

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE WELLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9th DECEMBER 2021 AT 7.00PM

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, J Browne, S Cursley, D Denis, A l'Anson, S Johns, S Powell, T Pullin (joined the meeting at 19.25), J Rust, P Welch (Mayor)

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk/RFO: S Luck
Town Clerk Assistant, C Woodland
WCC Staff: C Hobbs
Mace Bearer C Price
Cllr T Munt (Somerset County Council)
Three members of the Public

21/190/C APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM MEMBERS
Cllrs: A Bayley, R Humphreys, N Kennedy, T Leach, T Robbins

21/191/C DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 27th July 2012.
None received.

21/192/C MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL HELD ON 18th NOVEMBER 2021
Minutes of the previous meeting were proposed, seconded, confirmed as a true record and were signed by the Mayor.

21/193/C MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- i. C Simons asked for clarification on the financial "Cost neutral" in relation to Unitary matters.
The Town Clerk responded that it pertains to the business case in the One Somerset bid which states that assets and services in the Wells City Council's bid should be transferred as close to cost neutral as possible.
- ii. C Price enquired about plans to reinstate the toilet facilities in the Recreation Ground and asked if Wells City Council is liaising with Somerset County Council in relation to the "Bus Back better" scheme.
The Town Clerk confirmed replacement parts were on order to repair the toilets following vandalism.
Cllr J Rust assured Mr Price that a report had been submitted to Somerset County Council regarding the Bus Back Better scheme which will be made available on the WCC website and that work continues.

21/194/C MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- i. The Mayor paid respects to Stan Weatherhead who served the Council as Mace Bearer and has passed away.
- ii. The Mayor chaired a meeting on 8th December to discuss plans for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

Civic Event

Sunday 9th January Bishop Bekynton Commemoration Service, Wells Cathedral, 3pm. All Councillors and Civic Staff invited to attend. Official invitation to follow.

Mayor's Diary

- i. 10th Dec West Side Story premiere at Wells Film Centre for Mayor's Charity
- ii. 11th Dec Crib Festival, St Cuthbert's Church
- iii. 11th Dec Revival Christmas Social for Wells Twinning, Seager Hall (Postponed)
- iv. 12th Dec Mistletoe & Music event organised by Wells Rotary, Market Place
- v. 14th Dec Wells Almshouses Carol Service, Bubwith Chapel
- vi. 16th Dec Heads Up Christmas Party, South Horrington (Cancelled)
- vii. 17th Dec Wells Rotary Christmas Dinner, Wells Golf Club

- viii. 18th Dec Wells City Band Christmas Concert, Wells Town Hall
- ix. 21st Dec Carols by Candlelight, Wells Cathedral
- x. 25th Dec Christmas Lunch at Heads Up
- xi. 9th Jan Bishop Bekynton Commemoration Service, Wells Cathedral
- xii. 22nd Jan Heads Up 10th Anniversary, Swan Hotel

21/195/C MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & COUNCIL MATTERS COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2021 (to follow)
Cllr S Johns queried spelling of Richard III in 21/27FCM. No questions received.

21/196/C ANNUAL BUDGET

- i To agree the annual budget for year 2022-23
- ii To agree the precept for year 2022-23

The Town Clerk requested that the Annual Budget be agreed and signed off for the year 2022-2023.

The Mayor proposed that the budget be accepted. Seconded: Cllr S Johns

Cllr J Rust requested that the vote be a recorded vote.

Votes for: Cllrs L Agabani, J Browne, S Cursley, D Denis, A l'Anson, S Johns, S Powell.

Votes against: Cllr J Rust

The Town Clerk presented the proposal to apply to Mendip District Council to set the precept at £914,670 to fulfill the budget which includes premises for the Open Spaces team and increases in staffing.

Cllr J Rust requested that the vote be a recorded vote.

Cllr S Cursley proposed that precept be agreed for 2022-2023. Seconded Cllr L Agabani.

Votes for: Cllrs L Agabani, J Browne, S Cursley, D Denis, A l'Anson, S Johns, S Powell.

Votes against: Cllr J Rust

21/197/C MINUTES OF THE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meetings

i 25th November 2021

ii 2nd December 2021 (held under delegated authority)

Cllr S Johns queried the process for Cllr apologies when the meeting is held under delegated authority.

21/198/C OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 25th November 2021.

None received.

Cllr L Agabani reported that the Skatepark meeting on 6th December 2021 was well attended.

A presentation was given by the proposed developers. The report will come before Council in January 2022.

21/199/C UNITARY & ACQUISITIONS

i. To receive an update from the Town Clerk

Cllr T Pullin joined the meeting during the update.

The Town Clerk confirmed that Parish and Unitary Elections will take place on 5th May 2022 and that the terms of office will be five years rather than four years. Work Boards and Local Community Networks will be set up. A conference on the Unitary changes is planned for Councillors in February 2022 via Zoom. Details will be provided to Councillors when they are confirmed.

A Statement has been added to the WCC presentation as requested by Cllr D Denis regarding the Environmental and Climate Emergency Declaration.

It was unanimously agreed to share our vision with the SCC unitary team.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the declaration will be included on the new Wells City Council website.

Cllr S Johns asked about plans for public consultation.

The Town Clerk suggested that Wells City Council needs to have more in depth information regarding the Assets and Services that might be acquired by Wells City Council prior to any public consultation.

21/200/C CALENDAR OF MEETINGS AND ENGAGEMENTS
To receive and approve the draft Calendar of Meetings and Engagements
Cllr L Agabani requested that dates for Outside Spaces Committee and Planning Committee were swapped.
The Town Clerk requested Cllrs L Agabani and A l'Anson meet with him to discuss.
Councillors voted unanimously to approve the Calendar.

21/201/C OUTSIDE BODIES
Councillors voted unanimously for Cllr S Powell to become a Trustee of Wells Almshouses
The Town Clerk informed the meeting that all Outside Bodies had been written to with the contact details of their new representative.

21/202/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON OUTSIDE BODIES
No reports submitted.

21/203/C TO RECEIVE ANY WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DISTRICT OR COUNTY COUNCILLORS
SCC Cllr T Munt reported that Somerset County Council has been consulting regarding Local government organisation. She will share the link with the Town Clerk so that it can be made available to members.
Local Community Networks are being proposed and the map which explains how/where these networks are planned will be provided to the Town Clerk.
T Munt reported that she had attended a meeting with SCC officers Carlton Brand and Alan Jones and suggested that a meeting between WCC members and the Unitary team would be useful.
Cllr L Agabani asked if any meeting would be held online rather than in person and was assured that online would be an appropriate platform.
T Munt requested that she be invited to attend further meetings about the Platinum Jubilee.

21/204/C ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS OF REPORT
Cllr D Denis requested that Wells City Council write to the Environment Agency regarding two occasions of dumping/spreading of slurry by farmers which is affecting the water courses of Wells.
The Town Clerk confirmed that he would write to the Environment Agency.
Cllr J Browne thanked all persons who had helped with the Awards ceremony.

21/205/C DATE OF NEXT MEETING
The next meeting of Wells City Council will be Thursday 27th January 2022, 7pm.

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.

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