new Unitary Authority. He reported on a conference he attended in Bridgwater arranged by the county council's Unitary team. When received, the briefing notes will be forwarded to all Councillors.
- The Town Clerk gave a presentation of the asset acquisition options which the City Council could negotiate with the new Somerset Unitary Council.
- The presentation covered the proposals for future services and staffing increases that may be required once the Unitary Authority comes into force.
- Councillors asked the Town Clerk questions about possible risk assessments, aspects of the proposed asset acquisitions in the presentation and the estimated staffing budget.
- Cllr Osman offered his help in the negotiating process.
- Cllr Agabani asked that a public meeting take place. The Town Clerk suggested that this take place in early 2022 when more details were available.
- Cllr Cursley made a proposal that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Town Clerk be allowed to continue discussions with SCC and that the financial implications be considered at the next meeting of the Finance & Council Matters Committee for possible inclusion in future budgets.
- The proposal was seconded by Cllr Robbins and agreed unanimously.

21/165/C SKATE PARK PROPOSAL

- i. To consider proposal from Cllr Agabani.
- A discussion took place concerning maintenance contracts, the fundraising process, potential users and permissions required for the project to proceed.
- Cllr Agabani amended the attached proposal by removing section 3 and amended section 5 to read that Wells City Council will undertake to discuss with the Charity and the Developer about the future maintenance of the skate park and its liability.
- Seconded Cllr Pullin. Motion carried.

21/166/C PORTWAY ANNEXE PROPOSAL

To consider proposal from Cllr Agabani about a new management group.

Cllr Rust requested information about the reporting process and was informed the reports will go to the Outside Spaces & Estates Committee and then Full Council.

Seconded by Cllr Leach. Motion carried.

Cllr l'Anson thanked Cllr Osman for starting the Portway Annexe acquisition process and then gave a brief breakdown of the public consultation responses.

The Town Clerk responded to a question regarding the fire risk assessment and confirmed it had been completed but was still to be received by Wells City Council.

- 21/167/C NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING**
The up-to-date summary was received by members.
- 21/168/C MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT AND FUTURE PLAN**
To consider proposal from Cllr I'Anson.
A short discussion took place and the wording discussed. A request was made for volunteers. Cllrs Leach, Powell, Johns put themselves forward to review and build on the work carried out to date.
- 21/169/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON OUTSIDE BODIES**
The Chair requested that this subject be added to the agenda of next Full Council. Cllr J Browne suggested that a report from the local Policing Team would be useful.
- 21/170/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS**
A report was submitted from Mendip District Council but none from Somerset County Council.
- 21/171/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.
- 21/172/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
The next meeting of Wells City Council will be Thursday 18th November 2021, 7pm

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